ANALYSIS OF IMPEDIMENTS TO FAIR HOUSING

Syracuse and Onondaga County, NY 2020

Prepared by:
CNY Fair Housing
731 James Street, Suite 200
Syracuse, NY 13203
Phone: (315) 471-0420
Fax: (315) 471-0549
Email: info@cnyfairhousing.org

City of Syracuse
Neighborhood and Business Development
City Hall Commons, 6th Floor
201 E. Washington St.
Syracuse, NY 13202
Phone: (315) 448-8100
Fax: (315) 448-8036

County of Onondaga
Department of Community Development
John H. Mulroy Civic Center
421 Montgomery Street
Syracuse, NY 13202
Phone: (315) 423-3558
Fax: (315) 435-3794

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS
CNY Fair Housing wishes to acknowledge several individuals and organizations whose work and assistance was instrumental in completing this analysis. We would like to thank Alys Mann for her excellent work in providing data analysis and mapping for this project and Tiffany Patton for her help in formatting the report for publication. Thank you to the City of Syracuse Department of Neighborhood and Business Development for their help in providing data and the Onondaga County Department of Community Development for making information readily available for this report. Thank you to the many community partners whose work on housing and justice issues not only informed this report, but also the work we do each day. Finally, thank you to the staff of CNY Fair Housing who worked on this report, especially Catherine Porter who was the primary author and Casey Weissman-Vermeulen and Cooper Sirwatka who contributed important insights. Photo Credit: Chuck Wainwright.

Sally Santangelo
Executive Director
# Table of Contents

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY** ................................................................................................................. 1

Housing Practices ........................................................................................................................................ 2
Impediments and Recommendations ........................................................................................................ 2
Impediment 1 .............................................................................................................................................. 2
  Recommendations: ................................................................................................................................. 2
Impediment 2 .............................................................................................................................................. 4
  Recommendations: ................................................................................................................................. 4
Impediment 3 .............................................................................................................................................. 5
  Recommendations: ................................................................................................................................. 5
Impediment 4 .............................................................................................................................................. 5
  Recommendations: ................................................................................................................................. 5
Impediment 5 .............................................................................................................................................. 6
  Recommendations: ................................................................................................................................. 6

**INTRODUCTION** ................................................................................................................................. 7

Progress Since Last AI ............................................................................................................................. 7
Overview of Fair Housing Laws ............................................................................................................... 13
Defining the Analysis ............................................................................................................................... 15
Methodology ............................................................................................................................................ 16

**PROFILE OF ONONDAGA COUNTY AND THE CITY OF SYRACUSE** ................................................................. 17

Geography ............................................................................................................................................. 17
Demographic Patterns ............................................................................................................................ 19
Economic Opportunity ............................................................................................................................ 32
Transportation & Access to Community Assets .................................................................................. 42
Educational Opportunity .......................................................................................................................... 44

**HOUSING PROFILE** .......................................................................................................................... 49

Historical Context ................................................................................................................................... 49
Housing Opportunity ............................................................................................................................... 52
  Housing Stock .................................................................................................................................... 52
  Housing Quality ................................................................................................................................ 55
  Homeownership ................................................................................................................................. 56
  Affordable Housing ............................................................................................................................ 62
    Supply of Affordable Housing .......................................................................................................... 65
    Location of Subsidized Housing ....................................................................................................... 69
    Housing Instability ............................................................................................................................ 71

**OTHER FACTORS AFFECTING HOUSING CHOICE** .................................................................................. 73

Exclusionary Zoning in Onondaga County ............................................................................................. 73
ReZonE Syracuse, I-81 Redevelopment, and Blueprint 15 ................................................................... 75
Justice System Involvement ................................................................................................................... 77

**FAIR HOUSING ENFORCEMENT** ........................................................................................................ 78
List of Figures

Figure 1: SYRACUSE AND ONONDAGA COUNTY POPULATION CHANGE, 1950-2018 ................................................................. 19
Figure 2: WHITE POPULATION, 1960 AND 2010 ....................................................................................................................... 20
Figure 3: SYRACUSE AND ONONDAGA COUNTY RACE AND ETHNICITY, 2010 & 2018 ................................................................. 20
Figure 4: FAMILY TYPES IN SYRACUSE AND NEW YORK STATE .................................................................................................. 27
Figure 5: FAMILY TYPES IN ONONDAGA COUNTY AND NEW YORK STATE .................................................................................. 27
Figure 6: MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOMES, 2010 & 2018 .............................................................................................................. 32
Figure 7: UNEMPLOYMENT RATE, 2014-2019 ............................................................................................................................. 32
Figure 8: SYRACUSE MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME BY RACE AND ETHNICITY, 2014-2018 ......................................................... 35
Figure 9: SYRACUSE MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME BY FAMILY TYPE, 2014 - 2018 ................................................................. 36
Figure 10: ONONDAGA COUNTY AND SYRACUSE RESIDENTS LIVING IN POVERTY BY AGE, 2014-2018 ........................................ 36
Figure 11: SYRACUSE POVERTY COMPARISON BY RACE, 2018 ............................................................................................. 38
Figure 12: GRADUATION RATE FOR SYRACUSE CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT, 2006-2016 ................................................................. 48
Figure 13: AGE OF HOUSING STOCK, 2018 .............................................................................................................................. 52
Figure 14: PERCENT OF TESTED CHILDREN WITH ELEVATED BLOOD LEAD LEVELS, ONONDAGA COUNTY AND SYRACUSE .......... 53
Figure 15: LEAD TESTING IN SYRACUSE, NY, 2012 – 2019 ........................................................................................................... 53
Figure 16: 2017 HOME PURCHASE LOAN APPLICATIONS BY RACE/ETHNICITY, ONONDAGA COUNTY .................................. 58
Figure 17: TOP HOME PURCHASE LOAN DENIAL REASONS BY RACE/ETHNICITY: ONONDAGA COUNTY, 2017 ................ 59
Figure 18: 2017 HOME IMPROVEMENT LOAN APPLICATIONS BY RACE/ETHNICITY: ONONDAGA COUNTY .................... 60
Figure 19: TOP HOME IMPROVEMENT LOAN DENIAL REASONS BY RACE/ETHNICITY, ONONDAGA COUNTY, 2017 ........ 60
Figure 20: OCCUPANTS WITH A HOUSING COST BURDEN, ONONDAGA COUNTY, 2017 ....................................................... 64
Figure 21: COST BURDENED HOUSEHOLDS BY RACE & ETHNICITY, SYRACUSE MSA 2016 .................................................... 65
Figure 22: CASH CONTRACT RENT, SYRACUSE, 2010 & 2018 .................................................................................................... 68

List of Tables

Table 1: HIGHEST BLACK CONCENTRATION OF POVERTY ............................................................................................................ 41
Table 2: HIGHEST HISPANIC CONCENTRATION OF POVERTY .................................................................................................... 41
Table 3: HIGHEST WHITE CONCENTRATION OF POVERTY .......................................................................................................... 41
Table 4: RACE AND ETHNICITY IN ONONDAGA COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICTS, 2018 – 2019 .............................................. 45
Table 5: LIMITED ENGLISH PROFICIENT (LEP) LEARNERS IN ONONDAGA COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICTS, 2014-15 & 2017-18 46
Table 6: FREE AND REDUCED-PRICE LUNCH ELIGIBILITY IN ONONDAGA COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICTS, 2014-15 & 2017-18 47
Table 7: ONONDAGA COUNTY COVID-19 CASES BY RACE AND RACE AS PERCENT OF POPULATION, JUNE 2020 .................... 51
Table 8: HOMEOWNERSHIP RATE BY RACE/ETHNICITY, SYRACUSE MSA, 2000, 2010 & 2018 .................................................... 57
Table 9: DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS OF SUBSIDIZED HOUSING RESIDENTS IN ONONDAGA COUNTY, 2019 ............ 62
Table 10: NUMBER OF HOUSING UNITS THAT RECEIVE FEDERAL HOUSING ASSISTANCE, 2019 .................................................. 70
Table 11: HOUSING UNITS THAT RECEIVE FEDERAL HOUSING ASSISTANCE, 2019 ............................................................... 71
Table 12: ONONDAGA COUNTY JUSTICE INVOLVEMENT BY RACE & ETHNICITY, 2018 ............................................................. 77
List of Maps

MAP 1: ONONDAGA COUNTY: TOWNS, CITIES, INDIAN RESERVATIONS, AND INCORPORATED VILLAGES .................................................. 17
MAP 2: ONONDAGA COUNTY: 2010 POPULATION PER SQUARE MILE AT BLOCK LEVEL ................................................................. 18
MAP 3: 2018 POPULATION BY RACE, ONONDAGA COUNTY ............................................................................................................. 21
MAP 4: 2018 POPULATION BY RACE, SYRACUSE .......................................................................................................................... 22
MAP 5: 2018 PERCENTAGE OF POPULATION THAT IS FOREIGN BORN, SYRACUSE, NY ................................................................. 23
MAP 6: 2018 PERCENTAGE OF POPULATION THAT IS FOREIGN BORN, ONONDAGA COUNTY, NY .................................................. 24
MAP 7: 2018 PERCENTAGE OF POPULATION WITH A DISABILITY, SYRACUSE ........................................................................... 25
MAP 8: 2018 PERCENTAGE OF POPULATION WITH A DISABILITY, ONONDAGA COUNTY ............................................................. 26
MAP 9: 2018 PERCENTAGE OF HOUSEHOLDS WITH CHILDREN UNDER 18 YEARS OLD, SYRACUSE ........................................... 28
MAP 10: 2018 PERCENTAGE OF HOUSEHOLDS WITH CHILDREN UNDER 18 YEARS OLD, ONONDAGA COUNTY .................................. 29
MAP 11: 2018 PERCENTAGE OF HOUSEHOLDS WITH ADULTS 65 AND OLDER, SYRACUSE ............................................................... 30
MAP 12: 2018 PERCENTAGE OF HOUSEHOLDS WITH ADULTS 65 AND OLDER, ONONDAGA COUNTY .............................................. 31
MAP 13: 2018 MEDIAN INCOME, ONONDAGA COUNTY, NEW YORK ................................................................................................. 33
MAP 14: 2018 MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME, SYRACUSE, NY ....................................................................................................... 34
MAP 15: 2018 POVERTY RATE, ONONDAGA COUNTY, NY .................................................................................................................. 37
MAP 16: 2018 POVERTY RATE, SYRACUSE, NY ............................................................................................................................ 38
MAP 17: RACIALLY AND ETHNICALLY CONCENTRATED AREAS OF POVERTY, ONONDAGA COUNTY .................................................. 39
MAP 18: RACIALLY AND ETHNICALLY CONCENTRATED AREAS OF POVERTY, SYRACUSE .............................................................. 40
MAP 19: CENTRO BUS ROUTES, ONONDAGA COUNTY .................................................................................................................... 42
MAP 20: FOOD DESERTS IN SYRACUSE, NY AS DEFINED BY THE USDA, 2019 .............................................................................. 43
MAP 21: SCHOOL DISTRICTS, ONONDAGA COUNTY ..................................................................................................................... 44
MAP 22: DROPOUT RATES IN ONONDAGA COUNTY, 2018 ................................................................................................................. 48
MAP 23: REDLINING MAP, SYRACUSE, 1937 .................................................................................................................................. 50
MAP 24: PERCENT OF STRUCTURES BUILT BEFORE 1979 .................................................................................................................. 52
MAP 25: ELEVATED BLOOD LEAD LEVELS AMONG TESTED CHILDREN ............................................................................................... 54
MAP 26: 2018 PERCENTAGE OF HOUSEHOLDS THAT ARE OWNER OCCUPIED, ONONDAGA COUNTY, NY ........................................ 56
MAP 27: 2018 PERCENTAGE OF HOUSEHOLDS THAT ARE OWNER OCCUPIED, SYRACUSE, NY .......................................................... 57
MAP 28: ACTIVE FHA-BACKED MORTGAGES IN SYRACUSE, NY ..................................................................................................... 58
MAP 29: HOME SALE PRICE COMPARED TO ASSESSED VALUE IN SYRACUSE, 2016-2019 ............................................................... 61
MAP 30: 2018 PERCENTAGE OF HOUSEHOLDS WITH HOUSING COST BURDENS, ONONDAGA COUNTY ........................................ 63
MAP 31: 2018 PERCENTAGE OF HOUSEHOLDS WITH HOUSING COST BURDENS, SYRACUSE ............................................................ 64
MAP 32: NUMBER OF AFFORDABLE HOUSING UNITS BY CENSUS TRACT, SYRACUSE, 2017 .......................................................... 66
MAP 33: PERCENTAGE OF AFFORDABLE HOUSING UNITS AS A PERCENTAGE OF OCCUPIED UNITS BY CENSUS TRACT, SYRACUSE, 2017 ............................................................................................................................. 67
MAP 34: VOLUNTEER LAWYERS PROJECT EVICTION CASES BY CENSUS BLOCK, 10/17/12 – 1/6/17, SYRACUSE, NY ...................... 72
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing Choice (AI) for the City of Syracuse and Onondaga County was conducted by CNY Fair Housing, Inc., a private, non-profit qualified fair housing enforcement agency. As recipients of Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) entitlement funding from the US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), the City of Syracuse and Onondaga County are required to identify impediments or barriers to fair housing choice and work to address those barriers.

