

OUR VANCOUVER

OUR FUTURE 2045

EQUITY ANALYSIS

Prepared by Seva Workshop
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Introduction

The City of Vancouver is a growing city of an estimated 188,331 individuals (2021) in Clark County of Southwest Washington. Growth has been especially rapid in the latter half of the last decade when the population increased by 11% compared to the first half when it grew by 5%. The city has also grown in the proportion of residents who are people of color (POC). In 2021, just over 30% of the population was POC compared to 23% a decade earlier.

The Vancouver Comprehensive Plan is one of our community's most important tools to help plan for future growth. It provides the overall long-term vision and policy direction for managing the built and natural environment in Vancouver, and providing necessary public facilities. State law establishes the elements that cities with fast-growing populations must plan for, such as land use, housing, utilities, and transportation.

While minor updates may be made as frequently as once a year, in 2023, the City of Vancouver embarked on an ambitious update to its existing comprehensive plan—determining a new path forward for growth and development out to 2045. This update is a major opportunity to integrate equity throughout the plan.

This document includes context and conditions analysis that helps identify which communities have been historically marginalized* and which communities are most vulnerable to displacement and policy changes. These communities should be prioritized in future planning to address past inequities.

This equity analysis references 5-year estimates of 2017–2021 American Community Survey (ACS) data. The Housing Needs Assessment uses 1-year estimates of 2021 ACS data. More recent documents may reference 2022 data released after this document was completed.

* To be marginalized is to be treated as insignificant by those in power, including municipal government.

Highlights from Equity Analysis

The City of Vancouver's Comprehensive Plan, Our Vancouver 2045, will address several crucial topics related to the city's future growth and development through technical analysis and community engagement. These topics include housing; land use, development, and infrastructure; equity, and opportunity; and climate and environment. The equity analysis provides a foundation from which planners and their community partners can understand the shifting dynamics of the city and design community engagement and analysis to plan the future of the city together.

In addition to the fundamental aim of accommodating growth, the Equity Team has highlighted affordable housing, transportation infrastructure, and the need for reparative policies to undo past harms as equity goals for the planning process. Here we summarize a few important themes to contextualize these goals.

Vancouver is a relatively affordable community for the region, attracting young workers and single-person households.

However, the city has become less and less affordable in recent years. First-time renters and owners report difficulty gaining entry to the housing market, while longer term residents report that they would not have been able to access housing under current conditions. Compared to the State of Washington overall, Vancouver residents are less likely to be in married couple households, and more likely to be single female householders with no spouse or partner. The community also has a relatively high number of young people between 25 and 29 years of age. Vancouver is part of the Portland-Vancouver-Beaverton-Hillsboro, OR-WA Metropolitan Statistical area which has one of the country's highest proportions of individuals identifying as LGBTQ at 6.1% (second only to San Francisco).

The City of Vancouver is experiencing shifting demographics, just over 30% of the population is POC compared to 24% in 2011.

Compared to the State, Vancouver residents are slightly more likely to have moved recently. Residents identifying as white alone, Black, or American Indian and Alaska Native have declined as a share of the total population over the last decade. Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islanders and Hispanic or Latino groups are increasing as a share of population, as are those of two or more races.

People of color are more likely to live within City of Vancouver boundaries than in other parts of Clark County. Within Vancouver, pockets around Fruit Valley, Fourth Plain and East Mill Plain house the greatest proportions of POC. However, these pockets differ by race and ethnicity within POC. For example, Asian residents are relatively more concentrated in the eastern parts of the city, while Hispanic/Latine residents are proportionately more likely to reside in Fourth Plain and Fruit Valley areas.

Over fifteen percent of resident households are living below the federal poverty line. Extreme rates (over 50%) of early childhood poverty are found in a few neighborhoods within city boundaries, including Bagley Downs and Meadow Homes and southeast. These are also areas with relatively high rates of POC residents.

Vancouver neighborhoods vary greatly in terms of access to high quality public schools, access to parks and open space, access to affordable healthy food, and tree cover, creating disparities by race and ethnicity. For example, Sacajawea Elementary School has 93.2% students arriving kindergarten ready, while Harmony Elementary has 17.5%. There are significant pockets of Vancouver outside of 10-minute walk to parks. Tree cover by neighborhood ranges from a high of 47% in South Cliff to 9% in Esther Short. Neighborhoods with higher proportions of POC have 2.4% less tree cover than the city average. These areas often coincide with areas that are low-income and low in access to food, contributing to cycles that further entrench poverty and disadvantage.

Residents' race is associated with different median incomes, as well as housing cost burden and likelihood of owning a home. The median household income where the householder is Black or African American, for example, is over \$24,000 less than the overall median. On the other hand, households with an Asian head of household have a median income that is over \$24,000 more than the overall median.

The rental market predominates in Vancouver where the rates of owner-occupied housing (51%) are much lower compared to Washington State (64%).¹ Asian residents are the most likely to live in owner-occupied housing (71%), roughly twice as likely as other POC groups. Renting households are more likely to experience cost-burden, and severe cost-burden. Overall, as of 2022 there are 85,511 housing units in Vancouver.

Over two-thirds of the lowest income households are paying more than half their income for housing. In addition to lower home ownership rates, Black and Hispanic/Latine headed households are the most likely to be experiencing housing cost burden and therefore displacement risk.

Housing stock increased by 15% between 2011 and 2021, slightly lagging population growth of about 17% over the same period.

The housing mix has remained over half detached single family residential with some shift to larger developments within multifamily housing. Nearly half (46%) of Vancouver's renting households are cost burdened, and 20% severely so. Asian residents are disproportionately likely to live in detached single family housing. Black, Hispanic and Latine, and Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander, and those of other or two or more races are more likely to live in multifamily.

A significant proportion of households, 7.3%, are without access to a vehicle, though Vancouver is a relatively car-dependent city. 83% of workers take a vehicle to work, alone or using a taxi or carpool. Another 12% of workers work from home. Only 3% of workers take public transportation and the likelihood of using public transportation to go to work decreases as income increases.

As illustrated in the equity analysis, Vancouver's planning and equity goals are deeply intertwined. Race and ethnicity intersect with income and wealth, and therefore determine the available housing and neighborhood choices. Neighborhoods in turn vary greatly in access to amenities, infrastructure, and social supports – in other words – quality of life. Creating an equitable city will require focused attention on the neighborhoods and communities farthest from opportunity.

Context and Conditions

This context and conditions analysis helps identify which communities have been historically marginalized and which communities are most vulnerable to displacement and policy changes. First, A Brief History of Vancouver and Housing Exclusion provides historical perspective on land use and housing dating to when the area was first settled. Following that, A Current Profile of City of Vancouver Residents presents data from the last decade on demographics. Finally, demographic intersections with community outcomes, such as income, education, and quality of life indicators are presented.

A Brief History of Vancouver and Housing Exclusion

The Chinook, Vancouver’s First Peoples

Indigenous people have lived in what is now known as Vancouver, Washington since time immemorial. For at least 10,000 years before the arrival of European-Americans, the Chinook people made their homes along the north bank of the “Wimahl” River, or “Big River,” near its confluence with Oregon’s Willamette River.² Before contact with white explorers, the Chinook people lived in large rectangular houses made of cedar planks, located in towns close to the water.³ Rich in salmon, plants, and berries, the Chinook lived in relative abundance and became prolific traders. Cowlitz and Klickitat tribes also lived in the nearby region.

European explorers first reached the shores of Washington in the 16th and 17th centuries but did not have significant lasting contact with the Chinook until the late 1700s.⁴ Despite this, smallpox and other diseases began to decimate the Tribes of the Pacific Northwest (including the Chinook) beginning in the mid-1700s. The first American ships to enter the mouth of the “Wimahl” River arrived in 1792 under the command of Captain Robert Gray, who renamed

the waterway the Columbia River after his ship, the *Columbia Rediviva*.⁵ Over the ensuing decades, the region was opened to the influence of European-American fur traders and maritime explorers. These white newcomers and the waves of disease they brought with them devastated Chinook society. When Lewis and Clark visited what is now Vancouver in 1805, they estimated that there were approximately 400 Chinooks living around Cape Disappointment (already a significantly decreased number due to the epidemics of the mid-18th century). By 1830, that population was down to a mere 30–40 people.⁶

Today, the Chinook Indian Nation is made up of five constituent tribes—the Clatsop and Cathlamet (Kathlamet) of present-day Oregon and the Lower Chinook, Wahkiakum (Waukikum) and Willapa (Weelappa) of what is now Washington State.⁷ In 2001, after over a century of advocacy by Tribal members, the Chinook Indian Nation was granted federal recognition as a Tribe. However, this recognition was revoked in 2002. Without federal recognition, the approximately 3,000 members of Chinook Indian Nation do not have legal protections or benefits as American Indians, including support for housing or reservation land.⁸

1800s: Hudson’s Bay Company and Early Non-Native Settlement

In 1825, the British Hudson’s Bay Company (HBC) opened Fort Vancouver on the future site of the City of Vancouver.⁹ The Fort quickly expanded beyond a mere fur trading post; soon, it was the center of commerce for the entire region—boasting the first school, first library, and first theater in what is now Washington State.¹⁰ By

the 1840s, it was home to the largest concentration of people on the west coast. The trading operations at Fort Vancouver brought with them a robust and diverse group of inhabitants. While HBC officers and clerks lived inside the stockade, other workers and their families lived outside the fort, mostly in the Kanaka Village to the northwest. The word “Kanaka” comes from the Hawaiian word for “people,” so named because of the many Hawaiian Islanders who came to work here, brought on fur trading ships that stopped in Hawaii on



Fort Vancouver, 1845 Sketch by Lt. Henry Warre (UW Special Collections, WAS0374)

their way back from China.¹¹ This village of roughly 1,100 people was described as “a boisterous little community... where the [Hudson’s Bay] Company employees of lower rank—Iroquois, Hawaiian, French métis—lived with their Indian wives and families.”¹²

The mid-1800s saw a great deal of change to the area. The first American settlers arrived in 1844. The HBC was not immediately hostile to the new arrivals, but encouraged them to settle south of the Columbia River rather than in modern-day Vancouver. After the US-Canadian border was settled at 49°N in 1846, Fort Vancouver declined in significance as HBC moved its operations further north, safely into British territory. In 1849, the US Army began building their own barracks, leading to a flood of American settlers. Although technically illegal in the American West, these new military officers sometimes brought with them the “peculiar institution” of slavery—arriving with personal servants who were barely distinct from slaves.¹³

In 1850, just 220 people lived north of the Columbia River in modern-day Vancouver, compared to nearly 12,000 people living south of the river in what is now Portland.¹⁴ Washington Territory was officially formed in 1853 and the incorporation of the City of Vancouver followed shortly thereafter in 1857, making it one of the territory’s first incorporated cities. By 1880, it was the third most populous town in Washington Territory with 1,722 residents.¹⁵

Although most of these residents were European-Americans, there were also new non-white arrivals to Vancouver in the late 19th century. Records show that, throughout the 1880s and 1890s, several groups of Chinese immigrants were hired for labor crews in or near Vancouver.¹⁶ Generals and perhaps other officers at Vancouver Barracks sometimes had domestic staff of Chinese ancestry. For example, General Oliver Otis Howard employed cook Mick Lai from China, who lived in the upstairs back of his home.¹⁷ Notably, 1899 also saw the arrival of a company of 103 Buffalo Soldiers—segregated black cavalry troops—from the U.S. Army’s 24th Infantry. This regiment was treated with suspicion and hostility from some in the Army and in Vancouver’s white community. The regiment was demoted from its leadership position as soon as white replacements arrived.¹⁸

Early 20th Century: Slow Growth and National Trends

In the decades before World War II, Vancouver, like the rest of the nation, contended with labor strife, Prohibition, Depression, and changing social dynamics. Despite the 1908 arrival of the train, Vancouver and Clark County remained primarily agricultural (particularly prunes) until the 1940s. The economy was also driven by logging, lumber mills, and the railroad. By 1920, the population of Vancouver was around 12,600. Although the vast majority was white, census rolls showed a small percentage of African American, Native American, Chinese, and Japanese residents.¹⁹ The Vancouver Barracks remained an important foundation of the community, but many other civic institutions had been firmly established by 1920, including a library, churches, and schools. Development concentrated west of where Interstate 5 runs today.²⁰

The 1920s saw a resurgence of the Ku Klux Klan across the country. The Klan burst onto the Vancouver scene on March 11, 1921, when three Klansmen in regalia charged into the Clark County Courthouse.²¹ The Klansmen provided \$45 cash to pay medical expenses for a local child, eliciting sympathy from the local community. In 1924, 500 Klansmen congregated at Vancouver's Bagley Downs for the largest Ku Klux Klan rally in the Northwest, with 10,000 onlookers and a flaming cross.²² The Klan grew in political and social power in Vancouver throughout the 1920s, presenting itself as a patriotic Christian organization. This influence undoubtedly exacerbated discriminatory attitudes towards minority groups in Vancouver.

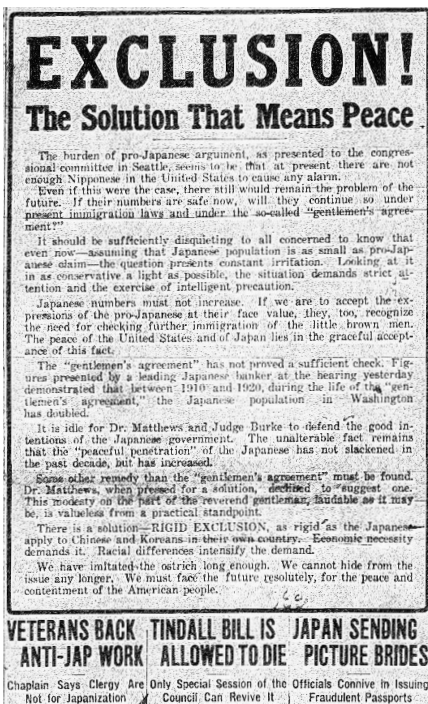
Throughout the 1920s, 1930s, and 1940s, restrictive covenants played a major role in urban development across the United States, as communities throughout Washington State adopted deed restrictions to keep out non-white families. These deed restrictions forbid property owners from selling, leasing, or renting to specified groups because of their race, color, or religion. To date, there has been no major study of the use of racial restrictive covenants in Clark County, so it is unknown how prevalent such restrictions were in Vancouver. However, the ongoing Racial Restrictive Covenants Project—involving research teams at the University of Washington and Eastern Washington University—has identified about 40,000 restricted properties in hundreds of neighborhoods within the five Washington counties they have studied to date (Whatcom, Snohomish, King, Pierce, and Thurston).²³ The research teams plan on conducting similar research in Clark County in the years to come.

Vancouver developers *are* known to have placed financial restrictions on plats to prevent the development of lower cost housing. For example, in 1904, the Mountain View addition on Main and 19th Streets advertised that, “No purchaser will be permitted to build a house costing less than \$1000” as “no cheap shacks will be permitted to disfigure [the development].”²⁴

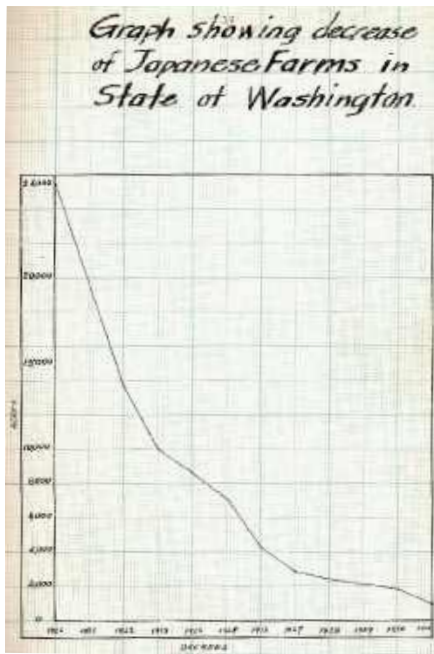
Japanese-American Families in Vancouver

Japanese immigrants first arrived in the Pacific Northwest in the 1880s. When the Chinese Exclusion Act stopped the flow Chinese immigration in 1882, American industrialists quickly turned to Japan to fill the demand for low-cost labor left behind by the Chinese, particularly in the railroad industry.²⁵ These Japanese immigrants, however, were subject to discrimination and exclusionary “Alien Land Laws.” The 1889 Washington State Constitution prohibited land ownership for aliens (non-citizens). Although the prohibition contained an exception for “those who in good faith have declared their intention to become citizens of the United States,” this did not apply to Asian immigrants, who had been banned from obtaining citizenship under any circumstances by US Congress in 1875. After World War I, local nativist activists such as the Hood River Anti-Alien Association pushed one step further, convincing the State to pass the Alien Land Law in 1921, which also took away non-citizens’ rights to lease or rent land.²⁶ This meant that Japanese immigrants could not own or lease land in Vancouver. Nonetheless, the Nikkei community (Japanese immigrants and their descendants) persisted in Clark County, playing a large role in Vancouver’s truck farms. By 1930, 47% of truck farmers in Clark County were Japanese American.²⁷ In 1940, Clark County was home to roughly 40 Japanese and Japanese-American residents.²⁸

World War II had a devastating impact on Vancouver’s small Nikkei community. On February 19, 1942, President Roosevelt issued Executive Order 9066, requiring the removal of 120,000 Japanese and Japanese-Americans from the western coastal areas to inland concentration camps.²⁹ In March 1942 the *Columbian* reported: “Japanese, German and Italian aliens and American Japanese are forbidden hereafter to live in southern and western Clark county.”³⁰ By the end of the month, Clark County’s 19 Japanese-American households has been forcibly removed. After the war, only one of those families returned—and they were required to buy their land back from its caretaker and start over from scratch.³¹ Most didn’t



1920 editorial in The Seattle Star (The Seattle Star files)



Japanese farm ownership in Washington State 1920-31 (University of Washington archives)

try to return to Clark County. For example, Pearl Yoshikawa, a direct descendant of the first Japanese pioneer in Oregon, was born and raised on a Vancouver farm. During the war, she was removed to the Minidoka concentration camp in Idaho. After, she opted to move to New York instead of returning to her former home.³²

World War II: Explosive Growth and the Vancouver Housing Authority

The arrival of several major industries in the 1940s ushered in a period of unprecedented growth in Vancouver. The Alcoa Aluminum plant opened in 1940, bringing many new jobs and residents to the region. However, the biggest change came with the arrival of the Kaiser Shipyard in 1942. This was one of three massive WWII shipyards in the Pacific Northwest (the other two being across the river in Portland). The 400-acre shipyard assembled and launched its first ship in 165 days. By end of the war, it had produced ten Liberty ships, 30 landing crafts, 50 escort aircraft carriers, 31 attack transports, 12 C4 troopships, eight C4 cargo vessels, and two 14,000 ton drydocks.³³

The shipyards attracted workers from across the country. Before the attack on Pearl Harbor in December 1941, Vancouver had a population of roughly 18,800 people, the vast majority (92%) of which was white.³⁴ By December 1943, the population was over 83,000.³⁵ During this time, the African American population of Vancouver grew from 18 to 8,825.³⁶ The shipyard needed a

great deal of labor to operate, and so conducted targeted recruiting and marketing efforts across the country. This included large recruitment pushes to both white and black workers in the South. The thousands of black workers and families who arrived in Vancouver were just a fraction of the nearly 1.5 million African Americans who left the South in the 1940s, drawn North and West by WWII industries and jobs.³⁷ These families faced a large cultural shift in their move to the Pacific Northwest, trading openly violent and legally mandated segregation for less obvious (but still damaging) racist systems in education, employment, and housing.



