



**DETROIT**  
**FUTURE**  
**CITY**

139 SQUARE  
MILES

139 Square Miles

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# 139 SQUARE MILES

## Foreword

At the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation, we believe that informed and engaged communities are essential to a well-functioning, representative democracy. This mission is guided by our support for free expression, journalistic excellence, civic engagement, and equitable, inclusive and participatory communities. It is built upon the vision of our founders, John S. and James L. Knight, newspaper publishers who were deeply committed to presenting the full, actual, contextual truth in service to their communities.

It is with our mission in mind that the Knight Foundation is pleased to support Detroit Future City's publication of *139 Square Miles*. Nearly five years ago, Detroit Future City was born out of a process that engaged more than 160,000 Detroiters to create a 50-year vision for the city's future. The resulting Detroit Strategic Framework, released in 2013, was crafted with a tremendous amount of data and research on the state of Detroit and the prospects ahead. Now, at a time of continuing transformation for Detroit, it is important to explore a new snapshot of the city's progress and ongoing challenges. Detroit Future City has endeavored here to present the truth about the realities facing our city today.

All Detroiters deserve to be empowered with information that is open, accessible and verifiable. To effect change, residents, policymakers, journalists, civic leaders, business owners, and activists need to work together using a common set of facts. With this in mind, *139 Square Miles* can be an impetus for constructive discussion and robust debate, so that we may continue to contribute to Detroit's recovery and its success for years to come.

**Katy Locker**

*Program Director for Detroit*

**The John S. and James L. Knight Foundation**

## Foreword

We are so pleased to present *139 Square Miles*. This important document is the first aggregation of Detroit-specific data to be published by Detroit Future City since our Strategic Framework in 2013. This report vividly illustrates the current state of the city of Detroit using hard numbers obtained by combing over a diverse set of data sources to provide the public critical insights. This report is a unique and vital tool created to provide a clear, concise, and authoritative set of data that can help guide broader citywide stabilization and revitalization efforts. The report gathers the best-available data into a baseline report that can be easily updated later. Though the report will be widely distributed locally, nationally and internationally, it was written and prepared for Detroiters as the primary users of this document. Detroiters owning the information and understanding how their city is changing through data, without analysis, was our priority. At DFC, we hope that everyone from the presidents of corporations to the presidents of block clubs will turn to *139 Square Miles* as their own source for information.

We hope you enjoy!

**Anika Goss-Foster**

*Executive Director*

**Detroit Future City**



# Acknowledgments

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## **Design Team:**

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**Information and data** can serve as a **baseline** for **inclusive growth and opportunity.**

Detroit is an evolving and ever-changing city of 139 square miles and more than 672,000 residents. As with many cities, Detroit has many neighborhoods and differing conditions across each of them, but Detroit is still one city, and a thriving city requires all its neighborhoods to be successful.

Detroit Future City's *139 Square Miles* aims to create an easily accessible and comprehensive document that can help inform a wide range of stakeholders, including residents, government, business and civic leaders, and philanthropy. This report tells the story of Detroit through the data available at this point in time – several years after the city's historic bankruptcy, with signs that a recovery is underway.

For the first time in **60 years** the city is beginning to **move towards growth.**

This document also aims to move these data beyond just being numbers in a spreadsheet, to highlighting key trends in the city. This report presents a snapshot of a city, where the decline appears to be slowing and, for the first time in 60 years, the city is beginning to move toward population growth.

The report is divided into three sections: People, Economy, and Place. The People section describes the 672,000 people who call Detroit home. The Economy section takes a deep look at the city's growing economy. Finally, the Place section examines the physical environment that Detroiters interact with on a daily basis.

The goal of this document is to continue Detroit Future City's efforts and the momentum of engaging and empowering Detroiters by providing access to data and information about the city. This report does not have all of the answers, nor does it suggest solutions, but as Detroit continues to change at a rapid rate, information and data can serve as a baseline for inclusive growth and opportunity.

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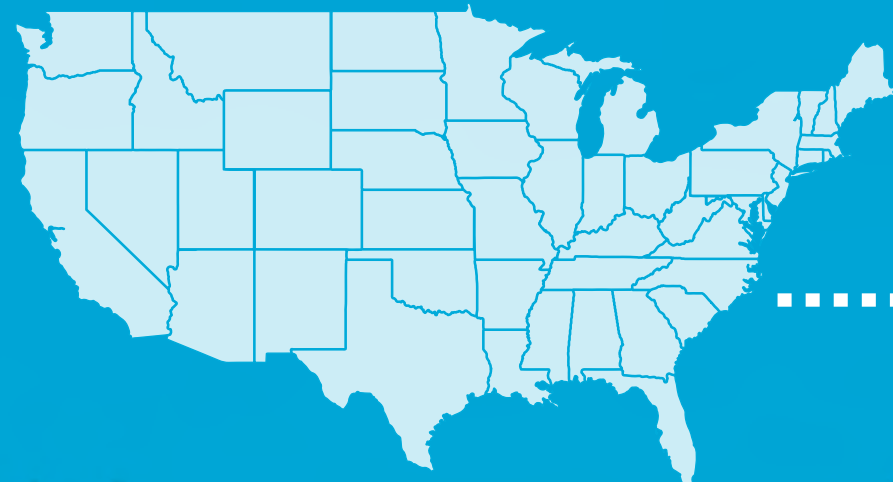
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# Population Trends

Size	16
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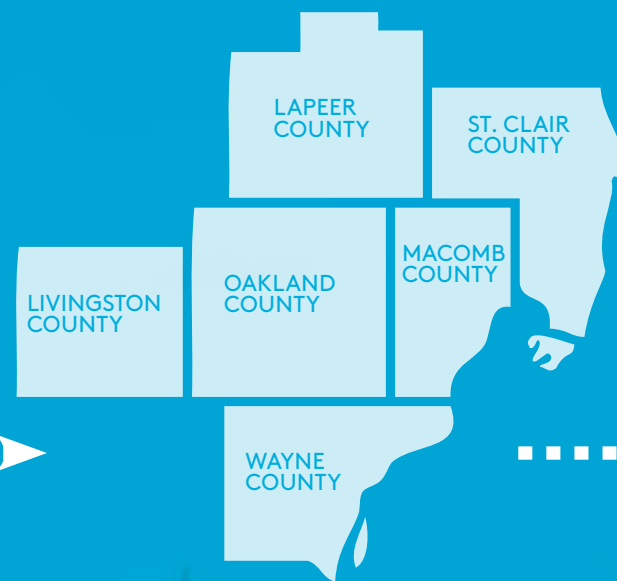
# In 2016...



United States  
323,127,513



Michigan  
9,928,300



Metro Detroit  
4,297,617



Detroit  
672,795

Source: U.S. Census, 2016 Population Estimates



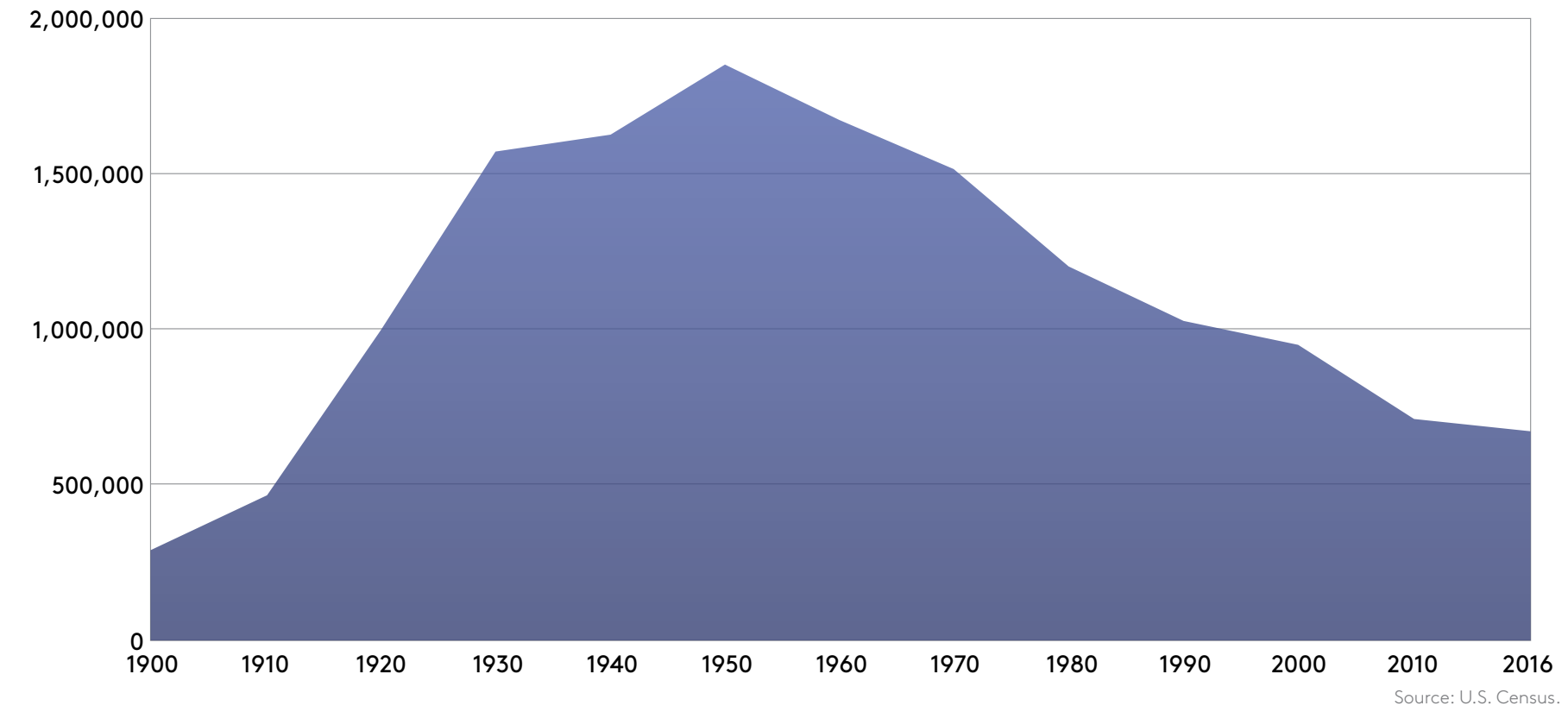
# Population Trends

## Detroit's rise and decline.

According to 2016 census population estimates, Detroit is now the 23rd largest city in the United States, slipping from its rank of 18th largest in 2010, having been surpassed by cities such as Seattle; Denver; El Paso, Texas; Washington, D.C.; and Boston. Detroit was the only city among the 25 largest in the country that has lost population since 2010. However, over the past five years, the rate of population decline has slowed, and there is renewed optimism that the city's population might begin to grow again in the near future.

Detroit is now the **23<sup>rd</sup>** largest city in the U.S.

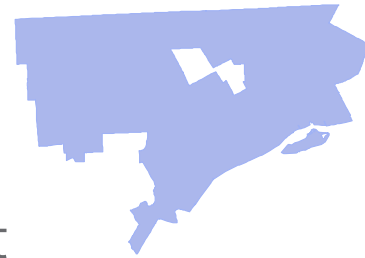
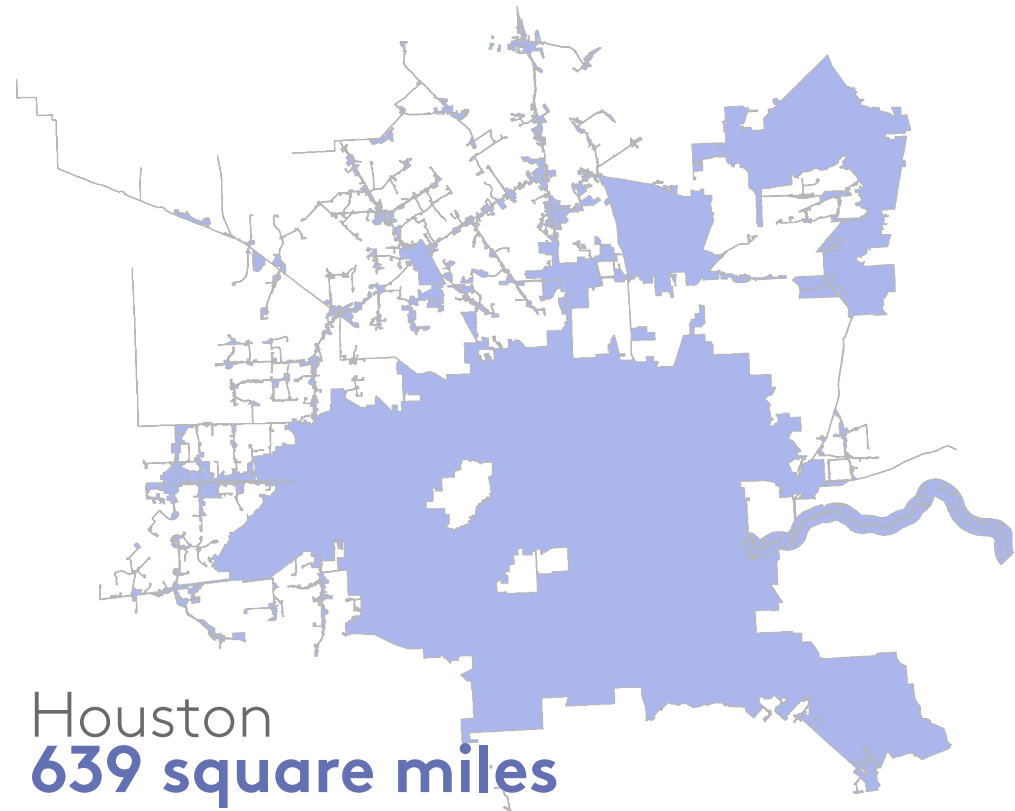
## Detroit's Population



# Size

Since 1926, Detroit's size has been fixed at 139 square miles.

Detroit is larger in area than Manhattan or cities with larger populations, such as Boston or San Francisco. However, when compared to the 25 largest cities in the United States by population, 19 are larger in size.