As defined by HUD, impediments to fair housing choice are:

- Any actions, omissions, or decisions taken because of race, color, religion, sex, disability, familial status, or national origin which restrict housing choices or the availability of housing choices
- Any actions, omissions, or decisions which have the effect of restricting housing choices or the availability of housing choices on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, disability, familial status, or national origin.¹

The CDBG program specifically contains a regulatory requirement that entitlement jurisdictions certify that they will affirmatively further fair housing as a condition of the receipt of that funding. This obligation to AFFH, requires the jurisdiction to pursue the following broad objectives:

- Analyze and eliminate housing discrimination in the jurisdiction;
- Promote fair housing choice for all persons;
- Provide opportunities for racially and ethnically inclusive patterns of housing occupancy;
- Promote housing that is physically accessible to, and usable by, all persons, particularly persons with disabilities;
- Foster compliance with the nondiscrimination provisions of the Fair Housing Act.²

To conduct this Analysis, CNY Fair Housing conducted data analysis and reviewed existing relevant studies. Two surveys were conducted to gather community input, one of local human service providers and one of local residents. In addition, information was utilized from roundtable and planning discussions for the Housing and Homeless Coalition of Syracuse and Onondaga County.

PROFILE OF ONONDAGA COUNTY AND THE CITY OF SYRACUSE

Like many older industrial areas, Syracuse and Onondaga County have experienced decades of economic decline, leading to large economic and social equality gaps. In a survey of 70 older industrial communities, Onondaga County had the seventh worst racial income disparity in the nation and the second worst in New York State.³ The income gap between Black and white households was calculated to be 92 percent. High levels of residential segregation are evident both across City neighborhoods and across jurisdictional boundaries within the County.

Many City of Syracuse residents live in racially and ethnically concentrated areas of poverty. In fact, in 2015 Syracuse had the highest rate of concentrated poverty among Blacks and Hispanics across the nation’s 100 largest metropolitan areas.⁴ The City is also home to a larger percentage of individuals with disabilities and female headed

households. The patterns of residential segregation that characterize both City neighborhood and City-suburb boundaries are also reflected in the enrollment patterns at Onondaga County school districts.

HOUSING PRACTICES

A century of lending discrimination, exclusionary zoning and overt racial discrimination has created a county where demographic and economic patterns continue to reflect redlining maps drawn nearly a hundred years ago. Further, the continued placement of subsidized housing in the City coupled with regular opposition to affordable housing in the suburbs, limits housing opportunity for protected class members who disproportionately utilize these programs.

In addition to the isolation of affordable housing in areas of low opportunity, there remains a serious shortage of quality affordable housing throughout Onondaga County. For some populations, finding housing is particularly difficult. Individuals with disabilities, who require subsidized, fully accessible units often have to wait two to three years for one to become available. Very low-income households also struggle to find quality housing, as poor conditions are prevalent. Over the past several years, affordable housing developments have sprung up in the suburbs, but often built in places with limited access to transportation or work that would allow those most in need to move.

Despite Syracuse’s passage of source of income protections, refusal by landlords to rent to Section 8 voucher holders and other recipients of housing assistance remains a significant barrier to housing choice. New York State only passed a similar law last year, which will hopefully lead to expanded housing opportunities in the rest of the County. However, recent complaints to CNY Fair Housing from voucher holders and other recipients of housing assistance indicate that landlords are employing a variety of tactics to subvert this law, which means that vigorous enforcement initiatives will be needed to ensure compliance by housing providers. A majority of Section 8 vouchers are currently used within the City in low opportunity neighborhoods often because they are the only areas where landlords accept them.

IMPEDIMENTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

A summary of the identified impediments and recommendations to address them is provided below. For a more thorough description of the impediments and recommendations, please see the full report. While some of the impediments to equal housing opportunity have developed over generations, with a concerted effort, Syracuse and Onondaga County can begin to address them and fulfill their obligation to improve housing opportunity for all of the region’s residents.

IMPEDIMENT 1

The isolation of and poor housing quality in Syracuse’s inner-city neighborhoods restrict housing choice for many low-income households, people with disabilities, and residents of color.

Recommendations:

1. Expand opportunity in economically distressed neighborhoods.
   a. Expand upon programs to improve housing quality in City neighborhoods and areas of low opportunity in the County such as inner-ring suburban neighborhoods.
      • Continue efforts to improve code enforcement and accountability of landlords.
• Increase transparency and professionalism in the code enforcement process, particularly in the towns and villages. Develop and improve online systems to track property conditions with a focus on ease of access for tenants and the general public.
• Continue and expand on efforts to address lead hazards through education, funding for remediation, and strict enforcement of relevant regulations.
• Create an emergency fund for moving, security deposit, and other expenses incurred by households that are displaced by housing code violations and/or condemnations.

b. Work to equalize educational opportunity.
• Continue and expand efforts to develop regional schools.
• Advocate for changes in the school funding system in New York State to reduce reliance on property taxes to fund education.
• City of Syracuse: Continue and expand investment in programs to improve schools such as the Say Yes to Education program.
• Onondaga County: Analyze the feasibility of consolidating school districts into a County-wide district.

a. Link future real estate investment in distressed neighborhoods to workforce development among un- and underemployed residents.
• Adopt a local hiring requirement for real estate development projects that receive grants, tax abatements, taxpayer-subsidized financing, or other local development incentives. Developers should be required to advertise, interview, and hire local candidates first, before making the positions available to a broader applicant pool. Developers should also be required to fill a specified percentage of new jobs with local candidates.
• Develop a job training program in partnership with the Greater Syracuse Land Bank to provide construction trade skills to participants while renovating Land Bank-acquired properties.

2. Reduce concentrations of poverty by increasing the geographic dispersal of affordable housing.

a. Increase the development of mixed-income housing, particularly in low poverty areas.
• Require any residential or mixed-use developments receiving grants, tax abatements, taxpayer-subsidized financing, or other local development incentives to include income-restricted affordable housing units.
• Provide expedited permitting, fee waivers, or additional development incentives to qualifying properties that provide mixed-income housing in low-poverty neighborhoods.
• Implement inclusionary zoning policies that require and/or incentivize affordable housing set-asides for all new residential development. In some communities, all new multi-unit housing over a certain size is required to make a percentage (usually 15-20%) of units available at reduced rates. Such a policy at the County level would significantly increase the availability of affordable housing and, if required of all new multi-family housing developments, would reduce the NIMBYism regularly associated with the development of affordable housing.
• Update zoning policies to reduce barriers to multi-family housing, including eliminating single-family only residential districts and increasing the number of areas where larger multi-family housing is allowed as of right.
b. Promote inclusive development in the City of Syracuse and ensure that developing and redeveloping neighborhoods remain available to low-income households.
   - Preserve and expanding affordable housing opportunities and ensure a right of return for public housing residents affected by the Blueprint 15 project.
   - Require the provision of affordable housing as part of any residential development on land made available for redevelopment along the I-81 viaduct corridor.
   - Create policies and programs to increase the development of affordable housing in areas that have seen an increase in the development of market-rate and luxury housing, such as Downtown, the Inner Harbor, and the University Neighborhood.

c. Encourage the creation of scattered site subsidized housing throughout the County, particularly in areas of higher opportunity.

d. Develop a county-wide affordable rental housing plan that incorporates fair share housing principles and measurable goals for each municipality in the County.

e. Establish a property acquisition fund that provides affordable housing developers with ready access to capital and allows them to act quickly to acquire land or buildings as they become available, rather than having to wait to obtain permanent financing through traditional public funding cycles.

f. Create a mobility counseling program for recipients of housing subsidies that supports individuals’ efforts to move to high-opportunity areas. This is particularly important for residents of public housing that may be temporarily displaced during the redevelopment of the East Adams Street neighborhood.

g. Conduct training for municipal leaders in the County CDBG consortium including elected officials, planning, and zoning officials on fair housing, affordable housing, and their obligation to affirmatively further fair housing. Support community-wide education on the history of housing discrimination in Central New York.

h. Investigate practices and models of community planning that foster greater public support for and/or limit neighborhood opposition to development perceived as undesirable.

i. Work to develop coalitions of community members in suburban towns to support and advocate for inclusive housing development.

j. Encourage and support the development of scattered site and mobile provision of social services by county departments and local human service providers.

**IMPEDIMENT 2**

The lack of accessible, affordable housing is a significant barrier to finding housing for people with disabilities.

**Recommendations:**

1. Target incentives to properties that build accessible units at all cost ranges and in particular to projects that incorporate accessible units into the rehabilitation of existing buildings that are not otherwise subject to the design and construction requirements of the Fair Housing Amendments Act.

2. Lobby state lawmakers for the adoption of a tax credit to encourage private development and rehabilitation of single-family homes to meet visitability standards.

3. Educate landlords and housing developers on the value and importance of building and rehabilitating housing that is accessible.
4. Support investigations of properties for violations of accessibility requirements of the Fair Housing Amendments Act and Americans with Disabilities Act.

**IMPEDIMENT 3**

Private rental market practices disadvantage people of color, families with children, people with disabilities, justice-involved individuals, and individuals receiving housing assistance.

**Recommendations:**
1. Support systemic investigations of housing discrimination. Areas of investigation include discrimination against refugees and new Americans, individuals with mental illness, and individuals receiving housing assistance.
2. Explore options to add additional protections to human rights laws for people with past criminal justice system involvement. Support enforcement and education of the Fair Housing Act’s disparate impact protections for people with criminal records.
3. Support research on housing issues for refugees and new Americans to identify common housing rights’ violations such as unlawful withholding of security deposits.
4. Support and monitor education efforts for housing providers. Ensure individuals involved in the leasing of housing receive accurate, helpful information regarding their responsibilities to adhere to fair housing laws.
5. Continue to support fair housing education for vulnerable populations. Information on fair housing and what to do if you are a victim of housing discrimination should be made available on the websites for the City of Syracuse and Onondaga County, as well as websites of the municipalities in the CDBG consortium.
6. Support tenants’ rights education and enforcement for all renters. Education on tenants’ rights and local housing and legal resources should be made widely available.

**IMPEDIMENT 4**

Homeownership rates for African American, Hispanic/Latinx, and Asian households remain well below homeownership rates for white, Non-Hispanic households.

**Recommendations:**
1. Increase access to sustainable mortgage products for people of color. Continue to support homeownership, financial literacy, and credit repair programs that contain affirmative marketing plans and cultural competency to increase homeownership rates.
2. Research and encourage best practices to increase utilization of the Section 8 homeownership program by area housing authorities, other administering agencies, and their program participants.
3. Establish a community land trust to provide affordable, shared equity homeownership opportunities, with a particular focus on land made available for development by removal of the I-81 viaduct and properties acquired by the Greater Syracuse Land Bank.
4. Seek state authorization to implement a property tax relief program for low-income homeowners and renters in neighborhoods that experience rapid increases in property values and corresponding increases in property taxes.
5. Support systemic investigations into discriminatory practices that impact homeownership such as differential treatment and steering in real estate sales and home lending.
**IMPEDEMENT 5**

Limited public transportation options restrict the ability of many residents to choose where they would like to live.

**Recommendations:**
1. Deliberately link the development sites of affordable housing to public transportation and preserve and expand affordable housing options in areas where cars are not required to access services and employment opportunities. Identify desirable locations in suburban towns for affordable housing development that are accessible to households without cars.
2. Explore the possibility of creating special Call-A-Bus districts to service existing subsidized housing locations that are not currently served by public transportation.
3. Identify and eliminate bus service gaps in neighborhoods of opportunity that may discourage protected classes from seeking housing in those areas.
### INTRODUCTION

The Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing Choice (AI) for the City of Syracuse and Onondaga County was conducted by CNY Fair Housing, Inc., a private, non-profit organization which is a qualified fair housing enforcement agency. As recipients of Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) entitlement funding from the US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), the City of Syracuse and Onondaga County are required to identify impediments or barriers to fair housing choice and work to address those barriers.