Hudson House on the Kaiser shipyard site (Vancouver Housing Authority archives)

The major and rapid influx of population was accompanied by growth in infrastructure and services in Vancouver, including roads, schools, churches, and a great deal of housing. To deal with the major housing demand, the Vancouver Housing Authority (VHA) was founded in 1942. The VHA built six major housing developments over 18 months, including: McLoughlin Heights, Burton Homes, Fourth Plain Village, Fruit Valley, Ogden Meadows, and Bagley Homes.³⁸ Collectively, these developments included nearly 12,400 family units and 10,000 dormitory units spread across 1950 acres of land.³⁹ While a small percentage of these projects were meant to be permanent—and can still be spotted along Grand Boulevard—most were intended as temporary buildings, meant to be demolished after the wartime need subsided.⁴⁰

The VHA housing projects had no official racial segregation policy. However, many residents and historians have noted that black and white families seemed to live in separate areas within the developments. “On paper there was no race-based housing, but people had experiences that counter that,” says Melissa Williams, author of “Those Who Desire Very Much to Stay: African Americans and Housing in Vancouver, Washington, 1940 to 1960.”⁴¹ Val Joshua, for example, came to Vancouver with her husband from Texas in 1944 and later helped start the local NAACP. She recalls that, when they first arrived in the McLoughlin Heights war housing project, “the whites were on one side of the street and the African-Americans were on the other side.”⁴² Another black resident, Horsea Lewis, recalls trying to move into the Fruit Valley housing development with her young family and being met with threats of arson. She eventually landed in a growing black enclave around 13th Street in Harney Heights, the site of today’s Community AME Zion Church.⁴³

Due in large part to this type of housing discrimination, members of the black community formed a local branch of the NAACP (National

Association for the Advancement of Colored People). NAACP Branch #1139 began serving Vancouver in 1945, advocating for housing desegregation as well as increased employment and education opportunities for black residents.⁴⁴ The Vancouver NAACP soon became involved with other groups, such as the Vancouver Civic Unity League, white church leaders, and



The 1949 meeting of the Washington State Conference of the NAACP was held in Vancouver on April 30. (Clark County Historical Museum, 2007.1.2.32)

the Mayor’s office, on the issue of housing segregation. The NAACP also looked towards the future—with WWII drawing to a close, they wanted to ensure that permanent housing would be available to African Americans who wanted to remain in the city.

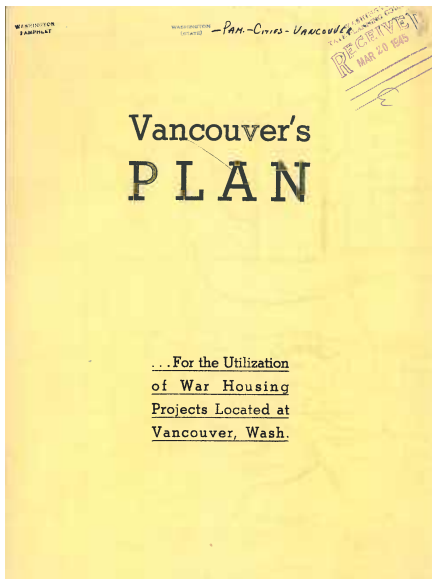
1945–1958: War’s End and the Conversion of Wartime Housing

The end of WWII in 1945 meant a reduction in wartime industries, and the shipyard soon laid off 30,000 workers. This led to discussions about what to do with the VHA’s massive wartime housing projects. The vast majority of these had been designed as temporary developments, and there was heavy concern amongst longtime white residents that continued public housing would grow to be a blight on the city.⁴⁵ The city opted to demolish the temporary housing and convert the developments into privately owned subdivisions, with the final family moving out of remaining wartime housing in 1958.

The official policy of non-discrimination continued in sales of these properties and (unlike Seattle and Portland) Vancouver did not have a formal red lining policy.⁴⁶ The city also created a Mayor’s Commission on Open Housing in 1952. This committee, which worked with the local NAACP and boasted a diverse membership, aimed to create non-discriminatory housing for all and handled complaints from across the city.⁴⁷ On January 3, 1958, Vancouver also became the first city in Washington to secure special mortgage insurance to finance 150 units of low-cost private housing.⁴⁸

Despite these efforts, unofficial segregation and discrimination continued in the post-war housing market, as families of color were discouraged from renting or buying in many neighborhoods. For example, in 1957 a white woman protested her neighbor’s plan to rent one side of her duplex to a black family.⁴⁹ In 1958, another white woman circulated a petition trying to force a newly arrived black family in her neighborhood to leave.⁵⁰ Even a newspaper report commending Vancouver for its successes in integration confirmed that the arrival of a black family would often lead to “panic selling” in a neighborhood.⁵¹

In addition to incidents like these, a lack of viable employment opportunities pushed many black families out of the city after the war’s end. In 1946, a survey found 77% unemployment among black family heads.⁵² “Now that the war is over, you people can go home,” is how it felt to Joseph H. Bailey, a Black shipyard worker interviewed



Vancouver’s Plan for War Housing (Washington Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation)



Residents fleeing the Vanport flood, May 30, 1948, N Denver Ave, Portland (The Columbian files)

later by *The Columbian*.⁵³ In response, the local NAACP lobbied major employers in to hire black workers. Although they were met with limited success in Vancouver, their efforts contributed to the passage of the 1949 Washington State Law Against Discrimination in Employment.⁵⁴

A 1945 VHA survey showed that 57% of black families wanted to stay in Vancouver after the war.⁵⁵ Despite this, the African American population declined from 8,825 in 1944 to 879 in 1950 to 494 in 1960.⁵⁶ Many black families relocated to the city of Vanport, Oregon, which was destroyed in a catastrophic flood in 1948. Others returned to homes elsewhere in the country or moved to Seattle or Portland to join existing black communities. The NAACP encouraged black families that stayed in Vancouver to settle throughout the city, to prevent the creation of a “black section” that could be targeted for neighborhood violence and intentional disinvestment.⁵⁷

1955–1970s: Arrival of I-5 and Urban Renewal

The arrival of Interstate 5 (I-5) in March 1955 cut off downtown Vancouver and forever altered the fabric of the city. I-5 closed Vancouver’s 5th Street—formerly a major arterial and the only road across the military reservation—and made downtown difficult to access due to lack of freeway exits.⁵⁸ These changes, combined with the rise of shopping malls, drew many businesses away from Vancouver’s city center.

The urban renewal movement of the 1960s and 1970s struck another blow to downtown Vancouver by removing most of the neighborhood’s remaining housing. Throughout those decades, metropolitan areas across the country focused on the removal of “blighted” areas in an effort to “clean up” their cities. In practice, this often led to gentrification, as longtime residents—usually communities of color—lost their homes and were priced out of any new developments in the area. This urban renewal movement also threatened historic buildings. For example, the historic Slocum House (built in 1877), was threatened with demolition as part of Vancouver’s urban renewal movement. Luckily, community groups rallied to preserve and move it to the southwest corner of Esther Short Park.⁵⁹

By 1970, 99% of Clark County’s residents identified as white. Out of a population of 128,500, there were only 548 black, 398 indigenous, 371 Asian Pacific Islander, and 151 Hispanic residents, many of whom lived in an impoverished Vancouver neighborhood near the I-5 bridge spanning the Columbia River.⁶⁰

1980s to present: Growth and Revitalization

The past 50 years have witnessed another period of growth within the city of Vancouver. While this growth is due in part to several major annexations (including the largest in state history), the city has also drawn newcomers with the arrival of many high-tech businesses. In 2020, Vancouver boasted a population of nearly 193,000 residents, making it the fourth largest city in Washington State. 70% of the population identifies as white—a significant decrease from 1970.⁶¹ The VHA still serves residents, providing subsidized housing for families, disabled people, and the elderly. NAACP Branch #1139 also continues to be a vital part of Vancouver’s community. The city center has undergone an impressive revitalization, guided by Vancouver’s Downtown Association since 1989.⁶²

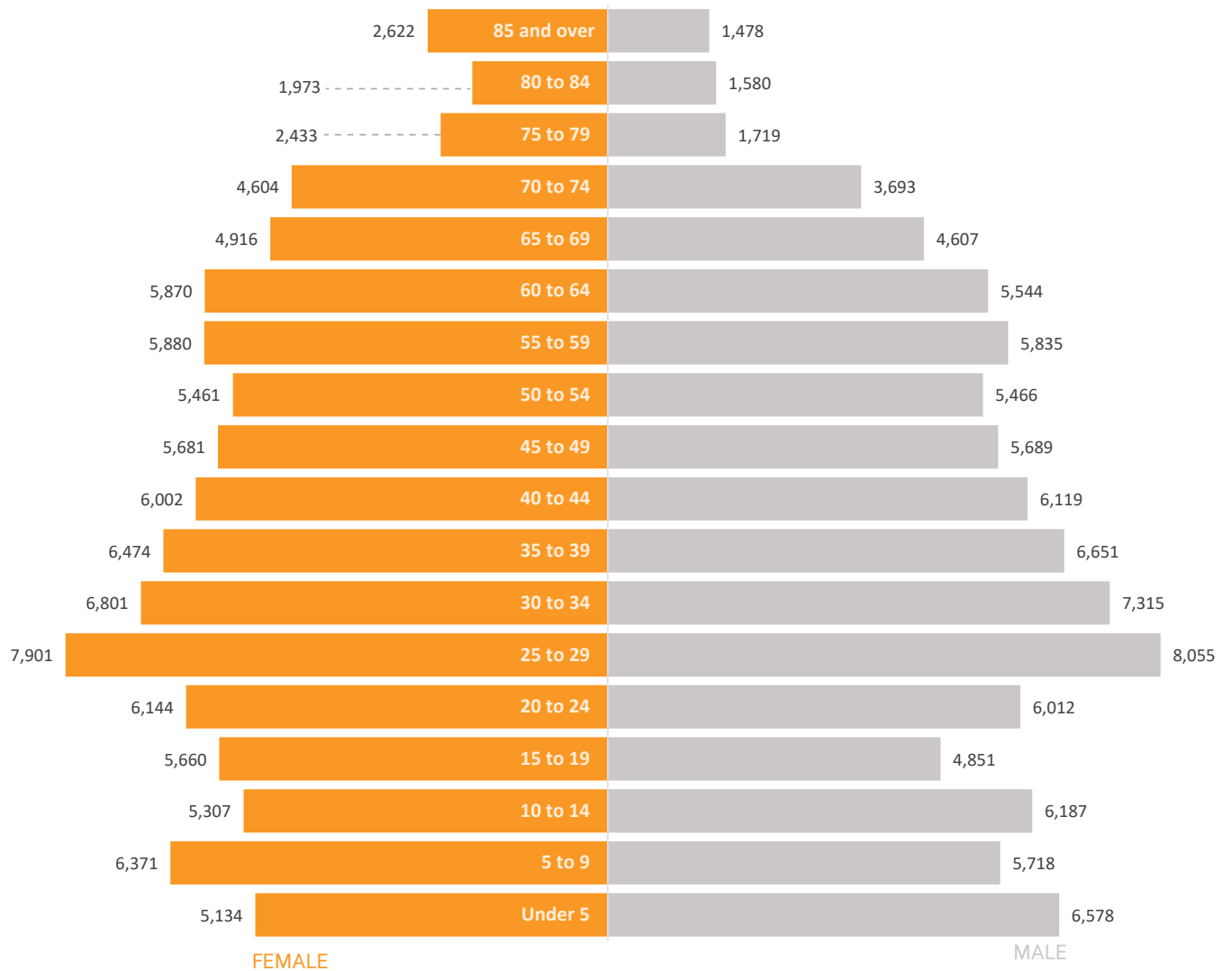
A Current Profile of City of Vancouver Residents

The most recent American Community Survey (2017–2021 5-year estimates) estimate the total population of Vancouver to be 188,331. The population pyramid indicates a relatively high prevalence of young people between 25 and 29 years of age, as well relatively high numbers of young children and adults between 55 and 64 years of age. The rectangular shape is typical for a relatively stable or stationary population, in other words not expected to grow or constrict rapidly through natural means. However, Vancouver is growing due to immigration and urbanization as well as through the annexation program.

Approximately 30,000 adults or 15.7% percent of the population of is aged 65 or older. On the other end of the spectrum, 41,569 residents, or 22.1% of the population, are under 18 years of age.

Vancouver has a stable population with a relatively high number of young people between 25 and 29 years of age.

Exhibit 1 Population by Age and Sex

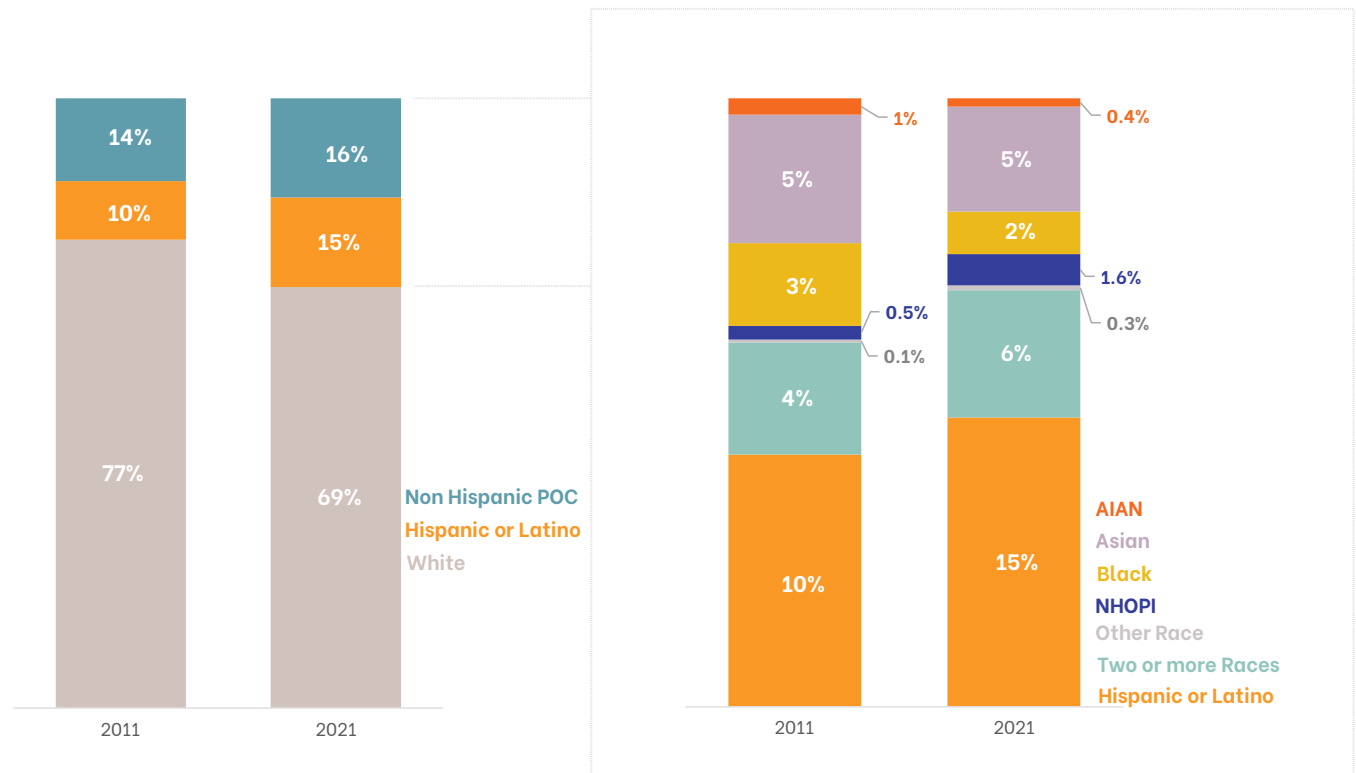


Source: American Community Survey 5-year estimates 2017-2021

Despite being the original inhabitants of the land on which Vancouver sits, the American Indian and Alaska Native population comprises less than one percent of the current population. Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islanders and Black or African Americans each make up about 2% of the total Vancouver population. Individuals identifying as two or more races make up 6%, Asians comprise 5%. Fifteen percent (15%) are Hispanic or Latine (of any race) and 69% of the population of Vancouver identifies as non-Hispanic white alone.

Just over 30 percent of Vancouver’s population is POC. Hispanic and Latines of any race are the largest group of POC. However, as shown in Exhibit 2, there are several block groups within Vancouver that are majority POC.

Exhibit 2 Population by Race and Ethnicity: People of Color Detail

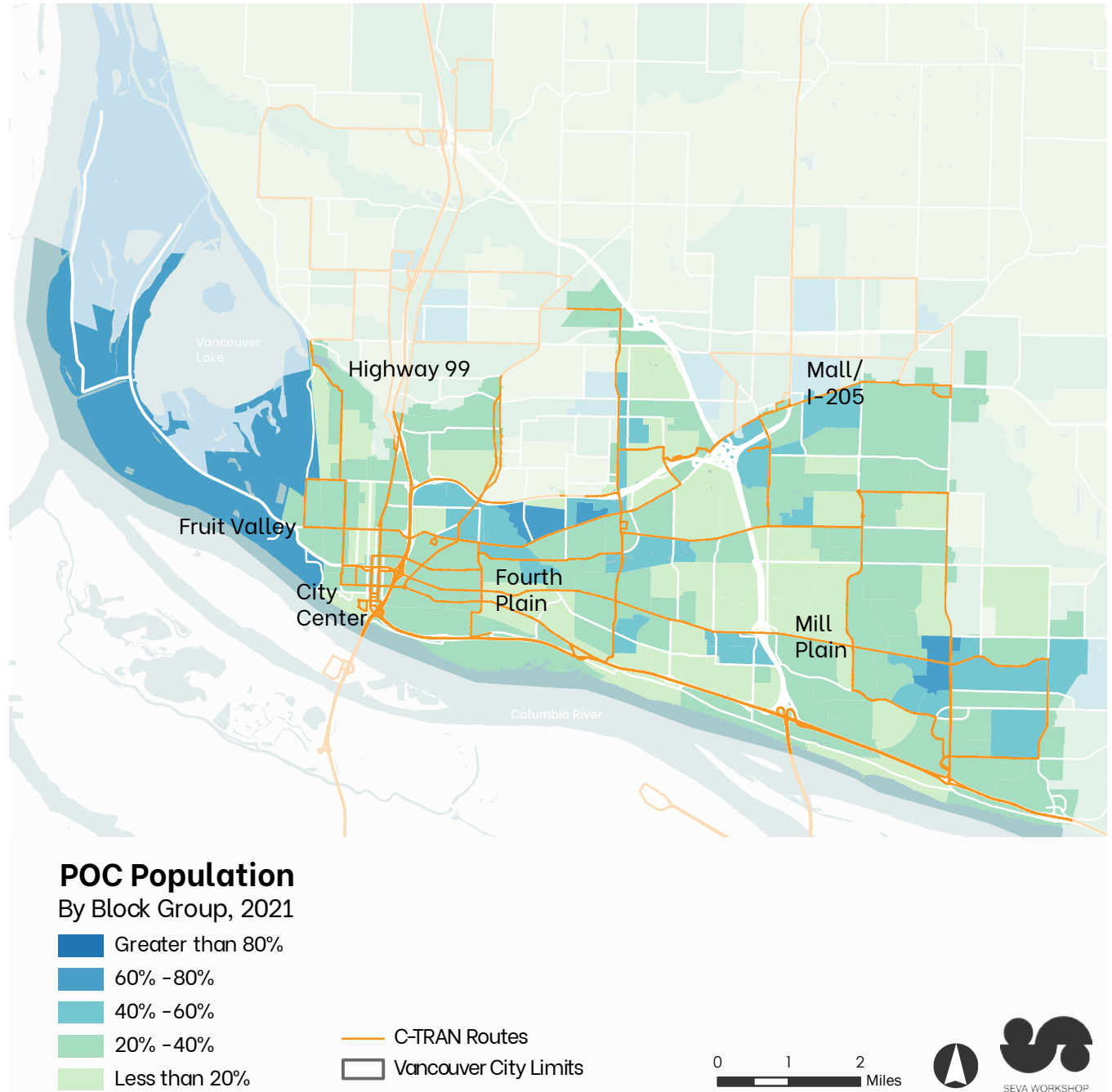


Notes: AIAN=American Indian and Alaska Native; NHOPI=Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander. Hispanic or Latine is an ethnicity. The Hispanic or Latine category includes Hispanic and Latine people of all races. All other categories show non-Hispanic races.

Source: American Community Survey 5-year estimates 2017-2021

Areas reaching north along the I-5 and I-205 corridors just outside of the City of Vancouver’s boundaries show similar levels of population density and diversity as within. There are distinct concentrations of people of color within certain census tracts in this area.