Detroit  
**139 square miles**



Manhattan  
**22 square miles**



Boston  
**48 square miles**

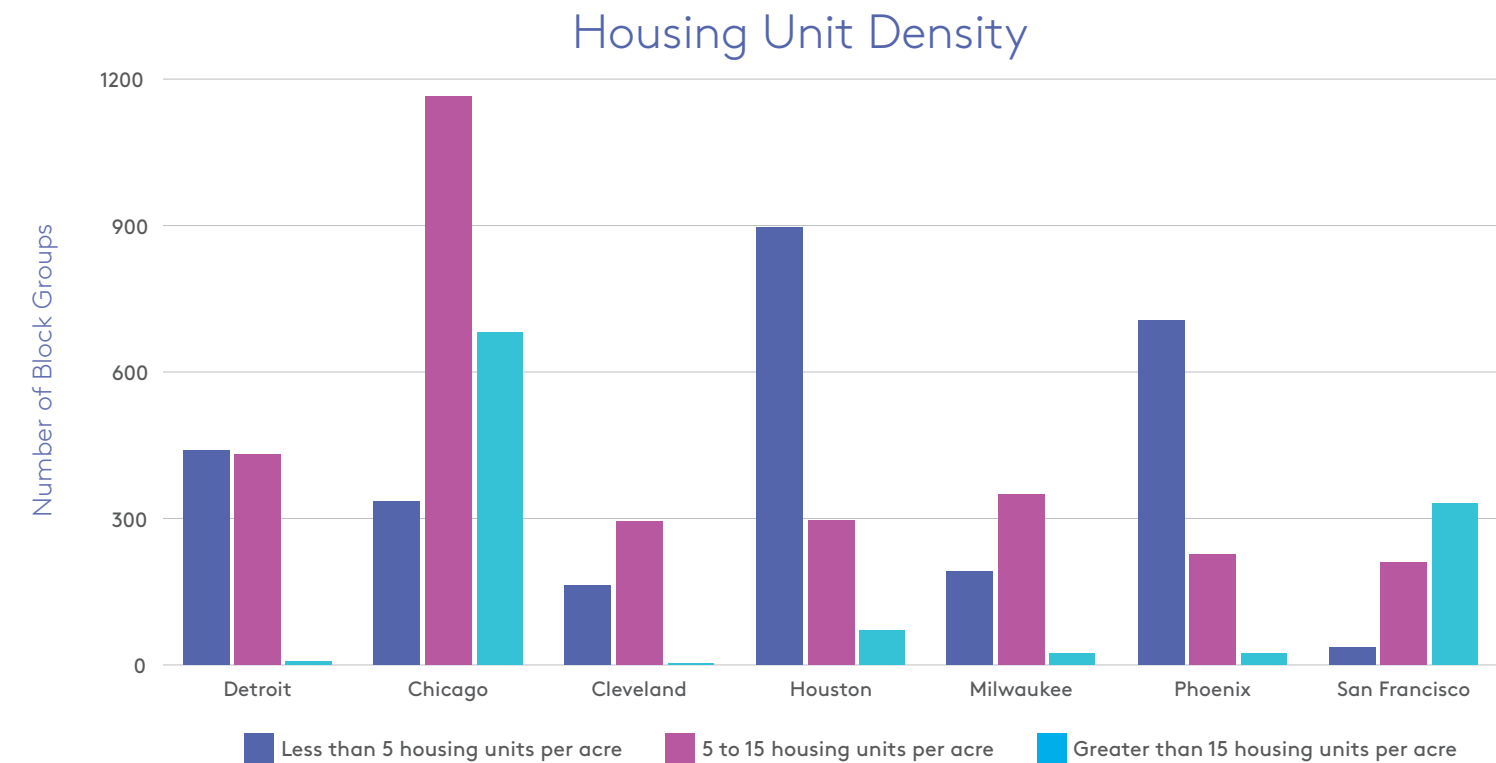


San Francisco  
**46 square miles**

# Housing Density

## How dense is Detroit?

There are few pockets of density in Detroit, and most of the city exists at what could be considered a suburban level of density. This lack of density limits the ability to provide walkable neighborhoods with amenities in close proximity to residents' homes. There are only eight census block groups in Detroit that have a density of more than 15 housing units per acre, and approximately half of the city has a density of less than five units per acre.



Source: American Community Survey 2011-2015 5 Year.

# Transportation

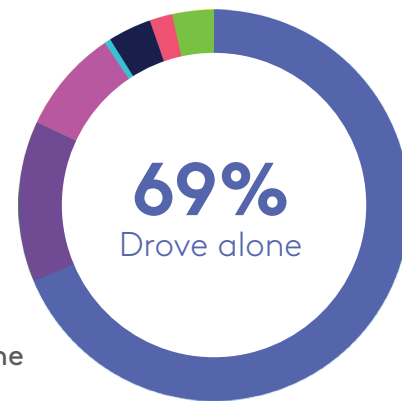
Twenty-five percent of Detroit's households do not have access to their own vehicle. This presents an obvious challenge for their ability to get where they need to go, whether it is to a job, school or other necessities. Those who have access to a vehicle face challenges with the cost of insurance. Detroit's auto insurance rates are twice that of other regional locations.

Over the past several years, there have been many improvements to Detroit's transportation network. In addition to the Detroit Department of Transportation (DDOT) bus system, which operates 43 bus routes, Detroit is now home to the QLINE, a 3.3-mile streetcar rail line. Detroit also has the MoGo bike share, with 430 bikes across 43 stations. The city has 104 miles of bike lanes, of which 8.7 miles are protected.

For those who drive within the city, the condition of the roads is a challenge. The Southeast Michigan Council of Governments reports that only 15% of Detroit's roadways are in good condition, with 43% in poor condition.

## Means of Transportation to Work

- 69%** Drove Alone
- 13%** Carpool
- 9%** Public Transit
- 1%** Bicycle
- 4%** Walked
- 2%** Other
- 3%** Worked from Home



## Commute Time

- 19%** < 10 mins.
- 43%** 15-30 mins.
- 23%** 30-45 mins.
- 6%** 45-60 mins.
- 8%** > 60 mins.



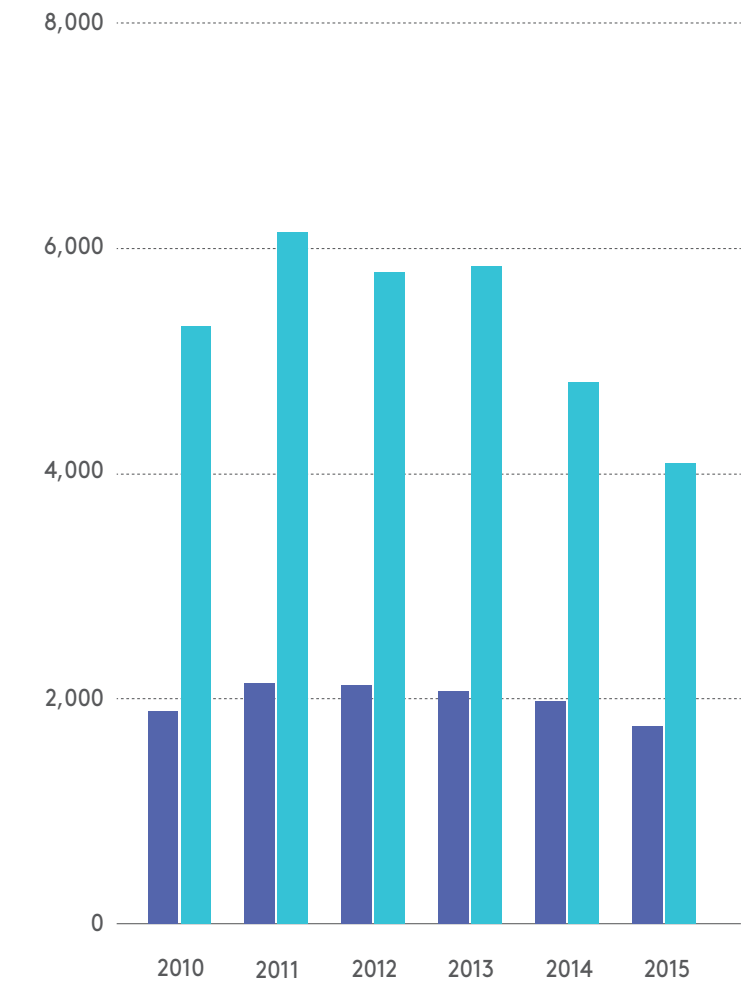
\*Because of rounding, numbers may not add up to 100%.  
Source: American Community Survey 2011-2015 5 Year.

# Public Safety

According to the FBI Uniform Crime Report, the total crime rate and violent crime rate in Detroit have been decreasing since 2011. Additionally, property crime has been on the decline since 2013, and the number of fires per year in Detroit also has steadily decreased. In 2016, the city experienced 3,400 building fires, 300 fewer than 2015.

Between 2014 and 2016, 65,000 LED streetlights were installed throughout the city. Prior to the start of replacement, at least 40% of the city's streetlights were not functioning thus leaving many areas in the dark. With streetlight replacement complete, Detroit is now the largest city in the U.S. to have 100% LED public lighting. The city has also expanded the Project Green Light Detroit program, in which the police department has partnered with more than 181 businesses to install high-definition cameras that can be monitored at the city's Public Safety Headquarters.

## Crime Rate per 100,000



■ Violent crime rate ■ Property crime rate

Source: F.B.I. Uniform Crime Report.



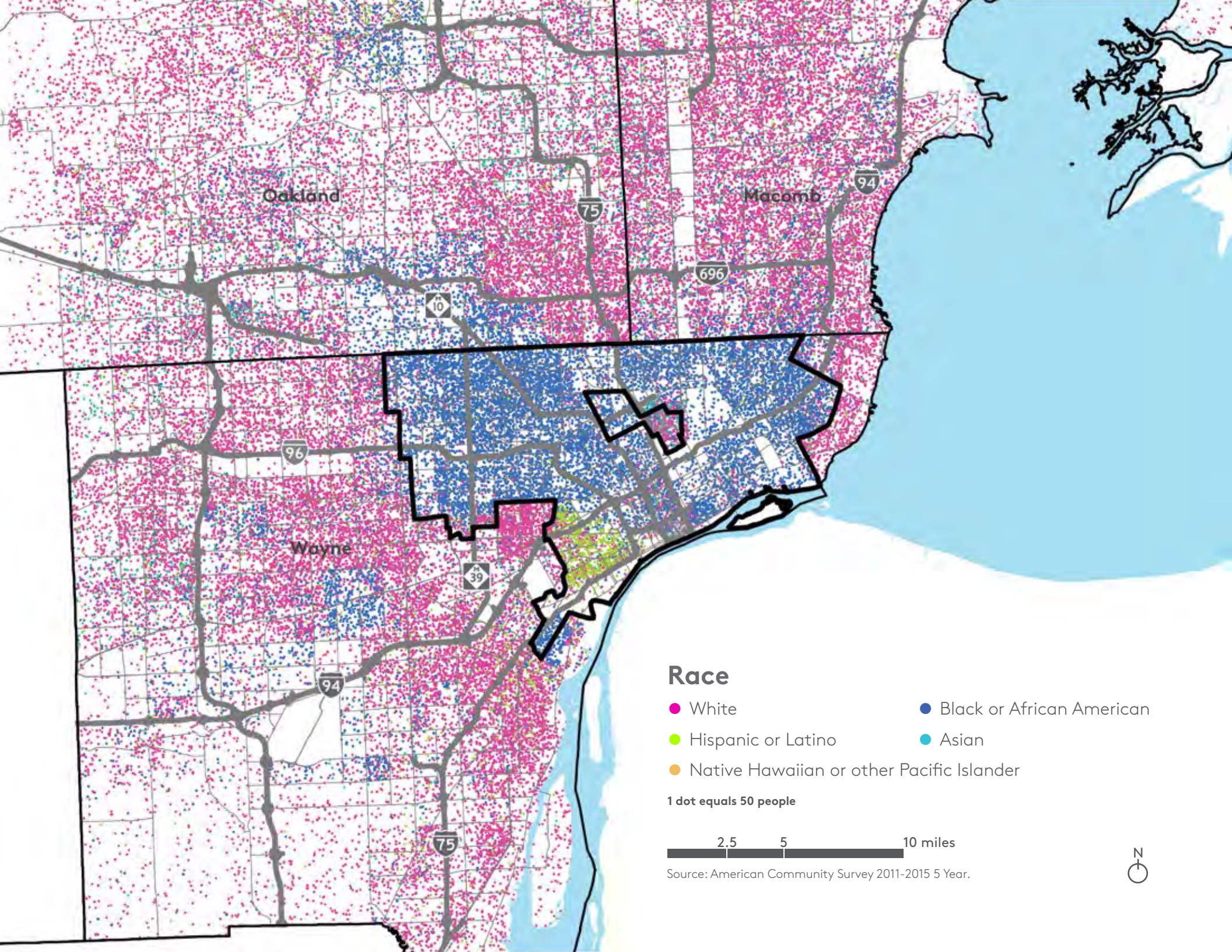
## People are Detroit's most precious asset,

those residents who have stayed through the tough times, as well as those who have only recently moved to the city. The residents of Detroit represent a dynamic group of individuals. This section outlines the diverse characteristics of the city's people with data that provide a snapshot of who lives here and how they identify themselves.

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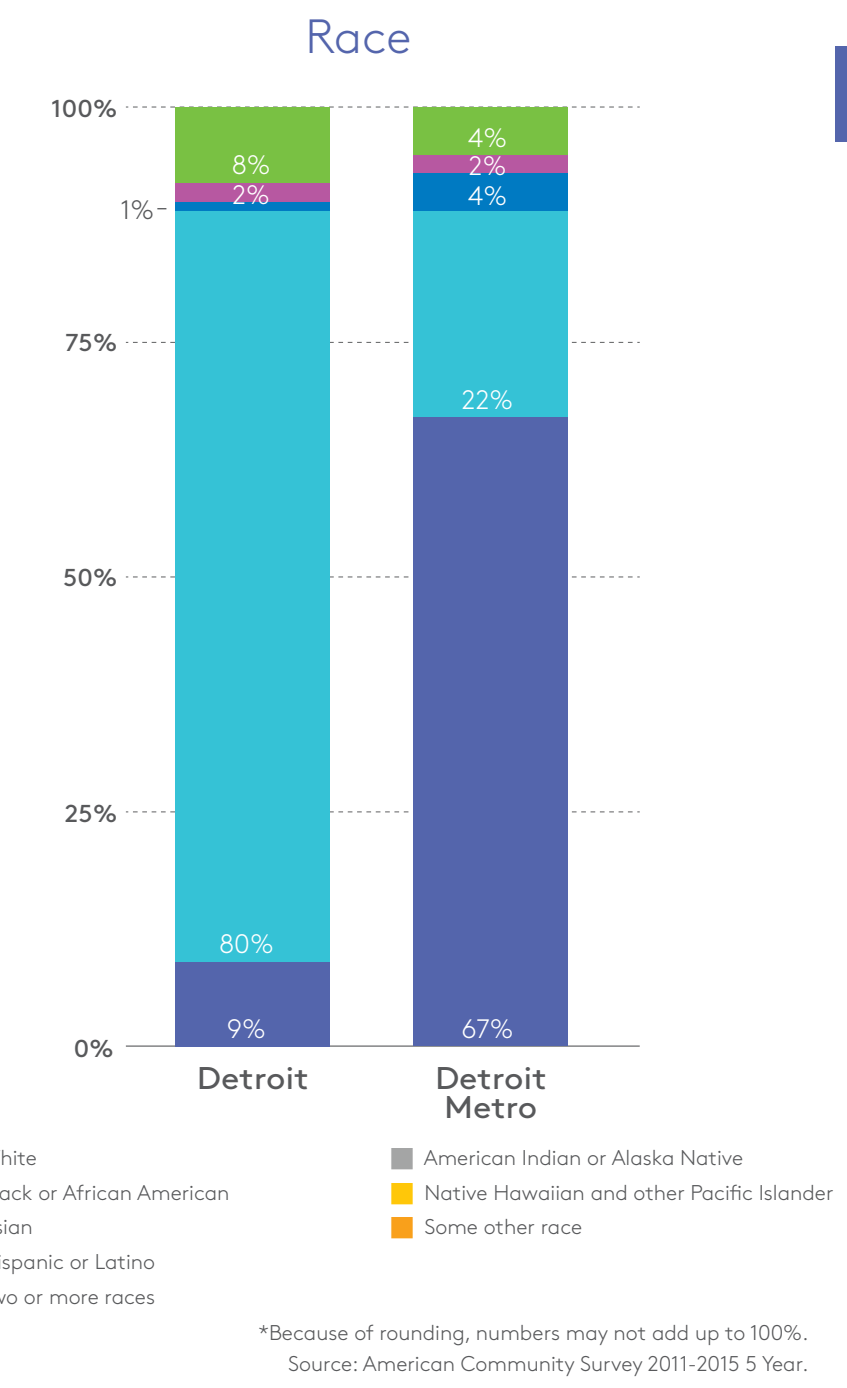
# People

