Economic Inclusion in Grand Rapids

Data Update

APRIL 2020
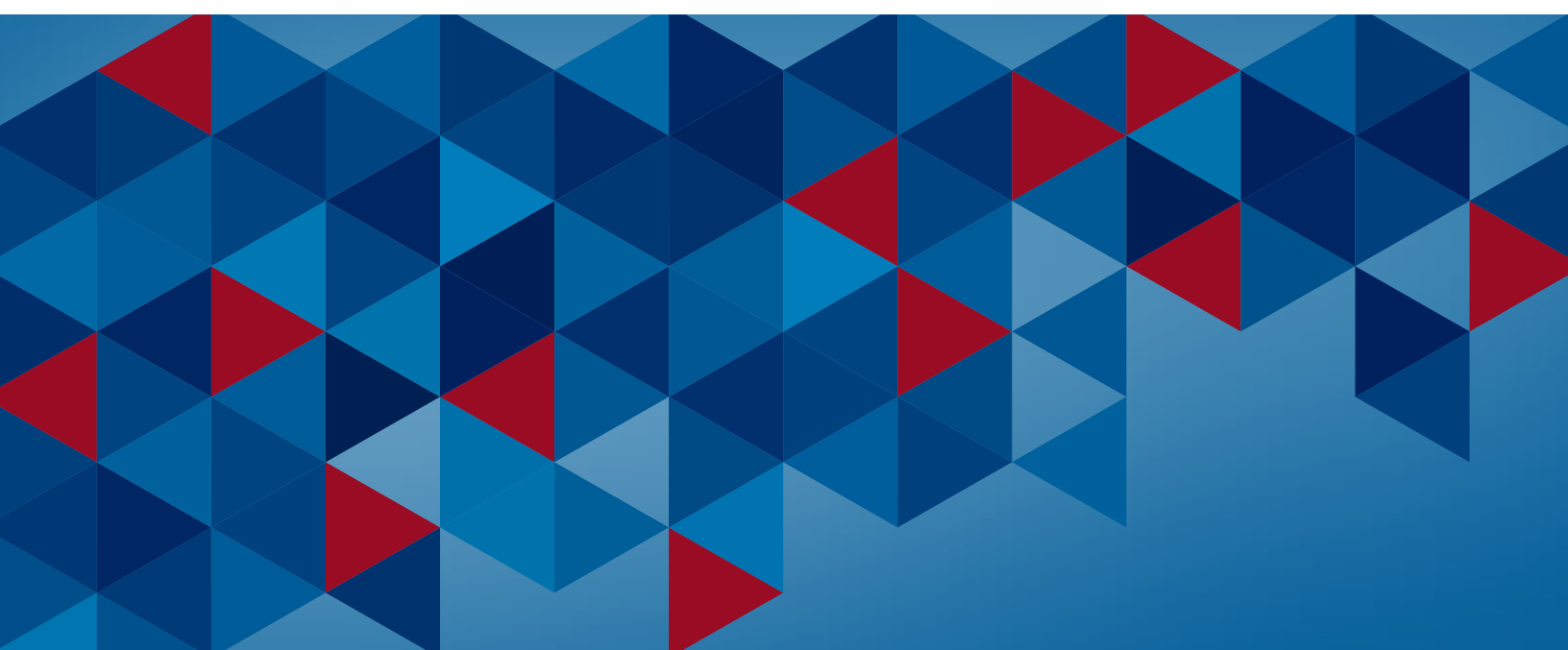
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Introduction

This report presents an updated review of progress toward economic inclusion in the Grand Rapids, Mich. area. It summarizes the changes between data reported by Dr. Mark White of the Center for Regional Analysis at George Mason University and the Center for Regional Economic Competitiveness in *Addressing Economic Inclusion in Grand Rapids* (2016) and the most recently available data obtained from public sources — primarily comparing data from 2014 to 2018. Data are displayed in various geographic groupings and disaggregated by demographic characteristics for comparison. This report, sponsored by the W.K. Kellogg Foundation (WKKF), is intended to aid ongoing strategy development for promoting inclusive growth in the Grand Rapids area.

Key Findings

- Three main demographic shifts occurred from 2014 to 2018 in the WKKF Neighborhoods of Focus, a contiguous group of census tracts near the south and west sides of Grand Rapids:

    1) a decrease in the number of residents identifying as Black or African American;

    2) an increase in residents identifying as White, not Hispanic or Latino; and Some Other Race; and

    3) an increase in degree attainment. However, 26.2% of Neighborhoods of Focus residents still lacked a high school diploma or equivalent, compared to 9.7% in Kent County and 13.4% in the city of Grand Rapids.

Figure 1: WKKF Neighborhoods of Focus
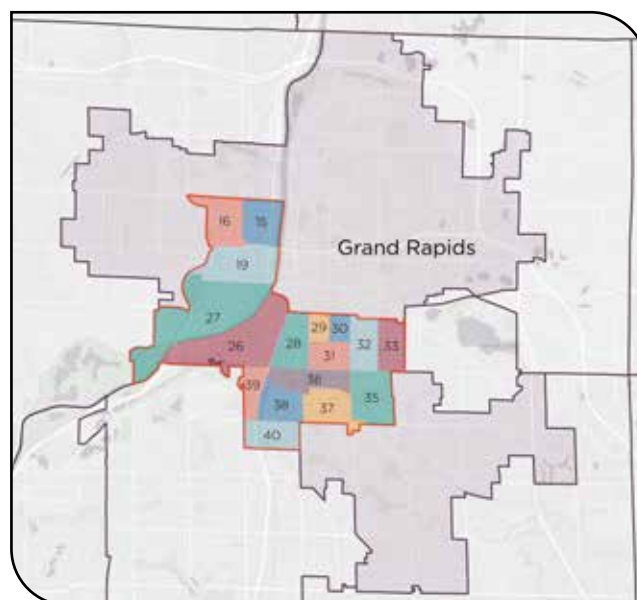
INCREASE
in residents identifying as "White, not Hispanic or Latino" and residents identifying as "Some Other Race"

DECREASE
in residents identifying as "Black or African American"

INCREASE
in residents attaining Associate or Bachelor's Degrees

Key Findings (continued)

- Neighborhoods of Focus residents continued to be younger than the city and county as a whole.

- Since 2014, most of the census tracts in the Neighborhoods of Focus have seen a decline in homeownership.

- While the number houses for sale in the Neighborhoods of Focus increased more quickly and while housing prices tend to be lower in the Neighborhoods of Focus than the city and county overall, the median sale price in the Neighborhoods of Focus more than doubled from $61,000 in 2014 to $127,700 in 2019 — a higher rate than both the city and the county overall.

- Poverty rates in the Neighborhoods of Focus, city, and county have declined since 2014, though Neighborhoods of Focus residents were more likely to experience poverty than city residents overall. Poverty rates fell especially for Black or African American residents.

- Five census tracts in the Neighborhoods of Focus have enjoyed large increases in median household income since 2014.

- Unemployment rates dropped, in some places drastically, from 2014 to 2018 across all geographies and educational levels, and nearly all racial and ethnic groups. Yet, the unemployment rates across all racial and ethnic groups in the Neighborhoods of Focus remained higher compared to the city and county as a whole.

- Black or African American residents in the Neighborhoods of Focus were more than twice as likely to be unemployed than White residents.

- Since 2014, there has been an increase in the proportion of the workforce with post-secondary degrees. Interestingly, there was also a rise in the proportion of the workforce with less than a high school diploma.

- In nearly all workforce sectors, the proportion of people of color in the workforce rose slightly. This rise mirrored the overall county population, which became slightly more diverse.

- Although the Grand Rapids-Kentwood, Mich. Metropolitan Statistical Area's gross domestic product continued to grow, the region's wellbeing did not grow uniformly.

INCREASE
in median household income

DECREASE
in unemployment rates

DECREASE
in poverty rates

INTRODUCTION

This report presents an updated review of progress toward economic inclusion in the Grand Rapids, Mich. area. It summarizes the changes between data reported by Dr. Mark White of the Center for Regional Analysis at George Mason University and the Center for Regional Economic Competitiveness in *Addressing Economic Inclusion in Grand Rapids* (2016) and the most recently available data — primarily comparing data from 2014 to 2018. Data included in this report were obtained from the following sources:

- U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis (BEA),

- U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS),

- U.S. Census Bureau's American Community Survey (ACS),

- U.S. Census Bureau's Longitudinal Employer-Household Dynamics (LEHD) Origin-Destination Employment Statistics (LODES), and

- U.S. Census Bureau's Quarterly Workforce Indicators (QWI).

This report, sponsored by the W.K. Kellogg Foundation (WKKF), is intended to aid ongoing strategy development for promoting inclusive growth in the Grand Rapids area. Data are presented in various geographic groupings, such as the WKKF Neighborhoods of Focus (a contiguous group of census tracts near the south and west sides of Grand Rapids), the city of Grand Rapids, Kent County, and the state of Michigan.[1] This presentation places the micro-level data in context of larger geographies to compare how well residents of each area are doing relative to those in the surrounding region. Data are also disaggregated by demographic characteristics, such as age, race and ethnicity, and educational level. This disaggregation allows for comparison between groups.

A Note About Race & Ethnicity Classifications in This Report

The U.S. Census Bureau collects data on race and ethnicity using two separate questions: 1) on race with the following options: American Indian or Alaska Native, Asian, Black or African American, Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander, and White and 2) on ethnicity with the following options, at minimum: Hispanic or Latino and Not Hispanic or Latino.[2]

As people identifying as of Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin may identify as of any race, the race and ethnicity categories presented in this report were derived using a combination of data from these two questions to represent changes specific to the Hispanic and Latino communities. These categories are further defined in the data figures that appear in this report.

Residents identifying as American Indian or Alaska Native or Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander each made up less than one percent of the population living within the Neighborhoods of Focus. Though Native American communities face deep challenges and barriers to inclusion, they are absent from the analysis presented here because the sample size is too small. Local data sources and the lived experiences of diverse residents should supplement the data provided in this report to more fully represent the state of equity in Grand Rapids, including our native communities.

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[1] Specifically, the WKKF Neighborhoods of Focus are defined as Kent County census tracts 15, 16, 19, 26, 30, 31, 32, 33, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, and 40. See Figure 1: WKKF Neighborhoods of Focus.

[2] For more information on the U.S. Census Bureau's classification of race and ethnicity, please see: https://www.census.gov/topics/population/race/about.html and https://www.census.gov/topics/population/hispanic-origin/about.html.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Population Demographics

Age

There has been little to no change in the age distribution of residents in the Neighborhoods of Focus, Grand Rapids, or Kent County since 2014. The ACS 2018 data showed the continued trend of higher proportions of younger residents in the Neighborhoods of Focus than the city and county as a whole.

Data Source: U.S. Census Bureau ACS (2014 and 2018)

Race & Ethnicity

Grand Rapids and Kent County has become slightly more diverse since 2014 with small changes in the racial and ethnic makeup of their residents. In the Neighborhoods of Focus, most notably, the percentage of the population who identified as Black or African American decreased from 33.0% to 27.6%. The percentage of the population who identified as White, not Hispanic or Latino, increased slightly from 30.6% to 33.5%, and the percentage of the population who identified as Some Other Race roughly doubled from 7.4% to 14.6%. Data for residents in the Neighborhoods of Focus, Grand Rapids, and Kent County in 2014 and 2018 can be seen in Appendix A, Table 1.

Figure 2: Race & Ethnicity in Neighborhoods of Focus

Data Source for all 2014 data: U.S. Census Bureau ACS (2014)

Data Source for all 2018 data: U.S. Census Bureau ACS (2018)

The "Hispanic or Latino" category includes people who identify as of Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin. People identifying as Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin may identify as any race.

The "White, not Hispanic or Latino" category represents data on people who identify as "White" but not of Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin.