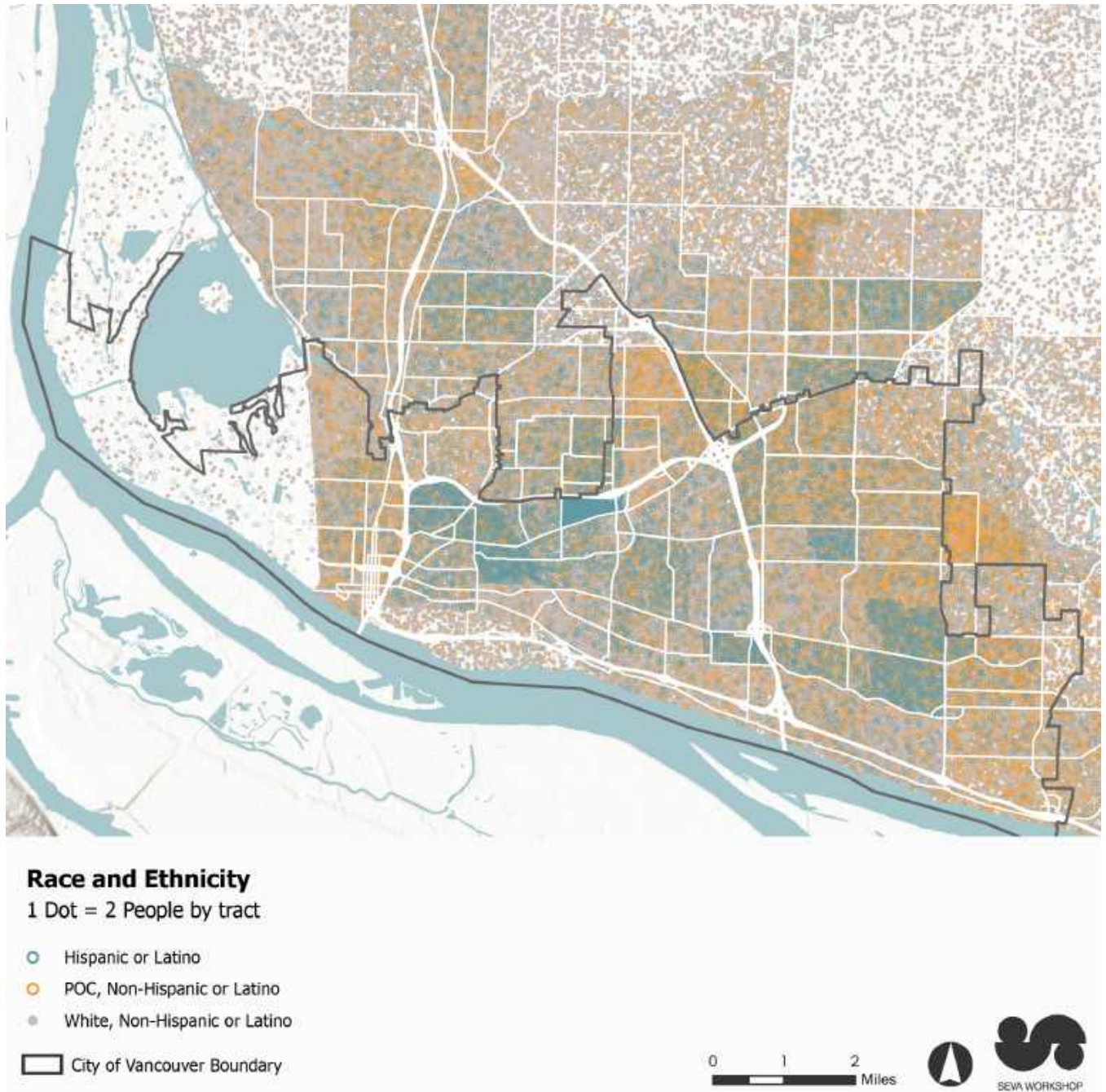
Exhibit 3 People of color population by block group



Source: American Community Survey 5 year estimates 2017-2021

The City of Vancouver and outlying areas show patterns of location by race and ethnicity.

Exhibit 4 Population density by race and ethnicity and tract



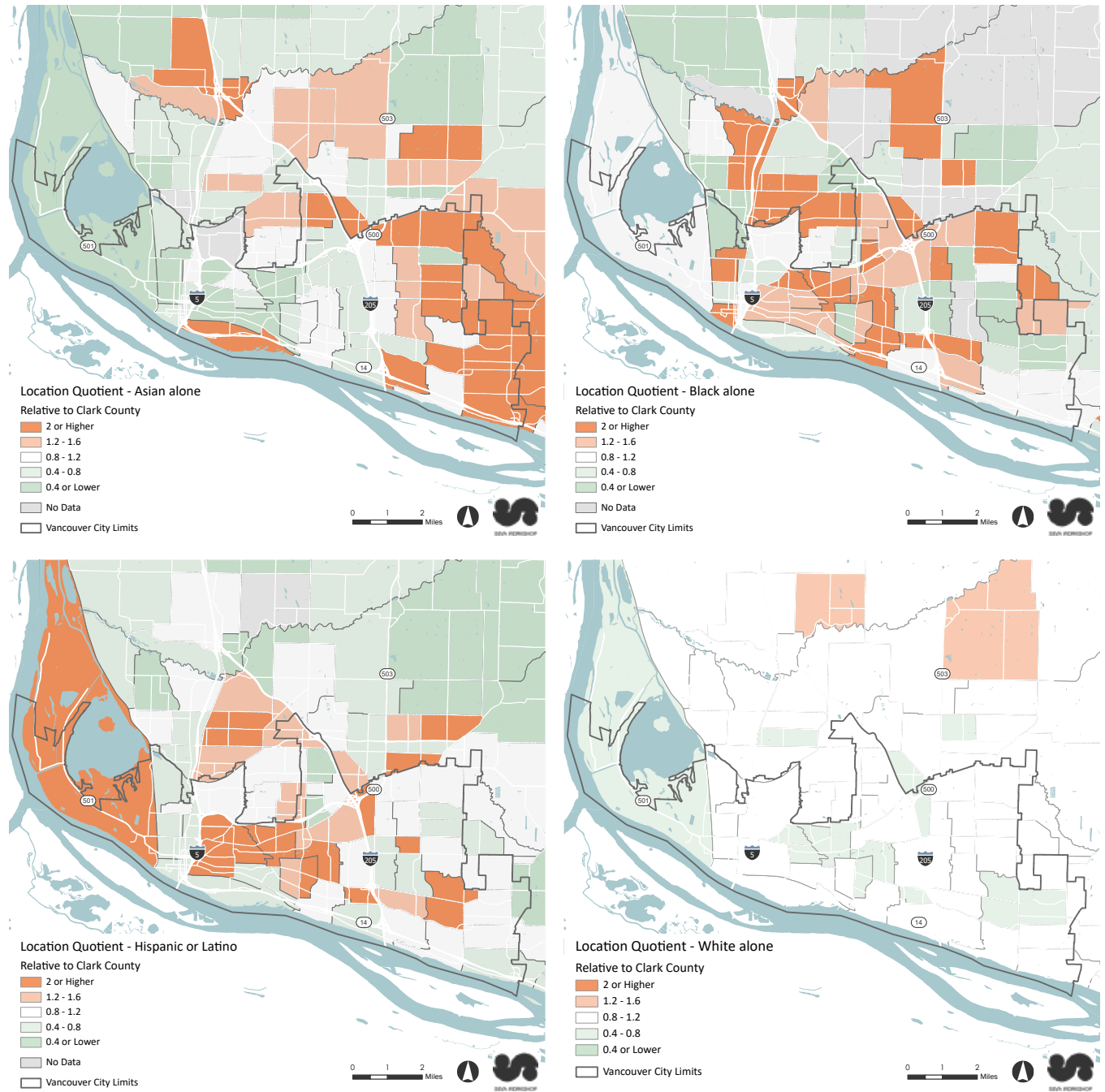
Source: American Community Survey 5-year estimates 2017–2021

A location quotient directly compares the prevalence of a population in a block group to their prevalence in the county overall. A higher quotient indicates a relative concentration of a

group. Patterns in the concentrations of certain populations may reflect de jure or de facto housing discrimination and exclusion, as well as “natural” patterns in housing and location preferences. The Asian population in Vancouver is largely concentrated in eastern block groups bordering with Camas. Black, Hispanic and Latine populations are more likely found in the central and west neighborhoods. The Black population peaked during WWII due to Kaiser shipyard work and was concentrated in neighborhoods nearby. However, the Black population has been declining and dispersing ever since.

Compared to their distribution in the County overall, POC are more likely to live in urban areas.

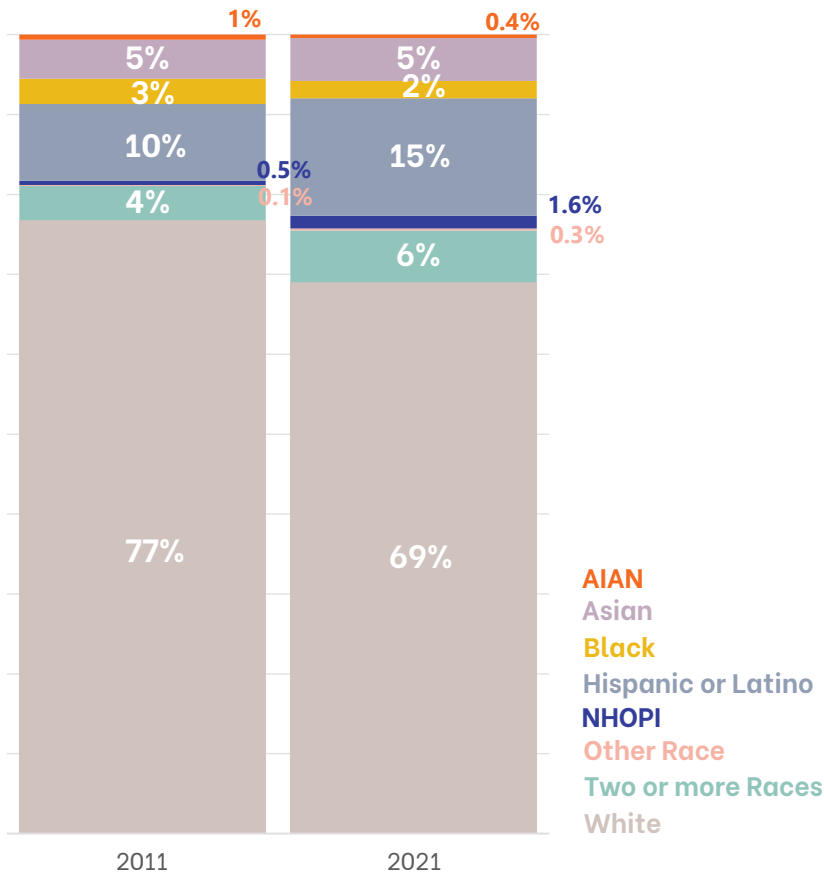
Exhibit 5 Location quotient by tract, Asian, Hispanic or Latine, Black or African American, and White



Source: American Community Survey 5-year estimates 2017-2021

The Vancouver population has grown in diversity over the last 10 years. The Hispanic and Latine, Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander, and multiracial populations are growing as a share of population.

Exhibit 6 Vancouver Population by Race and Ethnicity, 2011 and 2021



Notes: AIAN=American Indian and Alaska Native; NHOPI=Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander. Hispanic or Latine is an ethnicity. The Hispanic or Latine category includes Hispanic and Latine people of all races. All other categories show non-Hispanic races.

Source: American Community Survey 5-year estimates 2017-2021

The American Indian and Alaska Native population, already small by 2010, has declined by almost another third in the last decade. The Black and African American population has also been on the decline in the City of Vancouver (-9%). This trend is a continuation of decades of declining Black population in total numbers and as a share of the population from a pre-WWII peak of over 8,000. Though from a small base, the fastest growing population by race is Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islanders (+91%) and the population identifying as two or more races (+120%). The Asian alone population has also been growing at a rate higher than the population overall (27%).

The fastest growing populations of the last decade are Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander although from a very small base.

Exhibit 7 Population by Race, 2010 to 2021

	2011	2021	Percent Change
AIAN	1,006	788	-22%
Asian	7,914	10,079	+27%
Black	5,099	4,076	-20%
Hispanic or Latine	15,544	27,744	+78%
NHOPI	852	2,988	+251%
Other race	179	471	+163%
Two or more races	6,894	12,189	+77%
White	124,118	129,996	+5%
Total	161,606	188,331	+17%

Notes: AIAN=American Indian and Alaska Native; NHOPI=Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander. Hispanic or Latine is an ethnicity. The Hispanic or Latine category includes Hispanic and Latine people of all races. All other categories show non-Hispanic races.

Source: US Decennial Census 2010; American Community Survey 5-year estimates 2017-2021

The Hispanic or Latine category is an ethnic identity drawn from shared culture and history that intersects with race. The population identifying as Hispanic or Latine of any race has increased by 78% between 2011 and 2021, significantly more than the overall population growth of 17%.

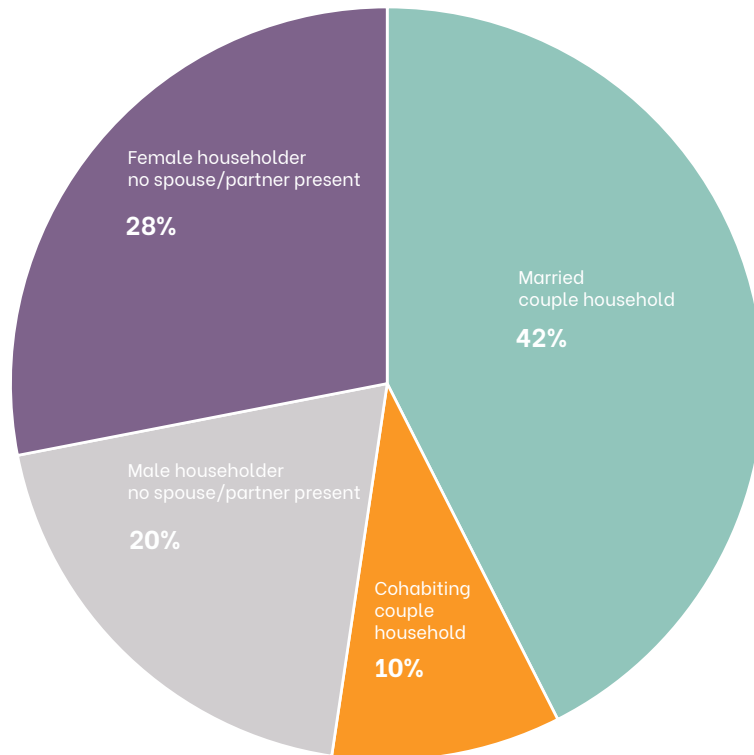
The US Census Bureau first started asking about sexual orientation and gender identity in 2021 with the Household Pulse Survey, a probability survey with a much smaller sample size, and only available at the state level. However, these are the best available data on the size of the LGBTQ+ population in Washington State. Data from the March 2023 pulse shows that an estimated 3.5% of identify as lesbian or gay and 5.5% as bisexual. Another 4.6% responded with a sexual orientation of either “I don’t know” or “something else.” Two percent (2.1%) of Washingtonians are estimated to be transgender and another 1.5% as something other than cisgender or transgender.

Household Composition

Just over half of the estimated 75,663 households in Vancouver are comprised of couples, either married or cohabiting. Twenty-eight percent of households are female-headed without a spouse or partner and another 20% are male-headed without a spouse or partner. Most single-headed households are persons living alone, without children under 18 or household members over 65-years old. Compared to the State of Washington overall, Vancouver residents are less likely to be in married couple households, and more likely to be single female householders with no spouse or partner.

Nearly half (48%) of Vancouver households are single-headed.

Exhibit 8 Household Composition



Source: American Community Survey 5-year estimates 2017-2021

Compared to Washington State, Vancouver has fewer married couple households, and more single-female headed households.

Exhibit 9 Household Composition Comparison

	City of Vancouver		Washington State		Difference in Percent Share of Households
	Count	%	Count	%	
Married-couple household	32,172	43%	1,467,589	50%	-7.6%
with children of householder(s) under 18 years	13,017	17%	584,510	20%	-2.7%
Cohabiting couple household	7,442	10%	241,242	8%	1.6%
with children of householder(s) under 18 years	2,299	3%	73,286	3%	0.5%
Male householder, no spouse/partner present	14,823	20%	530,227	18%	1.5%
with children of the householder under 18 years	1,237	2%	37,057	1%	0.3%
Householder living alone	9,982	13%	369,143	13%	0.6%
65-years and over	3,364	4%	102,638	4%	0.9%
Female householder, no spouse/partner present	21,226	28%	692,783	24%	4.5%
with children of the householder under 18 years	3,642	5%	114,897	4%	0.9%
Householder living alone	12,624	17%	411,623	14%	2.7%
65-years and over	6,569	9%	197,530	7%	2.0%

Source: American Community Survey 5-year estimates 2017-2021

US Census Bureau data products provide a very limited understanding of the LGBTQ+ population. The measurement “unmarried same-sex couples” was the only identifier consistently available since the 1990’s until 2018. Same sex marriage has been legal in Washington State in 2012 likely creating significant miscounts of even this basic measure. The 2018 data, the most recent year for which estimates are available for the City of Vancouver, indicate only 230 same-sex households (0.3% of all households) in Vancouver (90 male-male and 140 female-female). However, more recent and robust data at the state level indicate that the share of households that are of same sex couples, married or unmarried, is likely closer to 1.1%.

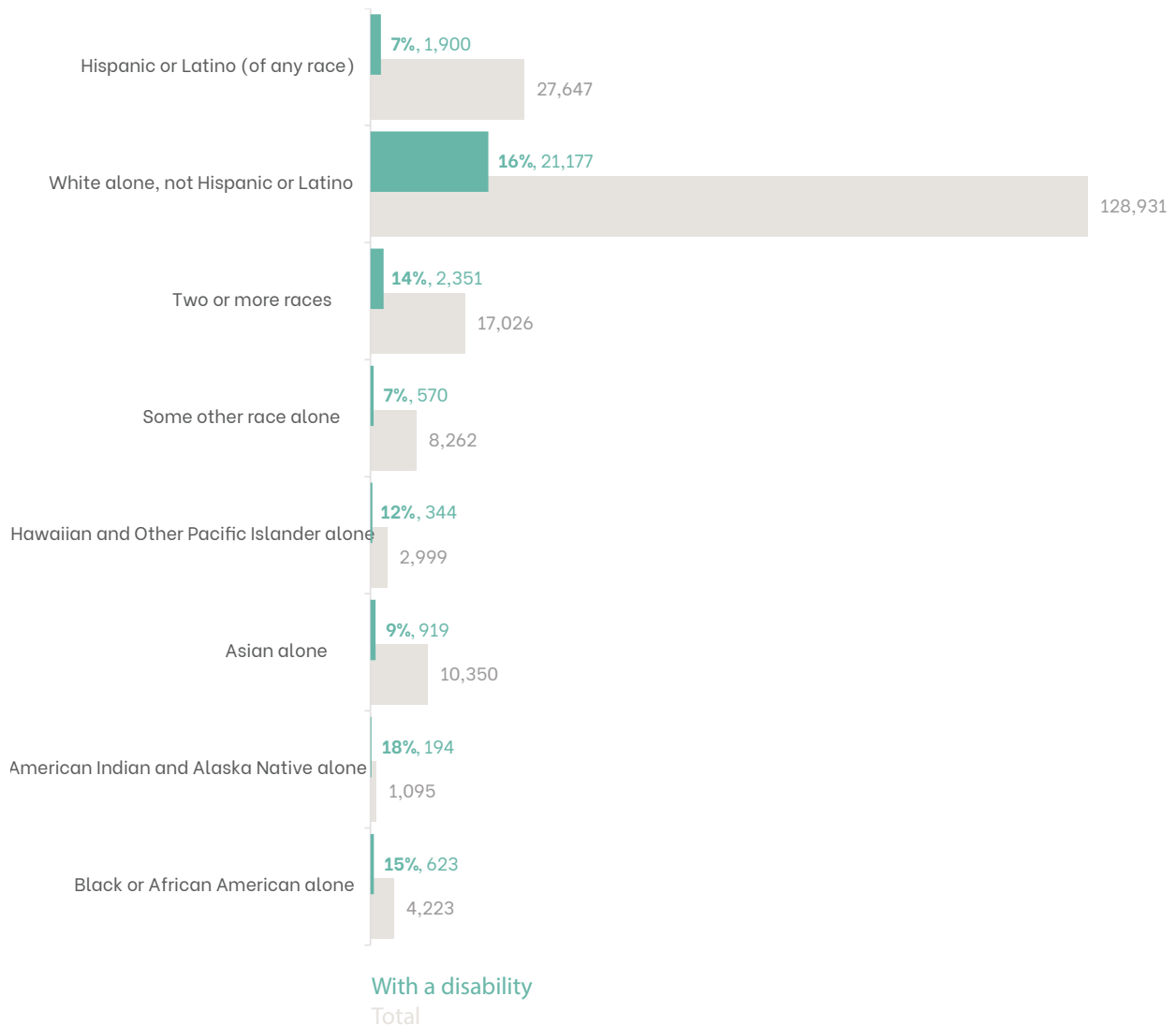
Age and Disability

Twenty-nine percent (29%) of households have at least one person 18 years of age or younger. Twenty-nine percent of households (29%) also have one or more people over the age of 65-years.