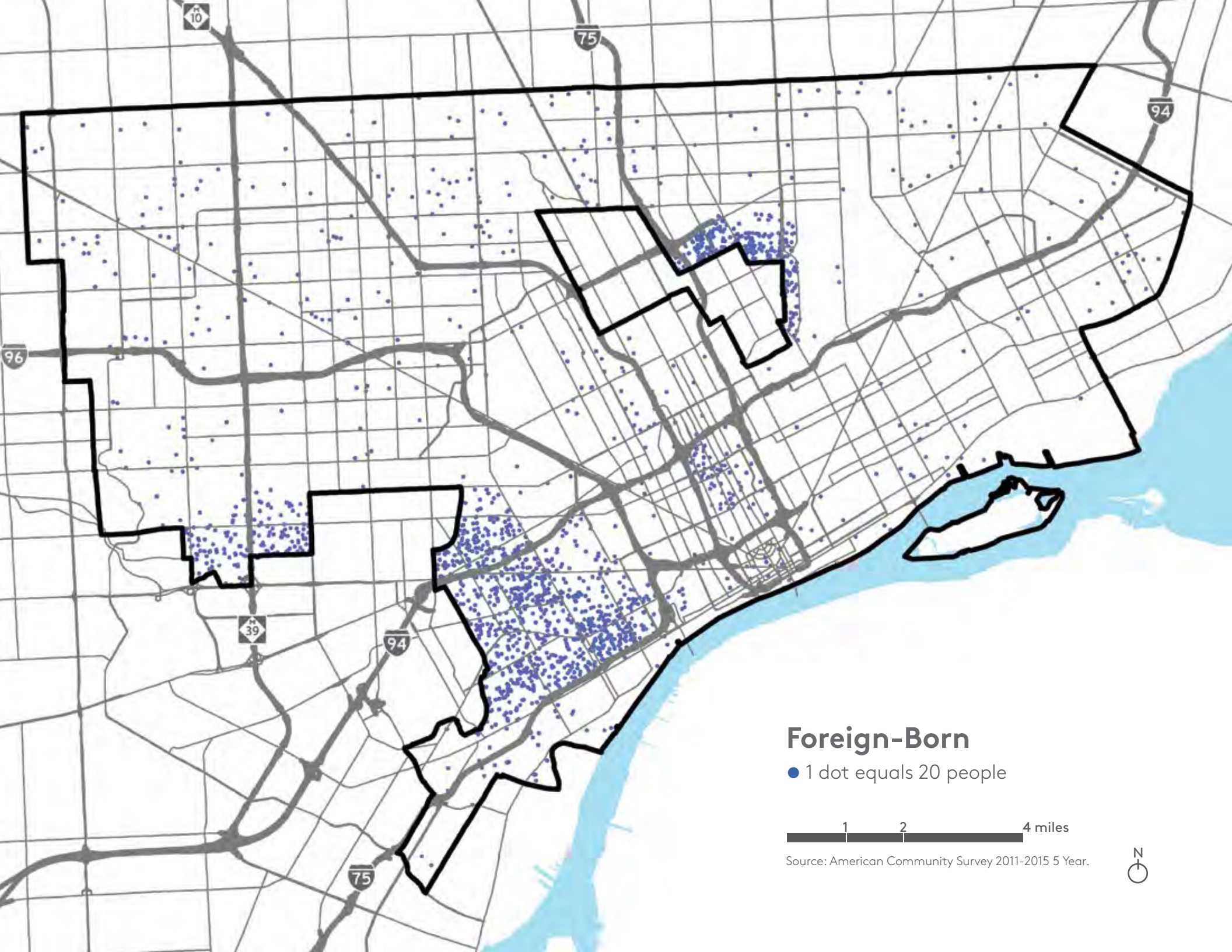


# Race

African Americans comprise the majority of Detroit's population, at 80%. White residents account for 9%; Hispanic residents make up 8%, and Asian residents make up 1%. This contrasts starkly against the Metro Detroit region, where African Americans represent 22% of the population and the white population makes up 67%.

Although the population has seen a decline in recent years, the number of Hispanic residents in the city has increased since 2000. The white population, which had long been on the decline, has grown by 13% since 2010.





# Foreign-Born

Detroit is home to several vibrant immigrant communities, with slightly more than 37,000 city residents born outside of the United States. Although Detroit is home to people from across the globe, the three largest groups who have settled in Detroit are from Mexico, who primarily live in Southwest Detroit; from the Middle East, residing primarily on the city's west side and adjacent to Hamtramck; and from Bangladesh, who mostly live just northwest of Hamtramck.



**37,107 foreign-born residents**

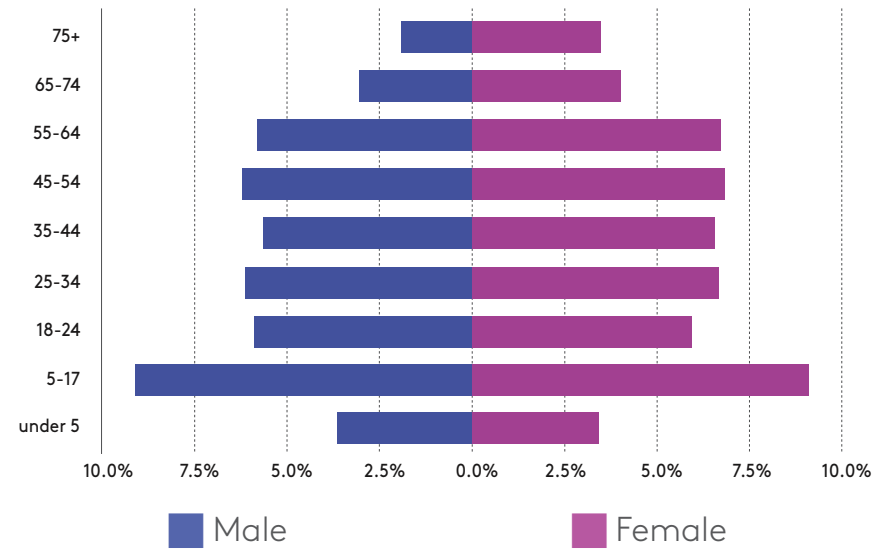
- 15,837** Mexico
- 3,391** Bangladesh
- 2,407** Yemen
- 1,440** Iraq

Source: American Community Survey 2011-2015 5 Year.

# Age

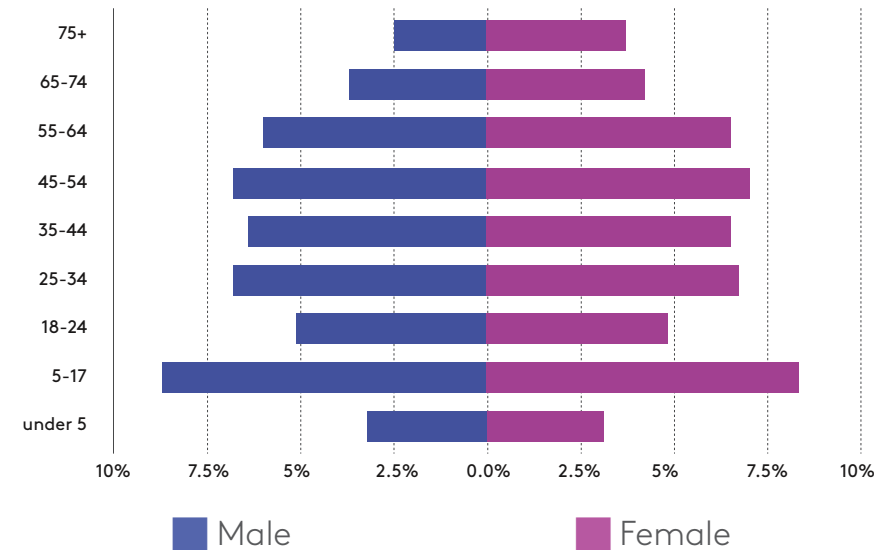
The city has experienced significant growth in its population among 25- to 34-year-olds in recent years. Since 2011, that age group has grown in the city by almost 10,000. However, the city is also aging, with residents older than 55 making up 25% of the population.

Population by Gender in Detroit



Detroit has experienced growth among the **25 to 34-year-old population.**

Population by Gender in the United States



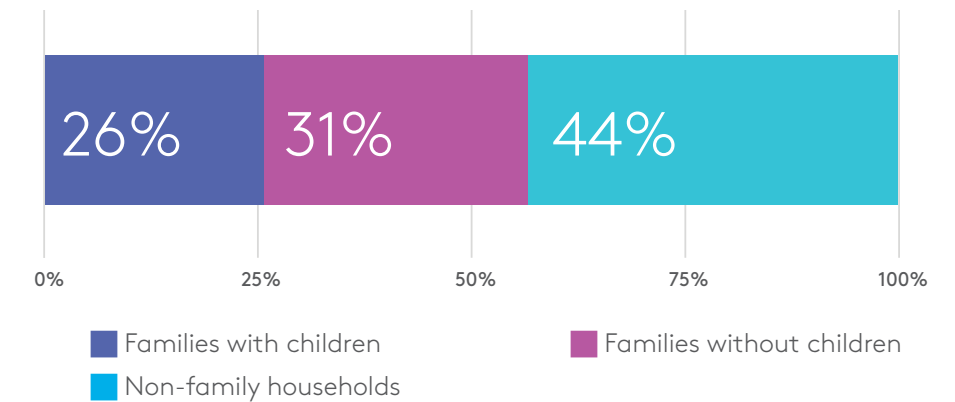
Source: American Community Survey 2011-2015 5 Year.



# Households

The average size of Detroit households has been declining over the past decade, with the current average being 2.6 people per household, which is similar to the county as a whole. One cause of the drop in household size is the loss of families with children. Since 2000, Detroit has seen the number of families with children decline by 43%. These households make up 26% of the city's households, down from 34% in 2000.

Household Type



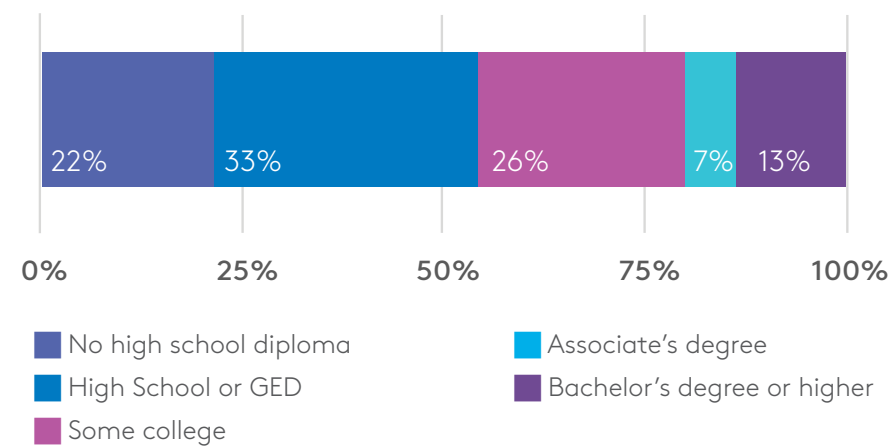
\*Because of rounding, numbers may not add up to 100%.  
Source: American Community Survey 2011-2015 5 Year.

# Educational Attainment

On average, Detroiters have lower levels of formal education than the rest of the region. Currently, 20% of the population 25 years and older has an associate's degree or higher, and 26% have attended some college but did not graduate. Twenty-two percent of residents 25 years and older have not completed high school. Lower levels of educational attainment are often associated with poor labor force outcomes. The unemployment rate among Detroiters without a high school diploma is nearly twice the rate of those with some college or an associate's degree.



Educational Attainment for the Population of 25 years and older



\*Because of rounding, numbers may not add up to 100%.  
Source: American Community Survey 2011-2015 5 Year.

# Schools

The Detroit Public Schools Community District (DPSCD) is the largest single educational entity in the city, with more than 45,000 students in the 2015-16 school year. DPSCD has seen an ongoing decline in student population as the city's population has fallen. Furthermore, an increase in charter schools operating within the city has brought new competition.

Since the 2010-2011 school year, the district has lost 41% of its enrollment — more than 30,000 students — while charter school enrollment has increased by 14%.

However, DPSCD's high school graduation rate has shown steady improvement. In 2007, 58% of students graduated in four years, but by the 2015-16 school year, that number had improved to 78%. Of those who graduated, 41% attended college.

The Detroit Public Schools Community District has a **78%** graduation rate.