### PROGRESS SINCE LAST AI

In the 2014 Analysis of Impediments, CNY Fair Housing identified six significant impediments to fair housing and made recommendations for the City of Syracuse and Onondaga County to address them and fulfill their obligation to improve access to housing opportunity for all of Onondaga County’s residents. While some progress has been made, many of these impediments remain. As such, this section will discuss each identified impediment and corresponding recommendations to evaluate any progress that has been made.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Original Impediment</th>
<th>Recommended Action</th>
<th>Comments on Progress</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>1. The economic and social isolation of Syracuse’s inner-city neighborhoods restricts housing choice of many low-income, disabled, and minority residents.</strong></td>
<td>Continue and expand upon programs to improve housing quality in City neighborhoods and areas of low opportunity in the County such as inner-ring suburban neighborhoods.</td>
<td>The City of Syracuse has invested a significant proportion of its community development funding to programs to improve housing quality and has worked to revamp and improve its code enforcement systems. Additional investment in housing quality remains a need, as does more robust enactment of the code enforcement improvements that have been created. The County has invested some resources in improving housing quality in inner ring suburban neighborhoods through low interest loan programs though these programs have been largely underutilized. Both the City and County have worked specifically to address lead hazards, including by improving enforcement of lead regulations and increasing lead remediation efforts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Strengthen tenant’s rights systems including advocacy for tenants who may not qualify for legal intervention.</strong></td>
<td>The City has prioritized housing stability as an area of focus and has created innovative pilot programs to reduce evictions through early interventions and advocacy. Despite early success, there remains a</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>City of Syracuse:</strong> Continue and expand investment in programs to improve schools such as the Say Yes to Education program.</td>
<td>Since the last report, the Say Yes endowment has been fully funded due to a $20 million grant from New York State. Additional improvements in educational outcomes at Syracuse City Schools are notable including a significant rise in graduation rates. That said, investment in Syracuse City Schools remains inadequate though responsibility for this lies primarily in inequitable state funding formulas.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Onondaga County:</strong> Analyze the feasibility of consolidating school districts into a Countywide district.</td>
<td>In 2017, the Consensus Commission on Local Government Modernization released a report on the feasibility of combining municipal government functions. The consolidation of school districts was deliberately left out of the analysis and there has been no widespread discussion of the idea of school district consolidation since. One promising development is the planned STEAM school that would serve as a regional magnet school for students across districts.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increase the development of mixed-income housing, particularly in low-income areas.</td>
<td>No new mixed-income housing developments have been completed, though one is currently under construction in the City of Syracuse. The City has attempted to create an incentive to encourage the development of mixed-income housing through tax abatements, but the program has not been utilized. There have been no efforts on this goal at the County level.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Task</td>
<td>Progress/Implementation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Encourage the creation of scattered site subsidized housing.</td>
<td>There has been some scattered site subsidized housing built in the City of Syracuse (LIHTC units), however this housing has been built in high poverty neighborhoods. There has been no scattered site subsidized housing built in the County.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develop a countywide affordable housing plan.</td>
<td>There has been no progress on this goal.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Create satellite social services offices for low-income individuals and individuals with special needs within areas of opportunity in the suburban towns and villages.</td>
<td>While no satellite offices have been created for the County DSS, the COVID pandemic has allowed for more remote and flexible operations. Human service agencies were also moving to provide more remote services prior to the pandemic which has increased since.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Create a housing mobility counseling program for recipients of housing subsidies that provides education on the value of living in high opportunity areas.</td>
<td>No housing mobility programs have been created.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Add source of legal income as a protected class under Fair Housing Laws.</td>
<td>The City of Syracuse passed source of income protections in 2016 and New York State enacted similar protections in 2019.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conduct training for municipal leaders in the County CDBG Consortium on fair housing and affordable housing and their obligation to affirmatively further fair housing.</td>
<td>Training on affordable housing was provided at the County Planning Federation conference in 2016.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Investigate practices and models of community planning that may build greater public support for and/or limit neighborhood opposition to development perceived as undesirable.</td>
<td>There has been no notable progress on this goal.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<p>| 2. Discrimination based on source of legal income | Add legal source of income as a class protected by local anti-discrimination | The City of Syracuse passed source of income protections in 2016 and New York State enacted similar protections in 2019. |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>limits housing choice laws.</strong></th>
<th><strong>York State enacted similar protections in 2019.</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Promote and support efforts to have source of legal income added as a protected class in New York State.</td>
<td>The City of Syracuse supported efforts to get source of income protections passed at the State level and the passage of source of income protections in the City helped spur the consideration of statewide legislation. There were no public instances of support for source of income protections by the County.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increase the number of landlords that accept housing choice vouchers throughout all parts of the County.</td>
<td>There has been no increase in the number of vouchers used outside the City (based on 2019 data).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Require properties that receive tax abatements or other government incentives to accept Section 8 or other public assistance as a source of income.</td>
<td>These properties are now required to do so by New York State law.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>3. The lack of accessible, affordable housing is a significant barrier to finding housing for people with disabilities.</strong></td>
<td>There has been no progress on this goal.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Target incentives to properties that build accessible units at all cost ranges, particularly when properties are rehabs of existing buildings that are not subject to the design and construction requirements of the Fair Housing Amendments Act.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lobby State lawmakers for the adoption of a tax credit to encourage private development and rehabilitation of single-family homes to meet Visitability standards.</td>
<td>There has been no progress on this goal.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educate landlords and housing developers on the value and importance of building and rehabilitating housing that is accessible.</td>
<td>CNY Fair Housing conducts annual outreach to housing developers on the importance of creating accessible housing though more extensive education would be beneficial.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Establish additional tenant protections for people with disabilities to allow them more flexibility in their housing. | There has been no progress on this goal at the City or County levels. However, legislation has been proposed at the State level by a local
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>4. Private market practices in rental, lending, and homeowners insurance disadvantage minorities, families with children, and single individuals receiving public assistance.</th>
<th>Increase access to sustainable mortgage products for racial and ethnic minorities. Continue to support home ownership, financial literacy, and credit repair programs that contain affirmative marketing plans to increase minority home ownership.</th>
<th>The City of Syracuse has continued supporting the homeownership programs of Home HeadQuarters, including the closing cost assistance program, homeownership counseling, and foreclosure counseling. The City also created the Financial Empowerment Center in partnership with Home HeadQuarters, which provides free financial counseling to anyone in the City of Syracuse. Onondaga County runs a small home renovation program that offers a handful of homes for sale at reduced cost each year.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Add gender identity as a protected class in Onondaga County.</td>
<td>Gender Identity was not added as a protected class in Onondaga County, but in 2019 New York State added it to the protected classes under state law.</td>
<td>Add gender identity as a protected class in Onondaga County.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Promote and support efforts to have gender identity added as a protected class in New York State.</td>
<td>Both the City and County supported efforts to improve transgender rights.</td>
<td>Promote and support efforts to have gender identity added as a protected class in New York State.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support systemic investigations of housing discrimination.</td>
<td>Both the County and City have continued to provide funding for CNY Fair Housing to conduct systemic investigations.</td>
<td>Support systemic investigations of housing discrimination.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support and monitor education efforts for housing providers.</td>
<td>Both the County and City have continued to provide funding for CNY Fair Housing to educate housing providers.</td>
<td>Support and monitor education efforts for housing providers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support fair housing education for protected classes.</td>
<td>Both the County and City have continued to provide funding for CNY Fair Housing and ARISE to educate protected classes.</td>
<td>Support fair housing education for protected classes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support tenants’ rights education for all renters.</td>
<td>The City continues to fund the Greater Syracuse Tenants Network and both City and County funding for CNY Fair Housing contributes to this</td>
<td>Support tenants’ rights education for all renters.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
5. Populations of hard to house individuals face very limited options including large families, those with justice involvement, and single individuals receiving public assistance.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Effort</th>
<th>Target incentives for projects that develop rental units for large families.</th>
<th>No progress has been made on this goal.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Explore the viability of permitting regulated rooming houses to be allowed by right in a variety of neighborhoods in the city and county.</td>
<td>Rooming houses have failed in other communities and may not be the best option to pursue. The City and County should advocate for increased DSS subsidies by New York State to improve housing options for extremely low-income households.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Encourage programs that make it easier for people with justice involvement to find rental housing.</td>
<td>Some progress has been made on this goal. The Center for Community Alternatives opened Freedom Commons in 2019, which specializes in housing people with criminal justice system involvement.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

6. Public transportation limits the ability of many residents to choose where they would like to live

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Effort</th>
<th>Deliberately link the development of affordable housing to public transportation and place affordable housing in places where cars are not required to access services.</th>
<th>There has been no progress on this goal. In fact, one of the largest affordable housing developments built since the last report, a LIHTC project in Cicero known as Island Hollow, was built more than 2 miles from the nearest bus route, job center, and retail services.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Explore the possibility of creating special Call-A-Bus districts to service existing subsidized housing locations that are currently not served by public transportation.</td>
<td>No progress has been made on this goal.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identify and eliminate gaps in bus service in neighborhoods of opportunity that may discourage protected classes from seeking housing in those areas.</td>
<td>No progress has been made on this goal.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Basis of This Study

Under the Fair Housing Act, the US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) is obligated to administer its programs in such a way as to “affirmatively further fair housing” (AFFH), a requirement that extends to grantees of HUD programs. The Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program specifically contains a regulatory requirement that entitlement jurisdictions certify that they will affirmatively further fair housing as a condition of the receipt of that funding.

This obligation to AFFH, requires the jurisdiction to pursue the following broad objectives:

- Analyze and eliminate housing discrimination in the jurisdiction;
- Promote fair housing choice for all persons;
- Provide opportunities for racially and ethnically inclusive patterns of housing occupancy;
- Promote housing that is physically accessible to, and usable by, all persons, particularly persons with disabilities;
- Foster compliance with the nondiscrimination provisions of the Fair Housing Act.\(^5\)

Specifically, the AFFH obligation requires the grantee to:

1. Conduct an analysis to identify impediments to fair housing choice within the jurisdiction
2. Take appropriate actions to overcome the effects of any impediments identified through the analysis
3. Maintain records reflecting the analysis and actions in this regard.\(^6\)

While the obligation to AFFH arises in connection to the receipt of HUD funds, the obligation extends beyond the operation of HUD-funded programs and applies to all public and privately funded housing and housing-related activities in the jurisdiction.\(^7\)

Overview of Fair Housing Laws

A combination of federal, state, and local fair housing laws apply in Syracuse and Onondaga County.

The first housing discrimination protections were established with the Civil Rights Act of 1866, which held that “all citizens of the United States shall have the same right, in every State and Territory, as is enjoyed by white citizens thereof to inherit, purchase, lease, sell, hold, and convey real and personal property.” While by statute, the Act bans discrimination on the basis of race or color, through case law, it has been held to prohibit discrimination on the basis of national origin and religion as well. The Act, however, went largely unenforced.

To address the continuing unequal access to housing, particularly for racial minorities, Congress passed Title VIII of the Civil Rights Act of 1968, the Fair Housing Act, which prohibits discrimination in housing based on race, color, religion, and national origin. The Fair Housing Act was amended in 1974 to included sex as a protected class and in 1988 to include disability and familial status.

In addition to these federal laws, additional protected classes have been established under state and local laws. New York State Executive Law §296 prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, creed, national origin, sex, familial status, disability, age, marital status, military status, and sexual orientation. In 2012, the City of Syracuse

---


\(^6\) Ibid, 1-2.

\(^7\) Ibid, 1-3
amended Local Law 17, the Fair Practices Act, to prohibit discrimination in housing and other services due to individuals “actual or perceived sex, or their gender identity or expression.”

There have been several updates to fair housing laws since the writing of the last AI in 2014. In 2016, the City of Syracuse added “legal source of income” as a protected class in the City of Syracuse. In 2019, New York State added source of income as a protected class across the state. As such, households can no longer be denied access to housing based solely upon their source of income anywhere in Onondaga County. All landlords except those renting the other half of a duplex in which they reside must accept Section 8, Public Assistance, DSS, SSI/D, and other types of assistance.