27,055 people or about 15% of the population in Vancouver are living with a disability. Cognitive, ambulatory, and independent living difficulties are the most common types of disability.

Vancouver residents of all ages and races experience disabilities.

Exhibit 10 Percent of Population Living with a Disability by Age Group



Source: American Community Survey 5-year estimates 2017-2021

Note: The US Census Bureau measures the prevalence of disability for the civilian population living outside of institutions.

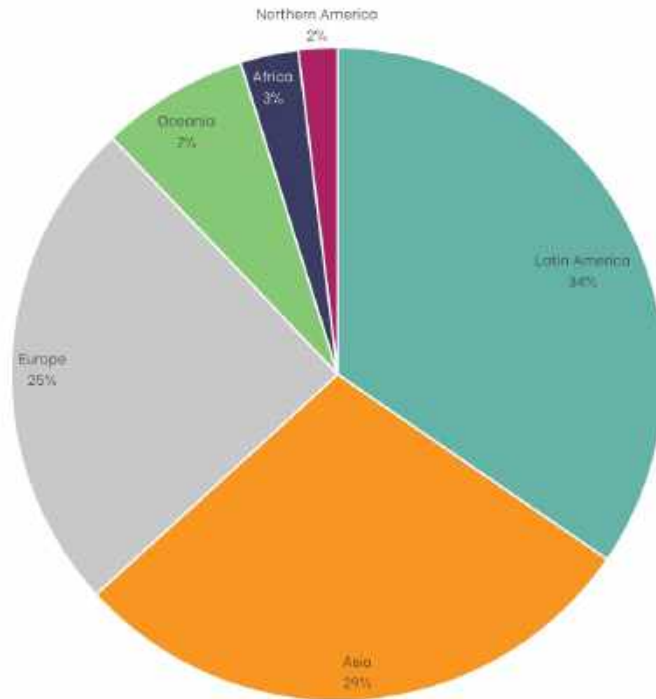
The Asian population (9%), those identifying as some other race alone (7%), and those identifying as Hispanic or Latine of any race (7%) report incidence of disability at lower rates than the population overall. American Indian and Alaskan Natives report the highest prevalence of disability (18%).

Place of Birth and Language

In 2021, 13.7% of the Vancouver population (25,773 people) was foreign-born. Over one-third of the foreign born population originates from Latin America, and another 29% from Asia, and 25% from Europe. Compared to the place of birth distribution of the foreign-born population in Washington State overall, Vancouver is much more likely to be home to immigrants and refugees from Europe and Oceania. In fact, according to data from the Migration Policy Institute, Clark County, Washington has the third largest Micronesian immigrant population of all counties in the United States, behind two counties in Hawaii.

Compared to Washington overall, Vancouver’s foreign-born population is more likely to originate from Europe and Oceania.

Exhibit 11 Foreign-born Population by Place of Birth



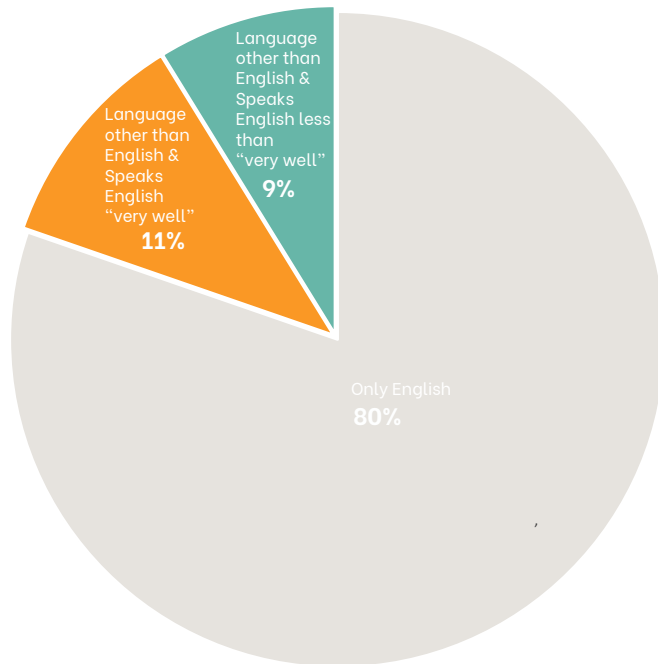
Source: American Community Survey 5-year estimates 2017-2021

The foreign-born population in Vancouver is distributed relatively evenly in terms of time of entry to the United States, though it does skew slightly toward newer arrivals as compared to Washington State overall. About one-quarter of the foreign-born population arrived in 2010 or later. Another 28% arrived between 2000 and 2009. The remaining 45% have been in the United States for over twenty years (entered 1999 or earlier). Ongoing climate change impacts in the Pacific Islands, and political and economic instability in the Russian/Ukrainian and Afghan regions is likely to drive further migration towards places like Vancouver where there is an established population and services

Twenty percent (20%) of the Vancouver population age 5 and older speaks a language other than English at home, roughly equivalent to the prevailing rate in Washington State. More than half of the residents who speak a language other than English at home, also speak English very well (11% of the population over 5). The remaining 9% speak English less than very well. Compared to the State of Washington overall, Vancouver residents who speak another language are slightly less likely to have English ability.

Nine percent of the population speaks English less than “very well.”

Exhibit 12 Language Spoken at Home for Population Age 5 and older



Source: American Community Survey 5-year estimates 2017-2021

A “limited English speaking household” is one in which no member 14 years old and over speaks English at least “very well.” In previous US Census products these households were referred to as “linguistically isolated.” In Vancouver, speakers of Russian, Polish, or other Slavic languages make up the largest number of households with limited English ability, estimated at 1,196 households. Spanish speaking households add another 1,071 households with limited English ability. Smaller groups with limited English households include Other Indo-European languages with 413, Chinese (including Mandarin and Cantonese) with 374, Vietnamese with 65, Tagalog with 93 and other Asian and Pacific Island languages with 267 households. These are likely to include Chuukese speaking communities from Micronesia. Note that the category of “Indo-European languages” contains all languages of the Indian subcontinent as well as Greek, Swedish, and Italian.

Community Outcomes

This section presents data on some key community outcomes. At the June 12, 2023 meeting of the Equity Team, the following community outcomes were identified as Vancouver's top priorities:

1. As Vancouver grows, anyone who wants to can afford to live in the city in safe, stable housing.
2. Public transportation is a viable alternative to owning a personal vehicle and offers connectivity across destinations in Vancouver.
3. Create reparative policies that account for the ongoing harm caused by past racist policies, including those related to land use, housing, and the criminal legal system.

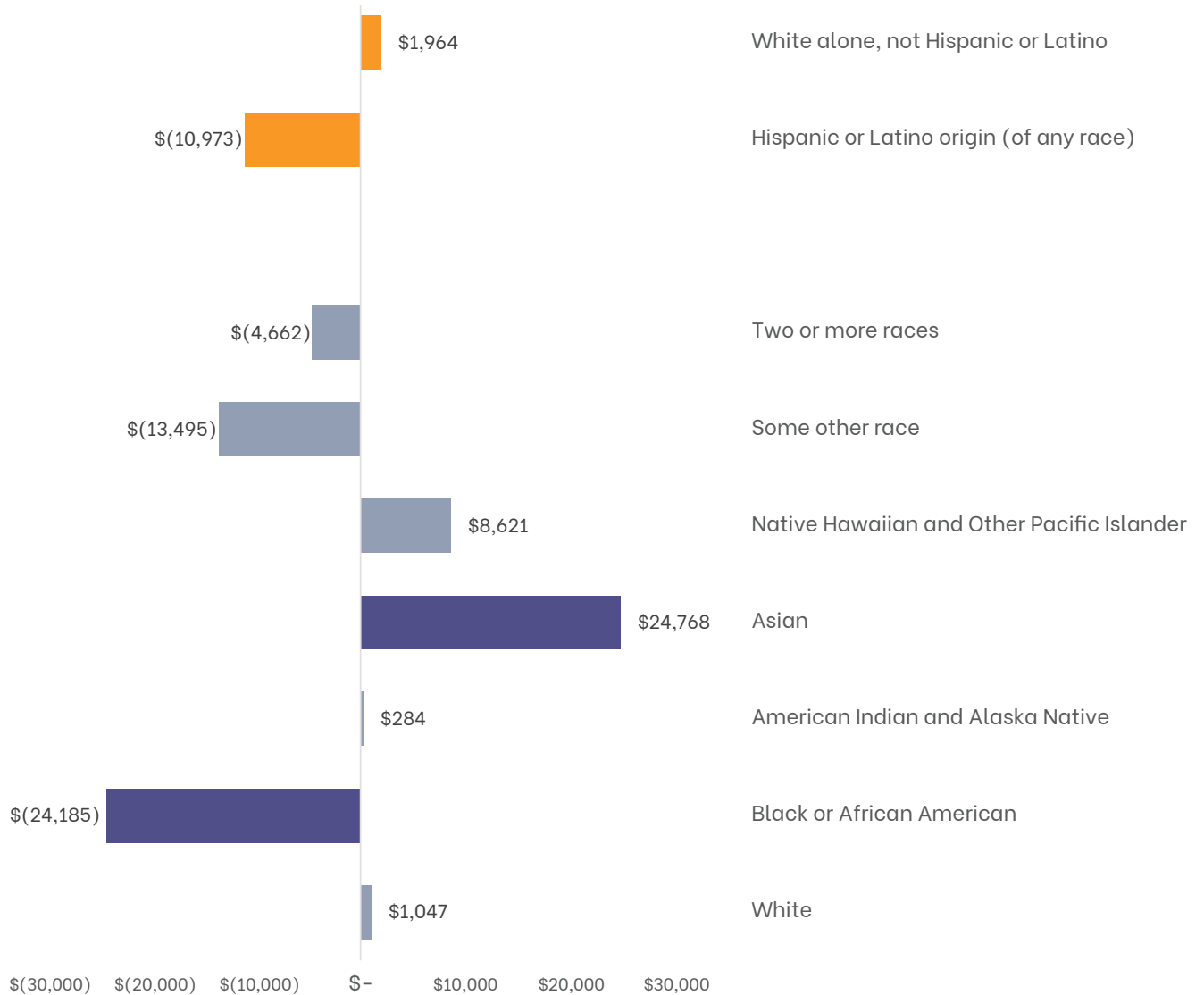
In an equitable society, demographic characteristics would not predict these outcomes. As we can see in the following data however, there are often disparities according to race, ethnicity, and other demographic factors. The following analysis relies on the best available public data, from sources such as the US Census Bureau. However, they still are limited by lags in data collection and processing, bias, and statistical error. Local observation is needed to complement these data and provide a more current and complete understanding of conditions. Where possible, we have included relevant quotes and comments from Equity Team members and community engagement.

Income and Poverty

Income is one half of the equation that determines whether a family can afford to live in the City of Vancouver, the top desired community outcome. The median household income estimated in 2021 for Vancouver was \$67,462. The median income varies considerably by race and Hispanic or Latine origin. The median household income where the householder is Black or African American, for example is over \$24,000 less than the overall median. On the other hand, households with an Asian head of household have a median income that is over \$24,000 more than the overall median.

The median income in Vancouver varies greatly according to race of the householder.

Exhibit 13 Household income, by race and Hispanic/Latine origin of householder compared to overall median.

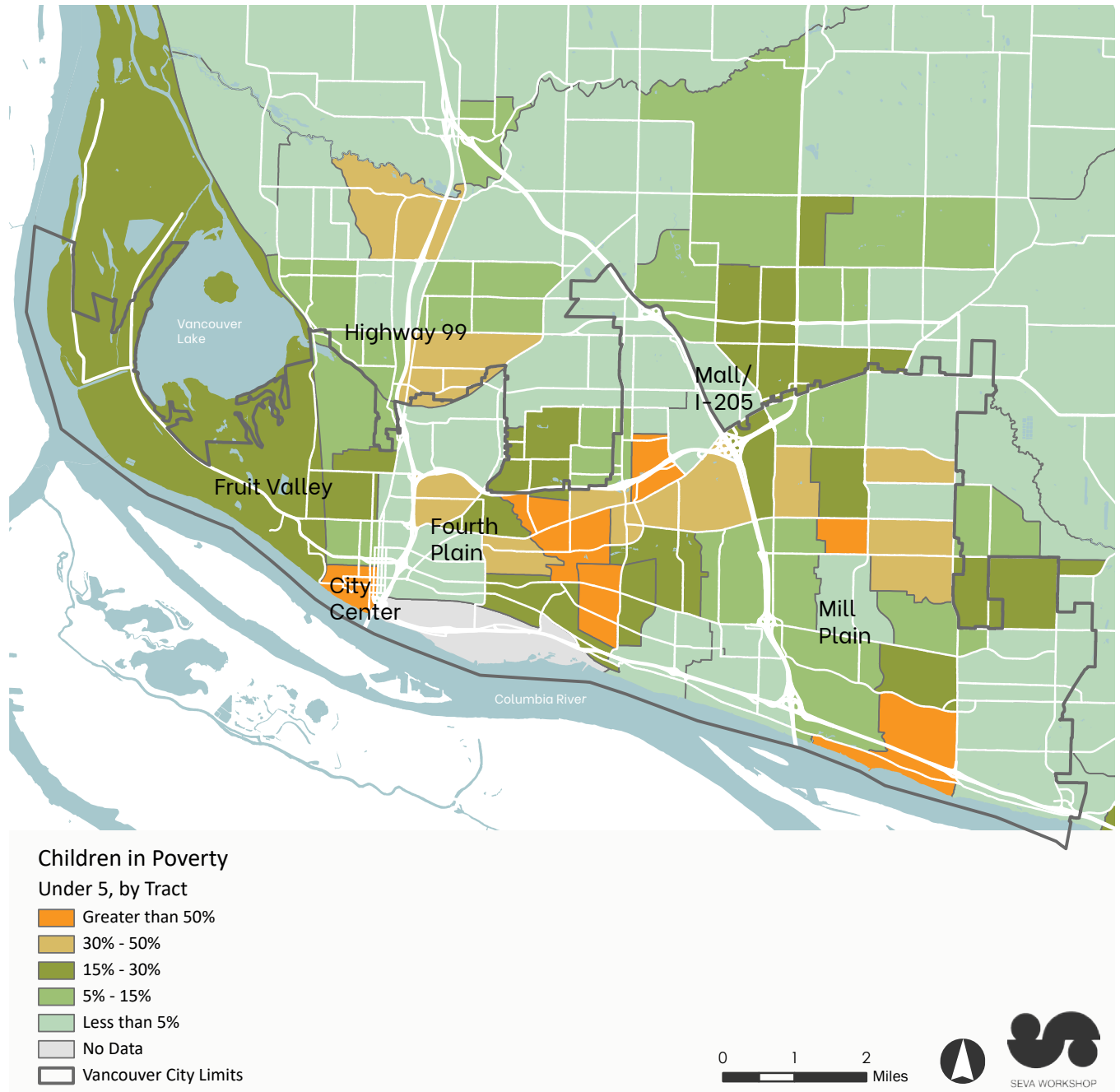


Source: American Community Survey 5-year estimates 2017-2021

Note: A value of 0 indicates the median value for that group equals the median value for all of Vancouver.

Extreme rates (over 50%) of early childhood poverty are found in a few neighborhoods within city boundaries, including Bagley Downs and Meadow Homes and southeast.

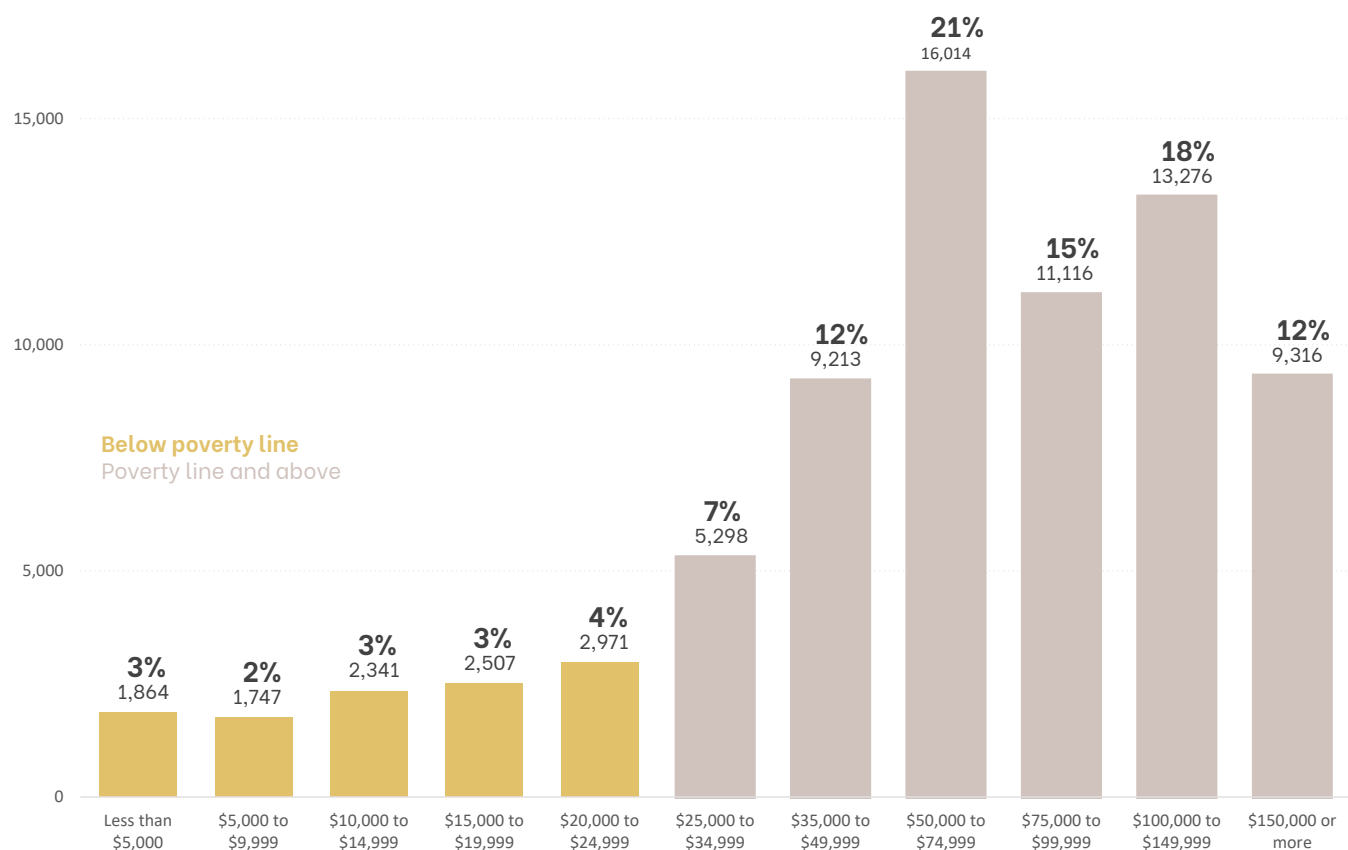
Exhibit 14 Children under 5 in poverty, by tract



Source: American Community Survey 5 year estimates 2017-2021

Over fifteen percent of resident households are living below the federal poverty line.

Exhibit 15 Household income



Source: American Community Survey 5 year estimates 2017–2021

Food Access

Income is also linked with food access. Over 11,000 households in Vancouver are accessing food stamps/SNAP benefits. Roughly half of these households have a member living with a disability. One-third of these households are comprised of a female householder with no spouse present. 46.8% of these households have a child under 18 years of age. Relative to their share of the overall population, households receiving SNAP benefits are disproportionately likely to be Black or African American, American Indian and Alaska Native, Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander, and/or Hispanic or Latine in origin. The majority (over 80%) of these households have at least one worker in the past 12 months.

Across both Evergreen and Vancouver School Districts, 65% of enrolled students are eligible for free lunch through the National School Lunch Program, the federal nutrition program for low-

income students as of October 2022. However, this rate varies greatly among individual school buildings. The school with the lowest eligibility rate was Felida Elementary with 19.1%. Six other schools, with combined enrollment of 2,445 students, are 100% eligible for free lunch. In the Vancouver School District, these are Eleanor Roosevelt Elementary, Fruit Valley Elementary, Martin Luther King Elementary, McLoughlin Middle, and Washington Elementary. In the Evergreen District, Hollingsworth Academy (K-12) is 100% eligible for free meals.