**41%** of graduates attend college.

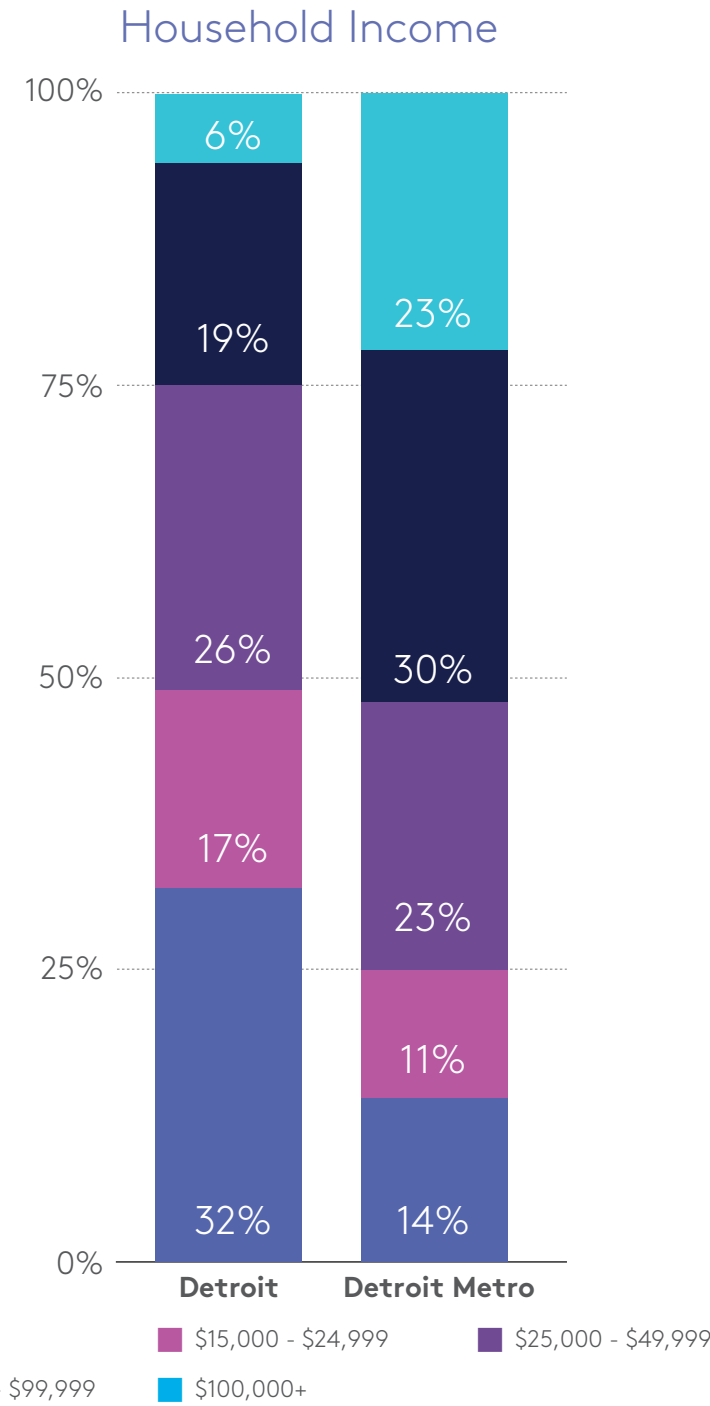
Source: MI School Data



# Income

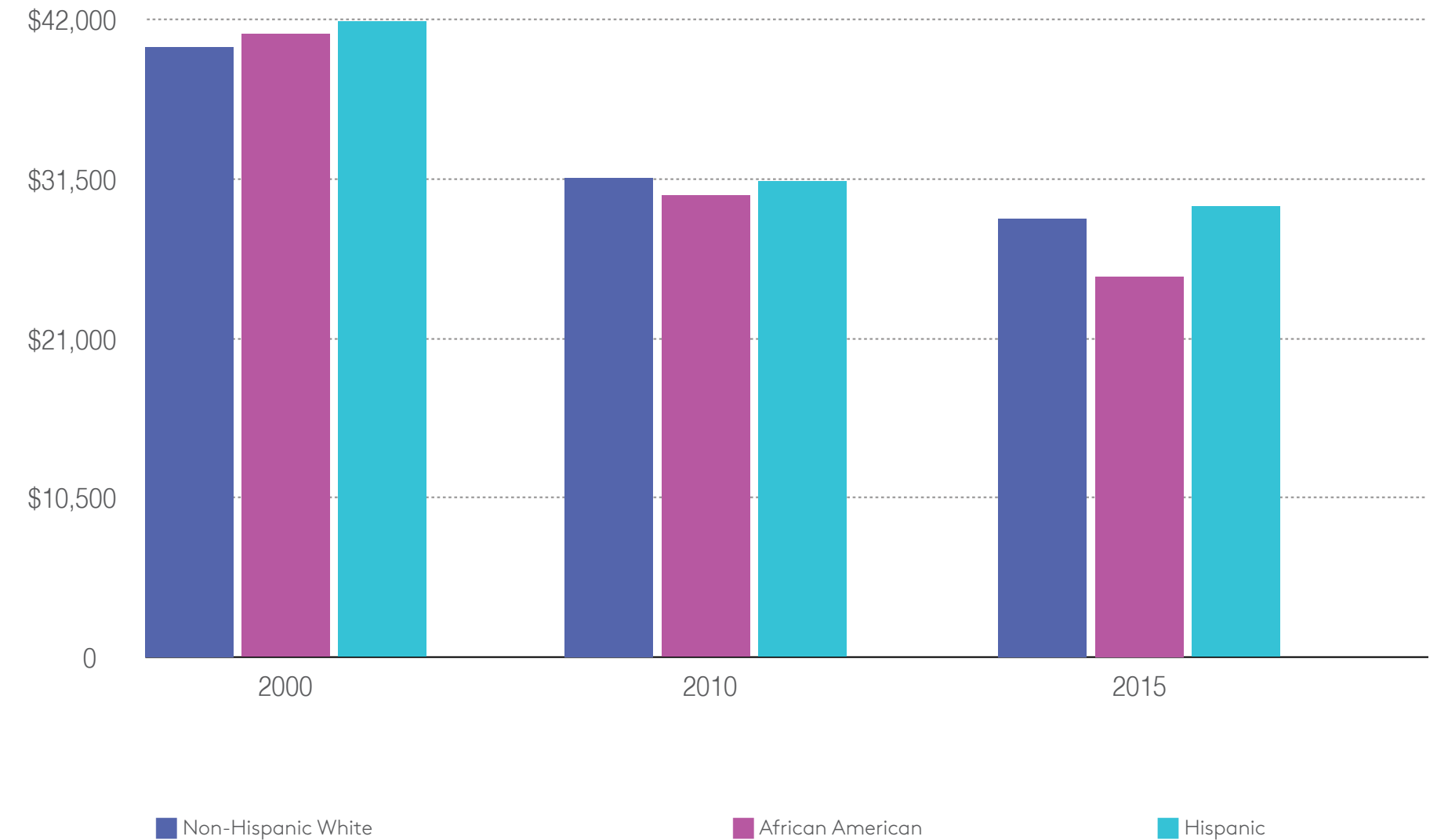
Over the past 15 years, the median income of Detroit residents has declined. In 2015, the median income in the city was less than half that of the region, with nearly a third of households making less than \$15,000 per year and only 6% of households making more than \$100,000.

In 2000, the median household income for the city's African American residents was higher than that of its non-Hispanic white residents. Although the median incomes of both groups have fallen since 2010, the decline has been greater for African American Detroiters (-17%) than white residents since 2010 (-8%).

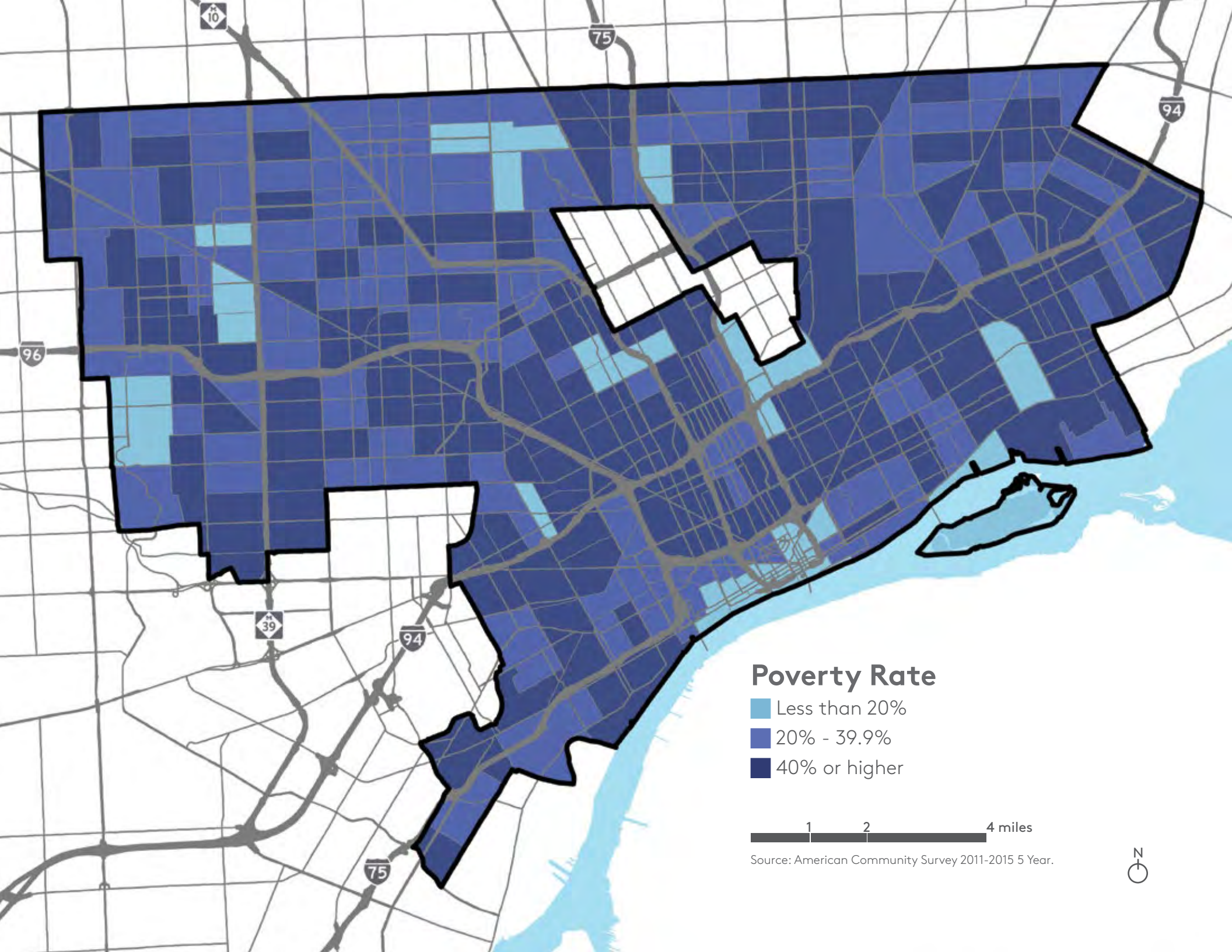


\*Because of rounding, numbers may not add up to 100%.  
Source: American Community Survey 2011-2015 5 Year.

## Detroit Median Household Income in 2015 Dollars



Source: U.S. Census, 2000, American Community Survey 2006-2010 5 Year, 2011-2015 5 Year.



# Poverty

Detroit is a city with an extremely high poverty rate. More than 40% of Detroit residents, and 57% of its children under the age of 18, live below the federal poverty line of \$24,339 for a family of four. The poverty rate among Detroit's seniors is considerably lower, with 20% living below the poverty line.

Today, 53% of Detroit residents live in "areas of concentrated poverty," typically defined as census tracts with a poverty rate of 40% or more. Research indicates that the negative effects of poverty on neighborhoods is limited below a poverty rate of 10% and increase dramatically between 20% and 40%, after which there is little increase in the negative effects of concentrated poverty.

**40%** Poverty rate

**57%** Children in poverty

**20%** Seniors in poverty

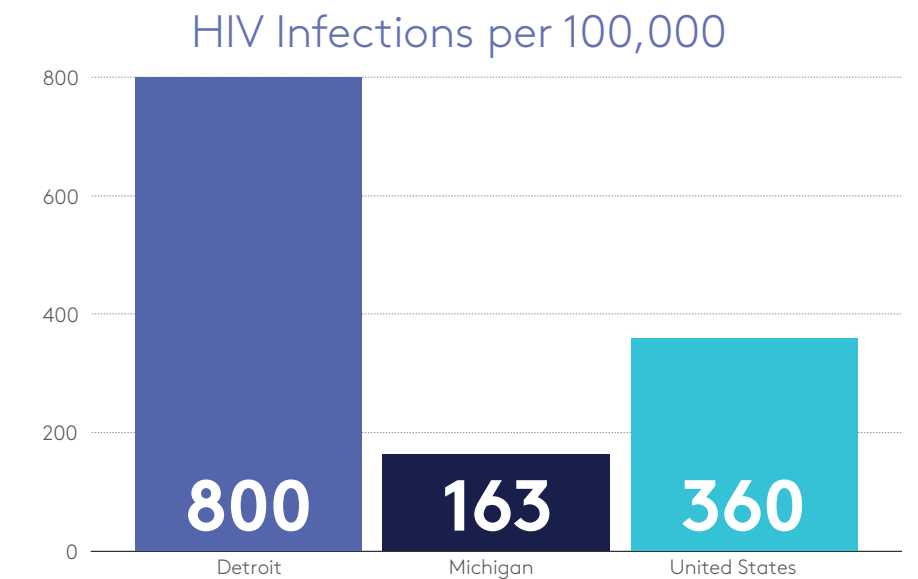
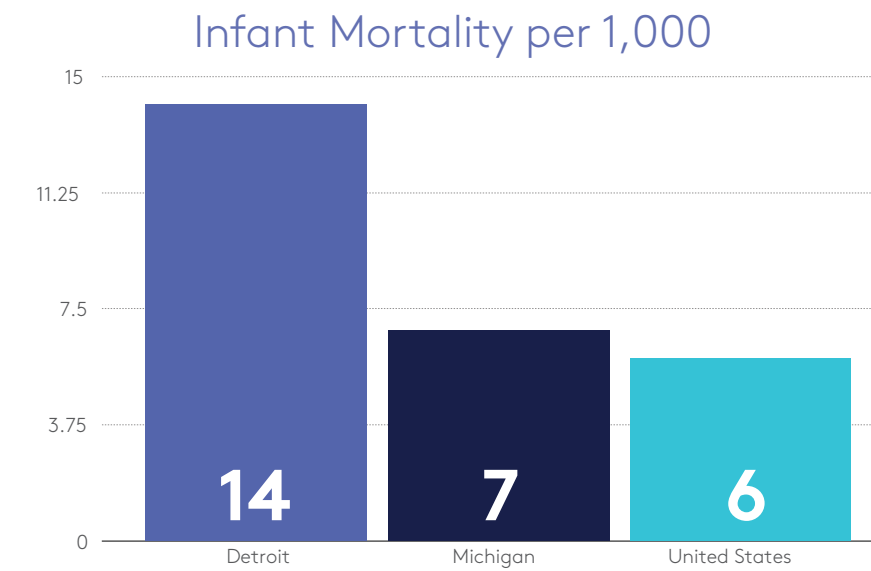
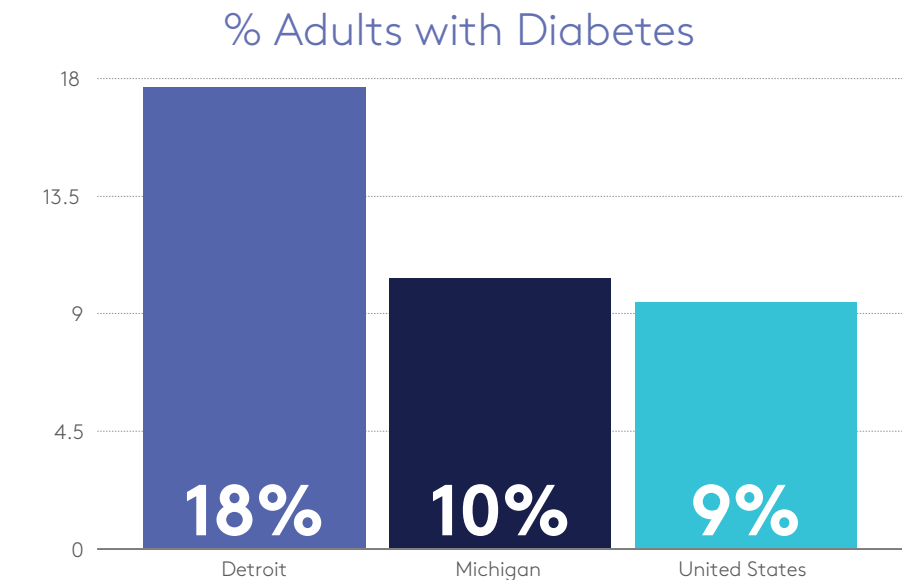
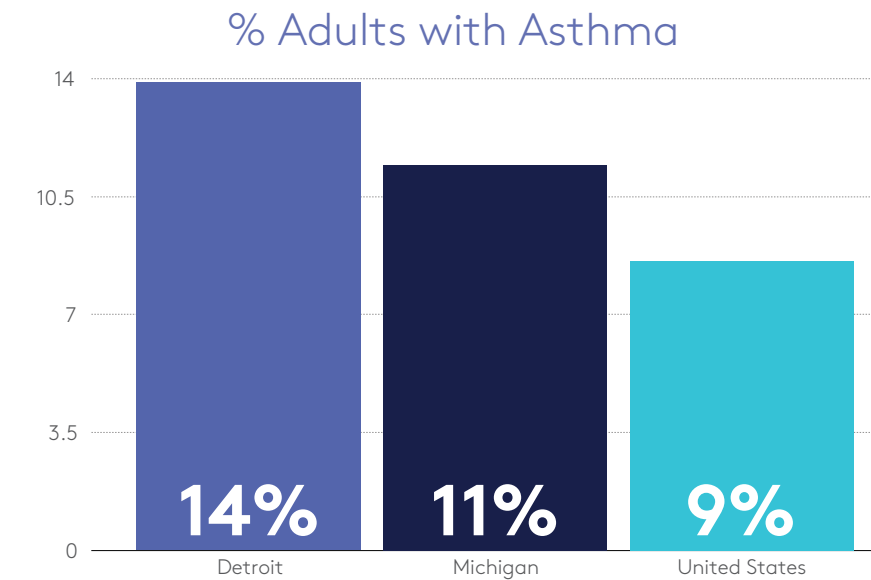
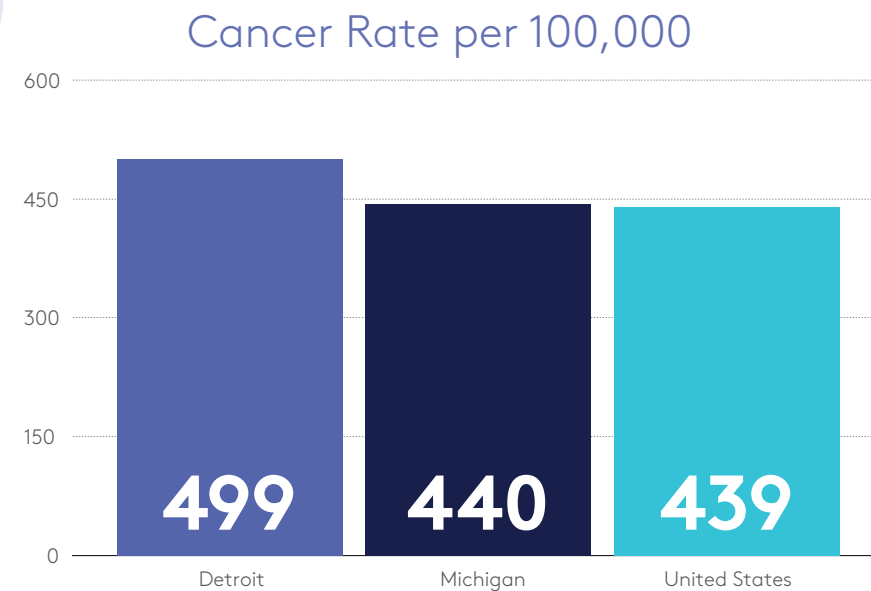
Source: American Community Survey 2011-2015 5 Year.