New York State also added gender identity as a protected class in 2019. Most recently, in 2020, the Supreme Court ruled that Title VII’s prohibition on employment discrimination “because of sex” includes discrimination against gay, lesbian and transgender employees. Justice Gorsuch wrote in the decision for Bostock v. Clayton County, “An employer who fires an individual for being homosexual or transgender fires that person for traits or actions it would not have questioned in members of a different sex. Sex plays a necessary and undisguisable role in the decision, exactly what Title VII forbids.” Like Title VII, the Fair Housing Act (Title VIII) includes the same prohibition on discrimination “because of sex.” While the Bostock decision only applies to Title VII's employment protections, the Supreme Court’s interpretation of Title VII has historically influenced lower courts’ rulings on Title VIII. Thus, it is likely that courts will soon more widely hold that sexual orientation and gender identity are protected characteristics under the Fair Housing Act.

Fair housing laws apply to all housing related transactions, including real estate sales, rentals, mortgage lending, homeowner’s insurance, zoning, and housing-related harassment.

The Fair Housing Act specifically identifies prohibited practices in §3604, §3605, §3606, §3617, and §3618. These prohibited practices include:

- To refuse to sell or rent, to refuse to negotiate for the sale or rental of, or otherwise make unavailable or deny, a dwelling to any person because of their membership in a protected class.
- To discriminate against any person in the terms, condition, or privileges of sale or rental of a dwelling, or in the provision of services or facilities in connection therewith, because of their membership in a protected class.
- To make, print, or publish, any notice, statement, or advertisement, with respect to the sale or rental of a dwelling that indicates any preference, limitation, or discrimination based on membership in a protected class.
- To represent to any person because of race, color, religion, sex, handicap, familial status, or national origin that a unit is not available for inspection, sale, or rental when such dwelling is in fact so available.
- To refuse to permit a reasonable accommodation or modification for a person with a disability when such an accommodation or modification is necessary to afford such person equal opportunity to use and enjoy a dwelling.
- A failure to design and construct multi-family housing to meet accessibility standards.
- To coerce, intimidate, threaten, or interfere with the exercise of protected housing activities.

While discrimination can occur overtly, such as a landlord stating that they will not rent to a family with children, the law also covers practices that are less direct. In 2015, the Supreme Court affirmed disparate impact as a theory of liability in Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs v. Inclusive Communities Project, Inc. Practices that have a disparate impact on a protected class are neutral on their face but disproportionately affect a protected group. For example, the eviction of survivors of domestic abuse under a landlord’s “zero tolerance for
violence policy” would disproportionately harm women, who are much more likely than men to be the victims of such abuse. Regardless of the landlord’s intent, the unjustified discriminatory effect of such a practice would constitute a violation of fair housing laws.

Under these provisions, a range of practices that have historically limited access to housing for members of protected classes are considered illegal under the Fair Housing Act. These include racial steering, exclusionary zoning, blockbusting, discriminatory advertising, and redlining in mortgage lending, homeowners insurance, and appraisals.

Both the Fair Housing Act and New York State Human Rights Law provide an administrative process to investigate complaints and pursue legal action on behalf of victims of discrimination. Individuals may file administrative complaints with HUD or the New York State Division of Human Rights, which is considered a substantially equivalent agency. Complaints filed with HUD are sometimes referred to the Division of Human Rights for investigation. If violations are proven, victims are eligible for monetary compensation and affirmative relief. Injured parties, including organizations, may also file civil cases on their own in state or federal court, and importantly prevailing plaintiffs can request that the court order the defendant to pay the plaintiff’s legal fees. Additionally, in the City of Syracuse, where local law includes additional protected classes, individuals may file in City court.

**Defining the Analysis**

Impediments to fair housing choice are those factors which may preclude an individual or family from living where they would freely choose to live, or which cause them to live under less favorable circumstances than equal treatment under the law would dictate. In other words, absent barriers which relate to federal and state fair housing laws, these individuals or families would reside elsewhere and/or be free of negative circumstances which accrued to them through unfair housing practices.

The Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing Choice seeks to identify not only if these prohibited practices are present within a community, but also looks broadly at housing and housing-related issues. Impediments to fair housing are not merely acts of discrimination, but any factor that limits the access to housing opportunities for members of protected classes. Thus, an impediment could be a discrete act of discrimination, such as a landlord’s refusal to rent to someone with a mobility impairment. An impediment can also be a broad public policy, or a lack of public policy, such as the failure of a municipality to ensure an adequate supply of accessible, affordable housing for people with disabilities.

As defined by HUD, impediments to fair housing choice are:

- Any actions, omissions, or decisions taken because of race, color, religion, sex, disability, familial status, or national origin which restrict housing choices or the availability of housing choices
- Any actions, omissions, or decisions which have the effect of restricting housing choices or the availability of housing choices on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, disability, familial status, or national origin.

To identify impediments, the AI involves conducting a comprehensive review of the jurisdiction’s laws, regulations, and administrative policies, procedures, and practices; an assessment of how those laws, etc. affect the location, availability, and accessibility of housing; and an assessment of conditions, both public and private, affecting fair housing choice.

---

9 Ibid, 2-7.
The required parameters of this analysis are far less clear than in the prior report. Since publication of that report, HUD has changed the regulations governing this analysis twice. In 2015, an Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing rule was instituted that replaced the Analysis of Impediments framework with a new Assessment of Fair Housing framework. The new rule and required Assessment included a series of questions and answers and was accompanied by new data tools. However, in 2018 HUD suspended that rule, leaving jurisdictions unclear as to how to proceed. Given this uncertainty, this report follows the previously established Analysis of Impediments framework and roughly follows the outline of the 2015 report.

**METHODOLOGY**

To evaluate the barriers to housing choice in the City of Syracuse and Onondaga County, CNY Fair Housing conducted several research activities:

- Data analysis and mapping
- Review of documents and existing studies
- Surveys with residents and service providers and focus group discussions

**Data Analyses**

In conducting this analysis, data was utilized from numerous sources. The primary data source for the creation of the original maps is the 2014-2018 ACS 5-year estimates from the US Census Bureau. Secondary sources include the NYS Department of Education data, Home Mortgage Disclosure Act data, and HUD data.

**Document and Study Review**

A number of documents and studies were reviewed to inform this analysis including the following:

- City of Syracuse Five Year 2020-2024 Consolidated Plan and First Annual Action Plan Program Year 46 Draft (2020-2021)
- Onondaga County 2019 Action Plan
- City of Syracuse Department of Neighborhood and Business Development Consolidated Annual Performance and Evaluation Report (CAPER) for Program Year 44 (2018-2019)
- A Study of Affordable Housing in the City of Syracuse, Department of Neighborhood and Business Development (June 2017)
- Mapping the Food Environment in Syracuse, New York, 2017
- A COVID-19 Community Needs Chronicle and Assessment for Syracuse and Onondaga County, New York, PEACE inc. (June 2020)
- Supporting Partnerships for Anti-Racist Communities (SPARC) Syracuse, Initial Findings from Quantitative and Qualitative Research (2018)
- ReZone Syracuse (2019)
- “Syracuse’s unfair property tax system hurts poor the most; here’s what can be done,” The Post Standard (September 2019)

**Surveys & Community Outreach**

CNY Fair Housing conducted qualitative interviews through an online survey distributed to both residents and service providers. The agency also utilized input from various housing forums and group discussions including
planning discussions organized by the Housing and Homeless Coalition of CNY. Finally, the agency learned from the stories and experiences of the hundreds of households that call each year for help in addressing their housing rights.

**PROFILE OF ONONDAGA COUNTY AND THE CITY OF SYRACUSE**

**GEOGRAPHY**

Onondaga County is located in Central New York State and is bordered by Oswego County to the north, Madison County to the east, Cortland County to the south, and Cayuga County to the west. The County covers 780 square miles and contains a mix of urban, suburban, agricultural areas and large amounts of forested land (see map). The City of Syracuse is located near the center of the County. In addition to the City of Syracuse, the County contains 19 towns, 15 villages, and the Onondaga Nation.

MAP 1: ONONDAGA COUNTY: TOWNS, CITIES, INDIAN RESERVATIONS, AND INCORPORATED VILLAGES

[Map of Onondaga County showing towns, cities, Indian reservations, and incorporated villages]

Created by Cornell Program on Applied Demographics. March 2012
Data Source: 2010 Census TIGER/Line files.
Onondaga County is the sixth most populous county in Upstate New York, containing 461,809 residents as of 2018. Approximately one-third of the population of Onondaga County lives within the City of Syracuse. Outside of Syracuse, the most populous areas are in the suburban towns North and East of the City. These include the towns of Salina, Clay, Cicero, Dewitt and Manlius. Map 2 shows the population density within the County in 2010, with areas designated as “urban areas” outlined in green.
DEMOGRAPHIC PATTERNS

Like many Northeastern industrial metropolitan areas, Syracuse and Onondaga County have experienced decades of suburbanization and the subsequent decline of the central city due to disinvestment. The graph below shows the population of the City and County from 1950 to 2010. While the population of the City of Syracuse has steadily declined since the 1950’s, Onondaga County experienced rapid growth in its population from 1950 – 1970 and has remained relatively steady since.

**FIGURE 1: SYRACUSE AND ONONDAGA COUNTY POPULATION CHANGE, 1950-2018**

![Population graph](image)

SOURCE: CITY OF SYRACUSE DEPARTMENT OF NEIGHBORHOOD AND BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT, USING AMERICAN COMMUNITY SURVEY

Of particular significance for issues of fair housing are the population trends related to race during this time. As Figure 2 indicates, the City of Syracuse experienced significant levels of “white flight” over the last seven decades. In the 1950s and 1960s, the construction of I-81 and other urban renewal projects destroyed predominantly black communities and displaced residents to other City neighborhoods. White households subsequently began leaving those neighborhoods and moving to newly developing suburbs from which Black households were usually excluded by restrictive covenants and other discriminatory practices. With the loss of population and continued discriminatory lending practices that prevented Black households from accumulating wealth, the City’s tax base was significantly eroded. In 1960, whites made up 94% of the City’s population. By 2010, that percentage had dropped by nearly 40% to just over 55%. Although the City’s population has stabilized since 2010, the percentage of whites continued to drop to 50% in 2018. The County has also experienced a drop in the percentage of population that is white (-17%) from 1960 to 2010, a drop that is comparable to the change nationally and is more reflective of the diversification of the American population and not necessarily a distinct pattern of migration within the community. Figure 3 demonstrates the racial and ethnic makeup of Onondaga County and Syracuse in 2010 and 2018. Although both the County and City continue to become more diverse, the County has a significantly larger proportion of white individuals.
FIGURE 2: WHITE POPULATION, 1960 AND 2010


FIGURE 3: SYRACUSE AND ONONDAGA COUNTY RACE AND ETHNICITY, 2010 & 2018

The result of these trends is a community marked by high levels of racial, and to a lesser extent, ethnic segregation. The following maps identify the patterns of settlement within Onondaga County and the City of Syracuse by race and ethnicity. Map 3 shows the 2018 population of Onondaga County by race and ethnicity. The map highlights the significant difference in the racial and the ethnic composition of the City of Syracuse compared to the surrounding suburban and rural areas. Outside of the City of Syracuse, racial and ethnic minorities live in small concentrations in some suburban communities and are largely absent in rural areas.

MAP 3: 2018 POPULATION BY RACE, ONONDAGA COUNTY

2018 Population by Race, Onondaga County, NY

Legend
- Dark Blue: Black
- Light Blue: Hispanic
- Black Triangle: Asian
- White: Non-Hispanic

Source: 2014-2018 ACS 5-Year estimates
Map 4 shows the 2018 population of the City of Syracuse with neighborhood boundaries. As the map highlights, there are distinct differences in the racial and ethnic composition of neighborhoods within the City, with the largest concentrations of African American residents in the Southwest, Southside, and Brighton neighborhoods and large concentrations of Hispanic residents in the Near Westside neighborhood.

The map also identifies the large population of Asian residents on the City’s Northside due largely to the resettlement of refugees in the region. For years, Syracuse has been a refugee resettlement city, with the largest ethnic groups of new Syracusans being the Bhutanese, Burmese, Somali and Sudanese communities. Although the refugee resettlement rate in Syracuse has dropped drastically with the Trump administration’s immigration policies, falling 72 percent from 2016 to 2017,\(^\text{10}\) Catholic Charities and Interfaith Works reported that the agencies

resettled 850 refugees in 2018-2019. A majority of these refugees were initially settled in the Northside neighborhood due to its proximity to the services of the resettlement agencies and the availability of affordable housing.