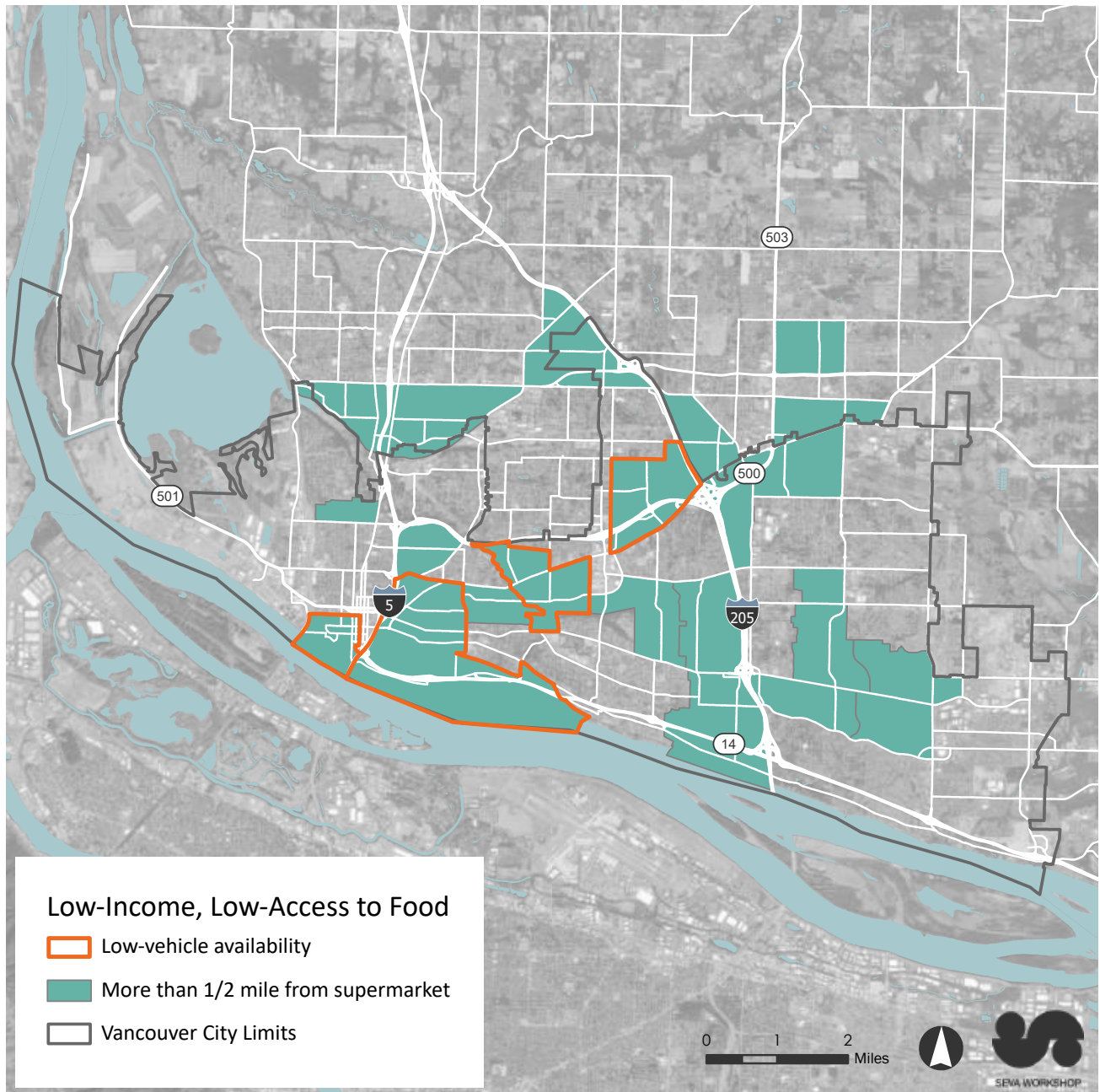
The USDA Economic Research Service uses the term low-income and low-access to designate areas with limited access to healthy food. These areas are sometimes referred to as “food deserts.”

“I’m surprised that Fruit Valley is not considered a low-income, low-access to food area. One of the main issues in the area is that residents have to drive about 20 minutes to the closest grocery store, and those without a car have more challenges due to limited public transit service in the area.” Equity Team July 18, 2023

“The Fourth Plain area is a low-income area, but I wouldn’t say it’s a food desert area. There is a WinCo, a Grocery Outlet, a Walmart, and several ethnic supermarkets in the area.” Equity Team July 18, 2023

City Center and Fourth Plain areas are food deserts according to indicators used by the USDA.

Exhibit 16 Census Tracts Identified as Low-Income, Low-Access to Food



Source: USDA Economic Research Service, Food Access Research Atlas, 2022.

For most families, food is second only to housing in terms of household spending. Families that live in food deserts need to spend more time and resources than other families to access healthy food.

In this way, basic food and nutrition is more costly for low-income residents. (It is expensive to be poor.)

For urban areas, a census tract with a high proportion of low-income residents who are one half mile or more from a grocery store (excluding convenience stores and mini-marts) would be considered low-income, low-access (shown in orange outline). These are importantly the types of stores where the majority of SNAP benefits are used. However, many more tracts (shaded in blue) have a high proportion of residents living more than one-half mile from a grocery store. This especially impacts households with no vehicle access (7.3% of households in Vancouver). Tracts in Vancouver with higher proportions of POC are more likely to meet these food desert criteria.

Housing and Mobility

The availability of affordable housing is the other key component to achieving the top desired community outcome. The current conditions, however demonstrate a market where communities are threatened by displacement and housing is growing farther out of reach for middle and low-income families. First-time homebuyers and even first time renters are encountering more challenges finding housing opportunities in Vancouver than previous generations.

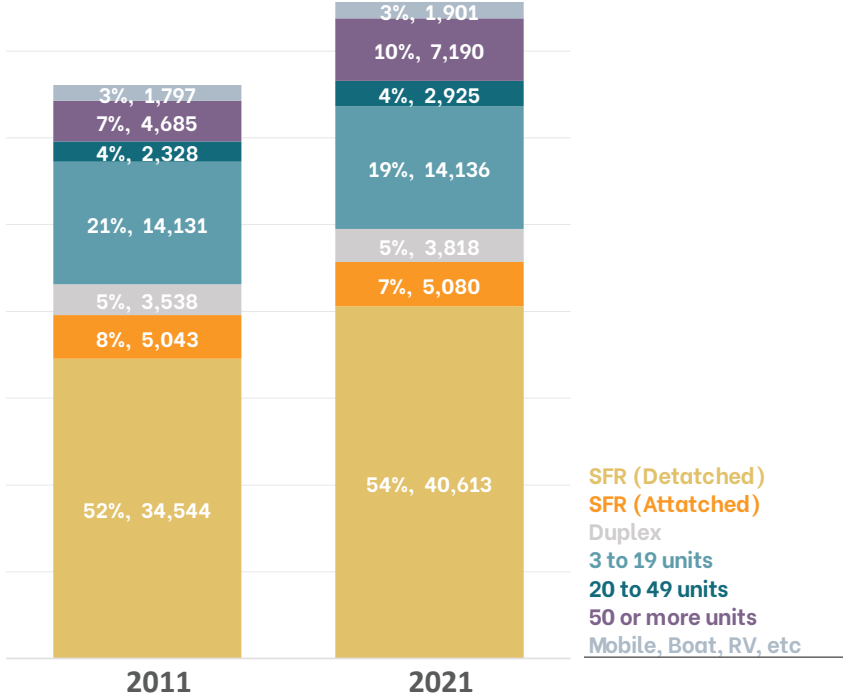
“A lot of younger adults who just graduate high schools students. A lot of people have expressed their difficulty finding the first apartment. Often they have to find a partnership or stay on in one just because of housing.” Equity Team July 18, 2023

“There are a lot of ways in which housing is difficult. I have lived in Lincoln for a long time. I couldn’t buy the house I live in. I bought it for 130 K and now it is 650K.” Equity Team July 18, 2023

Vancouver’s housing stock increased by 15% between 2011 and 2021, slightly lagging population growth of about 17% over the same period. The mix of housing types remained similar over the years, though there has been some shift within multifamily from smaller (3 to 19 units) towards larger developments of 50 or more units.

Housing stock increased by 15% between 2011 and 2021, slightly lagging population growth of about 17% over the same period.

Exhibit 17 Housing units by type, 2011 to 2021

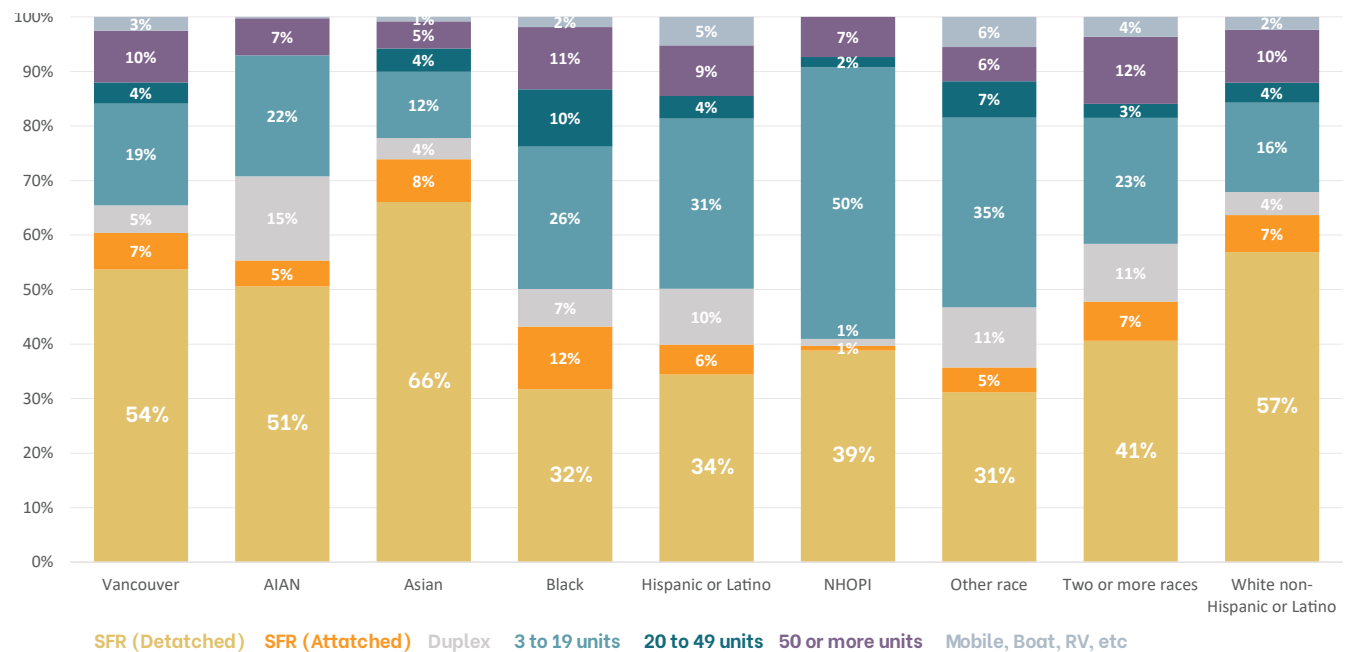


Source: American Community Survey 5 year estimates 2007-2011 and 2017-2021

The occupants of housing by type varies by race. These race-based distinctions also likely reflect intersecting patterns in income, home ownership, and neighborhood-level differences in housing mix. Asian residents are disproportionately likely to live in detached single family housing. Black, Hispanic and Latine, and Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander, and those of other or two or more races are more likely to live in multifamily. These patterns have been relatively stable since 2011.

Asian residents are disproportionately likely to live in detached single family housing. Black, Hispanic and Latine, and Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander, and those of other or two or more races are more likely to live in multifamily.

Exhibit 18 Housing units by race, 2011 to 2021



Source: American Community Survey 5-year estimates 2017-2021

The limited definitions of single family and multifamily obscure important nuance in preferences for housing. Priority groups such as people living with disabilities, Native Americans, Pasifika, Black and Latine households may prefer units that are appropriate for multi-generational living or housing that can accommodate extended family members and/or caregivers. These types of units may be found in SFR or multifamily, and data is lacking on the true current stock of multi-generational appropriate housing.

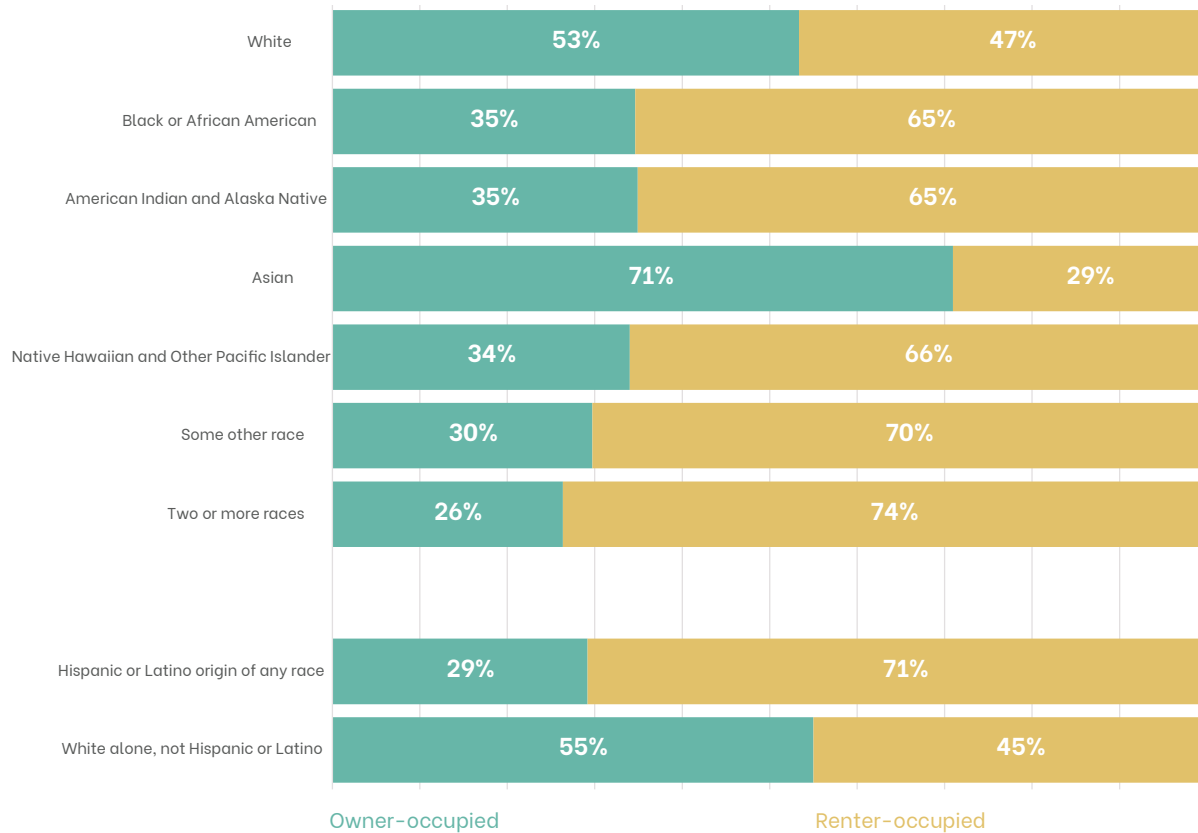
“Revisiting building codes is an important thing to consider. For example, if you are part of the Chuukese community you might need some intergenerational housing. Many get constantly evicted. How do we account for these cultural differences?” Equity Team July 18, 2023

“A lot of black communities and Latine often have family members come to live with them. It is because of housing challenges or sometimes people with disabilities want to live with others for support. Housing types should accommodate this.” Equity Team July 18, 2023

Housing ownership is historically an important means to wealth-creation. Of the estimated 75,663 households in Vancouver, about 51% reside in owner-occupied housing and 49% in renter-occupied housing. As a point of comparison, the owner-occupied housing rate across the State of Washington is approximately 64%. The predominance of the rental market in Vancouver in part reflects the relatively large number of young single-person households. Racial patterns in occupancy status largely reflect state-wide patterns with Asian and white households accessing housing ownership opportunities at much higher rates than other groups. However, these rates can vary greatly within white and Asian depending on country of origin, ethnicity, and time in the country. About 29% of Hispanic and Latine households of any race live in owner-occupied housing. These disparities are in part due to years of discrimination across sectors, such as education, labor markets, and housing, that has limited the earning power of households of color.

Asian residents are the most likely to live in owner-occupied housing, roughly twice as likely as other POC groups.

Exhibit 19 Owner-occupied and renter-occupied housing by race



Source: American Community Survey 5-year estimates 2017-2021

The average Vancouver home value is \$474,617. Under the assumptions of a 20% down payment, 6.6% interest rate, and 30 year fixed mortgage, a household would have to earn over \$110,000 annually to afford the average Vancouver home. The median household income estimated in 2021 for Vancouver was \$67,462. The median gross rent reported in the 2021 ACS was \$1,396, considered affordable to households earning \$55,840 or more. Still, relative to Portland and other urban areas in Washington State, Vancouver housing is more affordable.

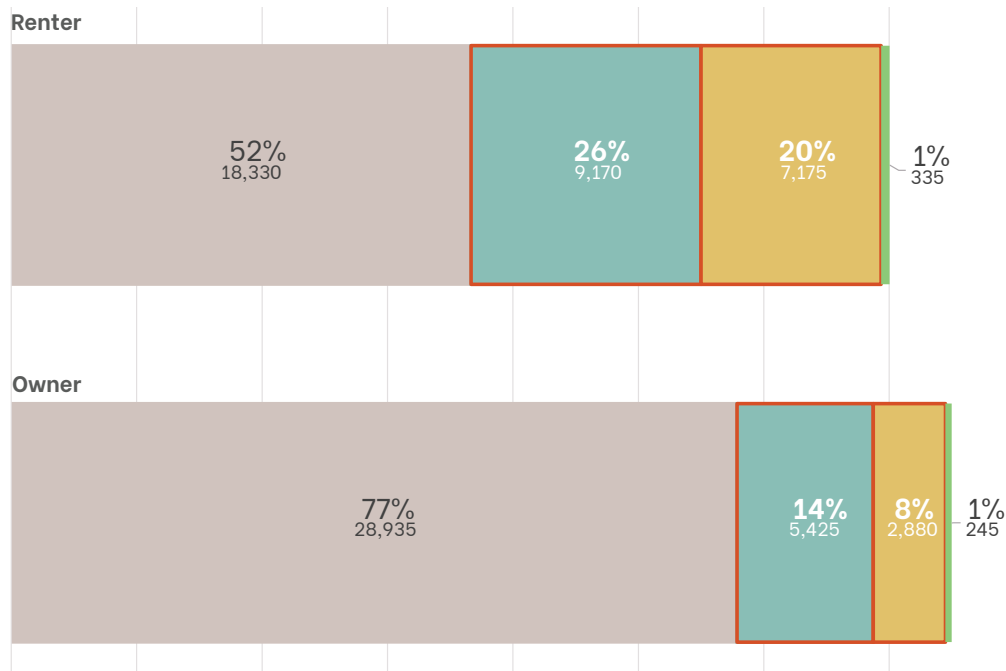
The number of households that are “cost-burdened” or spending an out-sized proportion of their monthly income on housing is an indicator of housing needs. HUD defines a household as cost burdened if they pay between 30% and 50% of their gross household income for housing, and severely cost burdened if

they pay more than 50% of their gross household income on housing. Overall, in Vancouver, 34% of households are considered rent burdened at the 30% threshold. Fourteen percent (14%) are burdened at the 50% threshold, or severely cost-burdened. These households are at a greater risk for displacement.

Renting households are more likely to be housing cost burdened than owner households. Forty-six percent (46%) of renter households pay more than 30% of household income on housing. Of those a large portion are paying more than 50% of income on housing. Initial deposit requirements can be a barrier for renters looking to access housing for the first time or moving between rentals. Equity team members have also reported that short-term rentals may be constructing the supply of available affordable long-term rentals.

Nearly half (46%) of Vancouver’s renting households are cost burdened, and 20% severely so.

Exhibit 20 Owner-occupied and renter-occupied housing cost burden



Source: CHAS (Comprehensive Housing Affordability Strategy) dataset based on the American Community Survey 5-year estimates 2015-2019

The likelihood of experiencing severe housing cost burden is much higher for low-income households. Sixty-seven (67%) of households earning 30% of the area median income or less are paying more than half their income for housing.

Over two-thirds of the lowest income households are paying more than half their income for housing.