# Health

Detroit residents face many health challenges, suffering from higher rates of disease and other chronic illnesses when compared to the state and the nation as a whole. These include cancer, asthma, infant mortality, HIV, and diabetes. Disparities are particularly acute for conditions such as infant mortality and HIV infection, where Detroit's rates are more than twice the national average.

Detroiters face issues of health care affordability, with 24% of adults reporting they were unable to access health care because of cost. There have been improvements in health coverage, with the number of Detroiters without health insurance falling by 54% between 2010 and 2015.

Detroiters also face **challenges** accessing **primary care.**



# Economy

Like much of the country, Detroit suffered significant job losses during the Great Recession.

Since bottoming out in the first quarter of 2010, however, the city has seen job growth at a rate that exceeds the rest of the U.S. economy.

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The **city's strong job growth** following the recession has contributed to the **region's resurgence.**

# Economy

In the years since the Great Recession, Detroit has experienced strong growth, with jobs and payroll associated with jobs in the city growing faster than in the U.S. economy as a whole. This growth has been relatively diverse, with jobs added in industries from automobile production to business services.

## Detroit remains the region's largest job center.

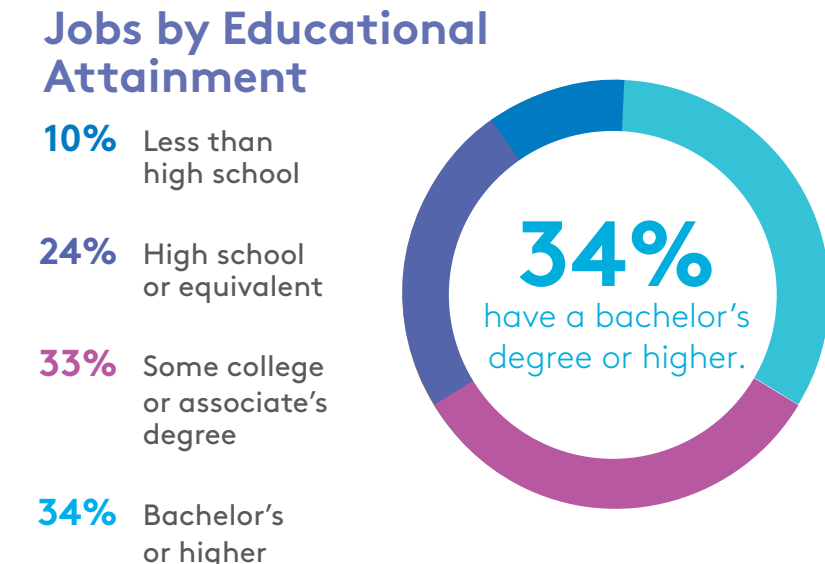
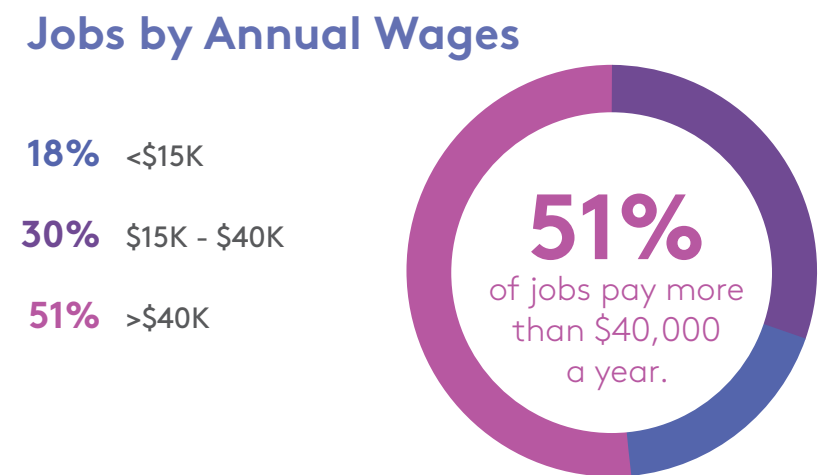
Moreover, investment in the city's innovation infrastructure appears to be paying off, with the number of venture capital-backed companies increasing by 50% in just three years. As the region's largest job center, Detroit's strong economic performance in the post-recession period has contributed to the region's resurgence.

By any standard, much of the economic news has been positive. Still, challenges remain. For example, though strong economic performance has increased the number of jobs per 1,000 city residents, Detroit would need to almost double its job base to provide the same number of jobs per resident as its urban peers across the U.S. In addition, although the recovering economies of both the city and the region have helped to dramatically reduce unemployment among Detroit's residents, unemployment remains high, especially for African American and Hispanic residents and for job-seekers with low levels of formal education. Physical access to jobs also remains a challenge for Detroiters without vehicles or access to reliable public transportation to regional job centers.

# Employment

There are about 238,400 jobs within Detroit's city limits. Of these, 206,800 are in the private sector and 31,600 are in the public sector. Of those in the private sector, 18% pay less than \$15,000 a year, 30% pay between \$15,000 and \$40,000, and 51% pay more than \$40,000. About one-tenth of the private-sector jobs are held by workers with less than a high school diploma; about a quarter only have a high school diploma, with one third of workers having attended some college or have an associate's degree; and about one-third have at least a bachelor's degree.

**238,400** total jobs  
**206,800** private sector jobs  
**31,600** public sector jobs



\*Because of rounding, numbers may not add up to 100%.  
 Source: Quarterly Workforce Indicators, Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages, On the Map.

# Economic Clusters

The largest "traded" clusters in Detroit – those that serve markets beyond the city and region – include business services, automotive, hospitality and tourism, financial services, and education. These five sectors account for 30% of Detroit's total employment.

Detroit also has significant employment in clusters that serve local markets. These include health services, hospitality and commercial services.



## Detroit - Largest Traded Clusters

Cluster Name	Private Sector Jobs, 2016
Business Services	32,100
Automotive	11,800
Hospitality and Tourism	11,300
Financial Services	10,400
Education and Knowledge Creation	5,400 (11,700)

\* The Education and Knowledge Creation cluster has 5,400 private-sector jobs but 11,700 jobs when public universities are included (e.g. Wayne State University).

## Detroit - Largest Local Clusters

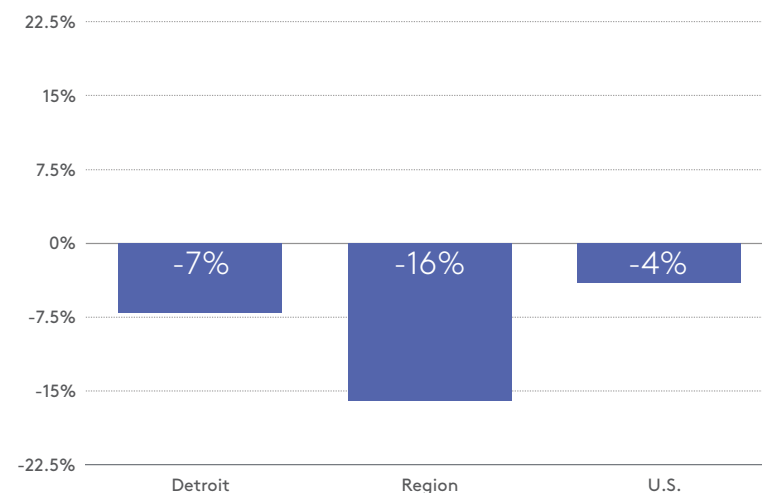
Cluster Name	Private Sector Jobs, 2016
Local Health Services	36,100
Local Hospitality Establishments	14,500
Local Commercial Services	10,900
Local Community and Civic Organizations	9,800
Local Real Estate, Construction, and Development	6,800

Source: County Business Patterns, Quarterly Workforce Indicators.

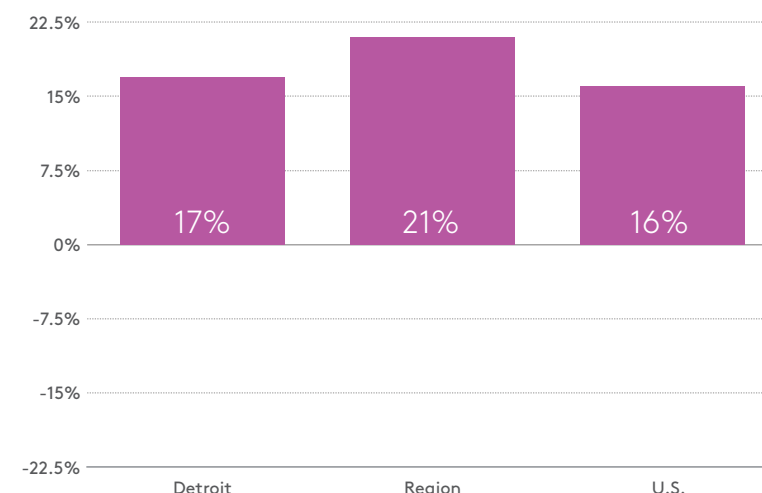
# Employment Growth

Detroit has had strong job growth since the Great Recession ended in 2009. Since the first quarter of 2010, Detroit has added 30,000 private-sector jobs, increasing the total jobs in the city to 238,400. The rate of private job growth in this period has been slightly higher (17%) than in the rest of the country (16%). Notably, this growth has not only been concentrated in Downtown and Midtown, but also in many of the city's key industrial areas. Detroit has matched or exceeded the region in traded clusters, but has had lower job gains in neighborhood-serving businesses.

Private Sector Employment Change  
2005-2010



Private Sector Employment Change  
2010-2016

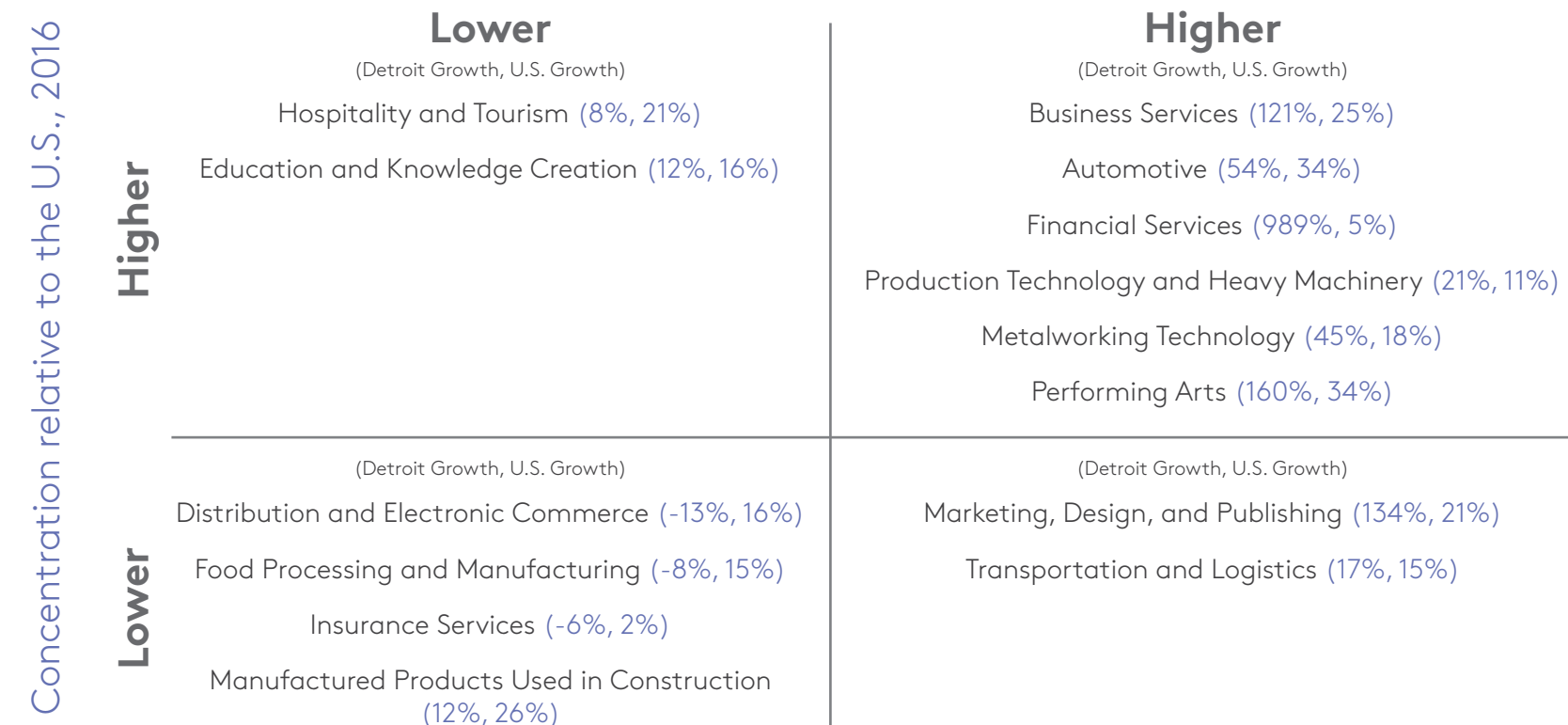


Source: Quarterly Workforce Indicators, Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages.

# Economic Cluster Growth

Many of Detroit's strong economic clusters are continuing to grow. These clusters are responsible for significant numbers of Detroit's jobs. These include Business Services, Automotive, Financial Services, Production Technology and Heavy Machinery, Metalworking Technology and Performing Arts. The growth of emerging clusters, such as Marketing, Design and Publishing, and Transportation and Logistics in the city is a positive sign for the economy.