Foreign-born residents make up 13.3 percent of all City residents. The concentration of refugees and other foreign-born individuals within certain City neighborhoods is even more apparent on Map 5, which shows the percentage of the population that is foreign born by census tract and neighborhood boundary. In addition to identifying the concentrations of refugee populations surrounding the Northside, this map also identifies large concentrations of international students in the neighborhoods surrounding Syracuse University. Map 6 shows the percentage of the population that is foreign born in Onondaga County. Countywide, foreign-born residents comprise 7.9 percent of the population. There are two census tracts in Dewitt with the second highest quintile of foreign-born population outside of the City of Syracuse. The foreign-born population in rural towns such as Lafayette, Pompey, Fabius and Onondaga may be attributed to immigrant farm workers or members of the Onondaga Nation.
In addition to the hyper-segregation of racial and ethnic groups in the region, there are also significant concentrations of people with disabilities within certain census tracts. Map 7 identifies the percentage of the population with a disability for each census tract in the City. Significant concentrations occur within certain census tracts within both the City and surrounding suburbs where subsidized housing projects for seniors and people with disabilities are located. The tract with the highest concentration of people with disabilities is tract 16, which includes the James Street corridor in Syracuse, which is home to a large number of service providers for people with disabilities as well as a number of senior housing developments. The percentage of people with disabilities in this tract is more than 30 percent, six times greater than tract 45, located in the Wescott neighborhood, which has the lowest percentage of people with disabilities (5.1 percent) in the City. Map 8 represents the percentage of the disabled population within the County, with all but one census tract in the highest quintile in the City of Syracuse. This is likely attributed to the greater availability of services, affordable housing, and transit in the City versus the suburbs.
MAP 7: 2018 PERCENTAGE OF POPULATION WITH A DISABILITY, SYRACUSE

2018 Percentage of the Population with a Disability in Syracuse, NY

Legend

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage Range</th>
<th>Color</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0% - 4%</td>
<td>Light Orange</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4% - 9%</td>
<td>Orange</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9% - 14%</td>
<td>Medium Orange</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14% - 19%</td>
<td>Dark Orange</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19% - 24%</td>
<td>Brown</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24% - 29%</td>
<td>Dark Brown</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: 2014-2018 ACS 5-year estimates

Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing, Syracuse and Onondaga County, NY 2020
There are also differences in family composition among different areas across the region that could result in varying levels of discrimination based on familial status, gender, or marital status. As seen in Figures 4 and 5 below, over 50 percent of households in the City of Syracuse are single mother headed households and less than 40% are two parent households, as compared with 30 percent and 60 percent in Onondaga County, respectively. Single mothers can be particularly vulnerable to familial status discrimination and sexual harassment, in part because their lower household incomes limit housing options.

**FIGURE 4: FAMILY TYPES IN SYRACUSE AND NEW YORK STATE**

[Figure 4: Bar chart showing family types in Syracuse and New York State.]

**SOURCE: CNY VITALS**

**FIGURE 5: FAMILY TYPES IN ONONDAGA COUNTY AND NEW YORK STATE**

[Figure 5: Bar chart showing family types in Onondaga County and New York State.]

**SOURCE: CNY VITALS**
While the number of households with children is fairly evenly distributed when comparing the City to the surrounding County, there are significant differences in the number of households with children across City neighborhoods. The map below identifies the percentage of households with children under 18 for each census tract in the City. There are a number of neighborhoods in the City where the percentage of households with children is significantly lower such as in the Syracuse University neighborhood as well as in the City’s Downtown, Franklin Square, and Lakefront neighborhoods, which are currently experiencing a revitalization of vacant commercial and industrial properties into higher-end loft-style apartments. Of particular concern, is the significant population of children in neighborhoods with older housing stock as will be discussed later in this report in relation to lead exposure.

MAP 9: 2018 PERCENTAGE OF HOUSEHOLDS WITH CHILDREN UNDER 18 YEARS OLD, SYRACUSE
The percentage of households with adults 65 or older is not as evenly distributed across the County and City, with significantly more census tracts with a high proportion of seniors outside of the City, as displayed in Map 11. However, there are significant variations in the distribution of seniors within the City of Syracuse as well, as shown in Map 12. Census tracts where over 25% of households have seniors tend to be located in the outer neighborhoods of the City, such as Meadowbrook, Winkworth, and South and North Valley. Households in the center of the City, such as in the University Area and Downtown, have a much smaller proportion of seniors. In Onondaga County, census tract 167 in Skaneateles has the highest percentage of households 65 and older, comprising 48% of all households.
MAP 12: 2018 PERCENTAGE OF HOUSEHOLDS WITH ADULTS 65 AND OLDER, ONONDAGA COUNTY
ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY

Like many cities, the Syracuse region has notable disparities in the distribution of economic assets. In broad terms, the City is home to some of the most concentrated poverty in the nation, while being surrounded by more affluent suburban communities. The chart below compares the median household income for the City of Syracuse, Onondaga County, New York State, and the United States in 2010 & 2018. As evidenced in the chart, the median income nationally and statewide are both higher than Onondaga County. Although median household incomes in both the County and City have risen at similar rates in recent years, the County median income is over 75% higher than that of Syracuse alone. As Figure 7 demonstrates, similar disparities exist in the unemployment rate, with City residents facing a much higher unemployment rate than in the County as a whole. Notably, the recovery from the Great Recession has also been disproportionate, with the gap in the unemployment rate between the City and County widening since 2014.

**FIGURE 6: MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOMES, 2010 & 2018**

**SOURCE: CNY VITALS**

**FIGURE 7: UNEMPLOYMENT RATE, 2014-2019**

**SOURCE: CITY OF SYRACUSE NEIGHBORHOOD AND BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT**

Mapping the median household income range for all census tracts in Onondaga County highlights the geographic disparities in economic assets. As evidenced on Map 13 below, all 27 census tracts that fall in the bottom quintile of median household income are within the City of Syracuse, while only one of the 28 census tracts in the highest
quintile is located within the City. A number of census tracts outside of the City fall within the second lowest quintile of household income. These tracts include the inner-ring suburban communities of East Syracuse, Mattydale, Solvay, Lyncourt and Galeville as well as tracts where subsidized housing projects are located in the Towns of Cicero, Clay and Van Buren. Map 14 of median income in the City demonstrates that neighborhoods in the Near Westside, Southside, and Near Eastside have median incomes of $20,000 or lower. The University and South Campus neighborhoods are also within the lowest quintile, as most residents are students with limited income. Syracuse neighborhoods with higher median incomes include Lakefront, Strathmore, Meadowbrook, Tipp Hill, and parts of University Neighborhood. However, when compared with County census tracts, many of these neighborhoods lay within the middle quintiles.

MAP 13: 2018 MEDIAN INCOME, ONONDAGA COUNTY, NEW YORK
Within both Onondaga County and the City of Syracuse, there are significant differences in the median household income by race and ethnicity and family type. As Figure 8 indicates, the median household income is higher in the County than in the City for all racial and ethnic groups. In Onondaga County as a whole, median income for white households is more than double the median income for Hispanic or Latinx and Black households. Within the City, the disparity is less but still significant with the median income for white households around 40 percent higher than Asian, Hispanic or Latinx, and Black households. This is of course a result of decades of systemic racism and disparities in access to opportunities for economic mobility. Figure 9 identifies the median household income by family type in the City of Syracuse. Female headed households have a median income that is nearly 50 percent lower than male headed households and three times lower than households with married couples. These disparities in household income greatly affect the housing choices available to these demographic groups.

**FIGURE 8: SYRACUSE MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME BY RACE AND ETHNICITY, 2014-2018**

![Median Income by Race, Onondaga County and City of Syracuse, 2014 - 18](source)

**SOURCE:** CITY OF SYRACUSE DEPARTMENT OF NEIGHBORHOOD AND BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT, 2014-2018 ACS 5-YEAR DATA.
The differences in poverty levels by geography and race are even starker. In 2018, 32 percent of individuals in the City of Syracuse were living in poverty compared to 15% of individuals in the County as a whole. Figure 10 identifies the percentage of individuals living in poverty by age. While City of Syracuse residents are much more likely to live in poverty at any age, the chart highlights the serious problem of childhood poverty in Syracuse with nearly half of all children under the age of 18 living in poverty.

SOURCE: ACS 2018 5-YEAR DATA. CITY OF SYRACUSE NEIGHBORHOOD AND BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT.
The spatial patterns of concentrated poverty are particularly evident when viewing a map of poverty rates for the County. As Map 15 below identifies, only one census tract outside of the City of Syracuse, a portion of Mattydale in the Town of Salina, has a poverty rate above 20 percent, while 43 census tracts in the City have poverty rates above 20 percent. Map 16 demonstrates the concentration of poverty within the City of Syracuse, with a third of census tracts with a severe poverty rate of 41 percent or above. The census tracts with the highest poverty rate in the City of Syracuse, excluding University Hill and South Campus tracts, are census tracts 42 and 53 in the Southside neighborhood, with poverty rates of 61.8 percent and 58.4 percent, respectively. Both of these census tracts are home to large public housing developments. Census tracts in the City of Syracuse with poverty rates under 20 percent largely correspond with the census tracts with the highest median incomes.

MAP 15: 2018 POVERTY RATE, ONONDAGA COUNTY, NY
When broken down by race and ethnicity, significant disparities are revealed in poverty rates within the City of Syracuse. Compared to white individuals, Hispanic/Latinx and Asian individuals are more than three times more likely to live in poverty and Black individuals are two and a half times more likely to live in poverty.

**FIGURE 11: SYRACUSE POVERTY COMPARISON BY RACE, 2018**

**SOURCE:** 2018 ACS 5-YEAR DATA.
Of particular concern for the purposes of identifying impediments to fair housing choice are areas in which there are both high concentrations of poverty as well as non-white residents. These racially and ethnically concentrated areas of poverty (RCAPs and ECAPs) are defined as census tracts with a non-white population of 50 percent or more and where 40 percent or more of individuals are living below the poverty line. As identified in Map 17 below, there were 19 RCAPs and ECAPs within Onondaga County in 2018, all of which are within the City of Syracuse. This is an increase from 15 RCAPs and ECAPs in 2012. As demonstrated in Map 18, neighborhoods with multiple RCAP and ECAP census tracts include the Southside, Near Westside, Northside, Near Eastside and Downtown.
According to a 2015 report published by the Century Foundation, Syracuse has the highest rate of concentrated, extreme poverty among Black and Hispanic populations in the nation.14 As shown in Table 1, by the end of 2013, 65 percent of Syracuse’s Black population lived in a high-poverty area, up from 48 percent in 2009. Similarly, Table 2 demonstrates that 62 percent of Syracuse’s Hispanic population lives in an extreme poverty neighborhood, a drastic increase from 38 percent in 2009. Lastly, Table 3 identifies Syracuse as fifth in the nation for highest concentration of poverty among non-Hispanic whites. Although the City’s poverty rate has declined by slightly over three percent from 2014 to 2018, this demonstrates that areas of poverty are still becoming more isolated.

In its 2020-2021 Action Plan, the City of Syracuse states that funds will be targeted geographically into HUD-approved Neighborhood Revitalization Strategy Areas (NRSAs) in the Northeast and Southwest portions of the City, both of which contain multiple census tracts with RCAPs or ECAPs. Increased funding aims to create jobs, retention activities, housing programs, and economic development.

---

### TABLE 1: HIGHEST BLACK CONCENTRATION OF POVERTY

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>RANK</th>
<th>METROPOLITAN AREA</th>
<th>BLACK</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Syracuse, NY</td>
<td>43.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Detroit-Livonia-Dearborn, MI</td>
<td>17.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Toledo, OH</td>
<td>18.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Rochester, NY</td>
<td>34.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Fresno, CA</td>
<td>42.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Buffalo-Niagara Falls, NY</td>
<td>30.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Cleveland-Elyria-Mentor, OH</td>
<td>26.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Gary, IN</td>
<td>22.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Milwaukee-Waukesha-West Allis, WI</td>
<td>38.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Louisville/Jefferson County, KY-IN</td>
<td>38.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sources: 2000 Census, 2005-2009 and 2009-2013 ACS. Limited to the 100 largest metropolitan areas.

### TABLE 2: HIGHEST HISPANIC CONCENTRATION OF POVERTY

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>RANK</th>
<th>METROPOLITAN AREA</th>
<th>HISPANIC</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Syracuse, NY</td>
<td>49.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Philadelphia, PA</td>
<td>53.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>McAllen-Edinburg-Mission, TX</td>
<td>61.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Detroit-Livonia-Dearborn, MI</td>
<td>8.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Springfield, MA</td>
<td>42.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Rochester, NY</td>
<td>32.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Milwaukee-Waukesha-West Allis, WI</td>
<td>5.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Fresno, CA</td>
<td>31.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Buffalo-Niagara Falls, NY</td>
<td>39.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Cleveland-Elyria-Mentor, OH</td>
<td>16.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sources: 2000 Census, 2005-2009 and 2009-2013 ACS. Limited to the 100 largest metropolitan areas.