Exhibit 21 Housing cost burden by income

	Cost burden >30%	Cost burden >50%
Household Income <= 30% HAMFI	79%	67%
Household Income >30% to <=50% HAMFI	72%	25%
Household Income >50% to <=80% HAMFI	42%	3%
Household Income >80% to <=100% HAMFI	14%	2%
Household Income >100% HAMFI	4%	0%
Total	34%	14%

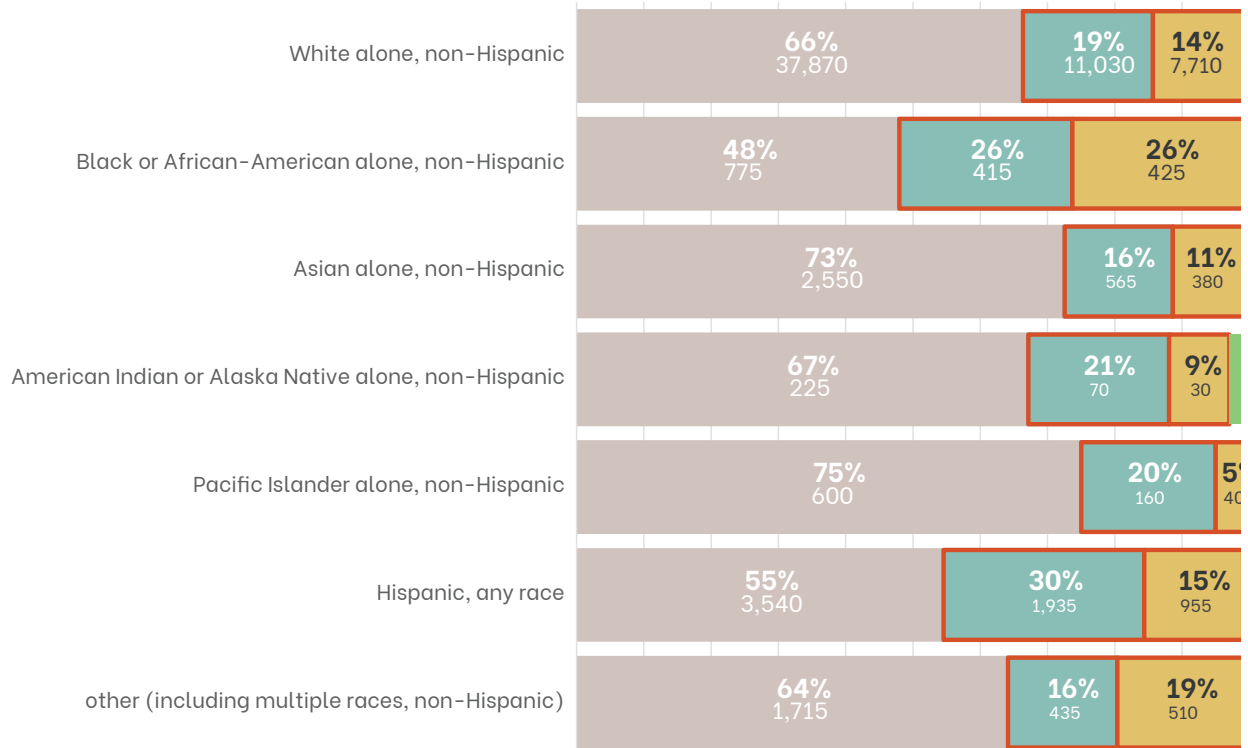
Source: CHAS (Comprehensive Housing Affordability Strategy) dataset based on the American Community Survey 5-year estimates 2015-2019

The experience of living under a high housing cost burden also displays patterns according to race and ethnicity. Fifty-two percent of Black and African Americans in Vancouver are paying more than 30% of their income for housing costs. Forty-five percent of Hispanic residents of any race are also cost-burdened at the 30% threshold. Non-Hispanic Asians and non-Hispanic Pacific Islanders are among the groups least likely to be cost burdened.

Black and Hispanic/Latine headed households are the most likely to be experiencing housing cost burden and therefore displacement risk. Exhibit 7 Population by Race, 2010 to 2021 on page 23 shows that the Black population has been on the decline. However, as the quote below and Exhibit 5 suggest, the Black population may be moving to areas just outside City limits that are annexation possibilities.

“The decline of the Black population may be attributed to people moving to more affordable housing outside city limits. Areas currently being considered for annexation include higher than average BIPOC populations. The data reveal the number of Black residents is declining, but experience suggests otherwise.” Equity Team July 18, 2023

Exhibit 22 Housing cost burden by race

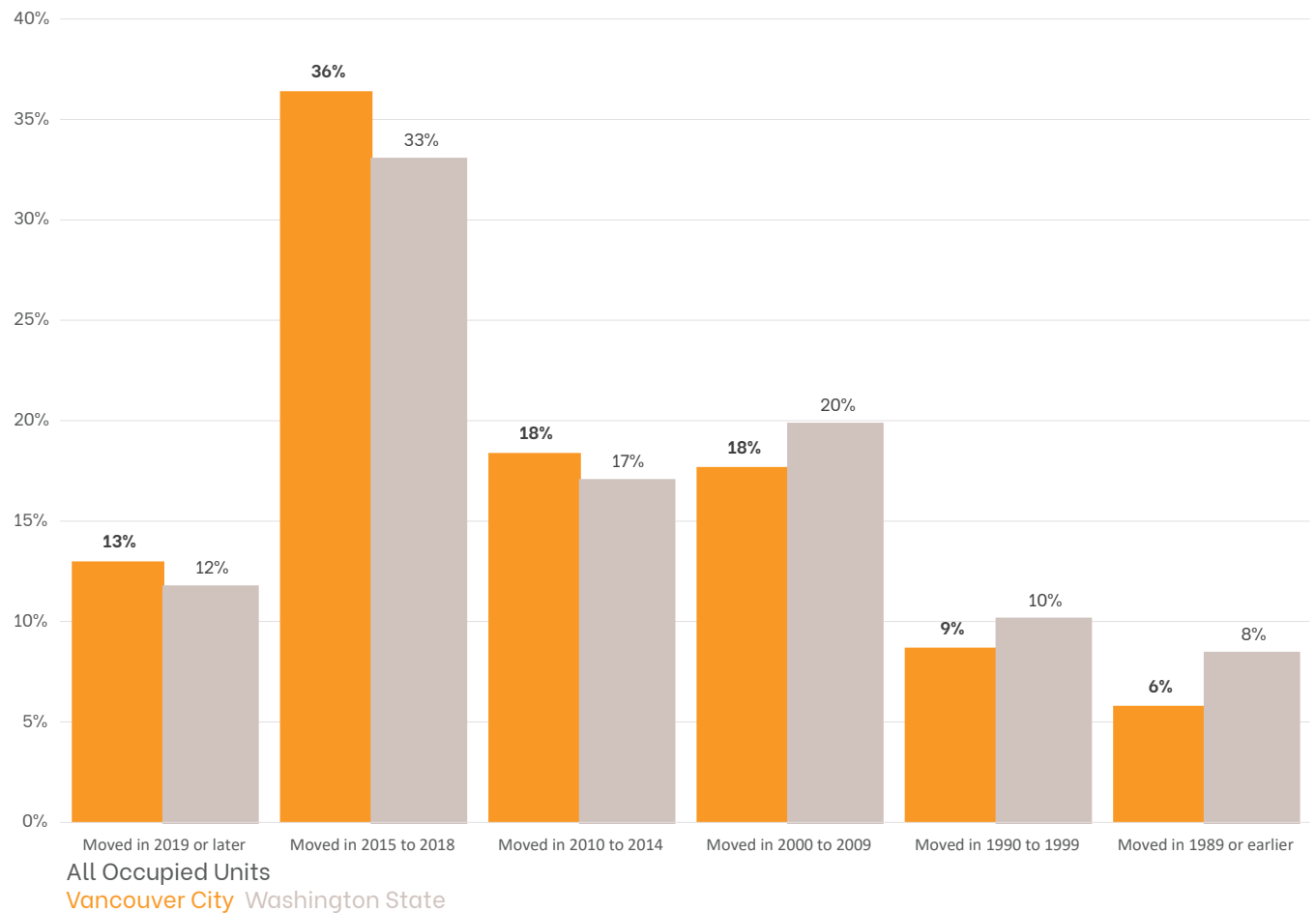


Source: CHAS (Comprehensive Housing Affordability Strategy) dataset based on the American Community Survey 5-year estimates 2015-2019

Compared to Washington State overall, Vancouver residents tend to be more recently moved into their current residence, whether owner- or renter-occupied. The years 2015 to 2018 in particular saw a relatively high number of move-ins to Vancouver, much of it owner-occupied. This three year period alone accounts for over one-quarter of owner-occupied housing in Vancouver.

Compared to the State, Vancouver residents are slightly more likely to have moved recently.

Exhibit 23 Year householder moved into current residence, Vancouver and Washington State (all tenure types)

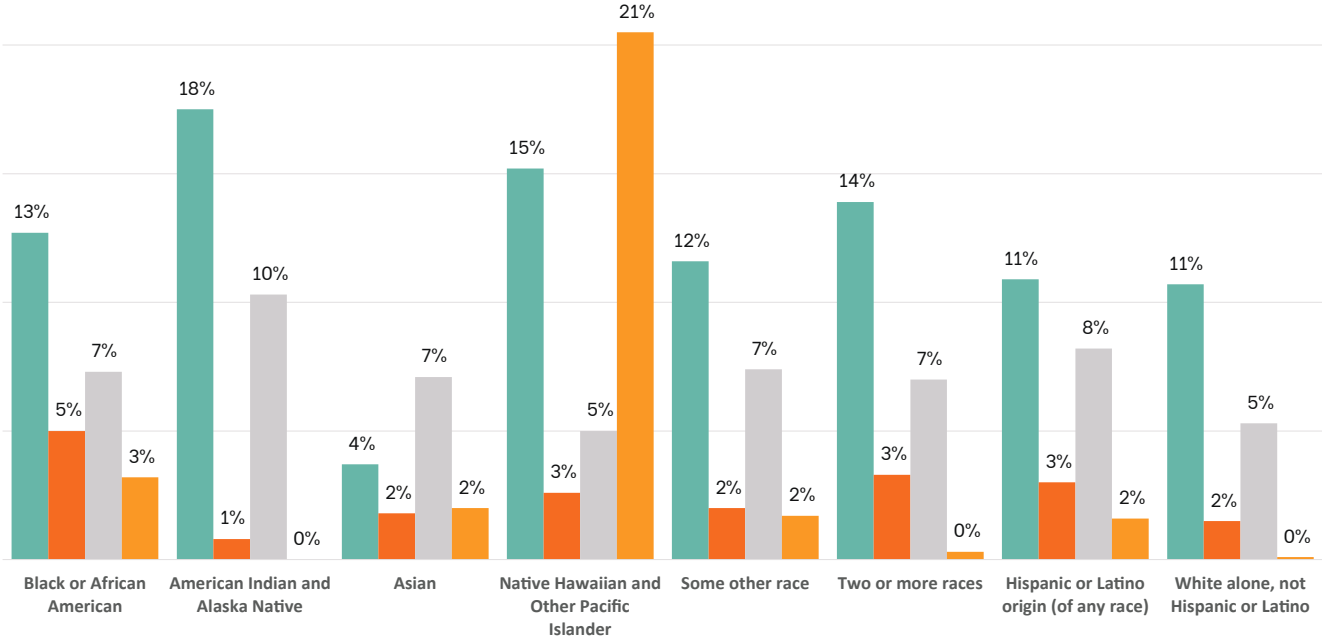


Source: American Community Survey 5-year estimates 2017-2021

Asian and White residents are the most likely to reside in the same place in Vancouver they did in the past year. Other racial groups have higher geographic mobility, through the place of origin varies. For example, American Indian and Alaska Native residents are the most likely to have moved from another place in the same county and the most likely to have moved from another state. Twenty-one percent of Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander residents have moved from abroad in the past year.

Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islanders in Vancouver are one of the fastest growing populations and likely to have moved from abroad.

Exhibit 24 Geographic Mobility, residence one year ago by race



Moved; within same county
 Moved; from different county, same state
 Moved; from different state
 Moved; from abroad

Source: American Community Survey 5-year estimates 2017-2021

Employment and Transportation to Work

Of the population of Vancouver aged 16 and older, 65% are in the labor force, and 61% are employed. The city had an estimated unemployment rate of 5.5% in 2021, roughly the same as statewide figures. People identifying as Native American and Alaska Native (8.5%); of two or more races (8.3%); and Black or African American (8.0%), experience higher rates of unemployment. Women with children under 6 years old only (9.6%) and children under 6 and children between 6 and 17 years (21.4%) also experience higher rates of unemployment. It is important to note that the data source covers a five-year span 2017-2021 which contains the employment impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic which disproportionately affected women workers and workers of color. Emerging data and evidence also indicate that recovery and access to jobs in the post-pandemic workplace has been biased against Black and Indigenous workers.

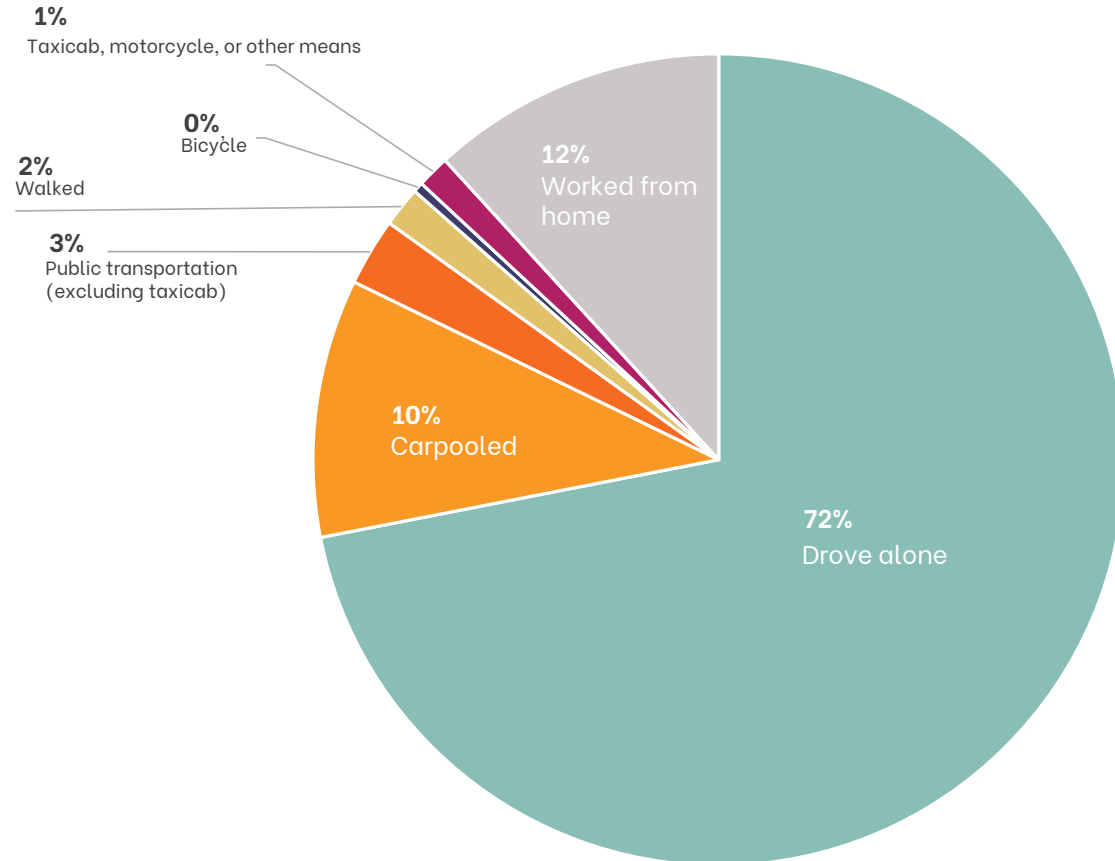
Educational services (21%), and health care and social assistance; Retail trade (12%); Manufacturing (10%); Arts, entertainment, and recreation, and accommodation and food services (10%), are the top four industries by employment.

According to 2019 LEHD Origin Destination Employment Statistics (LODES), only 35% of working Vancouver residents also work in Vancouver. Twenty-two percent (22%) have their place of employment in Portland, OR. The remaining 43% have places of employment nearby such as Camas (3%) and as far away as Seattle, WA (2%). It is important to note the LEHD data is based on administrative records such as unemployment insurance reporting connecting place of residence and place of employment. These numbers reflect both commuters and those who are working remotely. They also do not include self-employed workers who are more likely to work from home.

Unlike the LEHD, the American Community Survey is based on self-reported respondent experiences. Based on 2021 ACS data, the Vancouver workforce largely commutes by car, 72% driving alone and another 10% carpooling. Twelve percent of the workforce works from home.

83% of workers take a motorized vehicle to work, alone or using a taxi or carpool.

Exhibit 25 Means of transportation to work for workers aged 16 and over

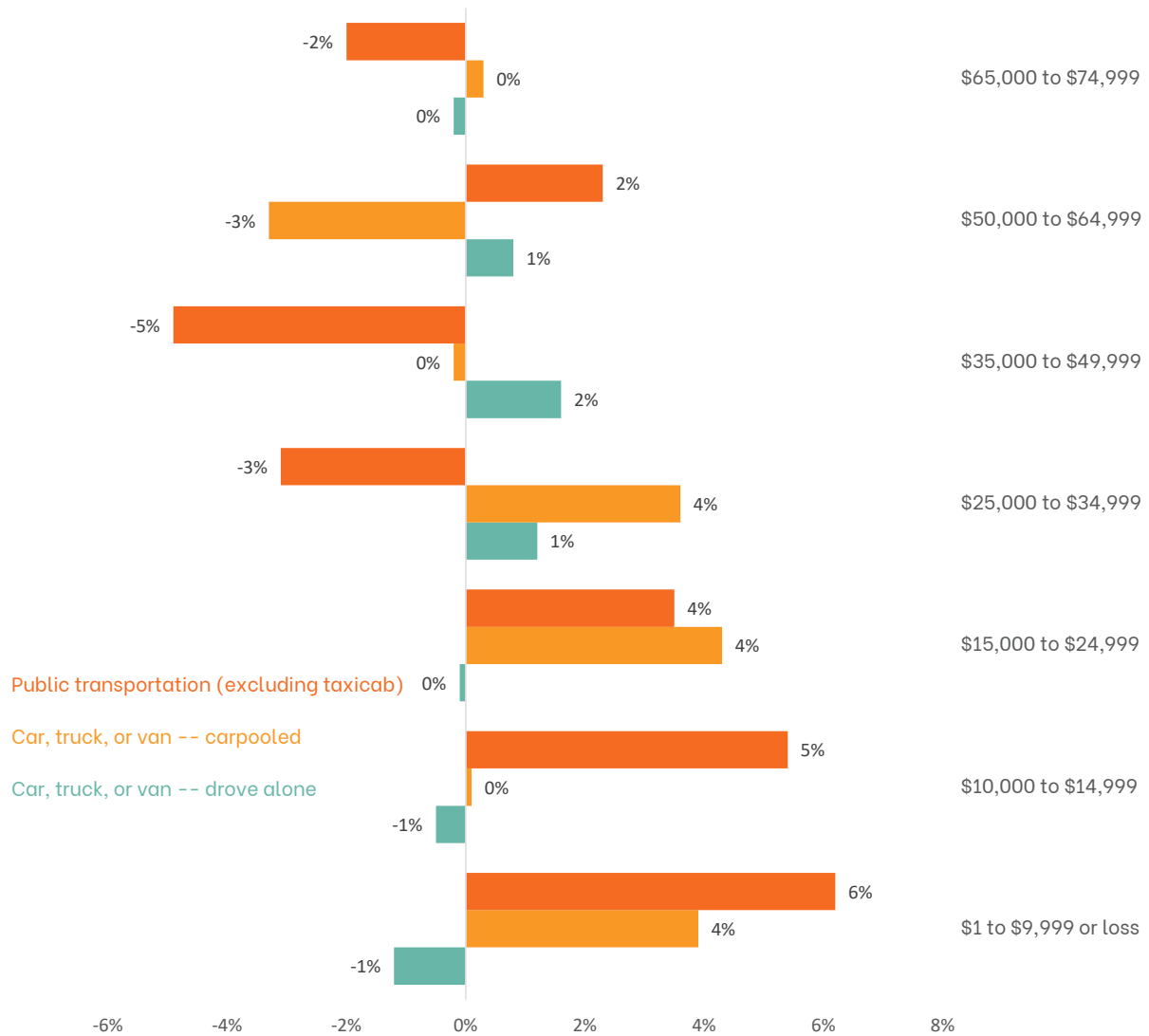


Source: American Community Survey 5 year estimates 2017-2021

Relative to their share of the overall population of workers, white workers are the least likely to take public transportation or to carpool, and the most likely to drive alone. Asian workers are also unlikely to take public transportation relative to their share of the total population, but slightly more likely to carpool. The groups most likely to use public transportation are those of two or more races, some other race or Black or African American. There is also a pattern by earnings. Workers earning \$24,999 a year or less are more likely to take public transportation than would be expected by their share of the population, and higher income workers are less likely. Carpooling is also relatively more common for workers in the lower earning tiers. Workers around the middle income tiers are the most likely to drive alone to work.