Educational Attainment

The Neighborhoods of Focus, Grand Rapids, and Kent County all saw an increase in the percentage of residents with an associate degree, an increase in the percentage of residents with a bachelor's degree, and little to no change in the percentage of residents with graduate and professional degrees. The Neighborhoods of Focus had lower levels of educational attainment than the city and county overall. The ACS 2018 data estimated that one in four Neighborhoods of Focus residents lacked a high school diploma (or equivalent), and that more than half of those without a high school diploma had less than a 9th grade education. While degree attainment for Neighborhoods of Focus residents increased, only 19.8% of residents had a bachelor's degree or higher, compared to 35.6% for all of Grand Rapids. Data for residents in Grand Rapids and Kent County in 2014 and 2018 can be seen in Appendix A, Table 2.

Figure 3: Educational Attainment in Neighborhoods of Focus

Data Source for all 2014 data: U.S. Census Bureau ACS (2014)
Data Source for all 2018 data: U.S. Census Bureau ACS (2018)
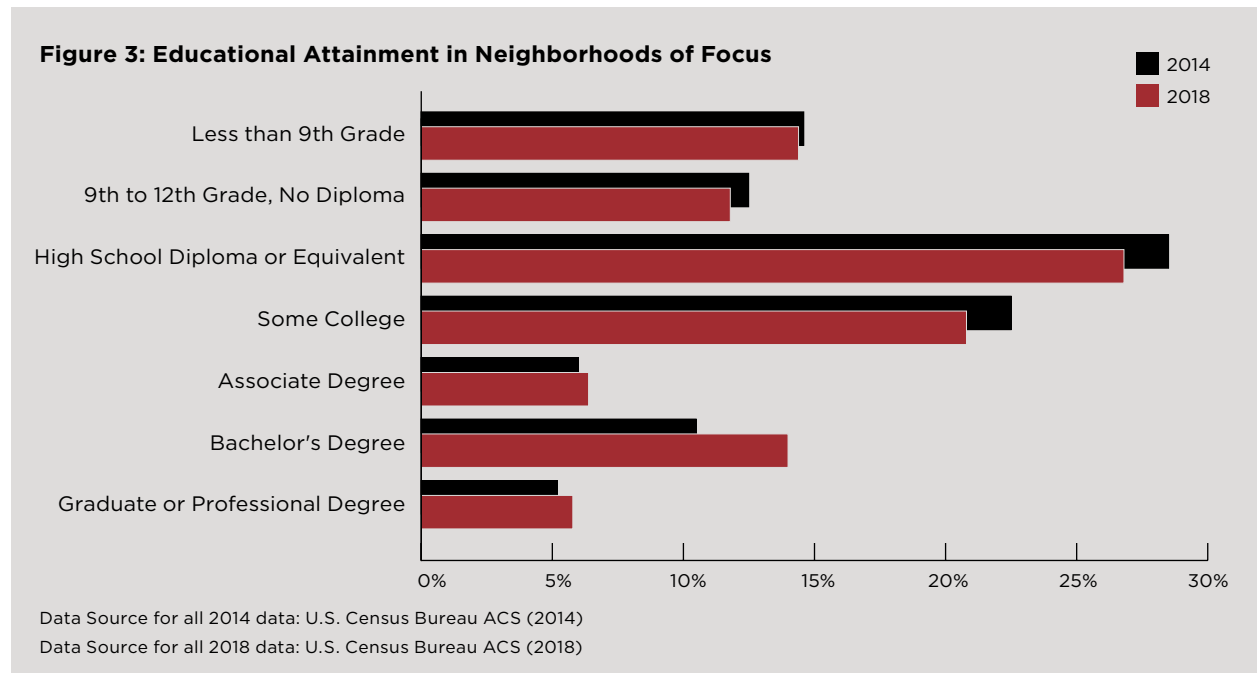
Summary

Three main demographic shifts occurred from 2014 to 2018 in the WKKF Neighborhoods of Focus, a contiguous group of census tracts near the south and west sides of Grand Rapids:

1) a decrease in the number of residents identifying as Black or African American;

2) an increase in residents identifying as White, not Hispanic or Latino, and residents identifying as Some Other Race; and

3) an increase in degree attainment.

Suggested Discussion Questions

• What conditions may have contributed to these shifts?

• How have these shifts impacted the community?

• What strategies could address the shifts?

However, 26.2% of Neighborhoods of Focus residents still lacked a high school diploma or equivalent, compared to 9.7% in Kent County and 13.4% in the city of Grand Rapids. Additionally, Neighborhoods of Focus residents continued to be younger than the city and county overall.

Owner-Occupied Housing and Housing Sales

Owner-Occupied Housing

Since 2014, 11 of the 17 census tracts in the Neighborhoods of Focus saw a decline in homeownership. The largest decrease in owner-occupied housing was 10.8% (census tract 36). In 2018, the lowest rate of owner-occupied houses was 16.8% (census tract 28), and the highest rate was 68.8% (census tract 33). Those census tracts also had the lowest and highest rates respectively in 2014. Maps of the percentage of housing that was owner occupied in the Neighborhoods of Focus in 2014 and 2018, and of the change between the two years, can be seen in appendices B, C, and D.
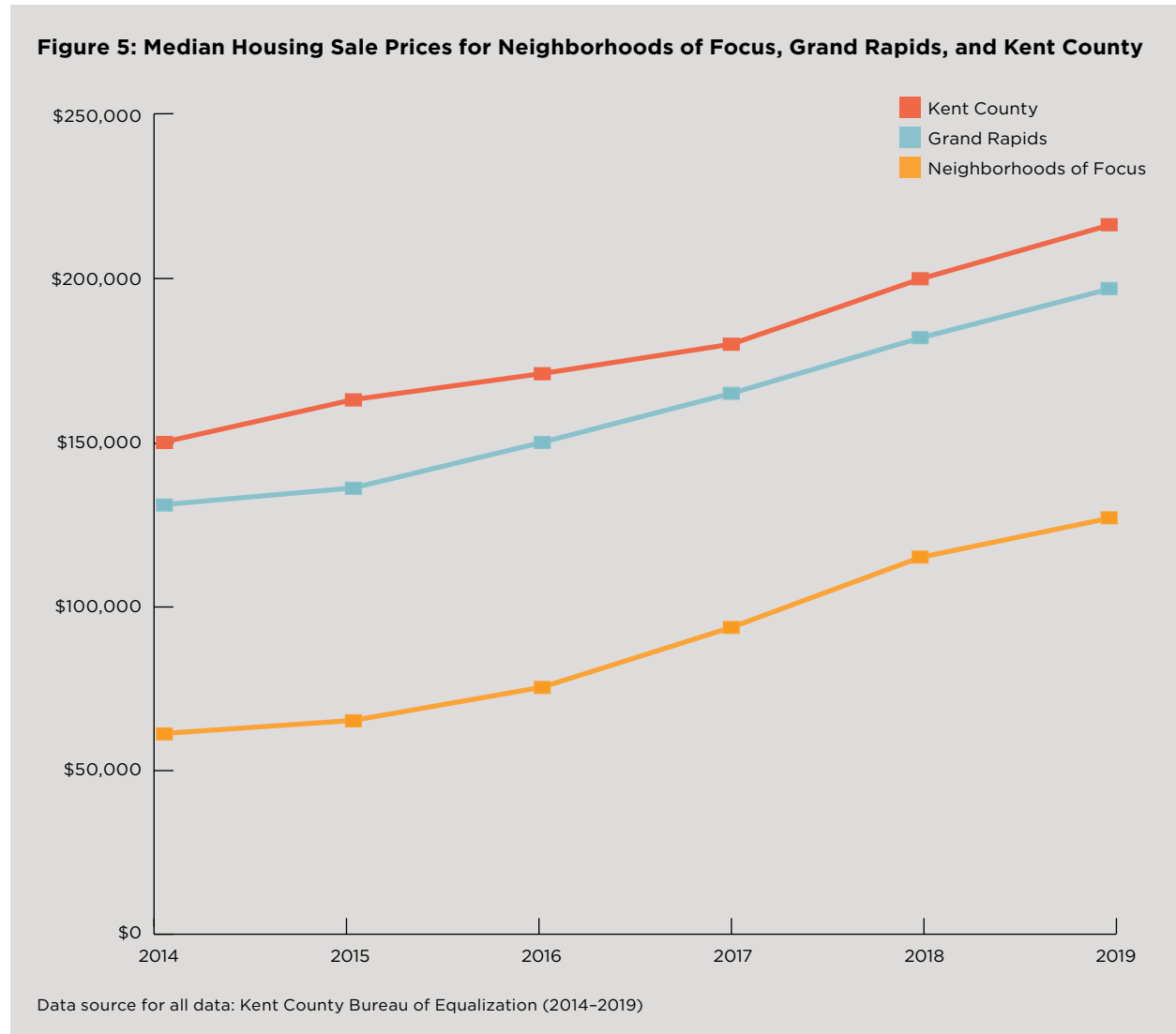
Data Source: U.S. Census Bureau ACS (2014 and 2018)

Figure 4:
Change in Percentage of Households that are Owner-Occupied in the Neighborhoods of Focus

Housing Sales[3]

Housing sales across the Neighborhoods of Focus, city, and county steadily increased in price between 2014 and 2019. While sales in the Neighborhoods of Focus tend to be lower cost, they rose at a higher rate than the city and county. The median sale price in the Neighborhoods of Focus more than doubled from $61,000 in 2014 to $127,700 in 2019, while the median sale price in Grand Rapids increased about one and a half times from $130,900 to $197,000, and Kent County increased nearly one and a half times from $150,000 to $216,000 during the same time.

Figure 5: Median Housing Sale Prices for Neighborhoods of Focus, Grand Rapids, and Kent County

Data source for all data: Kent County Bureau of Equalization (2014–2019)

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[3] All sales for all parcels from 2014 through 2019 were retrieved from the Kent County Bureau of Equalization. These analyses are limited to "arm's length" residential sales. "Arm's length" sales are sales where two parties freely and willingly agree to purchase a property and enter the deal on the conditions of the sale without any outside circumstances that pressure them to enter into such transaction. This does not, for example, include sales between family members.

The number of housing sales in the Neighborhoods of Focus also increased more quickly than the city and county overall. In the Neighborhoods of Focus, the number of housing sales increased 188% from 194 to 364, compared to an increase of 112% from 1,257 to 1,405 in Grand Rapids and an increase of 118% from 1,945 to 2,310 in Kent County.