### TABLE 3: HIGHEST WHITE CONCENTRATION OF POVERTY

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>RANK</th>
<th>METROPOLITAN AREA</th>
<th>NON-HISPANIC WHITE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>McAllen-Edinburg-Mission, TX</td>
<td>36.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Detroit-Livonia-Dearborn, MI</td>
<td>6.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Poughkeepsie-Newburgh-Middletown, NY</td>
<td>25.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Toledo, OH</td>
<td>8.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Syracuse, NY</td>
<td>8.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Fresno, CA</td>
<td>13.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Akron, OH</td>
<td>7.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Beakersfield-Delano, CA</td>
<td>6.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Tucson, AZ</td>
<td>3.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>New York-White Plains-Wayne, NY-NJ</td>
<td>10.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sources: 2000 Census, 2005-2009 and 2009-2013 ACS. Limited to the 100 largest metropolitan areas.
TRANSPORTATION & ACCESS TO COMMUNITY ASSETS

Another issue of concern related to economic opportunity in Syracuse is transportation and access to community assets. The only public transportation in the region is a bus service operated by CENTRO. While service within the City of Syracuse could be improved, service to the outer suburbs is extremely limited both in terms of the locations of bus routes and the frequency in which those lines are operated. Map 19 shows Centro bus routes operating in Onondaga County, which are largely concentrated within the City. As 27.6% of households in Syracuse do not have access to a vehicle, limited routes to suburban communities limit access to jobs and resources in the Onondaga County suburbs. Although many Onondaga County residents may come into the City to work, it is far more difficult for City residents to work in the suburbs.

MAP 19: CENTRO BUS ROUTES, ONONDAGA COUNTY

In a survey conducted by Syracuse Housing Authority, public housing residents and Housing Choice Voucher holders identified access to adequate transportation as a top requested need. Lack of public transportation is also a challenge for residents of several subsidized housing projects that have been built in suburban communities in recent years. Several Low-Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) properties are located in areas with limited to no access to public transit and few job opportunities, child care centers, or other services within walking distance. For people with eligible disabilities, CENTRO operates a Call-A-Bus service that provides door-to-door transportation within ¼ of a mile of an existing bus route. However, some locations of subsidized housing developments are not within the service area of Call-A-Bus, so individuals with disabilities who live or wish to live in such developments do not have recourse to that option. CENTRO also offers special services for seniors that are available throughout the County, though the number of trips per month is limited.

15 American Community Survey 2018 5-Year Data, Table S2504.
16 City of Syracuse, Consolidated Plan 2020-2024,
Transportation barriers can also impact access to adequate food as well. There are multiple food deserts in Syracuse, as represented by dark blue on Map 20 below. As shown, 71 percent of census tracts in the Southside are considered food deserts.\(^\text{17}\) Although there are three major supermarkets in the area, two lie outside the City’s boundary and more than 30 percent of households in the neighborhood do not have access to a vehicle. According to a 2016 survey by Onondaga County Health Department’s Healthy Neighborhood Program, 12 percent of respondents stated that transportation was their biggest problem with getting groceries. The important role of transportation is highlighted in the Eastwood neighborhood, as there are few grocery stores, but residents have higher rates of car ownership and thus increased access to food.

\textbf{MAP 20: FOOD DESERTS IN SYRACUSE, NY AS DEFINED BY THE USDA, 2019}

\begin{center}
\includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{fooddeserts.png}
\end{center}


\(^{17}\) Onondaga County Health Department, “Mapping the food environment in Syracuse, New York,” 2017, \url{http://www.ongov.net/health/documents/FoodEnvironment.pdf}. 

EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITY

“It’s also saying that the people in my neighborhood which is a poor neighborhood somehow want the schools that they have, which they don’t. They want the schools that you have but they can’t get access to those schools. I think that is, it’s the hypocrisy of it all, it’s pretending that there’s free choice in the housing market and therefore free choice in the school market and there isn’t.” - Nikole Hannah-Jones

Not surprisingly, the high levels of racial and ethnic residential segregation in Syracuse and Onondaga County is reflected in significant differences in the racial and ethnic makeup of the region’s schools. Onondaga County contains 18 school districts that are wholly or primarily within the County. Several other districts that are centered in neighboring counties cross into Onondaga County, but are not discussed in this analysis since the majority of their students live outside the County. While the Syracuse City School District boundary follows the City of Syracuse municipal boundary, the 17 other districts traverse municipal boundary lines. The largest of the districts in Onondaga County is the Syracuse City School District with approximately 20,000 students, followed by North Syracuse Central Schools with more than 8,000 students and Liverpool Central School District with over 7,000 students. The remaining 15 districts have around 5,000 students or less.

MAP 21: SCHOOL DISTRICTS, ONONDAGA COUNTY

Although the Syracuse School Board tried to desegregate its schools in the 1960s, the plan was confined to the City and many middle-class teachers and students fled to the suburbs. The resulting racial and economic disparities in education between City and County schools still persist today. Table 4 below identifies the race and

---

ethnicity of students in Onondaga County School Districts in 2018-2019. Of the approximately 11,800 Black students that were enrolled in Onondaga County schools in the 2018-2019 school year, approximately 82 percent were enrolled in the Syracuse City School District, slightly lower than 84 percent in 2010-2011. In the 2018-2019 school year, while the City school district had approximately 9,700 Black students, the 17 suburban districts had a total of just over 2,000 Black students. Excluding the Syracuse City School District, approximately 81 percent of students in the surrounding Onondaga County school districts are white. This is a shift since 2010-2011 when 89 percent of students in the surrounding school districts were white. This is due to both a decrease in the white population in these districts by approximately 6,200 students and increase in the non-white population by approximately 2,500 students.

| Race and Ethnicity in Onondaga County School Districts, NYS Department of Education, 2018 - 19 |
|------------------------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| School District              | White Number  | White Percent | Black or African- | American Indian or | Multi-Racial Number | Multi-Racial Percent | Asian or Native Hawaiian/ Other Pacific Islander Number | Hispanic or Latino Number |
| Baldwinville CSD (n=5,447)  | 4,002          | 88.2%         | 102             | 1.9%           | 15             | 0.3%           | 239             | 4.4%           | 58             | 1.1%           | 211             | 4.2%           |
| East Syracuse-Minoa CSD (n=3,165) | 2,702         | 85.4%         | 167             | 5.3%           | 26             | 0.8%           | 88              | 2.8%           | 83             | 2.6%           | 99              | 3.1%           |
| Fabius - Pompey CSD (n=617)  | 593            | 96.1%         | 3               | 0.5%           | 0              | 0.0%           | 4               | 0.6%           | 7              | 1.1%           | 10              | 1.6%           |
| Fayetteville-Manlius CSD (n=4,227) | 3,415         | 80.8%         | 138             | 3.3%           | 10             | 0.2%           | 94              | 2.2%           | 422            | 10%            | 148             | 3.5%           |
| Jamesville-Dewitt CSD (n=2,811) | 2,106         | 74.9%         | 211             | 7.5%           | 8              | 0.2%           | 145             | 5.2%           | 238            | 8.5%           | 103             | 3.7%           |
| Jordan-Elbridge CSD (n=1,206) | 1,144          | 94.9%         | 11              | 0.9%           | 6              | 0.5%           | 14              | 1.2%           | 6              | 0.5%           | 25              | 2.1%           |
| Lafayette CSD (n=833)        | 525            | 63.1%         | 8               | 1%             | 268            | 32.2%          | 17              | 2%             | 4              | 0.5%           | 11              | 1.3%           |
| Liverpool CSD (n=7,023)      | 5,231          | 74.5%         | 635             | 9.6%           | 33             | 0.5%           | 382             | 5.4%           | 366            | 5.2%           | 377             | 5.4%           |
| Lyncourt UFSD (n=380)        | 224            | 58.9%         | 62              | 16.3%          | 4              | 1.1%           | 20              | 5.3%           | 43             | 11.3%          | 27              | 7.1%           |
| Marcellus CSD (n=1,582)      | 1,514          | 95.7%         | 5               | 0.3%           | 0              | 0.0%           | 14              | 0.9%           | 26             | 1.6%           | 12              | 0.8%           |
| North Syracuse (n=8,484)     | 6,975          | 82.2%         | 363             | 4.3%           | 69             | 0.8%           | 494             | 5.8%           | 203            | 2.4%           | 380             | 4.5%           |
| Oncodaga CSD (n=831)         | 621            | 74.7%         | 94              | 11.3%          | 33             | 4%             | 45              | 5.4%           | 7              | 0.8%           | 31              | 3.7%           |
| Skaneateles CSD (n=1,362)    | 1,294          | 95%           | 0               | 0.2%           | 3              | 0.2%           | 15              | 1.1%           | 21             | 1.5%           | 26              | 1.9%           |
| Solvay UFSD (n=1,416)        | 1,052          | 74.3%         | 86              | 6.1%           | 18             | 1.3%           | 125             | 8.8%           | 11             | 0.8%           | 124             | 8.8%           |
| Syracuse City School District (n=19,698) | 4,387      | 22.3%         | 9,737           | 49.5%          | 212            | 1.1%           | 1,208           | 6.1%           | 1,498          | 7.6%           | 2,826           | 13.4%          |
| Tully CSD (n=788)            | 740            | 93.9%         | 9               | 1.1%           | 11             | 1.4%           | 13              | 1.6%           | 5              | 0.6%           | 32              | 4.1%           |
| West Genesee CSD (n=8,524)   | 3,984          | 88.1%         | 120             | 2.7%           | 46             | 1%             | 146             | 3.2%           | 54             | 1.2%           | 174             | 3.8%           |
| Westhill CSD (n=1,774)       | 1,528          | 86.1%         | 85              | 4.8%           | 8              | 0.5%           | 51              | 2.9%           | 27             | 1.5%           | 65              | 3.7%           |

Note: White population in data source refers to white Non-Hispanic population. Data source does not distinguish between racial identities for Hispanic or Latinx population.

With the exception of Lafayette, which has a high proportion of Native American students, the districts with the highest percentage of white students and the lowest levels of racial and ethnic diversity tend to be in the outer ring suburbs furthest from the City of Syracuse. However, significant differences in levels of diversity are also found in neighboring districts and between schools that are within walking distance to each other. In the 2014 Analysis of Impediments, we noted the difference between enrollment in Westhill High School and Corcoran High School in the Syracuse City School District, which are less than two miles apart. Since that report, this has been identified as the most segregated school district border in New York State and 15th most segregated school district border. 

border in the country. While diversity at Westhill has increased in recent years, the differences between these neighboring schools remain stark. In the 2018-2019 school year, Westhill High School had a Black population of 5 percent and white population of 88 percent while in Corcoran High School, the Black population topped 60 percent while the white population was 18 percent. It remains true that students living in the neighborhoods between these schools could walk to either location to attend school but would face a starkly different student body depending on which side of the district line their home is located on. Of course, only the students attending Corcoran would be required to walk nearly that far as Syracuse City School District high school students are not provided transportation unless they live more than 1.5 miles from the school.

There are also significant differences in the enrollment rates of other racial and ethnic groups across Onondaga County school districts. Nearly 4,500 Hispanic or Latinx students enrolled in Onondaga County schools in 2018-2019, a 28 percent increase from 2010-2011 school year. Hispanic or Latinx students are largely concentrated within SCSD, where 2,600 students (58 percent of all Latinx or Hispanic students in Onondaga County) were enrolled. However, it is important to note that the proportion of Hispanic or Latinx students enrolled in SCSD has decreased from 68 percent since the 2010-2011 school year. Although a larger proportion of Hispanic or Latinx students are now enrolled in the suburbs, Black student populations continue to be extremely low outside of SCSD, as discussed above.

Also, with the growing population of refugees and new Americans in the City of Syracuse, significant differences in the enrollment patterns of English Language Learners have emerged. In 2017-2018, of the approximately 4,400 English Language Learners learners that were enrolled in Onondaga County schools, 83.2 percent were enrolled in the Syracuse City School District. The number of English Language Learners in Onondaga County schools has increased by over 25 percent from the 2014-2015 to 2017-2018 school year. This includes an increase of 20 percent in the Syracuse City School District and, notably, a 50 percent increase in the number of English Language Learners in the remaining districts in the County. It is important to note that the City of Syracuse has a much higher capacity to handle English Language Learners students than the suburban districts.