Growth relative to the U.S., 2010-2016

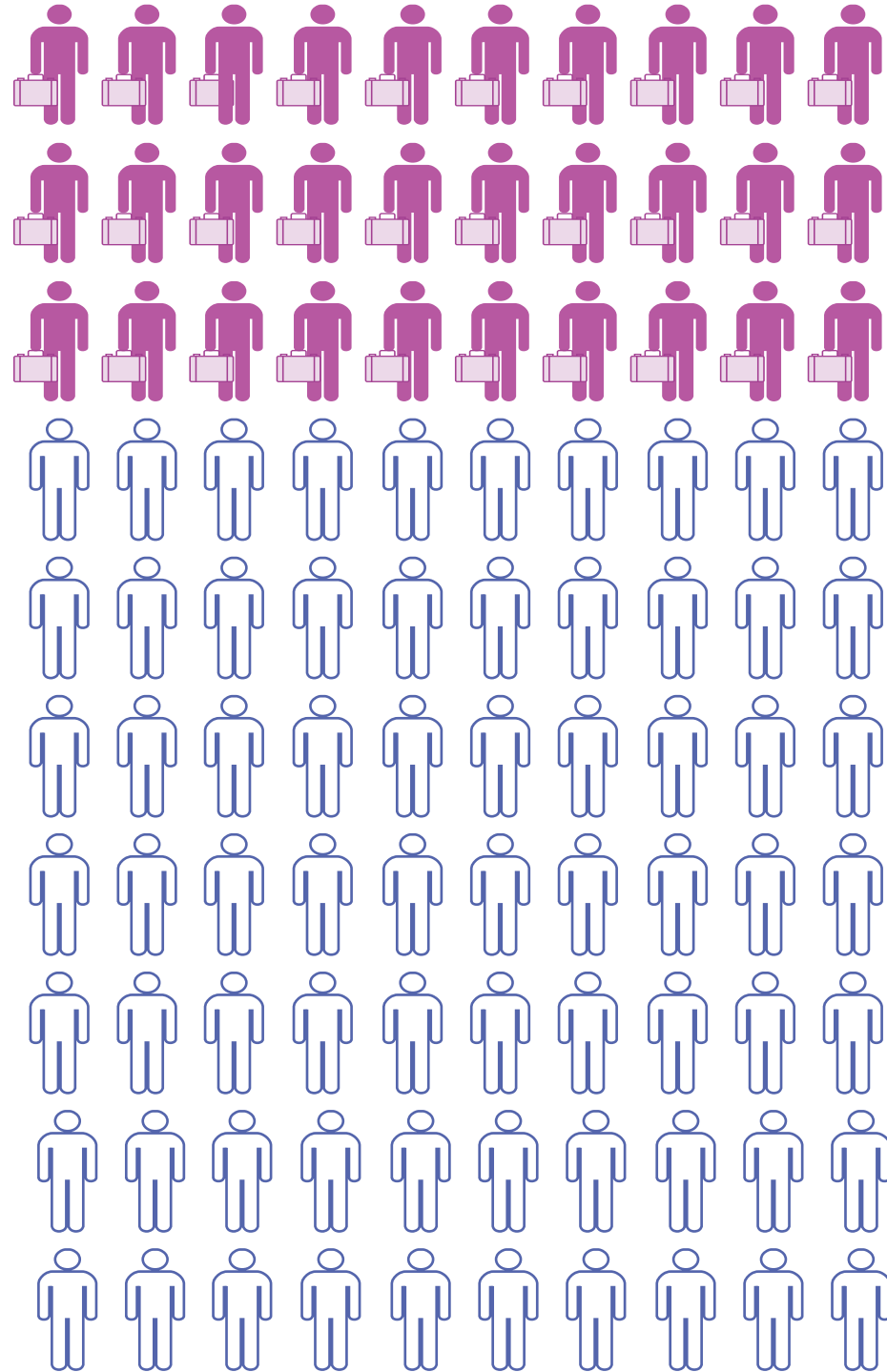


Source: County Business Patterns, Quarterly Workforce Indicators.

# Population to Jobs

The growth of Detroit's economy over the past five years has helped increase the city's jobs-to-population ratio to 30 jobs for every 100 Detroit residents, up from about 25 in 2010. That is a faster growth rate than experienced in many cities across the country. Although Detroit has made great progress in this metric, the city still ranks low compared to other U.S. cities.

Detroit's economy has **30 jobs** per 100 residents.



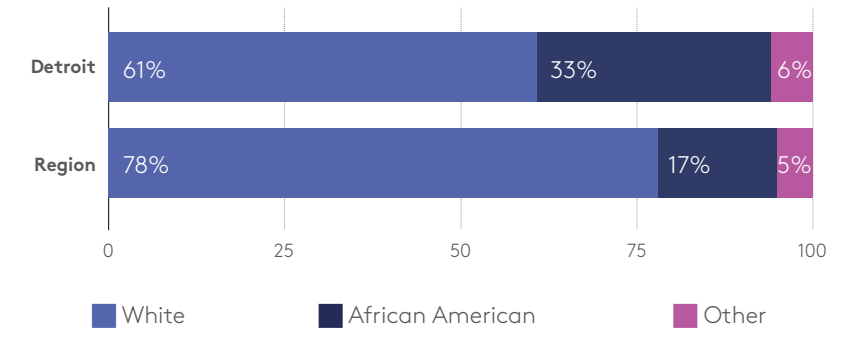
# Jobs

Detroit has seen the largest increase in jobs among those that pay more than \$40,000 per year. These jobs are concentrated along Woodward Avenue in Downtown and Midtown, as well as in the city's core industrial areas. Relative to the rest of the Metro Detroit region, the city's job base is skewed toward higher-paying jobs, with 51% paying \$40,000 or more (compared to 44% in the region) and only 18% paying less than \$15,000 (compared to 24% in the region). This could signify a shortage of entry-level and part-time positions in Detroit.

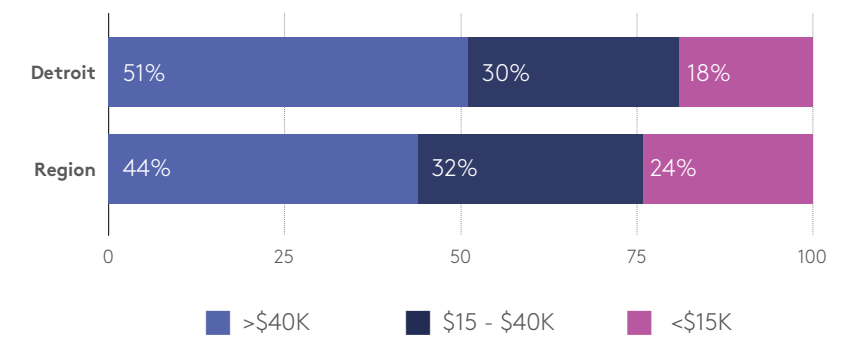
Currently, 33% of the city's jobs are held by African Americans, a decline from 2010, when African Americans held 36% of the jobs within Detroit.

\*Because of rounding, numbers may not add up to 100%. Source: On the Map, 2014.

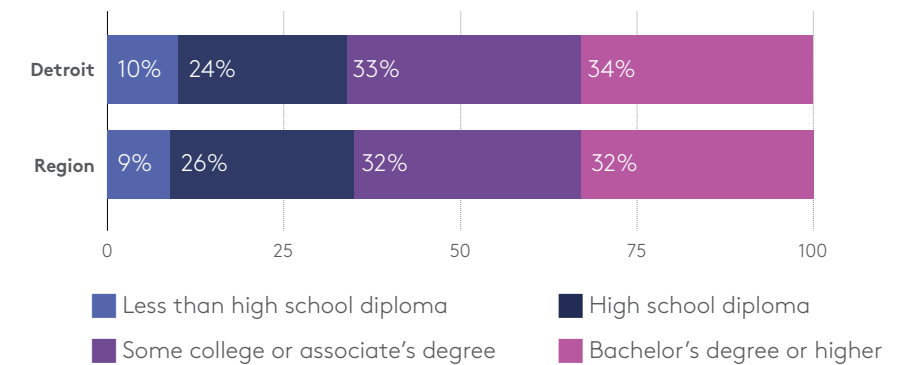
### Jobs by Race



### Jobs by Annual Wages



### Jobs by Educational Attainment





# Commuting Patterns

Over the past decade there has been a declining share of residents who both live and work within the city. In the most recent estimates, only about 30% of employed Detroit residents work within the city limits.

Among workers who commute into the city, 59% have jobs that pay more than \$40,000 per year. This compares with only 21% of Detroiters who commute outside the city to jobs that pay more than \$40,000 per year. Thirty-six percent of Detroiters who commute outside the city do so for jobs that pay less than \$15,000 per year. The relatively small base of entry-level jobs in the city likely contributes to these patterns.

Though Detroit residents tend to live closer to their jobs than those in the region, the city's lowest-wage workers, with jobs that pay less than \$15,000 per year, tend to have longer commutes. Furthermore, 10% of these residents with the lowest-paying jobs have commutes of more than 50 miles.



Source: On the Map, 2014.

# Unemployment and Labor Force Participation

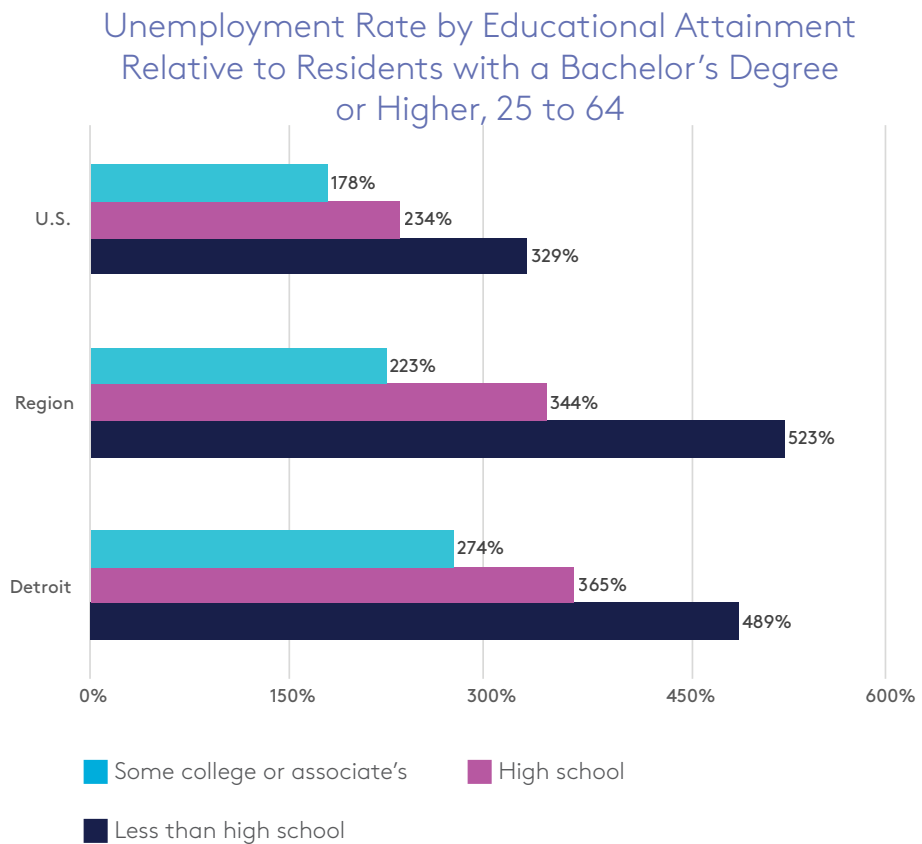
Recent job growth within the city and the region has led to a decline in the city's unemployment rate, which, according to one source, now sits at about 8%, down from about 25% in 2010. (A second source shows higher absolute unemployment rates but also a significant decline since 2010.)

At all levels of educational attainment, Detroiters still have higher rates of unemployment relative to their regional and national peers. Detroit residents with a bachelor's degree or higher have a higher unemployment rate than U.S. residents with only some college or an associate's degree. Additionally, Detroit residents without a high school diploma have significantly higher unemployment rates than similar workers in other U.S. cities.

Data suggest that Detroit has a lower labor force participation rate than many other U.S. cities. African American and Hispanic residents have similar rates of labor force participation as white residents,

Source: Local Area Unemployment Statistics, 2017, American Community Survey, 2015 1 Year.

however they have vastly different employment outcomes, with the unemployment rate for African Americans being 2.5 times that of the white population.



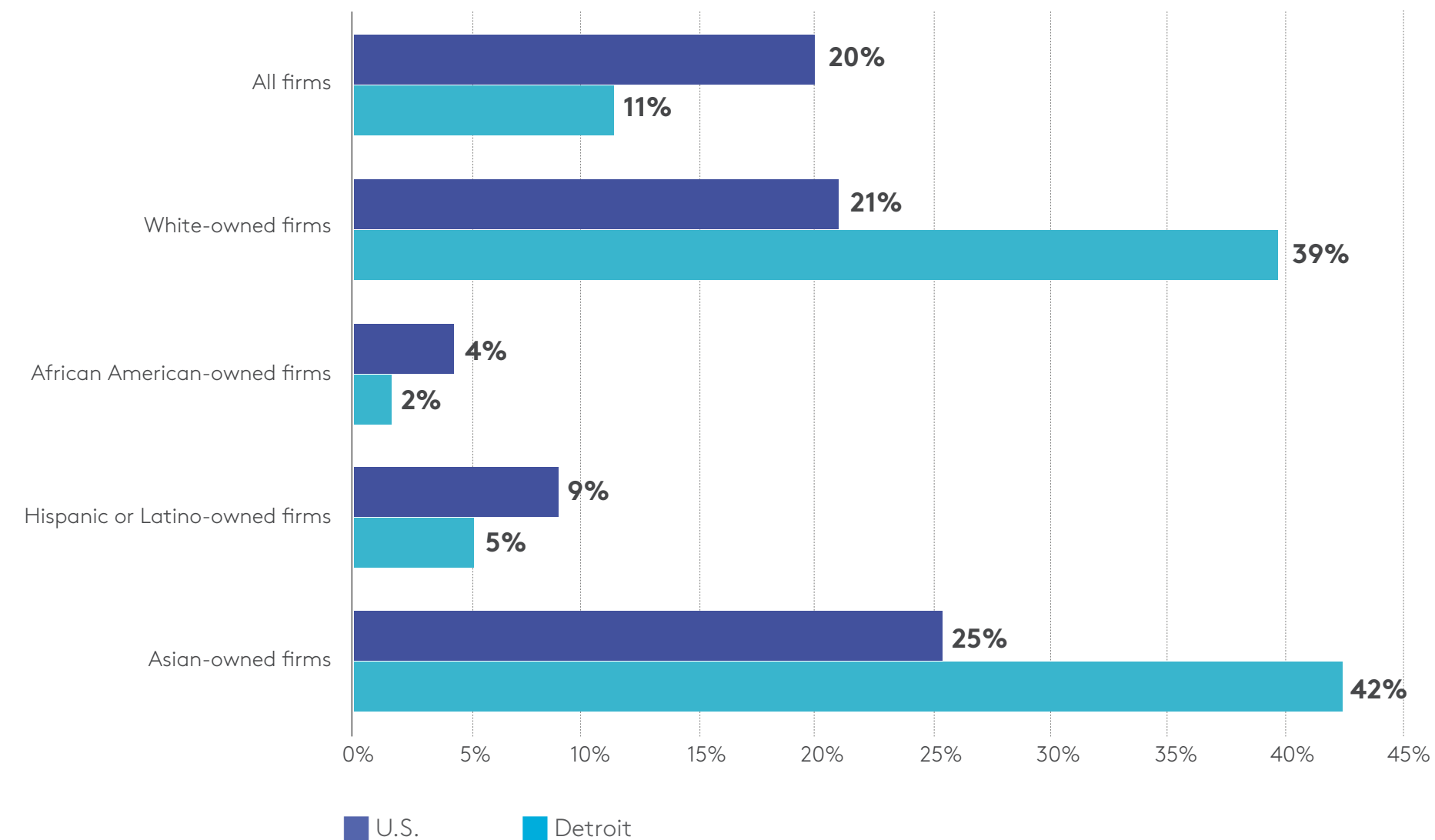
# Entrepreneurship

One response to Detroit's employment challenges faced by residents is for them to create jobs for themselves. In Detroit, there are 160 black-owned firms per 1,000 African American residents, which ranks 11th highest among the country's 50 largest cities. For Detroit's Hispanic population, the ratio is 103 firms per 1,000 residents. However, compared with peers across the U.S., Detroit's African American and Hispanic entrepreneurs are only about half as likely to have made the transition from self-employment to hiring workers.