Figure 6: Percentage Change in Number of Housing Sales for Neighborhoods of Focus, Grand Rapids, and Kent County between 2014 and 2019
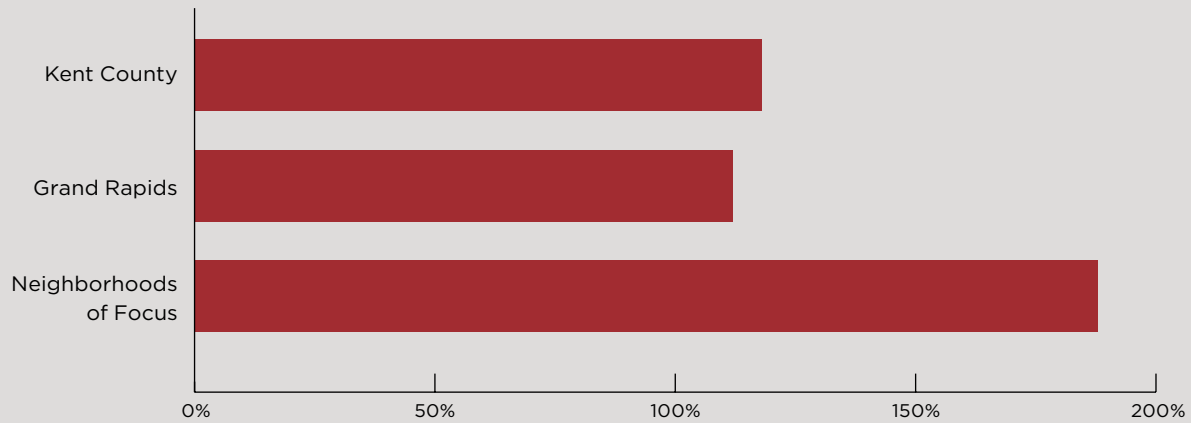
Data source for all data: Kent County Bureau of Equalization (2014–2019)

Summary

Homeownership is a key component of wealth building (White, 2016). Since 2014, 11 of the 17 census tracts in the Neighborhoods of Focus saw a decline in homeownership. The largest decrease was 10.8% (census tract 36). Additionally, while the number of houses for sale in the Neighborhoods of Focus increased more quickly and while housing prices tend to be lower in the Neighborhoods of Focus than the city and county overall, the median sale price in the Neighborhoods of Focus more than doubled from $61,000 in 2014 to $127,700 in 2019 — a higher rate than both the city and the county overall.
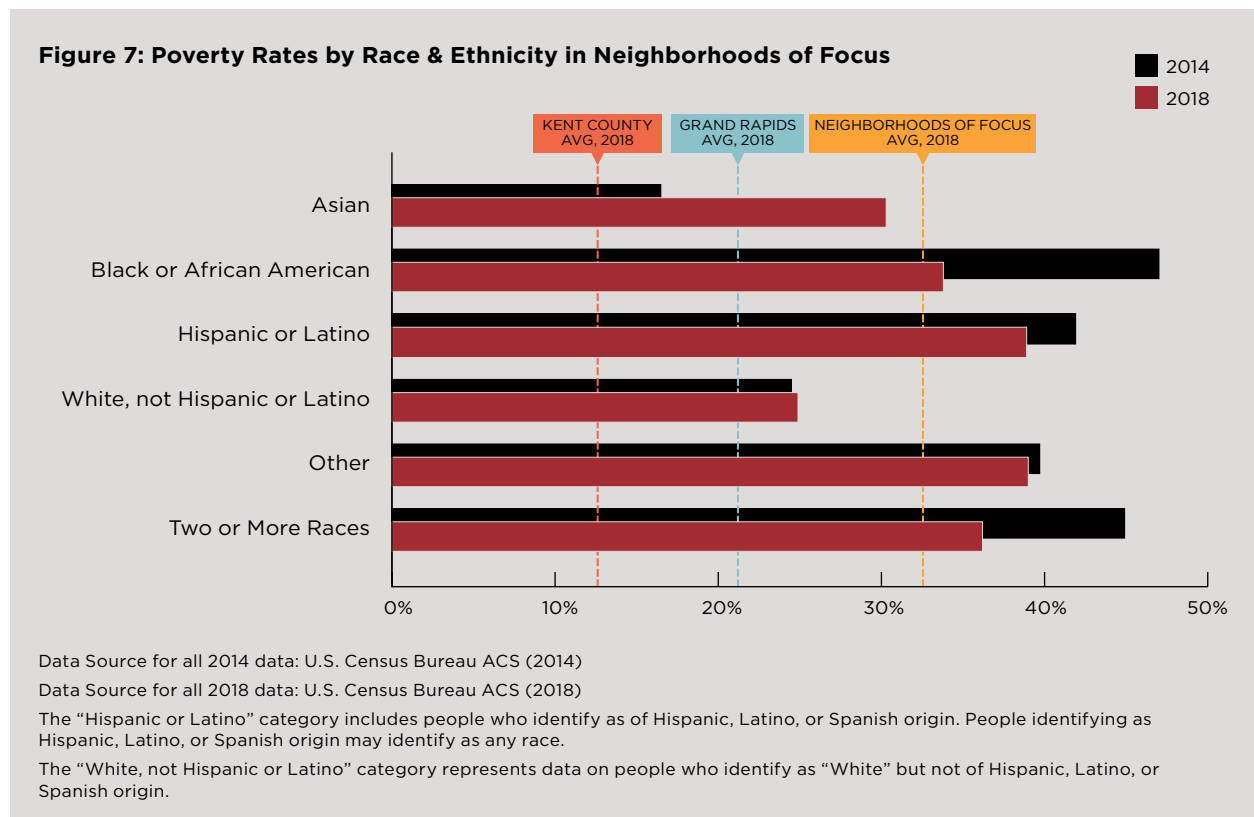
Suggested Discussion Questions

- What additional factors or conditions may have contributed to a decline in homeownership?

- What can be done to increase homeownership in the Neighborhoods of Focus?

- How do homeownership rates impact the community?

Poverty & Income

Poverty rates in the county, city, and Neighborhoods of Focus have declined since 2014, though Neighborhood of Focus residents were still more likely to experience poverty than city residents overall. For all residents in Grand Rapids, the poverty rate fell from 26.7% in 2014 to 21.2% in 2018; in the Neighborhoods of Focus, the poverty rate fell from 38.8% to 32.4%.

Poverty rates fell especially for residents who identify as Black or African American. The poverty rate for Black or African American residents living in Grand Rapids dropped approximately 14 percentage points from 43.7% in 2014 to 29.6% in 2018. The poverty rate for Black or African American residents living in the Neighborhoods of Focus also dropped approximately 13 percentage points from 47.0% in 2014 to 33.8% in 2018. A similar decrease was seen in the county overall. Data for residents in the Neighborhoods of Focus, Grand Rapids, and Kent County in 2014 and 2018 can be seen in Appendix A, Table 3.

Figure 7: Poverty Rates by Race & Ethnicity in Neighborhoods of Focus

Data Source for all 2014 data: U.S. Census Bureau ACS (2014)

Data Source for all 2018 data: U.S. Census Bureau ACS (2018)

The "Hispanic or Latino" category includes people who identify as of Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin. People identifying as Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin may identify as any race.

The "White, not Hispanic or Latino" category represents data on people who identify as "White" but not of Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin.

Poverty by Family Type

Poverty rates decreased similarly across most family types. The exception to this trend was "White, not Hispanic or Latino" families, especially female-headed "White, not Hispanic or Latino" families, who saw little to no change in estimated poverty rates in the Neighborhoods of Focus, city, and county.[4,5] Data for residents in the Neighborhoods of Focus, Grand Rapids, and Kent County in 2014 and 2018 can be seen in Appendix A, Table 4.

Figure 8: Poverty Rates by Family Type in Neighborhoods of Focus

Data Source for all 2014 data: U.S. Census Bureau ACS (2014)

Data Source for all 2018 data: U.S. Census Bureau ACS (2018)

The "Hispanic or Latino" category includes people who identify as of Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin. People identifying as Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin may identify as any race.

The "White, not Hispanic or Latino" category represents data on people who identify as "White" but not of Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin.

Due to small sample size, data for Asian families are excluded from this figure.

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[4] Female-headed refers to families maintained by a female householder with no spouse present. See U.S. Census Bureau (2020b) for Universe Definitions on family types. See https://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/cps/data/data-tools/cps-table-creator-help/universe-definitions.html.

[5] Data for residents who identify as "White" can be seen in Appendix A, Table 4. The "White" category represents data on people having origins in any of the original peoples of Europe, the Middle East, or North Africa and includes people who identify as "White," regardless of Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin.

Median Household Income

In general, median household incomes tended to marginally increase year after year due to inflation. As an exception, five Neighborhoods of Focus census tracts (16, 29, 30, 31, and 33) showed large increases in median household income from 2014 to 2018. The largest increase was $16,845, jumping from $42,019 in 2014 to $58,864 in 2018 (census tract 29). Additionally, the median household income decreased for some census tracts (19, 36, and 37), with the largest drop in census tract 19, of $3,610.[6] Maps of the median household income in 2014, 2018, and the change between the two years, can be seen in appendices E, F, and G.

Data Source: U.S. Census Bureau ACS (2014 and 2018)

Summary

Poverty rates are examined to help understand economic vulnerability of residents (White, 2016). Poverty rates in the Neighborhoods of Focus, city, and county have declined since 2014, though Neighborhood of Focus residents were more likely to experience poverty than city residents overall. Poverty rates fell especially for Black or African American residents. Additionally, some census tracts in the Neighborhoods of Focus have enjoyed large increases in median household income since 2014.

Suggested Discussion Questions

- What conditions may have contributed to these trends?
- Which programs or strategies were beneficial to alleviating poverty? Are they sustainable?
- Are new approaches needed?

Unemployment Rate

Unemployment rates have continued to decline nationwide since 2015. While a higher unemployment rate remained in the state of Michigan than the United States overall, the unemployment rate in Kent County remained lower than both Michigan and the United States. Along with the decline in the unemployment rate, the gaps between the county, state, and national unemployment rates became smaller.

Figure 9: Unemployment Rates for Kent County, State of Michigan, and United States
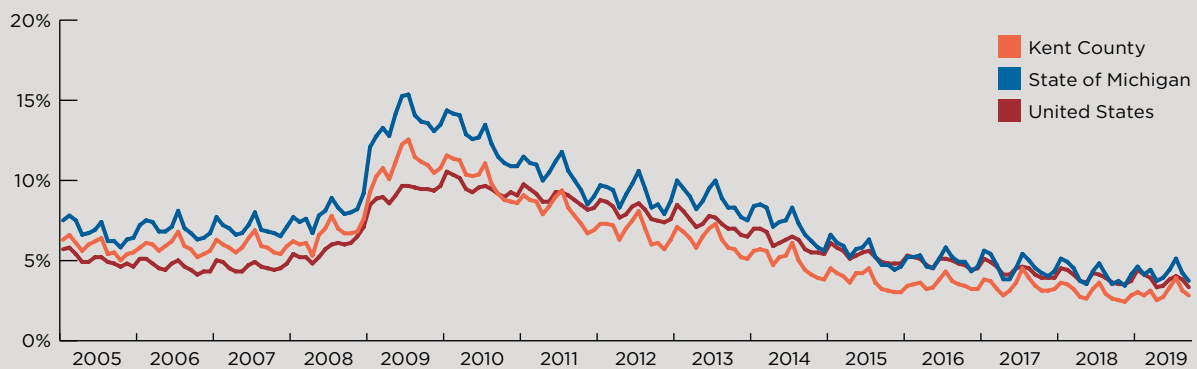
Data Source for all data: U.S. BLS (2005–2015)
Data for 2019 displayed through September

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[6] ACS estimates for the median household incomes are based on a sample and subject to sampling error. The margin of error measures the degree of uncertainty caused by sampling error. Therefore, it is possible that the actual decreases and increases in median household income may vary and changes may not be as large as estimated. See U.S. Census Bureau (2020a) to learn more about median household income estimates. See https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/note/US/INC110218.

The unemployment rate in the Neighborhoods of Focus dropped from 17.3% in 2014 to 9.8% in 2018. However, the unemployment rate in the Neighborhoods of Focus continued to be higher compared to the city (6.8% in 2018 from 12.0% in 2014) and county (4.8% in 2018 from 8.9% in 2014) as a whole.

By Race & Ethnicity

Unemployment rates dropped, in some places drastically, from 2014 to 2018 across all geographies and educational levels, and nearly all racial and ethnic groups. In Kent County, unemployment for Black or African American residents dropped from 21.6% to 11.6%, and for Hispanic or Latino residents, it decreased from 14.0% to 7.5%. Similar decreases were seen in Grand Rapids and the Neighborhoods of Focus for these populations. Yet, while declines in unemployment rates were seen between 2014 and 2018, Black or African American residents in the Neighborhoods of Focus were more than twice as likely to be unemployed than White residents. As an exception, the unemployment rate for the multiracial community (two or more races) remained relatively unchanged in the Neighborhoods of Focus, 15.1% in 2014 to 14.7% in 2018. Additionally, the unemployment rates across all racial and ethnic groups in the Neighborhoods of Focus remained higher compared to the city and county as a whole. Data on unemployment rates by census tract for 2014 and 2018 can be seen in Appendix A, Table 5.