The likelihood of using public transportation to go to work decreases as income increases.

Exhibit 26 Indexed means of transportation to work for workers aged 16 and over, by earnings in the last 12 months

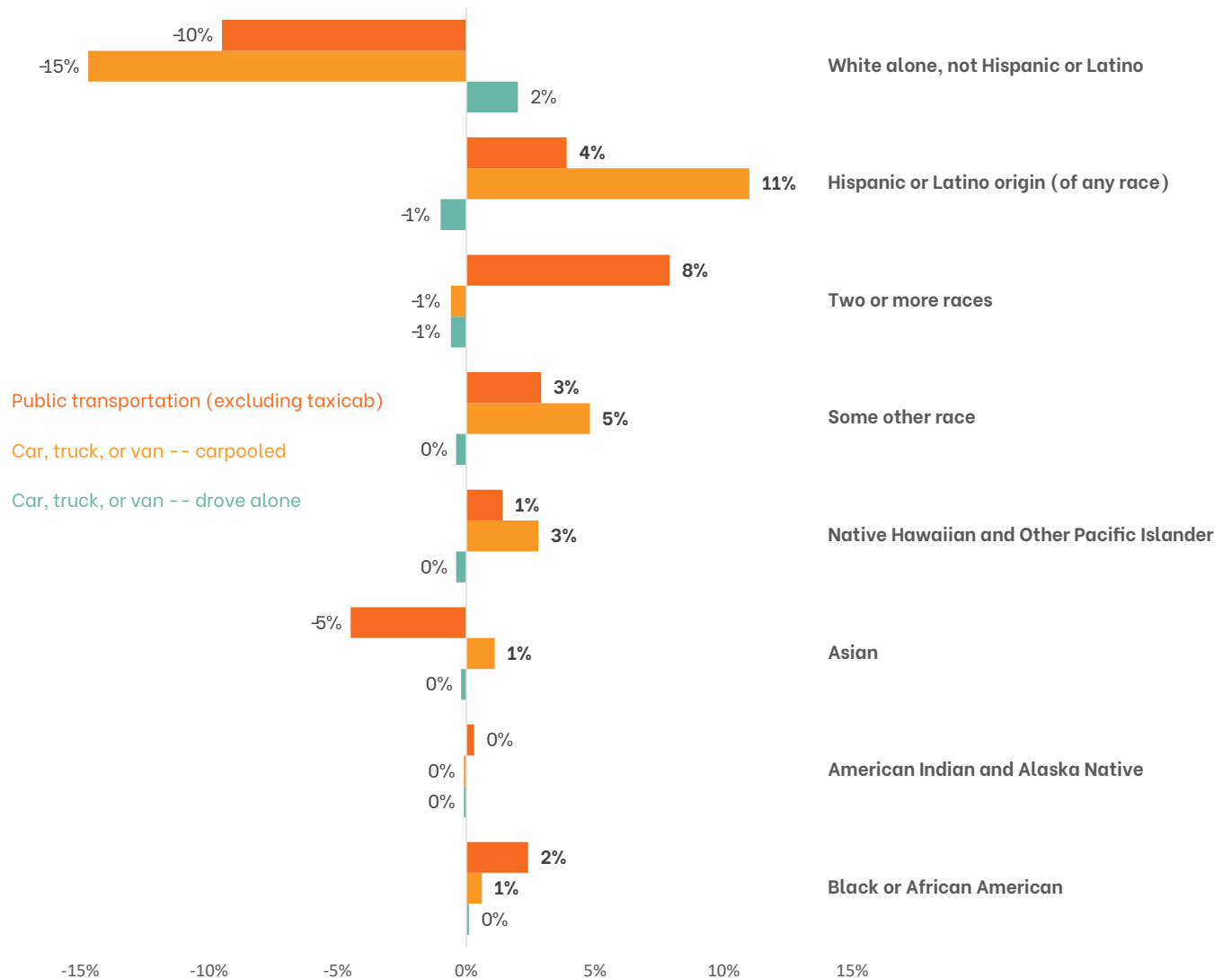


Note: A value of 0 indicates the share of that group using that means of transportation is equal to their share in the overall population)

Source: American Community Survey 5 year estimates 2017-2021

The likelihood of using public transportation to go to work is higher among people of color.

Exhibit 27 Indexed means of transportation to work for workers aged 16 and over, by race and ethnicity in the last 12 months



Note: A value of 0 indicates the share of that group using that means of transportation is equal to their share in the overall population)

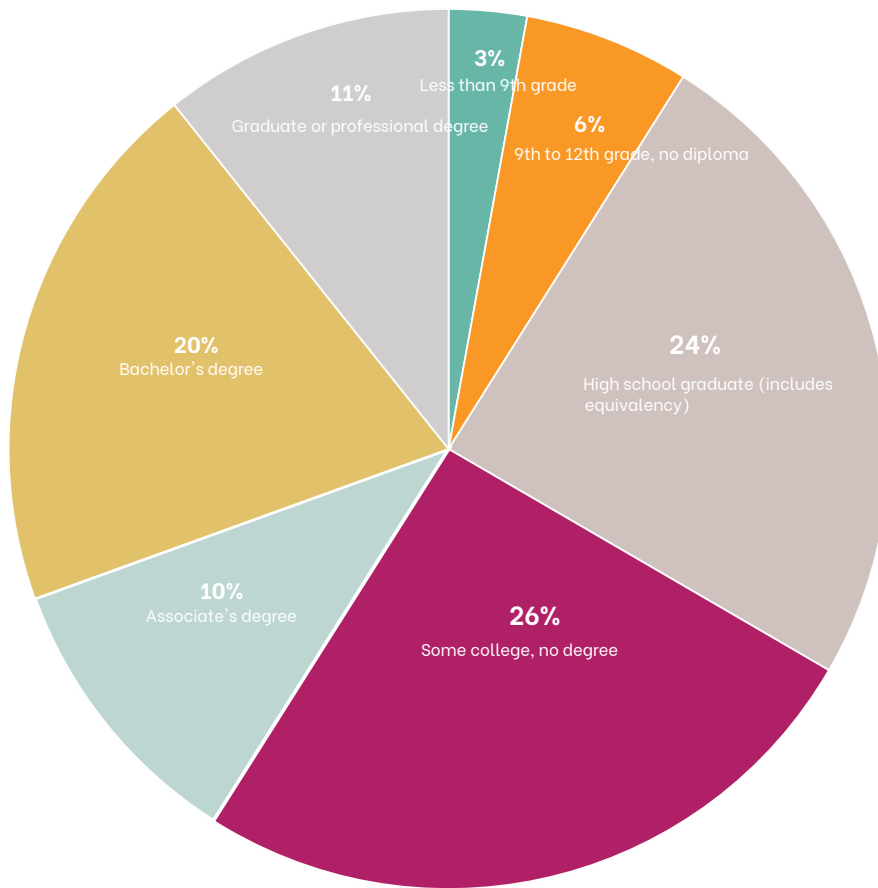
Source: American Community Survey 5 year estimates 2017-2021

Education Access

Ninety-one percent (91%) of Vancouver residents aged 25 or older have a high school diploma or higher level of education. Thirty-one percent (31%) have a Bachelor's degree or higher. One-quarter of the population age 25 or older has some college but no degree and another quarter terminated their education at high school graduation or earlier.

More than one-quarter of residents terminated their education at high school graduation or earlier. Another quarter have some college, but no degree.

Exhibit 28 Educational Attainment Among Residents aged 25-years and older



Source: American Community Survey 5-year estimates 2017-2021

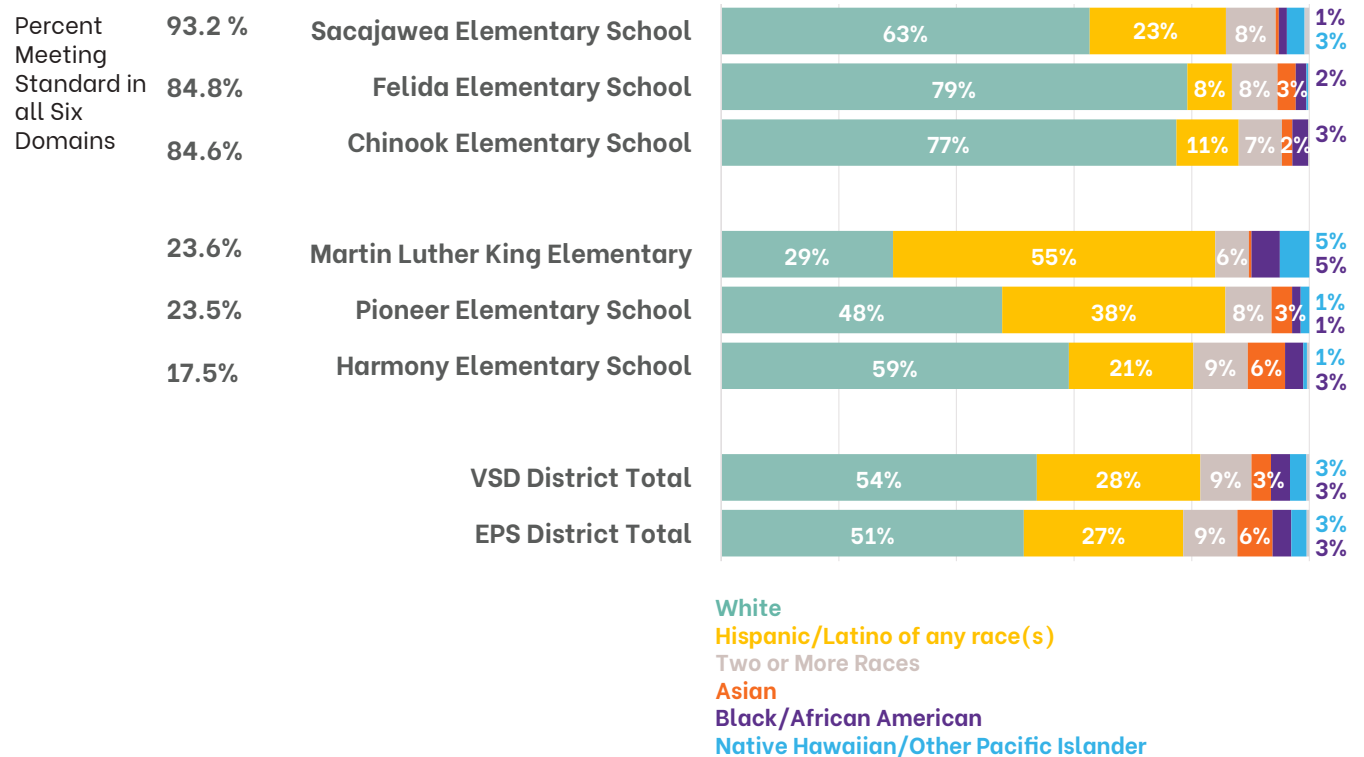
The City of Vancouver is served by two school districts, Vancouver School District and Evergreen Public Schools, both of which also serve portions of Clark County outside of city boundaries. Access to high-quality education within the city and early learning and

childcare system can vary by location within the city and race and ethnicity. The Washington State Office of the Superintendent of Instruction uses an observational whole child assessment to document kindergarten readiness. Six areas of development are assessed: social-emotional, physical, cognitive, language, literacy, and mathematics. Exhibit 29 shows the race and ethnicity composition of the elementary schools with the highest and lowest rates of kindergarten readiness, as measured by the proportion of students observed to be at standard in all six domains. As these assessments are performed early in the school year, they largely reflect a student's experiences and learning before entering public school (rather than school performance per se). At the primary level, school assignments are neighborhood-based in both districts unless a specific exception is granted. Vancouver School District will begin offering two elementary-level school choice programs beginning in the 2023-24 school year. District-wide demographics for Vancouver and Evergreen provide reference points.

The rate of students entering kindergarten fully ready in the top performing school is over five times that of the lowest performing school. White students are much more likely to be in the schools with the highest readiness levels where they comprise about two-thirds to three-quarters of the student population. Hispanic and Latine students are much more likely to be accessing schools in the bottom tiers of kindergarten readiness rates.

There is great disparity in rates of kindergarten readiness among Vancouver elementary schools which are largely neighborhood based.

Exhibit 29 Demographics of Top and Bottom Three Schools by Kindergarten Readiness, 2021-22

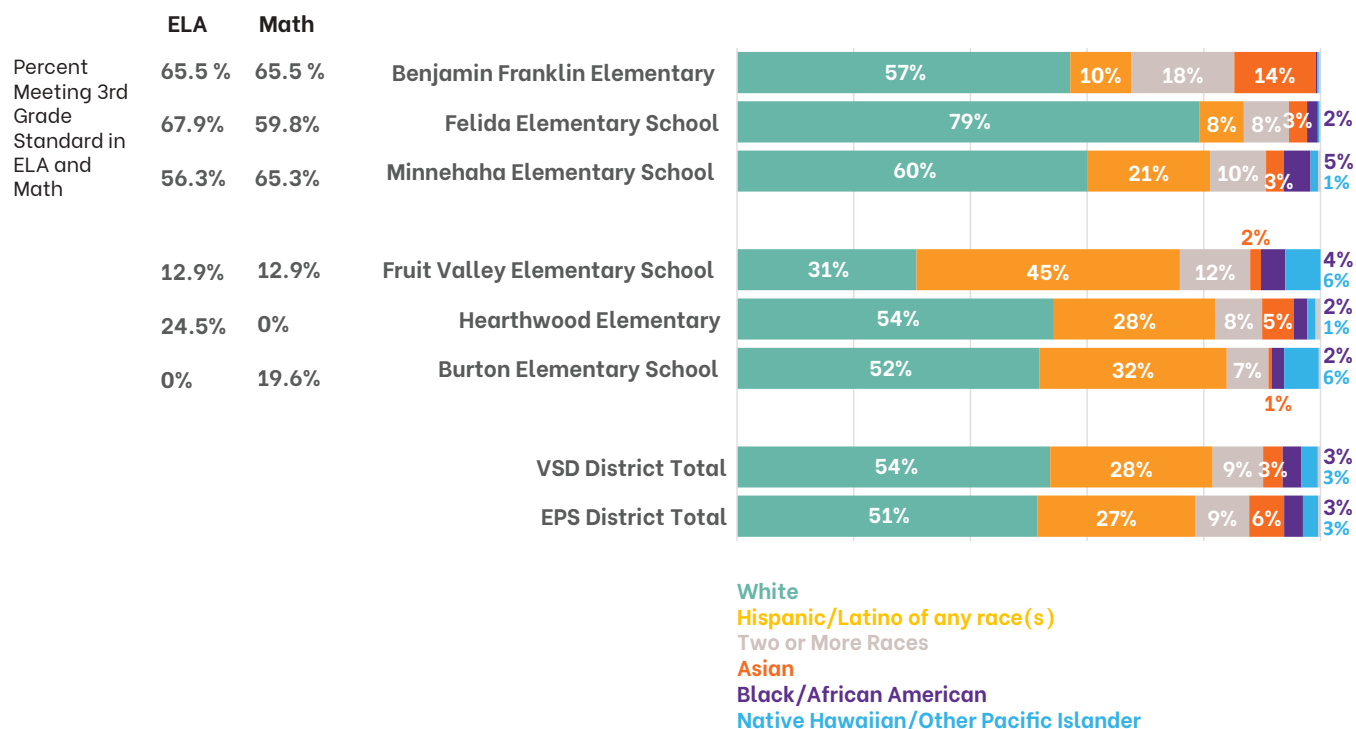


Source: OSPI, 2023

These demographic trends are slightly more pronounced by third grade as shown by proportions of students meeting standard in English Language Arts and Math in Exhibit 30. These assessments are likely to reflect the experiences and resources available to students in the school environment as well as in homes and neighborhoods.

Demographic trends in school performance tend to persist through 3rd grade.

Exhibit 30 Demographics of Top and Bottom Elementary Schools by 3rd Grade Assessment, 2021-22



Source: OSPI, 2023

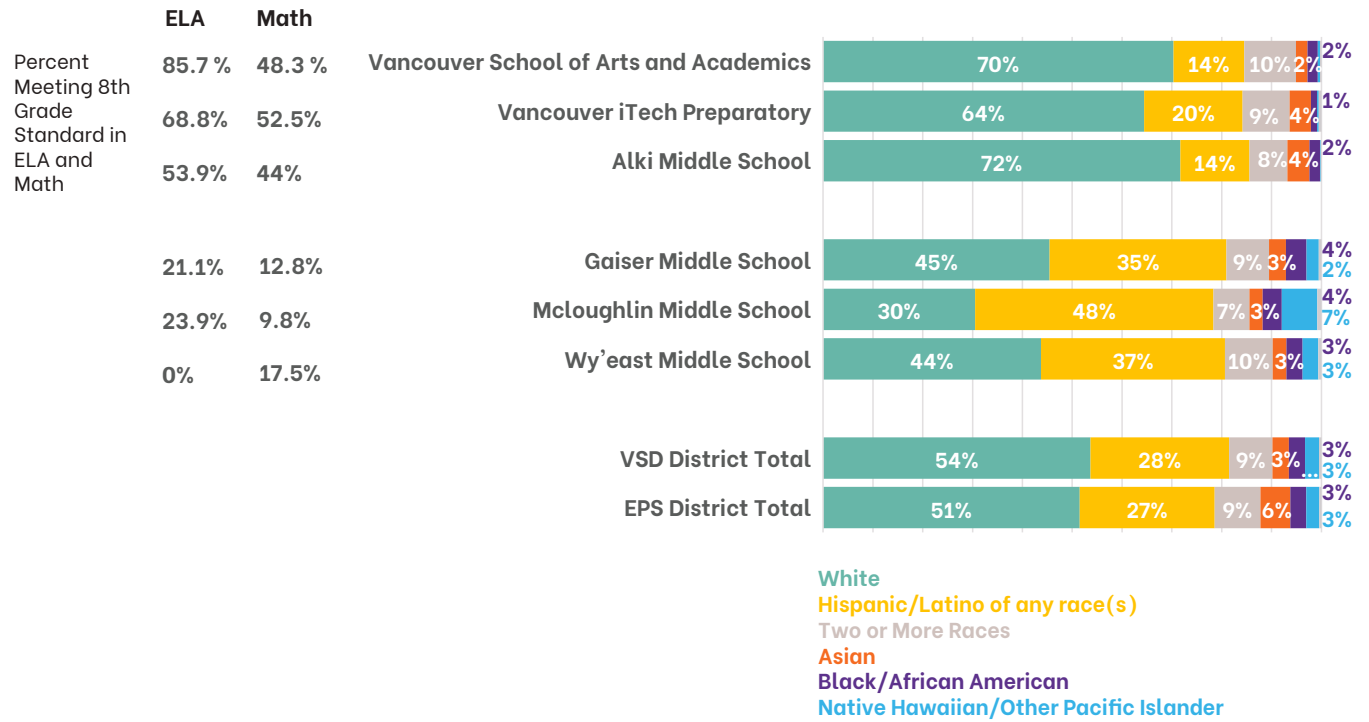
Hispanic/Latine and Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander students continue to be disproportionately attending lower performing schools according to 3rd grade reading and math standards.

School choice, or the ability to attend schools without neighborhood boundaries, is more prevalent in upper levels of education, beginning in the middle school years. The top two performing schools by state 8th grade English Language Arts and Math standards are choice schools with a application processes that prioritize residents in the Vancouver School District, but also admit students from neighboring school districts. While admissions processes are often intended to select students based on merit and demonstrated interest in more specialized education in STEM or Arts, for example, they can unintentionally end up reflecting privilege based on race, income, and other factors outside of student merit and interest. Even in Vancouver’s iTech program where the admissions process includes a lottery, white students

are overrepresented compared to district demographics, while Hispanic/Latine, Black, and Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander students are underrepresented.

White students are overrepresented in the highest performing schools by 8th grade standards.