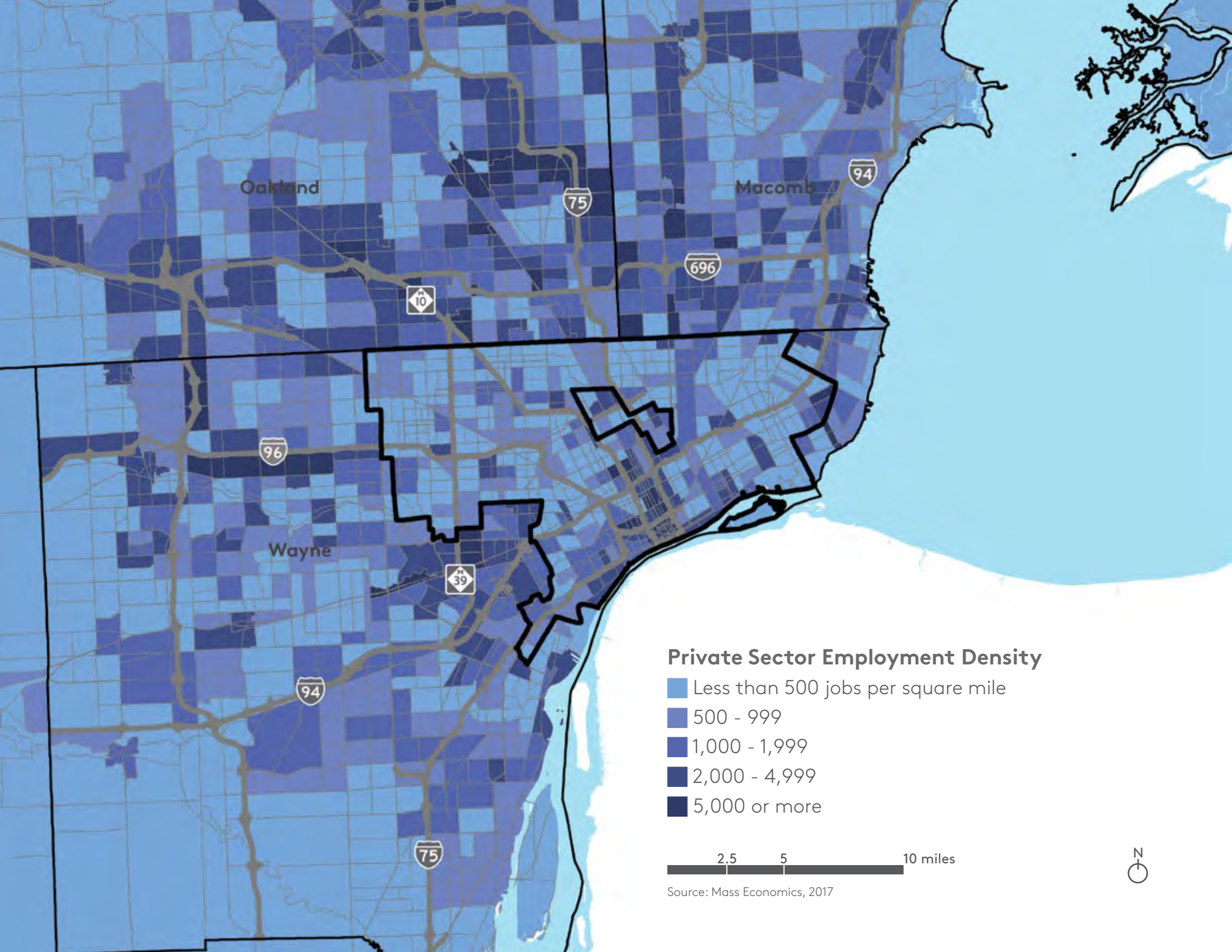
Entrepreneurship is crucial for providing goods and services to residents, but also for shaping who has economic and social power in the city. Detroit has a number of model programs that contribute to inclusive entrepreneurship, such as D2D, Hatch Detroit, NEIdeas, Entrepreneurs of Color Fund and Motor City Match. This data give the sense of scale for the problems and opportunities that these programs address.

The proportion of **African American- & Hispanic-owned** firms with employees is **about half** that of the U.S.

## Percentage of Firms with Employees



Source: US Census Survey of Business Owners 2012, Mass Economics Analysis.



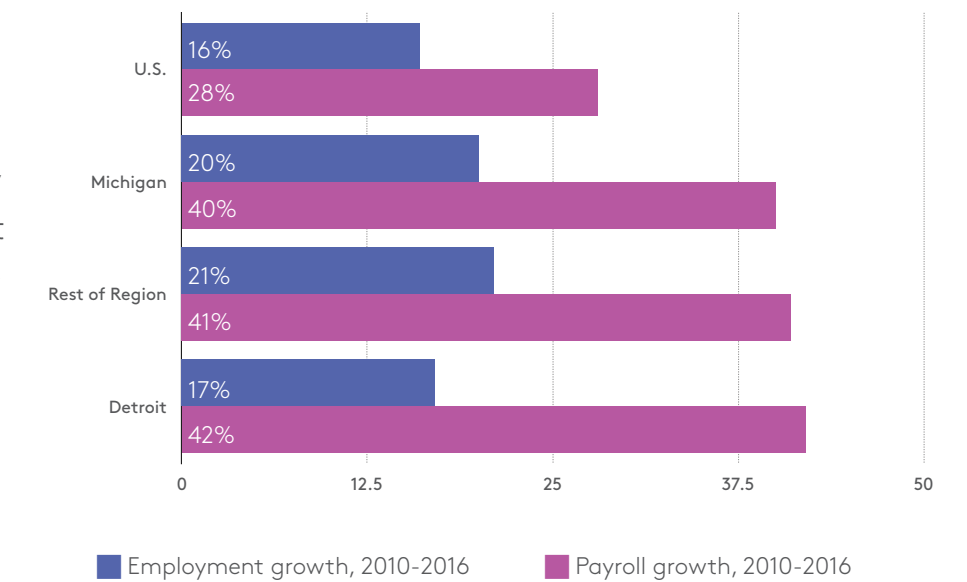
# Detroit in the Regional Economy

Helped by the strong job growth in recent years, today's Detroit has nearly twice the number of jobs as the next closest-ranked city in the region, Troy. The city's strong performance has helped drive growth in key regional clusters, such as Business Services and Automotive, and has generated considerable income for those who hold such jobs. Since 2010, payroll at firms located in the city has increased by 42%, which is 50% more than the average payroll growth across the U.S. The city's relatively low job density and its historical role as a significant employment center indicate that the city could easily continue to add large numbers of jobs within its borders.

Though Detroit is a key driver of the regional economy and has contributed to strong regional growth, there are other employment centers around the region, such as Dearborn

and Southfield. These centers of employment are just outside the city, and close enough to connect residents to other job opportunities in the region.

Employment and Payroll Growth, 2010 to 2016



Source: Quarterly Workforce Indicators, 2010–2016, Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages, 2010–2016.

# Place

## Detroit's physical environment is as important to the city as the people who live here.

Detroit was built to house 2 million people, and the steady decline over the past 60 years has come to define the city. There is now a revitalization underway in parts of the city, notably in the Greater Downtown, but also extending to several of the outlying neighborhoods. Detroit is on the verge of revitalization and conditions are improving throughout the city, even though the effects of 60 years of decline can still be felt in many neighborhoods.

Detroit has been and continues to be a dynamic place. Throughout its history, the city has been in a constant state of change, and today's Detroit is no different. This section explores the physical aspects of the city, its housing stock, housing market, and some of the features that have come to define Detroit in its more recent years.

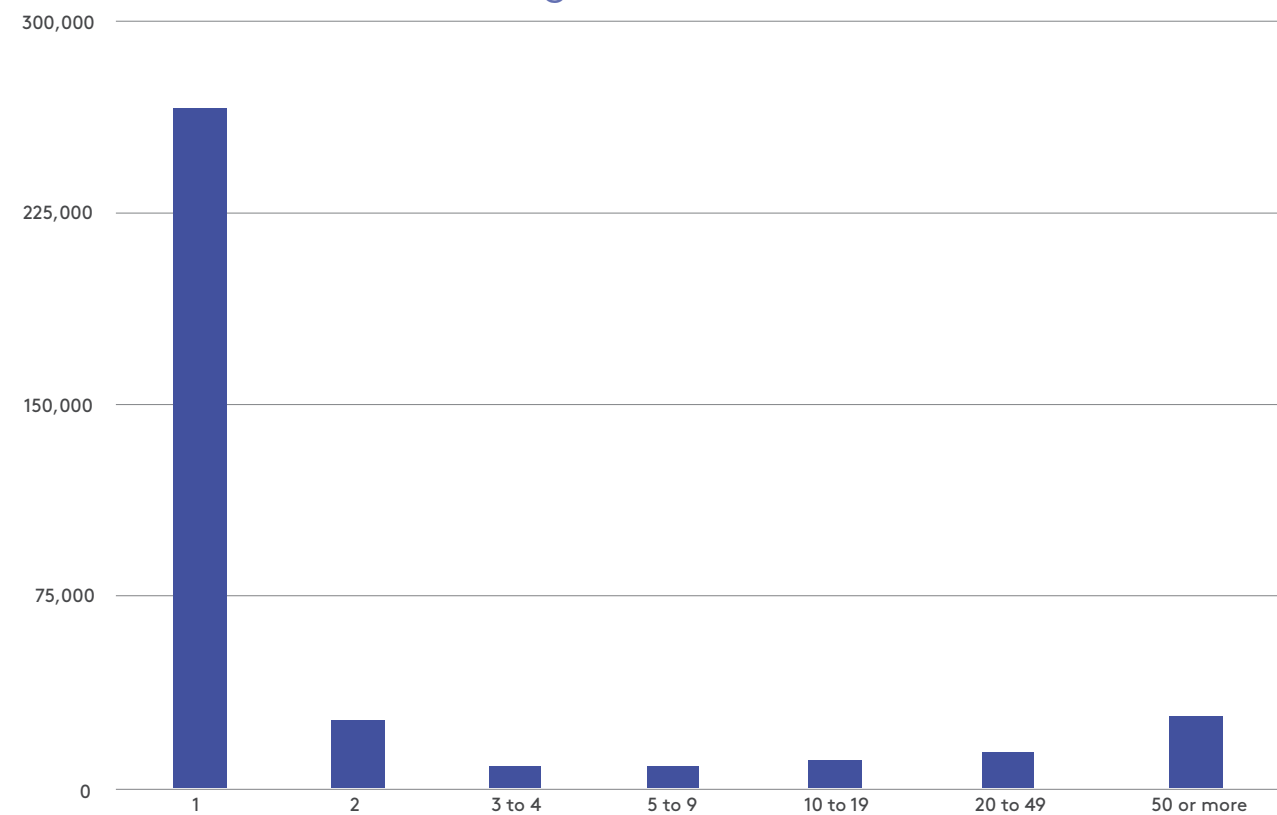
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# Housing Type

One of the defining features of Detroit is its large stock of single-family housing, which makes up 73% of the city's housing. Over the past 60 years, the share of single-family housing stock in the city has increased. There has been a 73% decline in two-family housing, and a 69% decline in three- to four-unit buildings.

### Housing Units in Structure



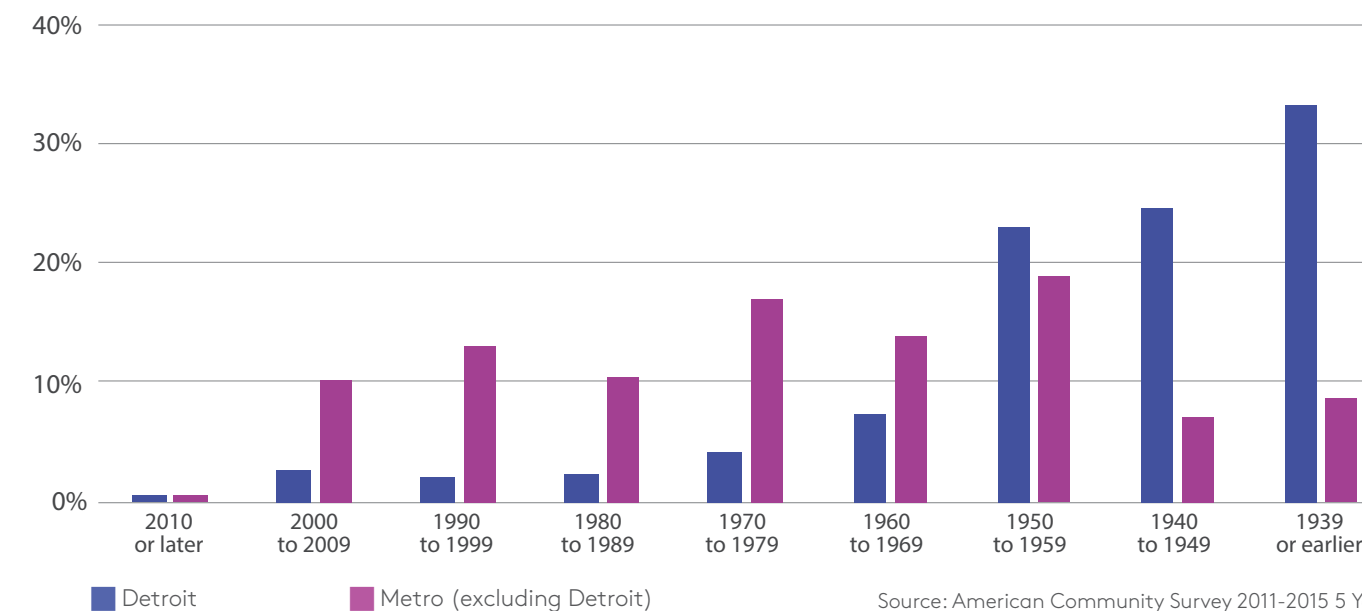
Source: American Community Survey 2011-2015 5 Year.

# Year Structure Built

The age of Detroit's housing stock reflects a period of rapid growth during the first half of the 20th century, continuing through the 1950s. Though the city's population peaked in 1950, the housing shortages of the war and post-war period led to the continued construction of housing until 1960. Since then, relatively little housing has been built in the city; as a result, 92% of Detroit's housing stock was built before 1980. Much of the growth in the region has occurred outside the city, with 29% of the region's housing units being built after 1980.

The age of the housing stock poses an important health issue because before 1978, lead was used in paint. The age of housing and its declining condition is a contributing factor to the number of children in Detroit with elevated blood-lead levels each year. Exposure to lead can negatively affect mental and physical development and create behavior and learning problems.

### Year Structure Built



Source: American Community Survey 2011-2015 5 Year.