Data Source: U.S. Census Bureau ACS (2014 and 2018)

Figure 10: Unemployment Rates by Race & Ethnicity in Neighborhoods of Focus

Data Source for all 2014 data: U.S. Census Bureau ACS (2014)

Data Source for all 2018 data: U.S. Census Bureau ACS (2018)

The "Hispanic or Latino" category includes people who identify as of Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin. People identifying as Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin may identify as any race.

The "White, not Hispanic or Latino" category represents data on people who identify as "White" but not of Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin.

By Educational Attainment

The estimated unemployment rates across all levels of educational attainment dropped by more than 50% in the Neighborhoods of Focus, Grand Rapids, and Kent County from 2014 to 2018. In Grand Rapids, the unemployment rate for those without a high school diploma dropped from 22.3% to 8.3%, and the unemployment rate for those with high school diploma as their highest level of education dropped from 16.3% to 7.5%. In the Neighborhoods of Focus, the unemployment rate for those without a high school diploma decreased from 20.1% to 7.0%, and for those with high school diploma as their highest level of education, it decreased from 21.4% to 9.1%.

Data Source: U.S. Census Bureau ACS (2014 and 2018)

Summary

Unemployment rates dropped, often drastically, from 2014 to 2018 across all local geographies and educational levels, and nearly all racial and ethnic groups. These positive local trends mirror the overall nationwide decline in unemployment rates. Yet, the unemployment rates in the Neighborhoods of Focus (9.8% in 2018 from 17.3% in 2014) remained higher than the city (6.8% in 2018 from 12.0% in 2014) and county (4.8% in 2018 from 8.9% in 2014) as a whole.

Suggested Discussion Questions

- What efforts targeting educational, professional, or workforce development may have contributed to these trends? Are they coordinated?

- Which efforts would be beneficial to continue or expand? Are they sustainable?

- What are some new approaches?

Sector Workforce[7]

By Race/Ethnicity

In nearly all sectors,[8] the proportion of people of color in the workforce rose slightly in Kent County. This rise mirrored the overall county population, which became slightly more diverse between 2014 and 2018. The only exception to this trend was within the Educational Services sector, where the proportion of Black or African American workers remained similar, making up 7.2% of the sector in 2014 to 6.6% in 2018. Yet, over 80% of jobs across all workforce sectors continued to be held by workers identifying as White.

Table 1: Sector Workforce by Race & Ethnicity in Kent County

Race/Ethnicity	Year	Total Workforce	Construction	Manufacturing	Retail Trade	Information	Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	Educational Services	Health Care and Social Assistance	Public Admin.
Black or African American	2018	9.4%	2.8%	10.2%	7.4%	7.1%	4.2%	6.6%	9.4%	8.1%
	2014	8.6%	2.2%	8.5%	7.2%	5.6%	4.0%	7.2%	8.7%	7.9%
Asian	2018	2.6%	0.7%	4.6%	2.4%	2.5%	2.7%	1.5%	2.7%	1.0%
	2014	2.3%	0.6%	3.9%	1.9%	1.6%	2.3%	1.3%	2.3%	1.0%
Hispanic or Latino	2018	7.0%	6.1%	10.8%	6.3%	5.3%	3.6%	4.1%	5.6%	5.1%
	2014	6.5%	5.3%	9.7%	5.2%	4.3%	3.1%	3.6%	4.3%	4.3%
White	2018	85.5%	94.5%	82.9%	87.4%	88.0%	91.4%	90.0%	85.7%	88.7%
	2014	87.0%	95.7%	85.5%	88.5%	90.9%	92.3%	90.1%	87.3%	89.4%

Highlighted cells indicate where percentage of the sector workforce are greater than that group's total percentage of the Kent County workforce for that year.

Data Source for all 2014 data: U.S. Census Bureau (2014 Quarter 4)

Data Source for all 2018 data: U.S. Census Bureau (2018 Quarter 4)

The "Hispanic or Latino" category includes people who identify as of Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin. People identifying as Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin may identify as any race.

The "White" category represents data on people having origins in any of the original peoples of Europe, the Middle East, or North Africa and includes people who identify as "White" and of Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin.

"Total" represents the percentage of each race/ethnicity group across all NAICS sectors.

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[7] QWI data are processed quarterly to "1) add a new quarter of data, 2) include any input data revisions provided by state partners, and 3) include any code improvements from production processes," as communicated by the LEHD program staff. The quarterly processing, thus, may result in changes to previously published data. Because this report presents data directly obtained from the QWI, the 2014 numbers may not exactly match the *Addressing Economic Inclusion in Grand Rapids* report.

[8] The sectors here refer to North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) sectors. For complete sector definitions and additional information, please see: https://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/economic-census/guidance/understanding-naics.html

By Sex

There was little change (mostly less than 1%) in the sex distribution of each sector's workforce between 2014 and 2018. There was a slight increase in women's representation in professional, scientific, and technical services, shifting from slightly majority male (50.8%) in 2014 to slightly majority female (50.9%) in 2018. There was also a slight decrease in women's representation in construction, manufacturing, and information, which widened the gender gap for each of those sectors.

Table 2: Sector Workforce by Sex in Kent County

Sex	Year	Total Workforce	Construction	Manufacturing	Retail Trade	Information	Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	Educational Services	Health Care and Social Assistance	Public Admin.
Female	2018	50.7%	13.8%	30.0%	50.1%	46.4%	49.2%	70.0%	79.1%	44.7%
	2014	48.8%	13.1%	28.4%	49.3%	45.1%	50.9%	69.0%	79.5%	44.8%
Male	2018	49.3%	86.2%	70.0%	49.9%	53.6%	50.8%	30.0%	20.9%	55.3%
	2014	51.2%	86.9%	71.6%	50.7%	54.9%	49.1%	31.0%	20.5%	55.2%

Highlighted cells indicate where percentage of the sector workforce are greater than that group's total percentage of the Kent County workforce for that year.

Data Source for all 2014 data: U.S. Census Bureau (2014 Quarter 4)

Data Source for all 2018 data: U.S. Census Bureau (2018 Quarter 4)

"Total" represents the percentage of each race/ethnicity group across all NAICS sectors.

By Age

There was little to no change in the sector workforce by age.

Data Source: U.S. Census Bureau QWI (2014 Quarter 4 and 2018 Quarter 4)

By Educational Attainment

Across all sectors there was a rise in the percentage of the workforce with a bachelor's or higher degree, alongside a rise among those with less than a high school diploma in the county overall. While there was an overall increase in the percentage of the workforce with post-secondary degrees, the percentage of those with a bachelor's or higher degree decreased in the information, professional, scientific, and technical services; educational services; health care and social assistance; and public administration sectors. Those with a bachelor's or higher degree made up a larger share of the construction, manufacturing, and retail sectors than in 2014. (See Table 3 on the following page.)

Table 3: Sector Workforce by Educational Attainment in Kent County

Educational Attainment	Year	Total Workforce	Construction	Manufacturing	Retail Trade	Information	Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	Educational Services	Health Care and Social Assistance	Public Admin.
Less Than High School	2018	11.6%	13.6%	14.2%	11.9%	9.1%	8.1%	7.0%	9.5%	7.4%
	2014	10.8%	12.7%	12.9%	11.3%	6.9%	6.4%	5.7%	7.9%	5.5%
High School or Equivalent	2018	28.9%	35.8%	32.2%	34.0%	24.3%	22.7%	21.6%	24.8%	24.0%
	2014	29.5%	37.0%	33.9%	35.3%	22.4%	21.2%	20.8%	24.0%	22.3%
Some College or Associate Degree	2018	32.7%	33.3%	32.4%	33.5%	31.7%	31.0%	29.0%	35.7%	36.0%
	2014	33.3%	34.1%	33.2%	34.1%	31.9%	30.5%	28.3%	37.1%	37.2%
Bachelor's Degree or Advanced Degree	2018	26.8%	17.3%	21.2%	20.6%	35.0%	38.2%	42.4%	30.1%	32.6%
	2014	26.4%	16.1%	20.0%	19.3%	38.8%	41.8%	45.2%	31.1%	35.1%

Highlighted cells indicate where percentage of the sector workforce are greater than that group's total percentage of the Kent County workforce for that year.

Data Source for all 2014 data: U.S. Census Bureau (2014 Quarter 4)

Data Source for all 2018 data: U.S. Census Bureau (2018 Quarter 4)

"Total" represents the percentage of each race/ethnicity group across all NAICS sectors.

Summary

Since 2014, there has been an increase in the proportion of the workforce with post-secondary degrees in Kent County. Interestingly, there was also a rise in the proportion of the county's workforce with less than a high school diploma. In addition, the proportion of people of color in the county's workforce rose slightly. This rise mirrored the overall county population, which became slightly more diverse. Yet, over 80% of jobs across all workforce sectors continued to be held by workers identifying as White.

Suggested Discussion Questions

- What workforce development efforts may have contributed to these trends? Are they coordinated?

- Which efforts would be beneficial to continue or expand? Are they sustainable?

- Are new approaches needed?

Work Destination for Neighborhoods of Focus Residents

Work locations for Neighborhoods of Focus residents did not change significantly from 2014 to 2017; most residents continued to commute outside of their home neighborhood but still within Grand Rapids to work. Notably, the census tract that includes the Gerald R. Ford International Airport and some of the surrounding area (census tract 122.03) had an increase of 589 workers from the Neighborhoods of Focus. There were only a few census tracts that had a substantial decline in the number of commuters from Neighborhoods of Focus — a tract within the Neighborhoods of Focus; two more in the downtown area; and others in the Kentwood, Wyoming, and Ada Township areas. Maps of the work destination for Neighborhoods of Focus residents in 2014, 2017, and the change between the two years can be seen in appendices H, I, and J.

Data Source: U.S. Census Bureau LEHD (2014 and 2017)

Figure 11: Change in Work Destination for Neighborhoods of Focus Residents
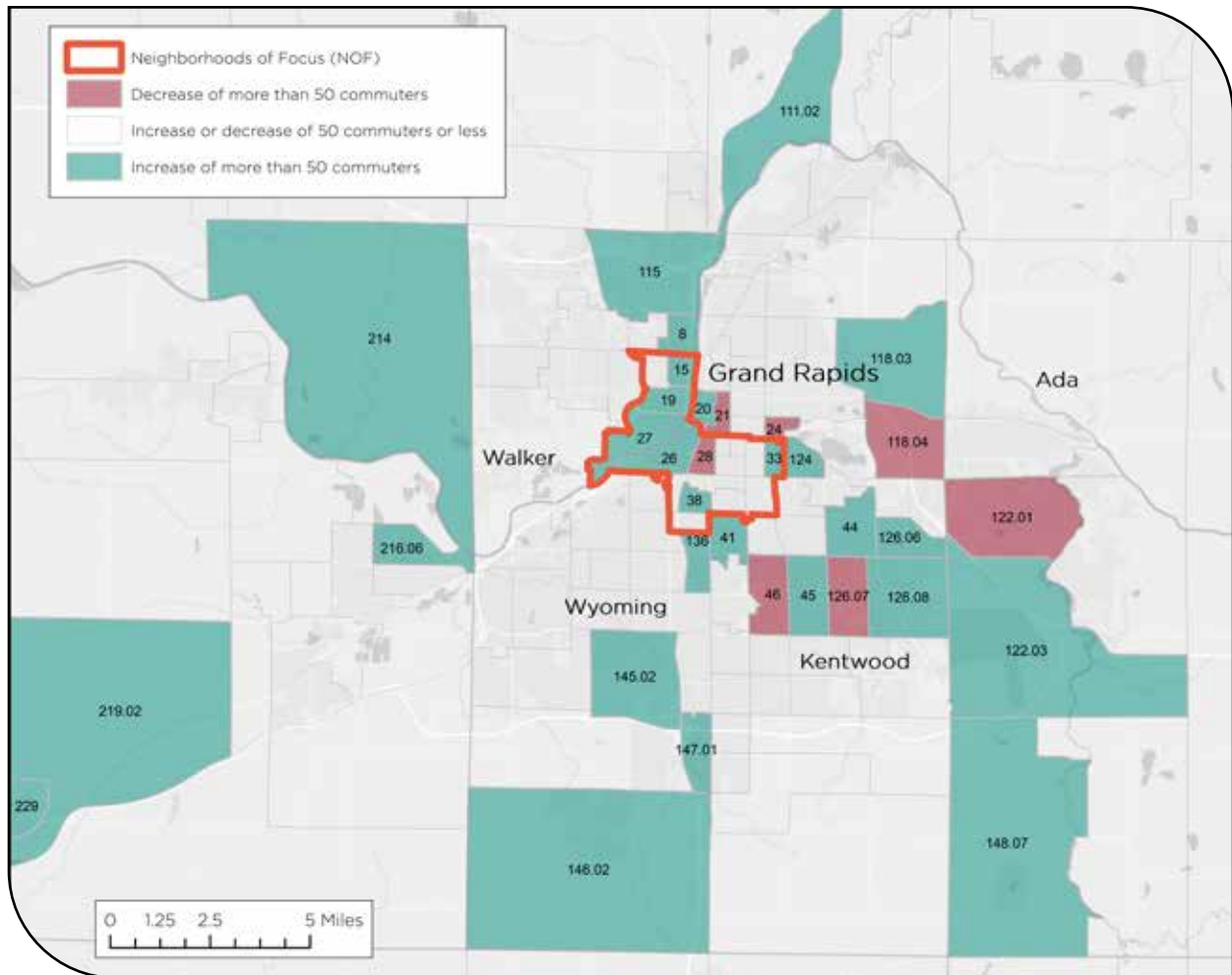
Summary