### TABLE 5: LIMITED ENGLISH PROFICIENT (LEP) LEARNERS IN ONONDAGA COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICTS, 2014-15 & 2017-18

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Students in District</td>
<td>Number</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baldwinsville</td>
<td>5,561</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ESM</td>
<td>3,241</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fabius–Pompey</td>
<td>677</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fayetteville-Manlius</td>
<td>4,157</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jamesville-Dewitt</td>
<td>2,928</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jordan-Elbridge</td>
<td>1,300</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lafayette</td>
<td>829</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liverpool</td>
<td>7,202</td>
<td>121</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lyncourt</td>
<td>321</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marcellus</td>
<td>1,750</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North Syracuse</td>
<td>8,804</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Onondaga</td>
<td>842</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skaneateles</td>
<td>1,414</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Solvay</td>
<td>1,461</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Syracuse City School District</td>
<td>20,084</td>
<td>3,010</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tully</td>
<td>912</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West Genesee</td>
<td>4,759</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West Hill</td>
<td>1,792</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**SOURCE:** NYS DEPT. OF EDUCATION HTTPS://DATA.NYSED.GOV/PROFILE.PHP?COUNTY=42

---


In addition to racial and ethnic segregation, there remains a significant difference in the economic isolation between students in Onondaga County schools. One way to look at the economic isolation of Syracuse City School District students is to compare students’ eligibility for free and reduced-price lunch by district. As Table 6 identifies, in 2017-2018, the number of students eligible for free or reduced-priced lunch in all of Onondaga County was 47 percent. Within the Syracuse City School District, 84 percent of students were eligible for free or reduced-price lunch. For the 17 other districts in Onondaga County excluding Syracuse, the average percentage of students eligible for free or reduced-price lunch was 34 percent. From the 2014-2015 school year to the 2017-2018 school year, the percentage of students eligible for free or reduced-price lunch in all Onondaga County school districts increased, with the exception of West Genesee, which remained the same. School districts with the largest percent increase in eligible students include Jamesville Dewitt, Skaneateles, and Marcellus.

There are other significant demographic differences between the Syracuse City School District and surrounding County districts. The City School District has a disproportionate percentage of students with disabilities compared to other districts. While the Syracuse City School District has 29 percent of all students in the 18 districts, it has 37 percent of the students with disabilities. In the City School District, 21 percent of students have disabilities while the average for the other 17 districts is 14 percent. The Syracuse City School District also has the majority of homeless students in the County. Of the approximately 1,100 homeless students in Onondaga County, 75 percent attend Syracuse City Schools.

With the higher percentage of students with disabilities, English Language Learners, and low-income and homeless students, the Syracuse City School district has a substantially greater percentage of higher-needs students while simultaneously facing limited resources due to the dwindling tax base and decades of disinvestment. As a result, educational outcomes between the Syracuse City School District and the surrounding Onondaga County school districts vary drastically but are narrowing as a number of educational outcomes in the City have improved. Figure 12 demonstrates that the disparity between graduation rates for white and black students has closed from 2006 to 2016 and the graduation rate has increased for both racial groups. The City School district has also seen a decline in drop-out rates for students with disabilities and English language learners. However, at just 64.5 percent, the graduation rate for the City School District still remains

---

Mulder, James T., “Syracuse high school graduation rate rises to 64.5%, first increase in 3 years,” Syracuse Post Standard, https://www.syracuse.com/schools/2020/01/syracuse-high-school-graduation-rate-rises-to-645-first-increase-in-3-

---

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School District</th>
<th>Students Number</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Students Number</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Baldwinsville</td>
<td>5,361</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>5,482</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ESM</td>
<td>3,241</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>3,185</td>
<td>41%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fabius - Pompey</td>
<td>677</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>617</td>
<td>32%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fayetteville Manlius</td>
<td>4,157</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>4,227</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jamesville Dewitt</td>
<td>2,928</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>2,811</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jordan Elbridge</td>
<td>1,300</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>1,206</td>
<td>39%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lafayette</td>
<td>829</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>833</td>
<td>48%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liverpool</td>
<td>7,202</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>7,023</td>
<td>39%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lyncourt</td>
<td>321</td>
<td>62%</td>
<td>380</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marcellus</td>
<td>1,750</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>1,582</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North Syracuse</td>
<td>8,804</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>8,484</td>
<td>37%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Onondaga</td>
<td>842</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>831</td>
<td>47%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skaneateles</td>
<td>1,414</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>1,362</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Solvay</td>
<td>1,461</td>
<td>51%</td>
<td>1,416</td>
<td>64%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Syracuse City School District</td>
<td>20,084</td>
<td>74%</td>
<td>19,668</td>
<td>84%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tully</td>
<td>912</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>788</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West Genesee</td>
<td>4,759</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>4,524</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West Hill</td>
<td>1,792</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>1,774</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

SOURCE: NEW YORK STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION HTTPS://DATA.NYSED.GOV/PROFILE.PHP?COUNTY=42
substantially lower than the County as a whole, which was 89 percent in 2019. Map 22 demonstrates that the dropout rate is significantly higher for SCSD than the surrounding districts. According to ProPublica, other racial disparities within education exist within SCSD as well, as white students are more than twice as likely to be enrolled in AP courses than Black and Hispanic students. White students are also less likely to be suspended from school. Given the high rate (12 percent) of students that are suspended yearly, this puts Black and Hispanic students even further behind.

Although differences in school funding do not account for all disparities between school performance, Syracuse City School District spent the second-least amount per student in 2018-2019 than all surrounding Onondaga County school districts in 2020-2021. According to the Post Standard, the Fabius Pompey School District spends

---

the most per pupil -- $30,231 annually -- in Onondaga County, which is partially attributed to its small size.\textsuperscript{25} In comparison, SCSD spends $20,557 per pupil annually, an amount similar to that spent by the larger suburban districts of Baldwinsville, Fayetteville-Manlius, and West Genesee.\textsuperscript{26} However, this is still lower than the school district average for schools of a similar size and is insufficient given the number of higher-needs students. It is important to note that, while suburban school districts in Onondaga County fund a greater percentage of their budgets through property taxes and the Syracuse City School District relies more on state funding, state funding levels have long been criticized for being inadequate to address the needs of Syracuse and similar districts. Further, as of 2016, only 23\% of SCSD teachers live in the City, meaning that their salaries are largely being invested and spent outside of Syracuse, thereby contributing to the economies of the surrounding suburbs rather than the City economy.\textsuperscript{27}

\textbf{HOUSING PROFILE}

The demographic trends identified in the previous sections are the result of a complex interaction of factors and policies that have developed over generations. At best, this analysis seeks to identify the most significant factors that have led to these trends while recognizing that some of these factors are not easily identifiable.

\textbf{HISTORICAL CONTEXT}

The patterns of racial and ethnic segregation that exist in Syracuse and Onondaga County are largely rooted in historical practices that have occurred over the last century. Discriminatory and racist public policies and private market practices have shaped the way the region has developed and continue to impact access to housing opportunities today. Understanding this historical context is important to identifying and addressing impediments that still exist. The following review highlights some of the most important policies and practices that have created the community we know today.

Beginning during the Great Depression, a number of federal programs were created to stabilize the nation’s housing market. In 1934, the National Housing Act created the Federal Housing Administration which worked to increase homeownership by insuring home loans made by private lending institutions against default. This made homeownership an option for more people as banks were willing to take on higher lending risks. Unfortunately, this federal program also explicitly sanctioned and encouraged racial residential segregation. Under the Federal Housing Administration’s underwriting standards, lenders were advised not to provide loans if there was not a racially restrictive covenant in place that guaranteed a “Prohibition of the occupancy of properties except by the race for which they are intended.”\textsuperscript{28}

Around the same time, the federal government created the Home Owners Loan Corporation (HOLC) to help slow a nation-wide wave of foreclosures, and in the process birthed the practice of “redlining.” The HOLC allowed homeowners to refinance mortgages over longer amortization periods. To determine whether properties were suitable for refinance, the HOLC surveyed 239 cities across the country, including Syracuse, to create “residential security maps.” These maps categorized neighborhoods on a four-tier scale. In general, these rankings tended to


\textsuperscript{28} Federal Housing Administration, Underwriting Manual: Underwriting and Valuation Procedure Under Title II of the National Housing Act With Revisions to February, 1938 (Washington, D.C.), Part II, Section 9, Rating of Location.
favor newer, suburban communities and gave the lowest rankings for older, city neighborhoods. In Syracuse, as in other cities, race was an important factor in rating neighborhoods. Areas that were predominately African-American, regardless of the condition of the neighborhood, were considered the highest risk for loans and were colored red or “redlined.”

The 1937 residential security map for the City of Syracuse and inner-ring suburbs is below. The areas with the highest ranking of green were areas with higher rates of new construction such as in Dewitt and the Meadowbrook neighborhood of Syracuse as well as older, wealthier neighborhoods such as Sedgewick and Strathmore. On the other end of the spectrum, areas in red include the City’s Near West Side, Nedrow, and a neighborhood on the Southeast edge of downtown known as the 15th Ward, which was home to a large African-American population before being demolished for the construction of the I-81 highway and other urban renewal projects. The second lowest ranking in yellow identified areas that were subject to “infiltration of a lower grade population.” This includes most of the South and West Sides of Syracuse, parts of the North Side, as well as the inner-ring suburban communities of Galeville, Mattydale, East Syracuse, and Solvay.

MAP 23: REDLINING MAP, SYRACUSE, 1937

In 1938, Pioneer Homes, the first public housing project in New York State and only the fifth public housing project in the country, was built in the City of Syracuse in the 15th Ward neighborhood. This began a trend of placing public housing in areas that, while facing disproportionate housing needs, also had disproportionately low levels of opportunity.

Over the next several decades, neighborhoods that were redlined declined significantly as it became more expensive if not impossible to secure loans for housing or other investment. At the same time, African American residents of these neighborhoods had few other options as racially restrictive covenants and other discriminatory practices that were still legal at the time, kept them from moving elsewhere. In the 1950s and 1960s, the federal government, with the support of local governments, decided to address the blight that had been created in these neighborhoods through the policy of “slum clearance” known as urban renewal. During this time, much of the African-American neighborhood of the old 15th Ward was demolished to make way for a highway, new civic structures, and modern residential and commercial towers. Nearly 1,300 residents were displaced from the neighborhood and relocated to other parts of the City, primarily on the South, Southwest and East Side. As African-American families moved into these neighborhoods, white residents moved out to the developing suburbs. The movement of these white residents was hastened by blockbusting, a practice in which real estate agents used scare tactics to get white residents to sell their homes at reduced prices by claiming Black families were moving into the neighborhood. The real estate agents would then buy up the houses and sell them to Black families at inflated prices.

Most of the neighborhoods rated yellow or red have still not recovered from the systematic disinvestment that was facilitated through these historic practices. The continual impact of redlining and other systemic discriminatory practices is even evident in the COVID-19 crisis. As these practices contributed to building racially concentrated areas of poverty, communities of color, especially Black communities, have been disproportionately impacted by the pandemic in Onondaga County, as demonstrated in Table 7. In Onondaga County, black residents are more than three times as likely to be hospitalized due to COVID-19 than white residents.

TABLE 7: ONONDAGA COUNTY COVID-19 CASES BY RACE AND RACE AS PERCENT OF POPULATION, JUNE 2020

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Race</th>
<th>Percent Hospitalized by Race</th>
<th>Race as Percent of Population</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Black or African American</td>
<td>26.5%</td>
<td>11.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>59.8%</td>
<td>79.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Race</td>
<td>9.2%</td>
<td>8.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>4.5%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

SOURCE: ONONDAGA COUNTY CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19) INFORMATION, 2020

HOUSING OPPORTUNITY

There are stark disparities in a number of housing-related indicators for members of protected classes and for City residents compared to those outside the City, including gaps in housing and neighborhood quality, homeownership rates, and housing cost burdens. In an unpublished December 2019 survey executed by CNY Fair Housing, Onondaga County residents identified the cost of housing and the condition of housing as the largest local barriers to housing choice.

Housing Stock

One of the most important factors affecting the quality and accessibility of available housing opportunities is the age of the area’s housing stock. Figure 13 below compares the age of the housing stock for the City of Syracuse, Onondaga County, New York State, and the United States. As evidenced in Figure 13 and Map 24, the average age of the City’s housing stock is significantly older than that of Onondaga County, New York State, and the United States. In addition to the general problem with maintaining aging housing, the City faces a huge burden due to the amount of housing built before the adoption of lead paint regulations in 1978, which particularly affects the availability of housing that is safe for families with young children. There is an especially larger proportion of housing built before 1939.