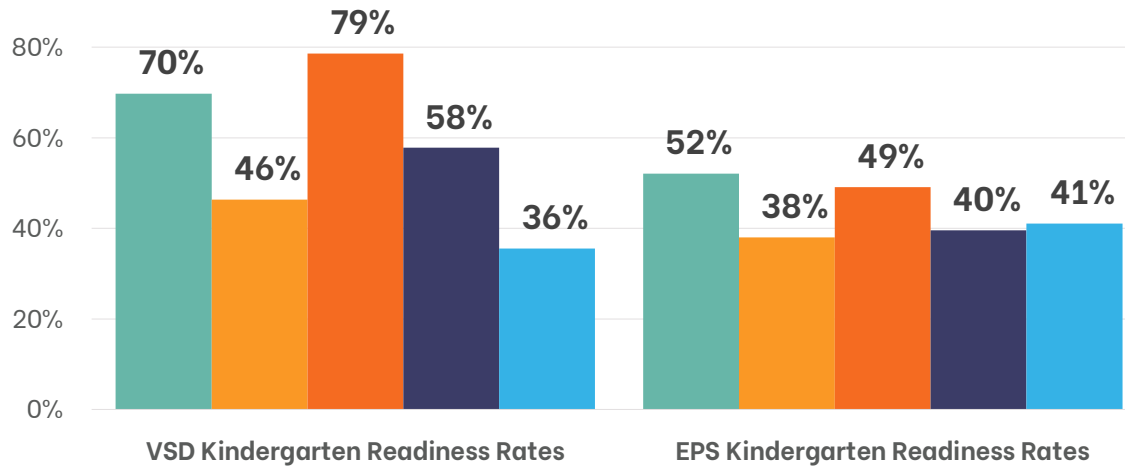
Exhibit 31 Demographics of Top and Bottom Middle Schools by 8th Grade Assessment, 2021-22



Source: OSPI, 2023

Race-based gaps in kindergarten readiness are not as stark as school/neighborhood based gaps

Exhibit 32 Demographics of Students Meeting all Six Domains of Kindergarten Readiness, 2021-22



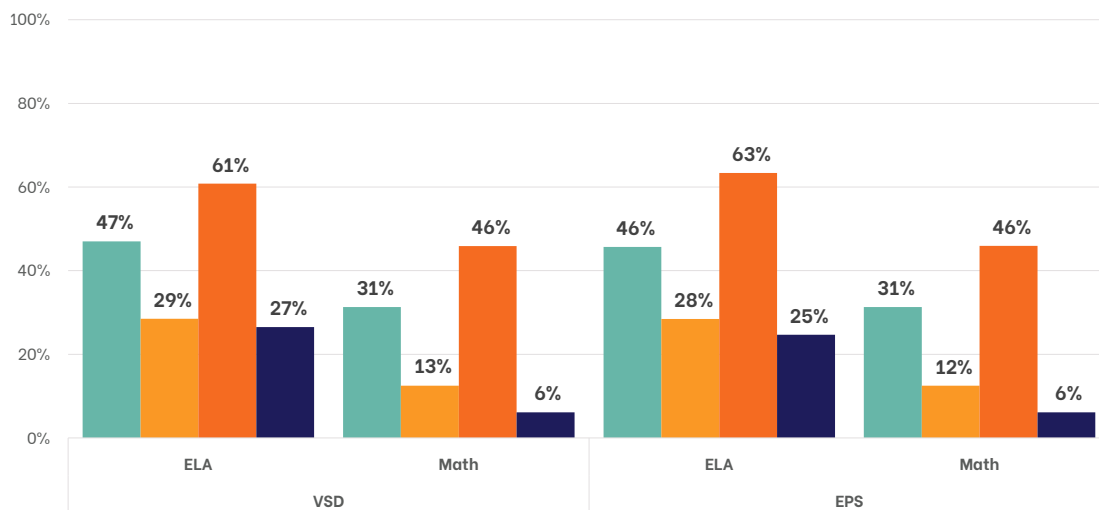
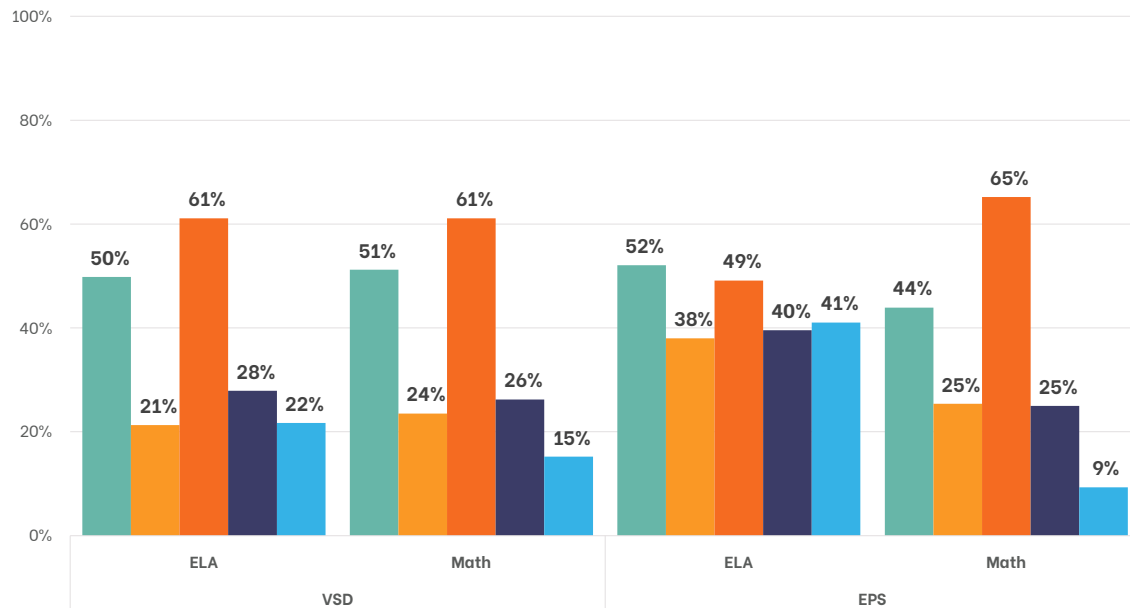
- White
- Hispanic/Latino of any race(s)
- Two or More Races
- Asian
- Black/African American
- Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander

Note: Scores for American Indian/ Alaskan Native students and students of Two or More Races in both grades, and Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islanders in 8th grade are suppressed by OSPI due to small numbers and not shown here.
 Source: OSPI, 2023

Though some slight variation in school readiness according to race and ethnicity are present upon entry to kindergarten (Exhibit 32), a much greater gap is apparent by third and eighth grades (Exhibit 33).

Asian and white students in the Vancouver and Evergreen School Districts are the most likely to meet 3rd grade and 8th grade standards.

Exhibit 33 Demographics of Students Meeting Standard by 3rd Grade and 8th Grade Assessments, 2021-22



■ White
■ Hispanic/Latino of any race(s)
■ Two or More Races
■ Asian
■ Black/African American
■ Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander

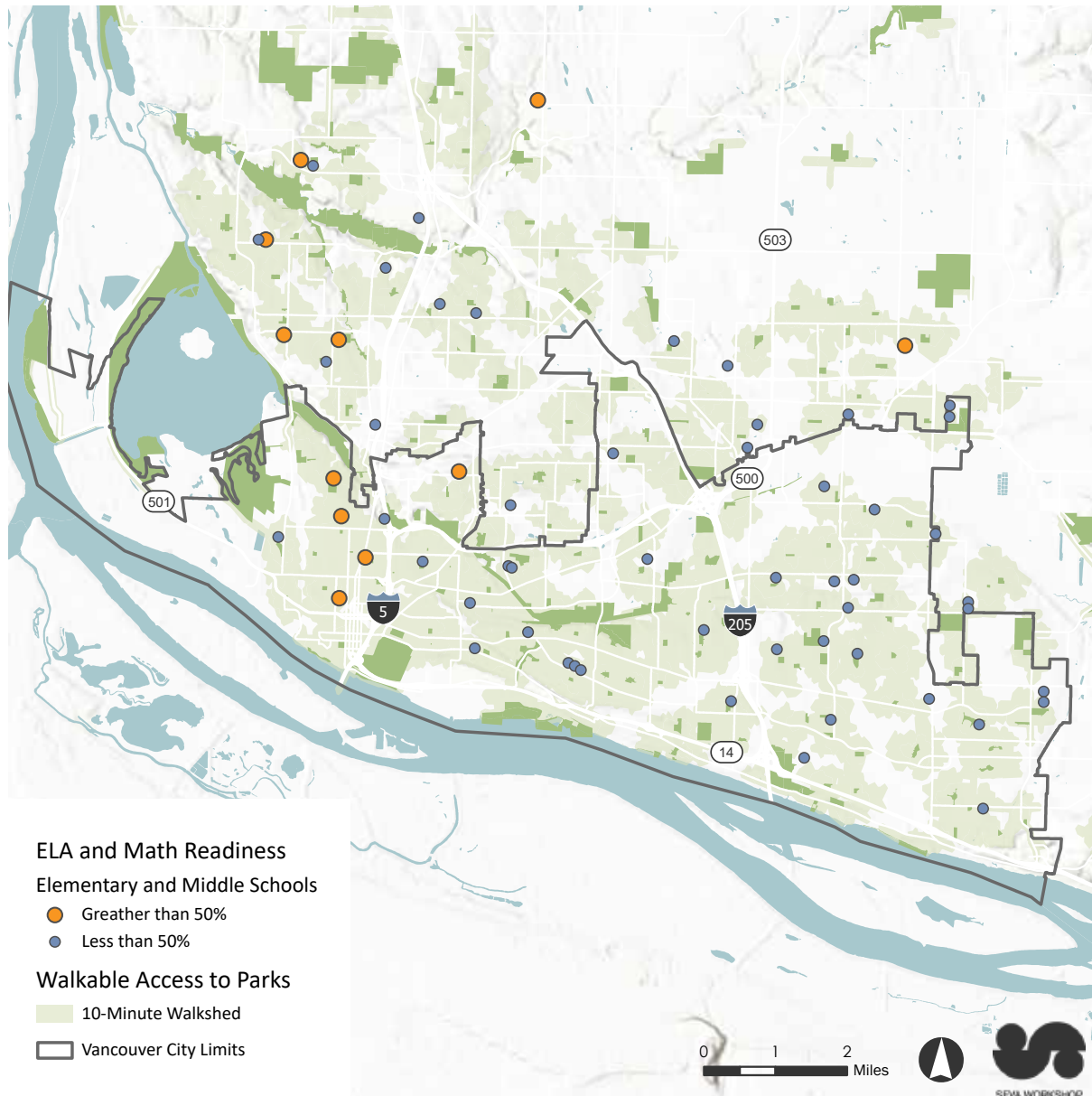
Note: Scores for American Indian/ Alaskan Native students and students of Two or More Races in both grades, and Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islanders in 8th grade are suppressed by OSPI due to small numbers and not shown here.
 Source: OSPI, 2023

Parks and Open Space Access

There are gaps in park access, defined as a 10-minute walkshed, throughout the City of Vancouver. Existing parks are smaller and access gaps are more common in the eastern parts of the City including East Mill Plain. The far western reach of the City between the Columbia River and Vancouver Lake also shows a significant gap in park access.

There are significant pockets of Vancouver outside of 10-minute walk to parks.

Exhibit 34 Areas within walkable access of parks



Source: OSPI, 2023; City of Vancouver, 2023.

Vancouver’s urban tree canopy coverage is estimated at about 19%. Other cities in Washington that have assessed their urban tree canopy have an average coverage of 32%, while the recommended canopy for maximum benefits is 40%. Urban tree canopies help regulate temperatures, reduce air pollutants, and preserve property values among many other social, economic, and aesthetic benefits. Tree canopy is unevenly distributed in the City, with some neighborhoods enjoying 40% coverage or more (Dubois Park, South Cliff) and others 12% or lower (Bennington, Columbia Way, Esther Short).

Vancouver’s tree canopy coverage is about 19%. However, coverage in individual neighborhoods ranges from 9% to 47%.

Exhibit 35 Percent tree canopy coverage by neighborhood

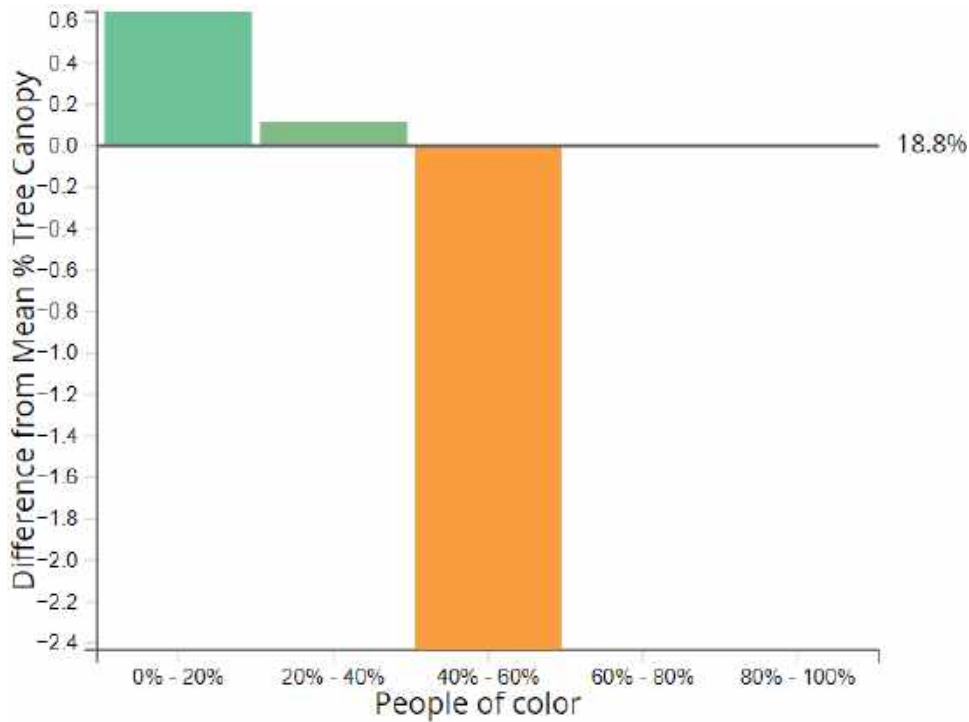
Neighborhoods	Tree Canopy %	Neighborhoods	Tree Canopy %
Airport Green	27%	Marrion	16%
Arnada	18%	Meadow Homes	17%
Bagley Downs	19%	Mountain View	15%
Bella Vista	33%	North Garrison Heights	18%
Bennington	12%	North Hearthwood	20%
Burnt Bridge Creek	19%	North Image	13%
Burton Evergreen	30%	Northcrest	28%
Burton Ridge	20%	Northfield	23%
Carter Park	14%	Northwest	29%
Cascade Highlands	17%	Northwood	34%
Cascade South East	21%	Oakbrook	24%
Central Park	18%	Ogden	19%
Cimarron	19%	Old Evergreen Hwy	35%
Columbia River	31%	Parkside	19%
Columbia Way	12%	Parkway East	15%
Countryside Woods	15%	Riveridge	30%
Dubois Park	40%	Riverview	20%
East Mill Plain	14%	Rose Village	17%
Edgewood Park	30%	Shumway	19%
Ellsworth Springs	29%	South Cliff	47%
Esther Short	9%	Vancouver Heights	22%
Evergreen Highlands	25%	VanMall	17%
Evergreen Shores	26%	Village at Fishers Landing	25%
Fairway/164th Ave.	15%	West Minnehaha	26%
Father Blanchet Park	18%	Wildwood	35%

Source: City of Vancouver, 2021.

Analysis from the Tree Equity Score project demonstrates that block groups housing higher percentages of POC have mean tree canopy 2.2% lower than the citywide average.

Block groups with higher proportions of people of color have 2.4% less tree canopy than the average for the city.

Exhibit 36 Tree canopy coverage in block groups with higher proportions of people of color



Note: Each bar represents the mean tree canopy % for block groups within the specified range of people of color. The amount above or below the thick horizontal line indicates the difference from the area-wide mean canopy %.
 Source: Tree Equity Score, 2023. treeequityscore.org/reports/place/vancouver-wa/#13.43/45.61567/-122.63495

Tree cover is densest in park areas, in central neighborhoods with high cover like Dubois and South Cliff, and along public rights of way. Tree canopy is very sparse along the waterfront in Columbia Way and stretching through Fruit Valley to the westernmost parts of the city. To the east and northeast, pockets around East Mill Plain and Bennington and North Image have very low tree cover.

Parks, rights of way, and certain residential neighborhoods in central Vancouver have the most dense tree canopy.

Exhibit 37 Tree canopy coverage



Source: City of Vancouver, 2021.

Criminal Legal System Outcomes

The Equity Team has prioritized reparative policies for a racist history in land use, housing, and the criminal legal system. A few key statistics from recent analysis in the City of Vancouver and Clark County highlight race-based disparities, though a full accounting of the criminal legal system is beyond the scope of this analysis.

The 2021 Report to the Washington Supreme Court, Race and Washington's Criminal Justice System examined disproportionate use of force outcomes in the City of Vancouver as a case study. The report found that "For uses of force in 2020, relative to Vancouver City demographics, a Black person is 10.6 times more likely than a White person to be the subject of police use of force; a Pacific Islander is 2.7 times more likely. A Latina/o person is about as likely to be the recipient of force as a White person, and an Asian person and an Indigenous person was 0.7 times as likely as a White person to be subjected to force" Vancouver had the highest disproportionality in use of force on Black people among the four case study cities of Seattle, Spokane, Tacoma, and Vancouver.

The report also demonstrates race and ethnicity-based biases in the criminal legal system at the state and county level from policing, prosecution, sentencing, incarceration and re-entry. Counties with lower proportions of Black residents are found to have higher disproportionalities. For example, "Clark County, where 86.1 percent of the population is White and 2.4 percent is Black, the percentage of Black drivers charged with DWLS3 (Driving with License Suspended) between 2010-2020 comprised roughly five to six times their percentage in the county's population and showed an upward trend during the decade. In comparison, the percentage of charges brought against White drivers reflected well below the 86.1 percent of White residents living in Clark County and showed a downward trend over the same ten-year period."

Engagement Themes

As part of Our Vancouver, the City of Vancouver’s comprehensive plan update process, the City began conducting outreach and engagement to the community in early 2023 to gain a better understanding of planning priorities among community members. Outreach was primarily conducted as part of existing City events from the spring through fall of 2023. More information about this outreach can be found on the project’s website: www.beheardvancouver.org/plan2045. Common themes that emerged during outreach include housing, transportation, accessibility of services, and parks and green space.

Housing

Housing-related comments were one of the most common comment themes that emerged during engagement. Community members expressed the need for more housing, more options for different types of housing, and the need to provide housing for those experiencing homelessness and supportive services for those who are at risk of losing housing. Community members also expressed concerns about the affordability of housing and the increasing cost of housing, especially compared to the cost of living.

Relevant Equity Analysis Findings

- Housing and Mobility (pg 36)

Transportation

Many community members commented on transportation issues, including the state of repair of roadways, the need for better and more efficient transportation options, and safety improvements for pedestrians and bicyclists. Suggestions for improved transportation options included improving the viability and efficiency of bus

transit compared to driving, expanding C-Tran routes (including to new developments, Battle Ground, and to Portland via light-rail). Community members also pointed to the lack of bicycle safety in various parts of the City as reasons why they feel compelled to drive to frequent destinations like the grocery store or school. Lack of pedestrian safety and ADA accessibility on sidewalks was cited as a barrier to using local bus stops. Some community members also cited speeding as a pedestrian and bicycle safety issue.

Community members also expressed interest in increased micro-mobility options like scooters and e-bike hubs.

Relevant Equity Analysis Findings

- Employment and Transportation to Work (pg 45)

Accessibility of Services

Community members expressed support for walkable neighborhoods with more amenities. Community members frequently identified large or unused parking lots as opportunities to add valuable retail, housing, or green space. Desire for locally-owned, affordable small businesses was also a common theme in responses. Community members also expressed a desire for more third spaces in their communities (i.e., spaces to meet others outside of where they work or live).

Relevant Equity Analysis Findings

- Food Access (pg 33)
- Education Access (pg 50)

Parks and Green Space

Community members frequently commented that they feel a sense of belonging and connection to the various public spaces and amenities in Vancouver. Participants mentioned city parks, community centers, the downtown library, farmers markets, downtown businesses, and the waterfront as their favorite places to find and build community. People also expressed desire for more paths and trails, facilities and activities for youth (including indoor activity spaces), and gardens and green spaces. A few people identified specific parks like Chelea Anderson Memorial Park as

great examples of what they would like to see in other parts of the City, including East Vancouver. Comments about increasing the tree canopy across the city were also common, citing heat and lack of shade as concerns.

Relevant Equity Analysis Findings

- Parks and Open Space Access (pg 57)

ENDNOTES

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