Mark White (2016) contends that Neighborhoods of Focus residents should not have to commute outside their neighborhoods, given the abundance of manufacturing jobs in their own census tracts. Still, similar to Mark White's (2016) original findings, most residents continued to commute outside of their home neighborhood, but still within Grand Rapids, to work. The census tract that includes the Gerald R. Ford International Airport and some of the surrounding area had the largest increases of workers from the Neighborhoods of Focus.

GDP Index[9]

In 2015, the Grand Rapids-Kentwood Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) made up 11.6% of Michigan's gross domestic product (GDP). That number remained steady; in 2017, the Grand Rapids-Kentwood MSA made up 11.7% of Michigan's GDP. The GDP Index for Grand Rapids-Kentwood MSA rose from 105 to 115 from 2014 to 2017, continuing to grow alongside the GDP Indexes for both Michigan and the United States.

Suggested Discussion Questions

- What kinds of jobs are available and where? Are the jobs the right fit for Neighborhoods of Focus residents? Are they sustainable?

- Are there barriers to long-term employment (e.g., transportation, living wages and benefits, opportunities for promotion)?

- What types of skill development or training would be needed to employ more Neighborhoods of Focus workers within their home census tracts?

Figure 12: GDP Index for the Grand Rapids-Kentwood MSA, Michigan, and the United States
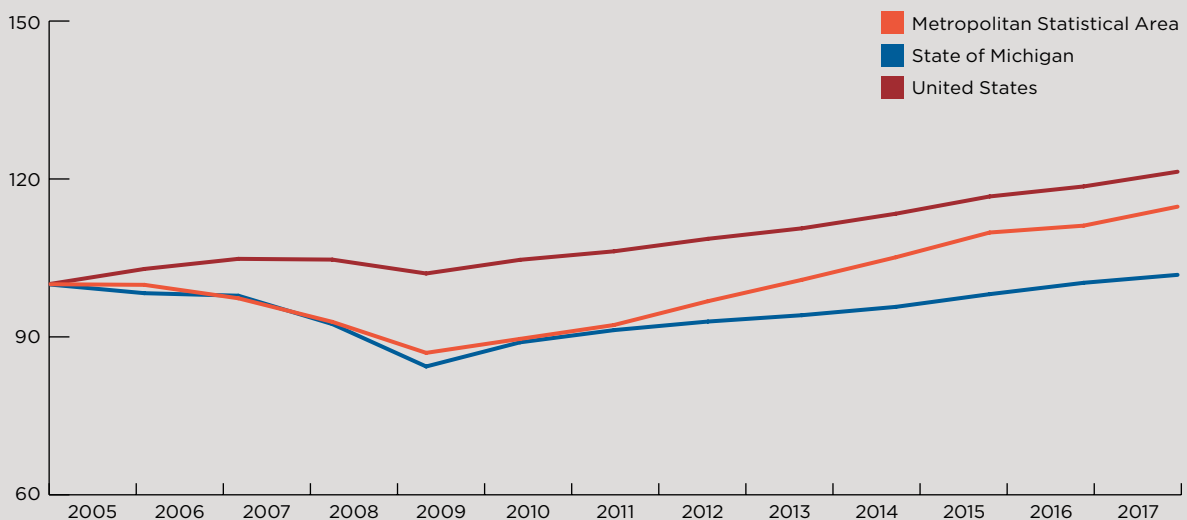
Data Source for all data: U.S. BEA (2005–2017)

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[9] The 2005–2014 numbers may not exactly match the previous report due to the BEA revisions of the data. See U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis (2019), especially NIPA Handbook Chapter 4, to learn more about why estimates are revised. See https://www.bea.gov/resources/methodologies/nipa-handbook.

Summary

GDP is one measure of the size and health of an economy.[10] The GDP index for Grand Rapids-Kentwood MSA rose from 105 to 115 from 2014 to 2017, continuing to grow alongside the GDP for both Michigan and the United States. Though the Grand Rapids-Kentwood MSA GDP Index continued to grow, simply using it as a marker for economic growth may mask both economic and social disparities (White, 2016). As presented in this report, while some gains were made in the Neighborhoods of Focus, such as lower poverty and unemployment rates, the Neighborhoods of Focus continued lagging behind the city and county.

Suggested Discussion Questions

- What are some innovative approaches or opportunities to increase goods and services?

- How can inclusive growth be promoted in Grand Rapids?

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[10] For information on GDP and GDP index, please see https://www.bea.gov/resources/learning-center/what-to-know-gdp and https://www.bea.gov/resources/learning-center/what-to-know-prices-inflation.

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DATA TABLES

Table 1: Race & Ethnicity in the Neighborhoods of Focus, Grand Rapids, and Kent County

Geography	Year	American Indian or Alaska Native	Asian	Black/ African American	Hispanic/ Latino	Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	Non-Hispanic White	Other	Two or More Races	White
Grand Rapids	2014	0.5%	1.9%	21.1%	15.7%	0.0%	58.3%	3.7%	4.4%	68.4%
Grand Rapids	2018	0.4%	2.3%	19.2%	15.9%	0.1%	59.4%	5.5%	5.0%	67.5%
Kent County	2014	0.5%	2.4%	9.7%	9.9%	0.0%	75.4%	2.3%	3.2%	81.8%
Kent County	2018	0.4%	3.0%	9.7%	10.4%	0.0%	74.0%	3.3%	3.8%	79.8%
Neighborhoods of Focus	2014	0.7%	0.7%	33.0%	33.1%	0.0%	30.6%	7.4%	6.2%	51.9%
Neighborhoods of Focus	2018	0.6%	1.0%	27.6%	34.5%	0.0%	33.5%	14.6%	7.2%	49.0%

Table 2: Educational Attainment in the Neighborhoods of Focus, Grand Rapids, and Kent County

Geography	Year	Less than 9th Grade	9th to 12th Grade, No Diploma	High School Diploma or Equivalent	Some College	Associate Degree	Bachelor's Degree	Graduate or Professional Degree
Grand Rapids	2014	6.8%	8.6%	24.0%	22.7%	7.1%	19.9%	10.8%
Grand Rapids	2018	6.6%	6.8%	22.4%	20.8%	7.8%	23.4%	12.2%
Kent County	2014	4.2%	6.5%	26.0%	22.1%	8.6%	21.3%	11.3%
Kent County	2018	4.0%	5.8%	24.4%	21.5%	9.1%	23.2%	12.0%
Neighborhoods of Focus	2014	14.6%	12.5%	28.5%	22.5%	6.0%	10.5%	5.2%
Neighborhoods of Focus	2018	14.4%	11.8%	26.8%	20.8%	6.4%	14.0%	5.8%

Table 3: Poverty Rates by Race & Ethnicity

| Geography	Year	All	Asian	Black/ African American	Hispanic/ Latino	Non-Hispanic White	Other	Two or More Races	White
Grand Rapids	2014	26.7%	13.9%	43.7%	42.2%	15.6%	38.9%	37.2%	20.3%
Grand Rapids	2018	21.2%	22.7%	29.6%	35.6%	14.4%	36.0%	32.6%	16.5%
Kent County	2014	15.5%	11.9%	39.3%	34.5%	9.6%	29.9%	30.4%	11.6%
Kent County	2018	12.6%	11.9%	26.3%	26.3%	8.6%	25.3%	25.1%	9.7%
Neighborhoods of Focus	2014	38.8%	16.5%	47.0%	41.9%	24.5%	39.7%	44.9%	32.9%
Neighborhoods of Focus	2018	32.4%	30.3%	33.8%	38.9%	24.9%	39.0%	36.2%	28.8%

Table 4: Poverty Rates by Family Type

Geography	Year	All Families	Black/ African American Families	Hispanic/ Latino Families	Non-Hispanic White Families	White Families	Families with Children	All Female-Headed Families	Black/ African American Female-Headed Families	Hispanic/ Latino Female-Headed Families	Non-Hispanic White Female-Headed Families	White Female-Headed Families	Female-Headed Families with Children
Grand Rapids	2014	19.2%	36.9%	37.2%	8.6%	12.5%	31.2%	42.5%	52.4%	59.8%	25.2%	29.9%	53.6%
Grand Rapids	2018	14.5%	24.2%	31.3%	7.5%	9.6%	24.3%	34.9%	39.1%	46.5%	26.3%	28.7%	46.7%
Kent County	2014	10.7%	33.9%	30.7%	6.1%	7.5%	17.7%	32.7%	49.7%	47.5%	22.9%	24.5%	42.2%
Kent County	2018	8.2%	21.1%	22.2%	5.4%	6.2%	13.3%	25.7%	35.2%	36.5%	20.1%	21.2%	35.0%
Neighborhoods of Focus	2014	32.7%	41.1%	37.7%	17.9%	26.1%	43.7%	52.0%	55.1%	55.5%	41.9%	43.4%	60.8%
Neighborhoods of Focus	2018	25.9%	26.6%	32.7%	19.6%	22.4%	38.3%	43.5%	41.8%	46.0%	45.9%	44.9%	53.9%

Table 5: Unemployment Rates by Census Tract in the Neighborhoods of Focus, 2014 and 2018

Geography	2014	2018
Census Tract 15, Kent County, Michigan	23.4%	4.4%
Census Tract 16, Kent County, Michigan	11.5%	3.1%
Census Tract 19, Kent County, Michigan	11.3%	9.5%
Census Tract 26, Kent County, Michigan	13.4%	14.6%
Census Tract 27, Kent County, Michigan	13.5%	12.0%
Census Tract 28, Kent County, Michigan	25.6%	12.8%
Census Tract 29, Kent County, Michigan	10.5%	6.4%
Census Tract 30, Kent County, Michigan	17.5%	6.0%
Census Tract 31, Kent County, Michigan	21.0%	13.9%
Census Tract 32, Kent County, Michigan	16.8%	13.4%
Census Tract 33, Kent County, Michigan	19.6%	7.5%
Census Tract 35, Kent County, Michigan	15.1%	9.6%
Census Tract 36, Kent County, Michigan	32.6%	11.7%
Census Tract 37, Kent County, Michigan	20.5%	8.5%
Census Tract 38, Kent County, Michigan	25.4%	14.4%
Census Tract 39, Kent County, Michigan	18.9%	13.5%
Census Tract 40, Kent County, Michigan	13.5%	12.8%
Neighborhoods of Focus	17.3%	9.8%
Grand Rapids	12.0%	6.8%
Kent County	8.9%	4.8%