# Vacancy

The number of vacant housing units in the city doubled between 2000 and 2010. As the city's population has continued to decline, the number of vacant housing units has continued to increase. Currently, the American Community Survey reports that 30% of Detroit's housing, or 109,788 units, are vacant.

In addition to vacant housing, the population loss has also contributed to vacancy in other buildings, such as schools, storefronts, and industrial sites. This large number of abandoned structures has become one of the defining features of the city.

Housing units  
**365,528**

Vacant housing units  
**109,788**

Vacancy rate  
**30%**

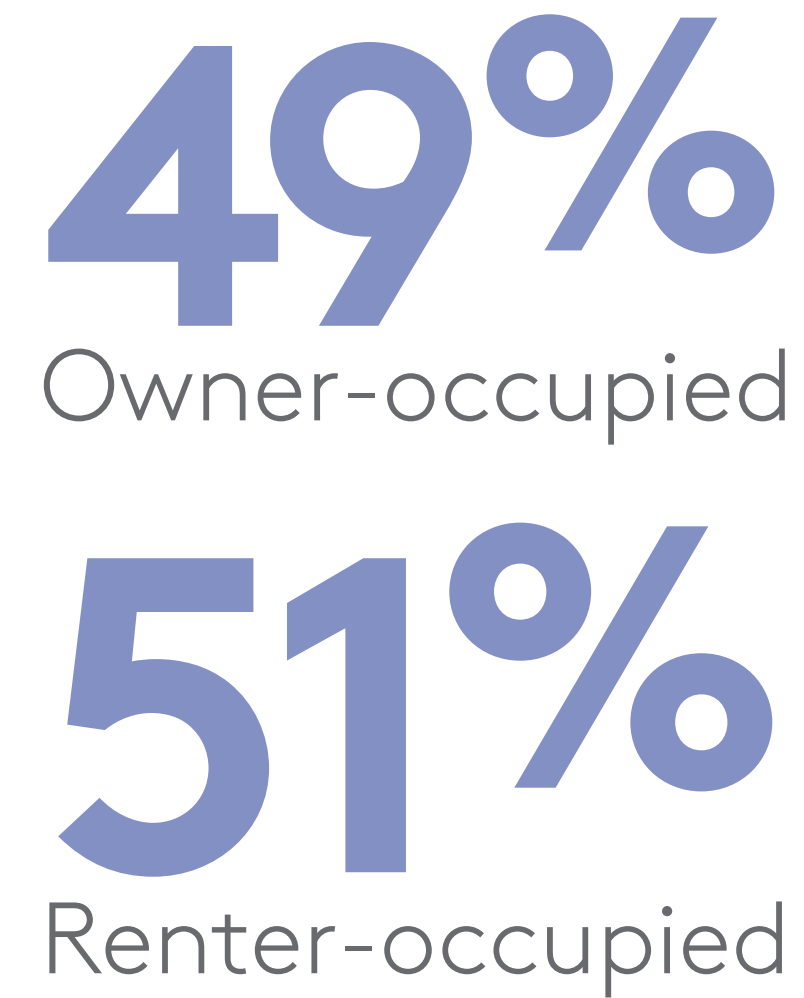




# Home Ownership

The vast amount of single-family housing in the city has led to its reputation for high rates of homeownership, particularly among African Americans. Over the past decade, there has been a decline in the number of homeowners in the city, and for the first time since 1950, renters make up the majority of households in Detroit.

Many neighborhoods have seen a shift, as the number of owner-occupied homes decreased and the number of renters increased. The number of renters living in single-family housing also has increased between 2000 and 2015. In Detroit, the paradigm of renters living in multi-family housing and homeowners living in single-family housing is a thing of the past. Fifty-four percent of Detroit's renters live in single-family housing.



Source: American Community Survey 2011-2015 5 Year.

# Housing Market

Home values are increasing in most areas of the city, but remain well below values in the surrounding region. The median home sale price in Detroit, after sinking to \$18,000 in 2011, has increased to \$19,070 in 2015. The number of mortgages in the city has also increased since 2011, although they remain at low levels compared to other cities across the country.

Hundreds of new multi-family apartments have come on the market in the Greater Downtown area, and hundreds more are under development there, reflecting a growing demand for dense, walkable, urban neighborhoods close to jobs and other amenities.

Detroit has been challenged with a large number of foreclosures, most notably the thousands of tax foreclosures that have occurred over the past decade, including the 8,313 properties in Detroit scheduled to enter the foreclosure auction in 2017.

**Detroit's**  
median home sale price in 2015  
**\$19,070**







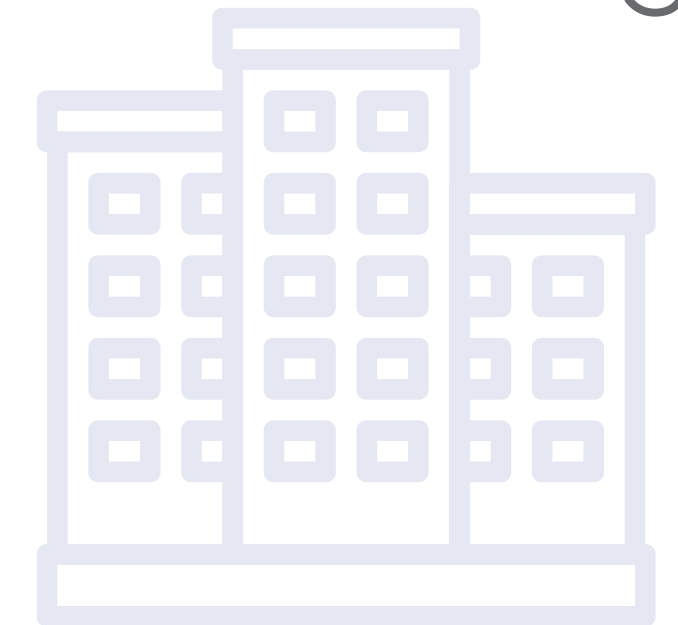
# Affordability

Detroiters face serious issues with the affordability of housing. Fifty-eight percent of renters are cost-burdened, spending more than 30% of their income on housing. Thirty-seven percent of renters spend more than 50% of their income on housing. In many locations across the country, the main driver of housing affordability issues is cost of housing. This is not the case in Detroit where housing costs in many neighborhoods are very low and income levels create challenges with affordability. Although rental rates are steadily increasing in areas such as Downtown and Midtown, the median gross rent for a two-bedroom unit in Detroit remains around \$750 per month, which is \$130 less per month than the region.

**58%** of renters in Detroit are cost-burdened.

Source: American Community Survey 2011-2015 5 Year.

**37%** of Detroit renters spend **more than 50% of their income** on housing.





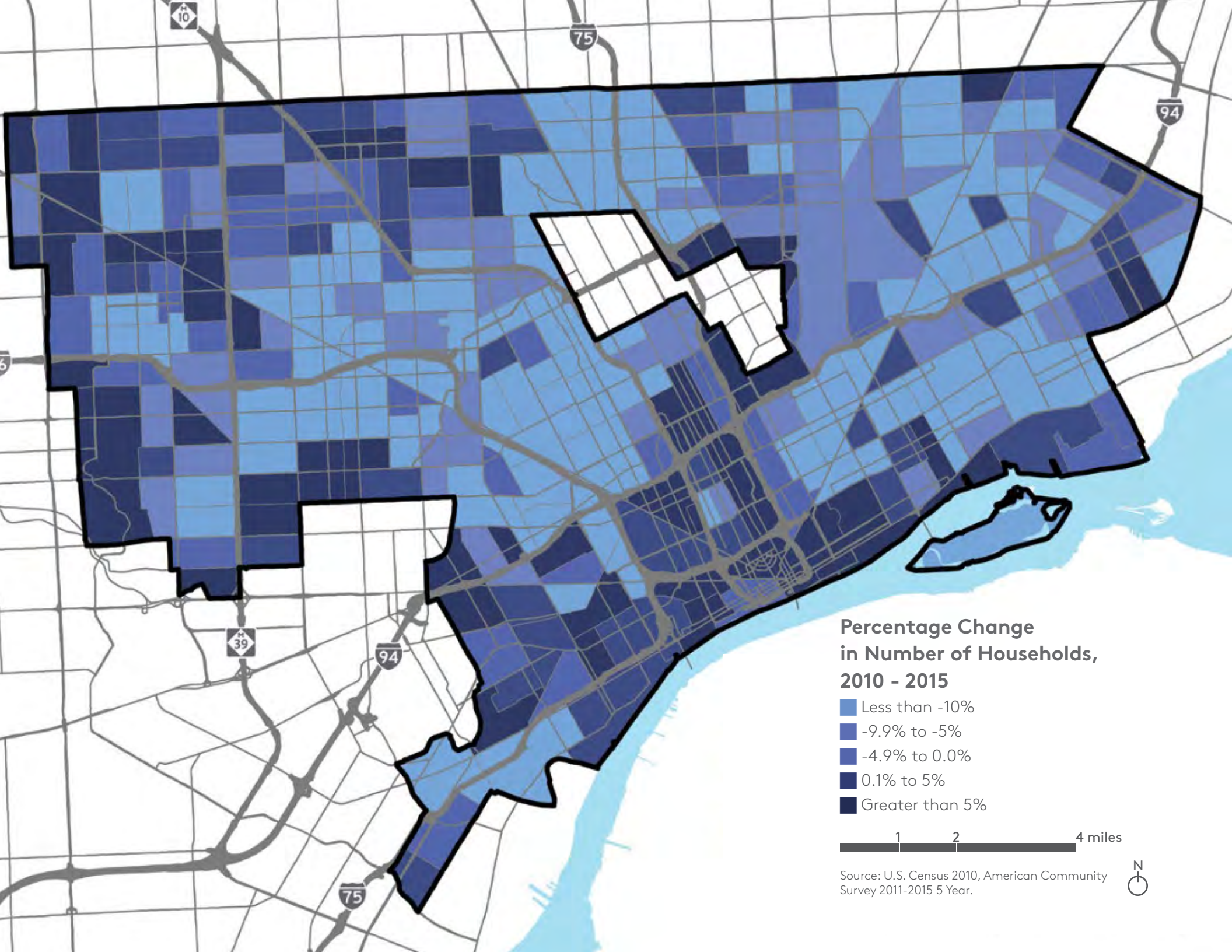
# Public and Subsidized Housing

In cities such as Detroit, subsidized housing can take many forms. Detroit has many traditional forms of subsidized housing, including 4,343 public housing units, more than 13,000 Low-Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) units, and 10,374 Housing Choice Vouchers. These units fill only a fraction of the demand for low-cost housing across the city. Furthermore, there are 2,200 HUD-supported units scheduled to expire over the next two years, which could increase in cost if they convert from subsidized to market rate.

Subsidies also take other forms, such as Neighborhood Enterprise Zones – which provide property tax abatements to homeowners – or Renaissance Zones, which provide a range of tax abatements, and are intended help encourage investment and redevelopment.

Program	Units
LIHTC	13,313
House Choice Voucher	10,374
HOME	7,011
Public Housing	4,343

Source: U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development.



# Stabilization

Detroit is in the early stages of recovery. Although much attention is paid to the revitalization of the Greater Downtown, there are other neighborhoods that are stabilizing and seeing an increase in the number of households and a decrease in vacancy.

The recovery can also be seen in the new construction underway in the city. Detroit is currently leading the region in new residential units permitted, the majority of these being multi-family units, located in Downtown and Midtown and along the Riverfront.

Detroit is currently **leading** the region with **1,076 new residential permits** issued in 2016.

Source: SEMCOG.



# Blight

In 2014, the Detroit Blight Removal Task Force found that 40,077 structures met its definition of blight, and another 38,429 showed indicators that they would likely become blighted in the future. In total, this amounts to 78,506 structures that would likely need intervention. Ninety-two percent of these buildings are single-family or small-scale multi-family.

Though much of the attention is paid to abandoned structures, blight also takes the form of unkempt vacant lots with unmowed grass or illegal dumping, which is hard to quantify, given its rapidly changing nature.

In 2014, Detroit had

**40,077** Blighted structures

**38,429** Structures that show indicators to become blighted in the future

Source: Detroit Blight Removal Task Force, 2014



# Demolition

Since 2014, the city has accelerated the pace of demolition and razed more than 11,800 vacant structures. The pace of the demolition program earned the City the recognition of running the largest demolition program in the country.

There have been

**11,847**

blighted structures demolished since 2014.

Source: City of Detroit.





# Vacant Land

Detroit has more than 24 square miles of vacant land, not including the city's park land. This represents more than 120,000 parcels that were once housing or commercial or industrial businesses.

Though there are many areas where vacant land dominates the community, the majority of vacant parcels are small and interspersed within neighborhoods. When all adjacent parcels are combined, 44% are part of a group of parcels containing three lots or fewer.

The 24 square miles of vacant land does not account for those parcels that have been returned to productive use in the form of urban agriculture, green stormwater infrastructure or other productive reuses.

Source: Detroit Future City, City of Detroit.

**24** square miles of vacant land

Publicly owned  
**72,173** vacant parcels



# Parks

Detroit is the home to **308 parks**, and **12 recreation centers**.

In addition to the city parks, there are two state parks: Belle Isle and Milliken State Park. The system also includes a wide range of parks, from regional parks, such as Rouge Park, to small parks nestled within the community.

Detroit ranks 75th out of a 100 cities using the Trust for Public Land's (TPL) ParkScore, which bases its ratings on acreage of parks, investment and amenities, and access. There have been improvements over the last few years, with 10 parks renovated in 2016 and 30 more slated for upgrades in 2017.

Source: City of Detroit, Trust for Public Land.

Recent park renovations

**10** in 2016

**30** planned for 2017

**75 out of 100**  
on TPL's ParkScore



Detroit has **emerged from bankruptcy** in better financial shape, and many indicators point to the **city beginning to rebound.**

# Conclusion

The data presented in *139 Square Miles* represents Detroit at this moment in time. Detroit has emerged from bankruptcy in better financial shape, and there are many indicators that the city is beginning to rebound.

In the last six years, the rate of population decline has slowed, compared to the accelerated pace of the early 2000s. Other indicators show that the city is beginning to improve: vacancy estimates show the number of vacant housing units may be beginning to decline, with some neighborhoods showing an increase in the number of households. The economy in Detroit has also rebounded and is now adding jobs at a faster rate than the rest of the nation.

Over the past five years there are demonstrable improvements, not only downtown, but in neighborhoods across the city – the return of public services, the installation of 65,000 streetlights, the removal of nearly 12,000 blighted structures, a decrease in the number of vacant housing units, and a decrease in crime. However, it is also clear that there is a long way to go in the city's revitalization. The decline of Detroit is one that has been well-documented, and occurred over 60 years. It will take some time to reverse a trend that is more than a half century long, but the data prove that Detroit is on its way.

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## Foreign Born

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## Clusters

County Business Patterns.

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## Cluster Growth

County Business Patterns.

Quarterly Workforce Indicators.

## Population to Jobs

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## Jobs

On the Maps, 2014.

## Commuting Patterns

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## Unemployment and Labor Force Participation

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American Community Survey, 2015 1 Year.

## Entrepreneurship

US Census Survey of Business Owners 2012, Mass Economics Analysis.

In the Survey of Business owners, publicly held, foreign-owned and not for profit firms are not classified by gender, ethnicity, race, and veteran status. Each classification is based on the ownership of 51% or more of the stock or equity in that company.

## Detroit in the Regional Economy

Quarterly Workforce Indicators, 2010 – 2016.

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## Housing Type

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## Year Structure Built

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## Vacancy

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## Home Ownership

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## Vacant Land

Detroit Future City, City of Detroit.

## Parks

City of Detroit.





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