Percentage of Households that are Owner-Occupied in the Neighborhoods of Focus (2014)
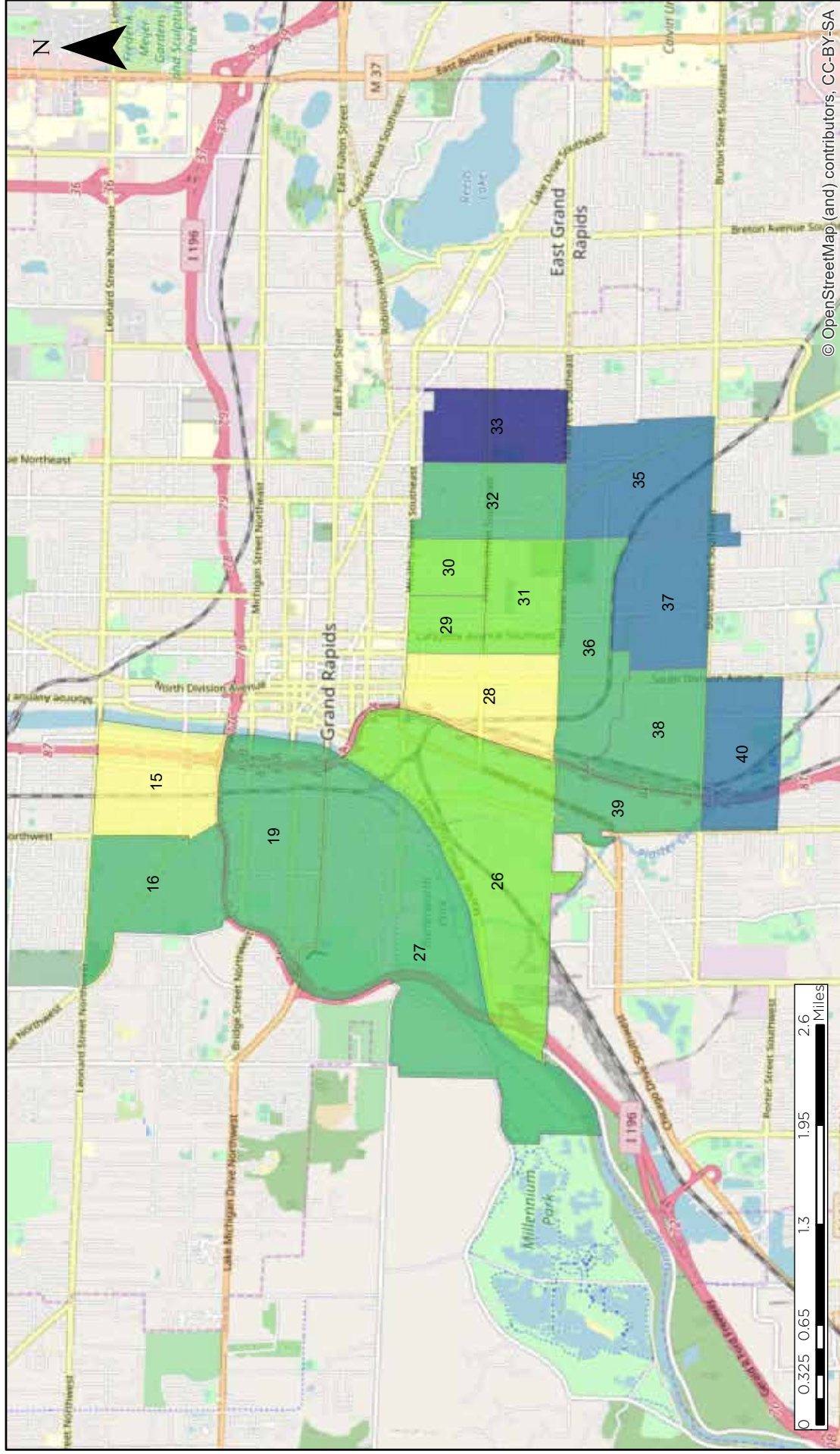
Percentage of Households that are Owner-Occupied

- 21.1% - 31.3%
- 31.4% - 44.0%
- 44.1% - 50.2%
- 50.3% - 59.6%
- 59.7% - 69.5%

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American Community Survey (ACS) 5-year estimates, 2010-2014,
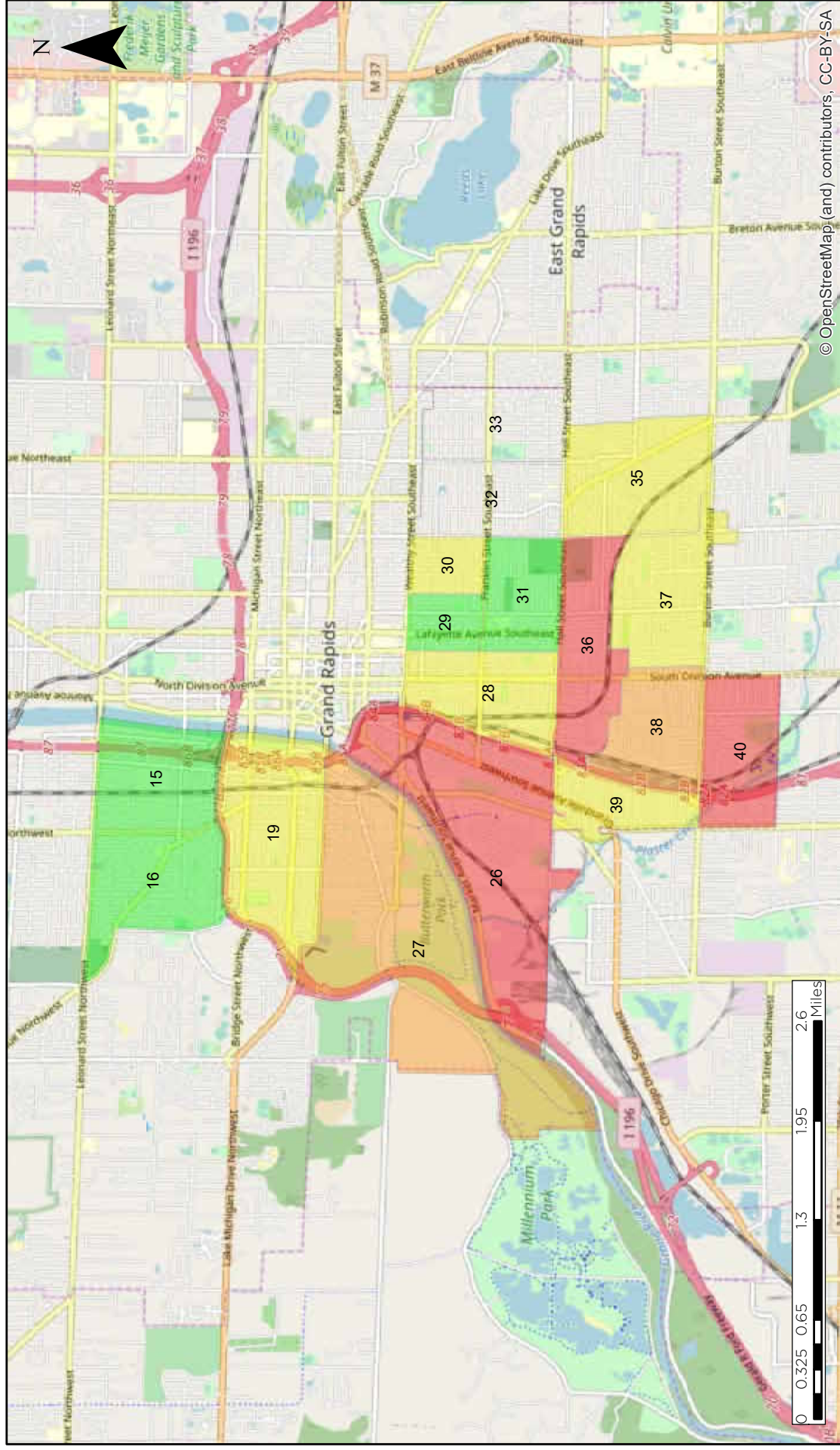*Table B25003, Retrieved from https://data.census.gov/cedsci/*

Percentage of Households that are Owner-Occupied in the Neighborhoods of Focus (2018)

Percentage of Households that are Owner-Occupied

- 16.9% - 38.8%
- 38.9% - 46.3%
- 46.4% - 56.5%
- 56.6% - 68.8%
- 68.9% - 88.8%

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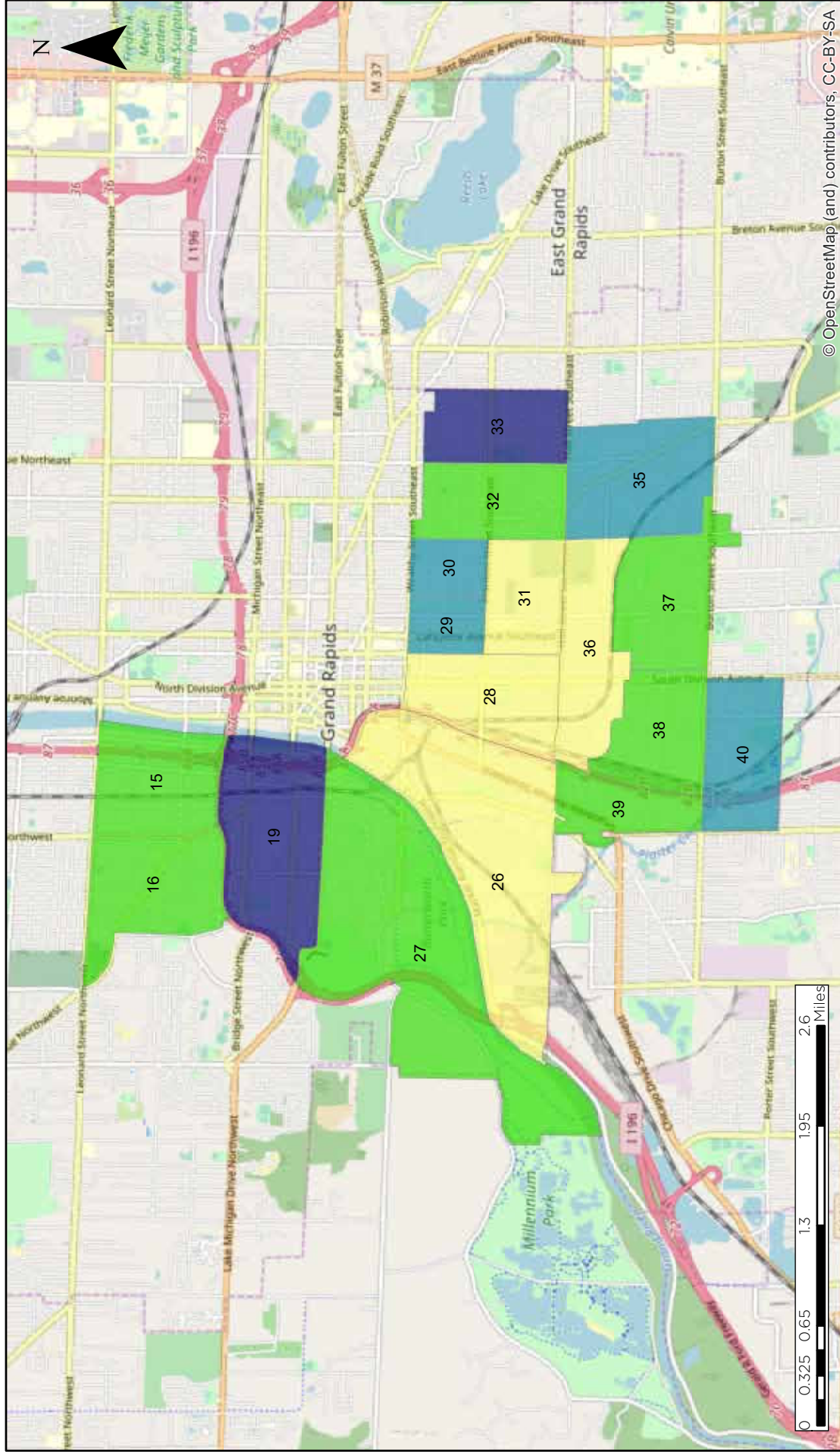*Table B25003, Retrieved from https://data.census.gov/cedsci/*

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Change in Percentage of Households that are Owner-Occupied in the Neighborhoods of Focus (2014 to 2018)

Change in Percentage of Households that are Owner-Occupied

- -5% – -5%
- 1.1% – 1%
- -0.9% – 1%
- -6.5% – 6.6%
- -8.8% – -8.9%
- -10.8% – -8.9%

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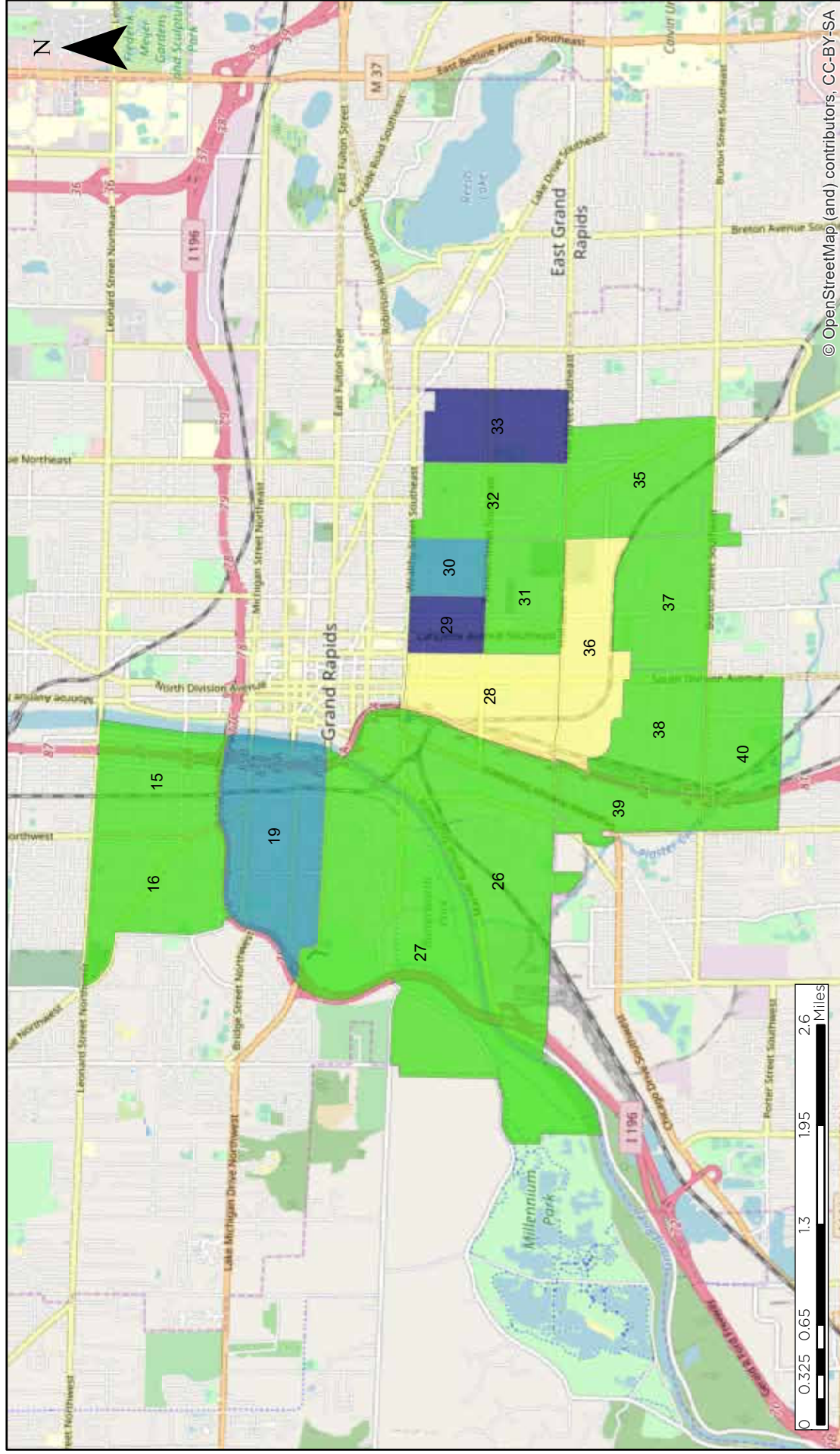*Table B25003, Retrieved from https://data.census.gov/cedsci/*

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Median Household Income in the Neighborhoods of Focus (2014)

Median Household Income

- $16,908.00 - $24,691.00
- $24,691.01 - $32,911.00
- $32,911.01 - $42,019.00
- $42,019.01 - $51,346.00

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*American Community Survey (ACS) 5-year estimates, 2010-2014,
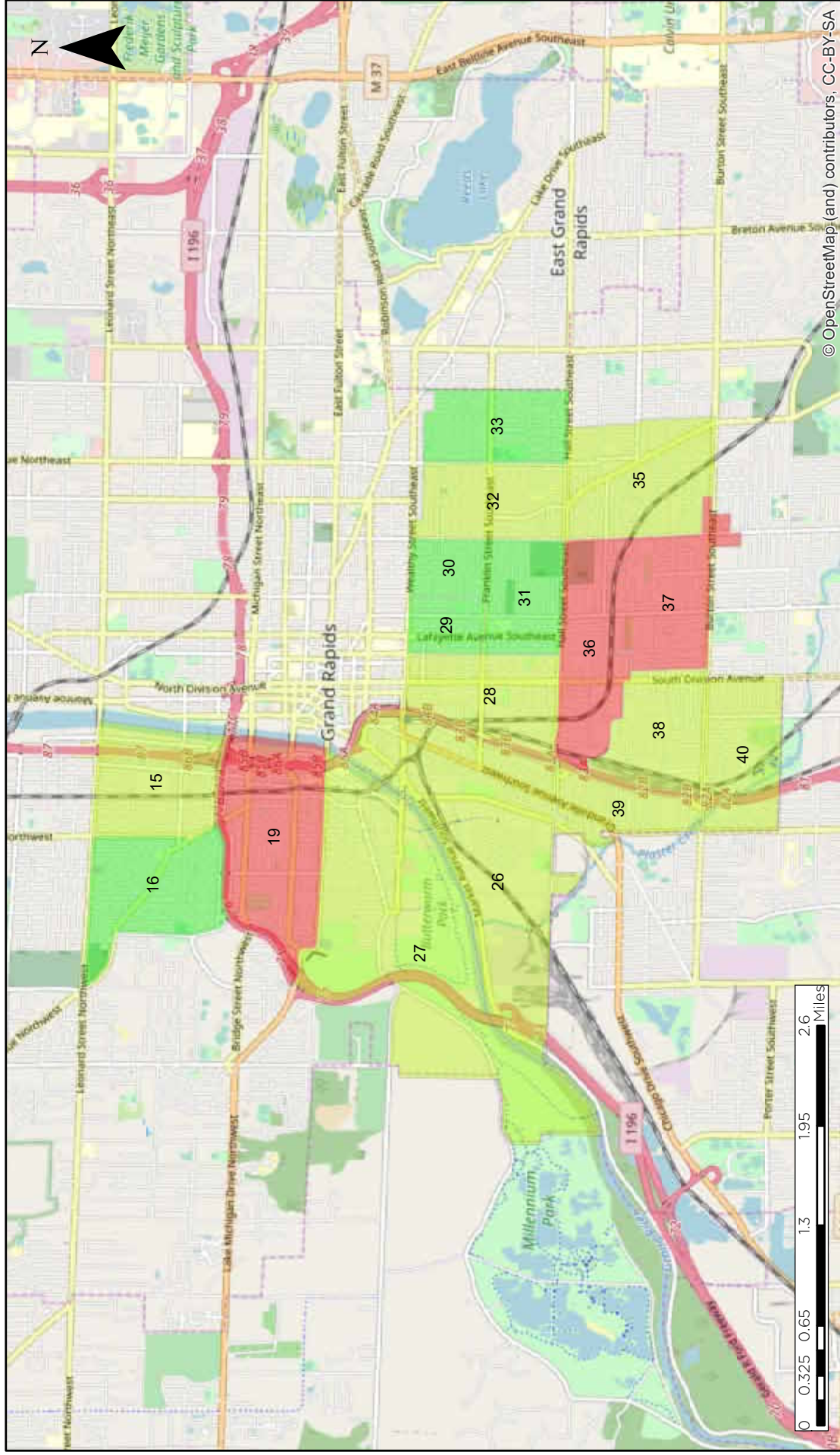Table S1901, Retrieved from https://data.census.gov/cedsci/*

Median Household Income in the Neighborhoods of Focus (2018)

Median Household Income

- $19,974.00 - $21,364.00
- $21,364.01 - $40,883.00
- $40,883.01 - $51,328.00
- $51,328.01 - $66,587.00

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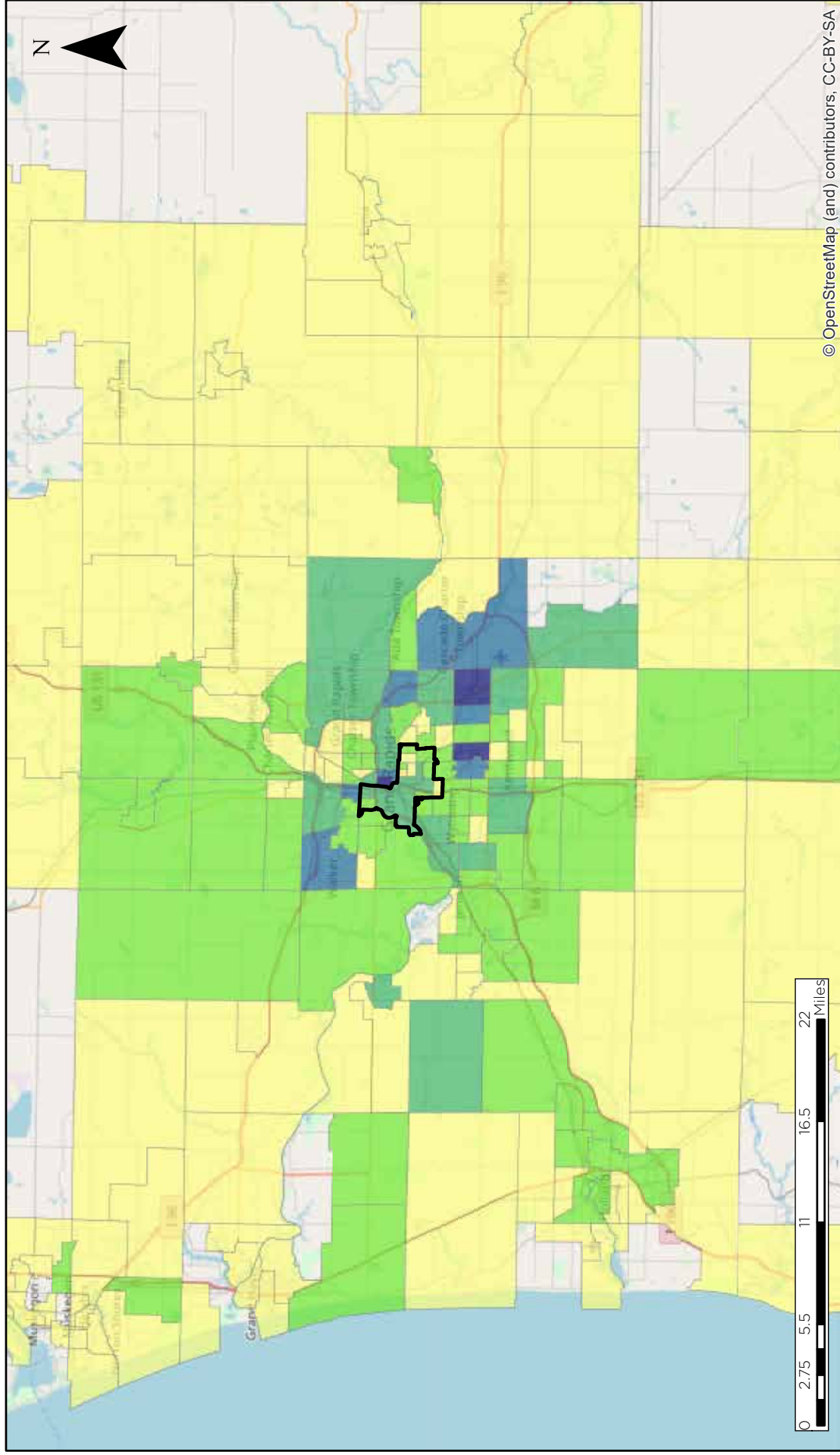Table S1901, Retrieved from https://data.census.gov/cedsci/*

Change in Median Household Income in the Neighborhoods of Focus (2014 to 2018)

Difference in Median Household Income

![red]	($3,610.00) - ($500.00)
![white]	($499.99) - $500.00
![yellow]	$500.01 - $10,000.00
![green]	$10,000.01 - $16,845.00

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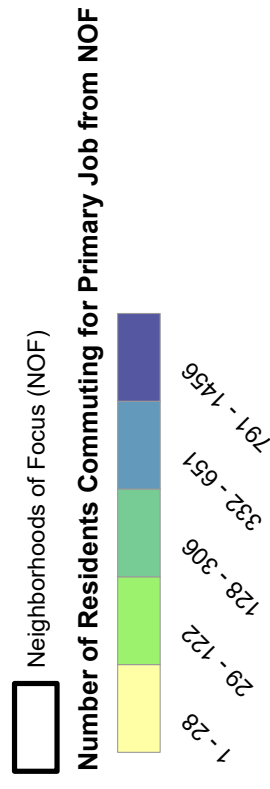*American Community Survey (ACS) 5-year estimates, 2010-2014 & 2014-2018, Table S1901, Retrieved from https://data.census.gov/cedsci/*

Work Location of Neighborhoods of Focus Residents (2014)

N

Neighborhoods of Focus (NOF)

Number of Residents Commuting for Primary Job from NOF

- 791 - 1456
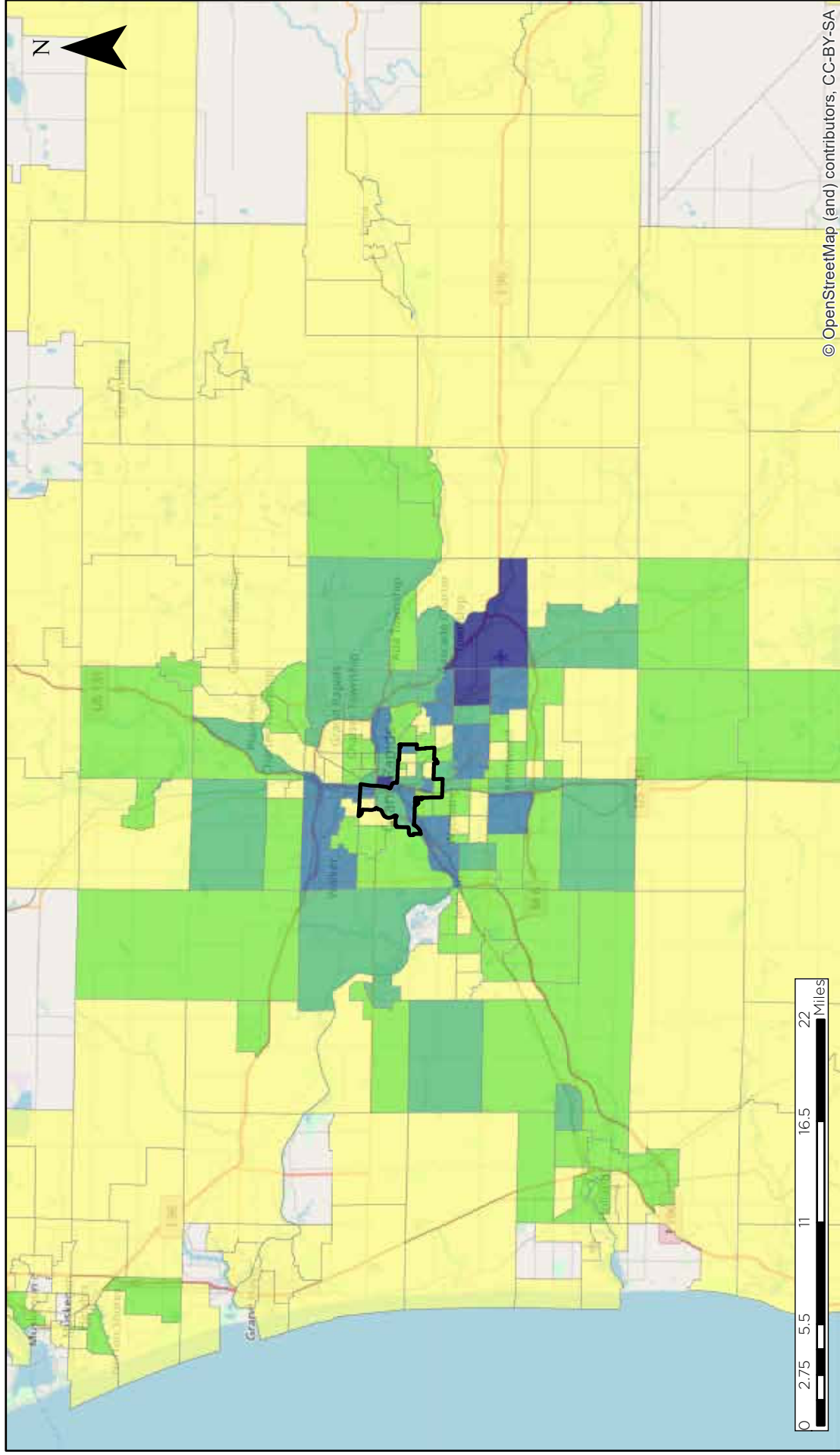- 332 - 651
- 128 - 306
- 29 - 122
- 1 - 28

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*LEHD Origin-Destination Employment Statistics (LODES), 2014,
Primary Job Locations, Retrieved from https://lehd.ces.census.gov/data/*

Miles
0 2.75 5.5 11 16.5 22

Work Location of Neighborhoods of Focus Residents (2017)

Neighborhoods of Focus (NOF)

Number of Residents Commuting for Primary Job from NOF

929 - 1819
291 - 613
127 - 269
30 - 112
1 - 29

0   2.75   5.5   11   16.5   22
Miles

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*LEHD Origin-Destination Employment Statistics (LODES), 2017,
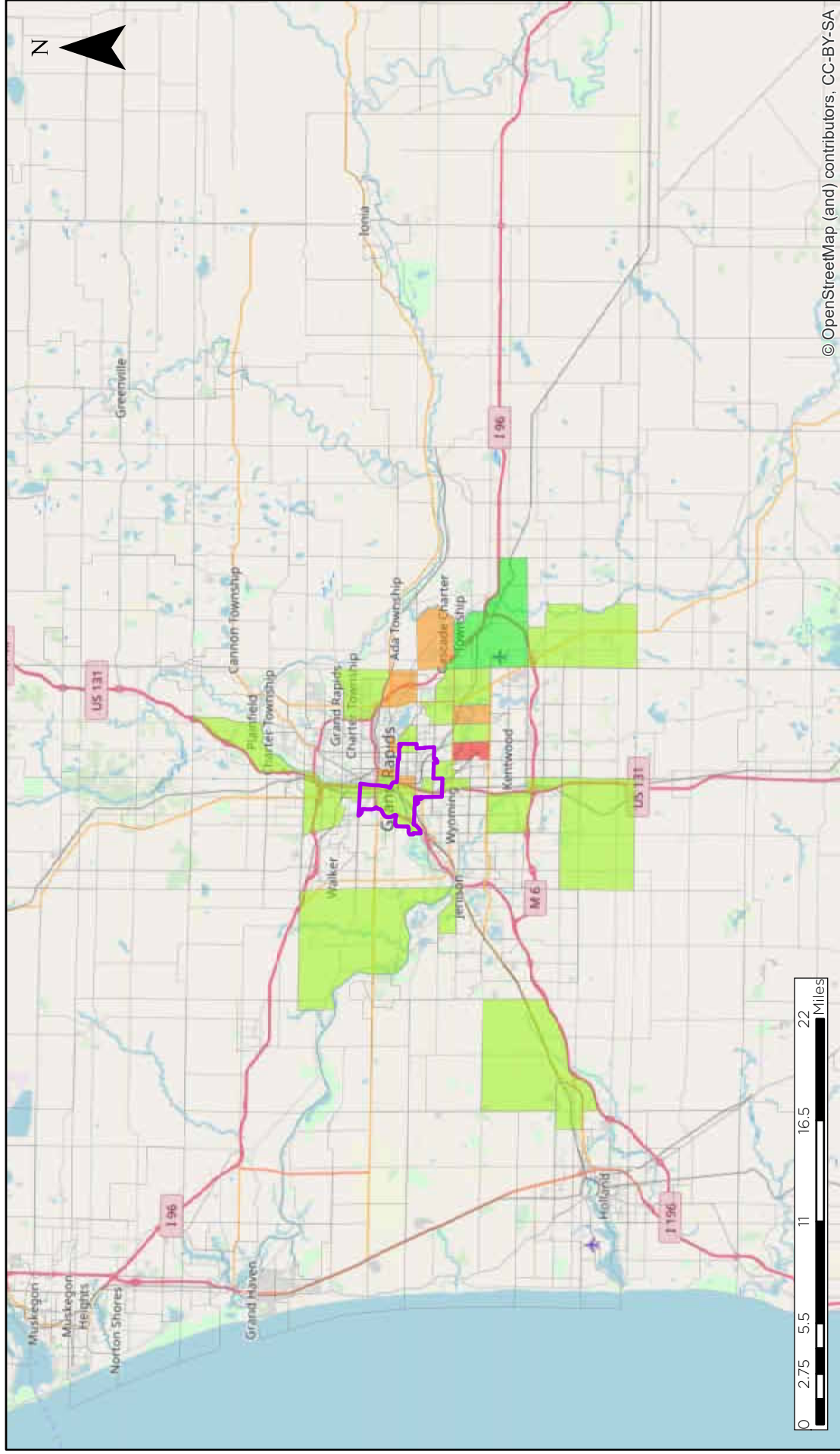Primary Job Locations, Retrieved from https://lehd.ces.census.gov/data/*

Change in Number of Neighborhoods of Focus Residents Commuting to Each Tract (2014 to 2017)

Neighborhoods of Focus (NOF)

Change in Number of Commuters

- 589
- 51 - 373
- -44 - 50
- -200 - -59
- -491 - -275

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Primary Job Locations, Retrieved from https://lehd.ces.census.gov/data/