The impact of this difference in the age of housing stock between the City and County is evident in lead poisoning test results. While only 20% of children in Onondaga County live in Syracuse, 89 percent of children who tested positive for elevated blood lead levels during 2019 live in Syracuse. Lead poisoning can severely damage brain development and cause serious health problems. Figure 14 demonstrates that 10.4 percent of children tested had
elevated blood lead levels in Syracuse, compared to only 4.9 percent of children in Onondaga County as a whole.\textsuperscript{31} Although the percentage of children with elevated blood levels in Syracuse has declined since 2012, as shown in Figure 15, this is still a large proportion of children tested.

Map 25 demonstrates that the zip codes with the highest concentration of children with elevated blood levels in Syracuse are neighborhoods with a large concentration of structures built before 1979 on the South and Northside. Both the City and County, with the support of funding from HUD and philanthropic organizations like

\textsuperscript{31} Onondaga County Health Department, Lead Poisoning Prevention Data, \url{http://www.ongov.net/health/lead/data.html}. 
the Central New York Community Foundation have ramped up efforts to address lead poisoning in recent years. The City of Syracuse’s 2020-2024 Consolidated Plan outlines the goals of the Syracuse Lead Program, which aims to assist over 200 units occupied by low-income families to reduce lead hazards using funding from HUD’s Office of Lead Hazard Control. Onondaga County’s 2019 Action Plan states that it aims to provide housing rehabilitation and lead hazard reduction grants to 140-160 low or moderate income households in the County.\(^2\) The City of Syracuse also has enacted a Lead Ordinance that will ensure that Syracuse Code Enforcement inspectors are certified to perform lead inspections and are authorized to issue violations and require remediation when lead paint hazards are found.

The City also has a very small percentage of housing built after design and construction standards were established in 1994, standards that greatly increased the amount of multi-family housing that is accessible to people with disabilities. Older housing often has narrow hallways, stairs, and inaccessible bathrooms.\(^3\) While 32.3 percent of the nation’s housing stock was built after 1990, only 5.4 percent of the housing stock in the City of Syracuse was built after 1990. This is also a significant, though less severe problem county-wide where 14.9 percent of the housing stock was built after 1990. Though the City of Syracuse is seeing an uptick in the number of residential units being built, particularly in the Downtown census tract, most of these developments are rehabs of existing buildings that are usually not subject to accessibility requirements or are luxury “student” housing developments that are unaffordable to most residents of the City.

The 2020-24 Consolidated Plan for the City of Syracuse and Onondaga County’s 2019 Action Plan identify the need for more accessible, affordable housing. Many supportive housing options have long waitlists, limiting age restrictions, and income limits, all of which inhibit access and may force people with disabilities to live in senior housing, rehabilitation centers, and nursing homes. In its Consolidated Plan, the City of Syracuse identifies that

\(^2\) Onondaga County 2019 Action Plan.
the majority of LIHTC units require minimum incomes, which price out people who rely on SSI benefits and consequently increase the homeless population. According to the National Low Income Housing Coalition, an affordable rent to those who receive Supplemental Security Income (SSI) payments ($870 monthly) in New York State would be only $261, severely limiting housing choice and contributing to cost burden. In addition, the City’s Consolidated Plan identifies that disabled households are disproportionately impacted by substandard housing conditions and housing instability. The Onondaga County Department of Social Services currently administers the HUD Rental Assistance Program (RAP), which provides vouchers to 91 households with mental health disabilities. RAP is critical to preventing homelessness among persons with disabilities but has a long waitlist. The Onondaga County 2019 Action Plan aims to improve accessibility in 20-30 low- or moderate-income households with disabilities and includes funding to supplement its existing Ramp & Accessibility Modification Program (RAMP), which provides financial and other assistance to help income-eligible people with disabilities make accessibility modifications to existing homes.

In a survey of service providers conducted by CNY Fair Housing, 50 percent of respondents indicated that they believe their clients with physical disabilities have been discriminated against very often or often and 69 percent indicated that their clients with mental illness have been discriminated against very often or often. About one third of respondents believe that housing providers refusing to make reasonable accommodations is one of the most widespread discriminatory activities in Syracuse and Onondaga County.

**Housing Quality**

Poor housing quality continues to be a large problem in Onondaga County, particularly in Syracuse. Low-income individuals, and disproportionately, members of protected classes, are often forced to live in substandard housing plagued by habitability issues such as infestations, mold, lead paint and other hazards, which can have detrimental effects on health and child development. Besides being more likely to be inaccessible and have lead paint, older housing is much more likely to be in poor condition.

Housing problems are largely concentrated in rental housing. Homeowners are significantly less likely to have one or more severe housing problems (lack of kitchen or complete plumbing, severe overcrowding, or severe cost burden). According to the 2020-2024 Consolidated Plan, 11,940 renter households at or below the Area Median Income in Syracuse have one or more of these four housing problems, compared to only 2,015 owners. Excluding severe housing cost burden, the largest severe housing problem, 1,695 renter households and only 244 owner-occupied units still had severe housing problems. More than 70 percent of all health and safety violations in Syracuse were in rental properties in 2019. Further, of households in the City of Syracuse that earn the Area Median Income or less, Black households were more likely to have one or more housing problem at every income bracket. Properties with unfit violations are concentrated on the City’s Northside, Near Westside and Southside neighborhoods and approximately 30 percent of homes in the Northside and Southside have open code violations. During the City of Syracuse’s rental registry pilot program, in which landlords must register their properties with the City, only 67.5 percent of properties passed on their first inspection.

---

35 City of Syracuse Draft Five-Year Consolidated Plan 2020-2024.
37 [http://data.syr.gov/datasets/48ee40d313d249909d656c7e44c081ae_0?geometry=-76.383,42.994,-75.919,43.082](http://data.syr.gov/datasets/48ee40d313d249909d656c7e44c081ae_0?geometry=-76.383,42.994,-75.919,43.082)
Code enforcement mechanisms take time and many tenants are fearful of retribution by their landlord, which, though illegal, is difficult to prove. Many low-income tenants may not have time or resources to pressure their landlords to make necessary fixes or fight evictions. Often tenants are left with little choice but to remain in the substandard housing or move. Many New American or Hispanic tenants may prefer to remain in substandard housing in the Northside and Near Westside neighborhoods than move due to the strong sense of community.  

**Homeownership**

Homeownership remains the principal way that most families in the United States build wealth. Unfortunately, homeownership rates in the Syracuse region, as in the rest of the country, are marked by significant geographic, racial, and ethnic disparities. Geographically, homeownership rates are significantly higher in Onondaga County’s suburban towns than in the City of Syracuse. At just under 64 percent, the homeownership rate in Onondaga County overall is nearly identical to the rate nationally. In contrast, less than 39 percent of homes in the City of Syracuse are owner-occupied. Map 26 illustrates the geographic patterns of homeownership rates in the County and highlights the relatively low homeownership rates within the City. Within Onondaga County, only one census tract outside the City of Syracuse, in the Town of Clay, falls within the lowest quintile of homeownership rates. Conversely, only two census tracts within the highest quintile of percent owner-occupied households lies within the City of Syracuse. Map 27 highlights that low rates of homeownership are concentrated within the center of the City, with higher rates of homeownership on the City’s outskirts. Additionally, homeownership rates in the City have fallen over the last decade.

---

39 Ibid.
40 [https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/US,onondagacountynewyork,syracusecitynewyork/LND110210](https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/US,onondagacountynewyork,syracusecitynewyork/LND110210)
41 Ibid.
42 [https://pro.cnyvitals.org/profile/syracuse#occupancy](https://pro.cnyvitals.org/profile/syracuse#occupancy)
There are also significant racial disparities in homeownership in both the City of Syracuse and Onondaga County as a whole. In 2017, the Syracuse MSA had the third lowest Black homeownership rate in the nation, and the second largest gap between Black and white homeownership rates. This gap has continued to slowly widen from 2000 to 2018, with Black homeownership at 28.2 percent and white homeownership at 72.1 percent in 2018.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Homeownership Rate by Race/Ethnicity</th>
<th>2000</th>
<th>2010</th>
<th>2018</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Black</td>
<td>30.3%</td>
<td>29.9%</td>
<td>28.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>American Indian or Alaska Native</td>
<td>47.9%</td>
<td>48.3%</td>
<td>48.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian/Pac. Islander</td>
<td>37.8%</td>
<td>41.8%</td>
<td>43.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic</td>
<td>30.6%</td>
<td>33.8%</td>
<td>33.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Hispanic White</td>
<td>71.0%</td>
<td>71.9%</td>
<td>72.1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


43 Choi, Jung Hyun; McCargo, Allana; Neal, Micheal; and Young; Caitlyn, The Urban Institute, “Explaining the Black-white homeownership gap: A closer look at disparities across local markets,” https://www.urban.org/sites/default/files/publication/101160/explaining_the_black-white_homeownership_gap_a_closer_look_at_disparities_across_local_markets.pdf.
To better understand disparities in homeownership rates, CNY Fair Housing analyzed 2017 Home Mortgage Disclosure Act (HMDA) data for Onondaga County. The Figure 16 identifies home purchase loan application results by race and ethnicity within the County. People of color, especially Black applicants, are underrepresented among home mortgage applicants as compared to their proportion of the County population, while white mortgage applicants are overrepresented relative to their proportion of the County population. Although people of color comprise nearly a quarter of the total County population, they comprised only a little more than 12 percent of total mortgage applicants. Further, applicants of color face a higher denial rate of 13.7 percent, nearly double the rate for non-Hispanic whites. Map 28 demonstrates the number of active FHA mortgages in Syracuse as of 2016. As seen, neighborhoods with the highest number of mortgages are along the outskirts of the City, while there are few mortgages in the Downtown and Near Westside Neighborhoods.

Figure 17 below identifies the loan denial reasons by race and ethnicity for all County applicants. Among the reported reasons for loan denials, the most marked differences between Non-Hispanic white and applicants of color were in the proportion of denials based on insufficient cash, unverifiable information, debt-to-income ratio and denial of mortgage insurance. Applicants of color were three times more likely than Non-Hispanic white applicants to be denied a loan due to insufficient down payment and closing costs. This suggests that lending programs that provide down payment assistance could greatly benefit homebuyers of color. While only 3.4 percent of all Non-Hispanic white applicants who were denied a loan were
denied based on unverifiable information, approximately 6.4 percent of all applicants of color were denied for that reason. Further, of applicants of color whose application was denied, nearly 7.5 percent were denied because they were unable to secure mortgage insurance, compared to only 3.7 percent of Non-Hispanic whites. Interestingly, applications for people of color were much more likely to have a denial reason identified than applications from white borrowers. This issue could warrant further investigation in the future.

**FIGURE 17: TOP HOME PURCHASE LOAN DENIAL REASONS BY RACE/ETHNICITY: ONONDAGA COUNTY, 2017**

![Bar chart showing top home purchase loan denial reasons by race/ethnicity in Onondaga County, 2017](source: 2017 HMDA DATA)

Data on home improvement loan applications show similar disparities. County-wide, 54 percent of applications from people of color resulted in denial or frustration compared to just 34 percent of white applicants. Again, there are striking differences in the percentage of applicants of color in the City versus in the County outside of the City. Nearly half of all home improvement loan applications in the City came from people of color while just under 16 percent of applications outside of the City came from people of color.

As with home purchase loans, people of color, and black applicants in particular, are underrepresented among home improvement loan applicants relative to their proportion of the Countywide population. Non-Hispanic whites are overrepresented among home improvement loan applicants. Non-Hispanic Blacks constituted just 5.5 percent of all home improvement loan applicants and 12 percent of the total County population, while non-Hispanic whites comprised only 77 percent of the total County population, but 84 percent of all home improvement loan applicants. Collectively, people of color comprised nearly a quarter of the total County
population, but less than 9 percent of total home improvement loan applicants. Denial rates for home improvement loans were significantly higher for applicants of color as well. Collectively, applicants of color had a denial rate of 36 percent, while Non-Hispanic Whites had a denial rate of just 14.5 percent. Blacks had the highest denial rate among applicants, with a denial rate of 41 percent. Again, applicants of color are more likely than white applicants to be denied due to debt-to-income ratio, as shown in Figure 19. This data indicates that homeowners of color and particularly Black homeowners face barriers even after achieving homeownership making them less able to maintain or improve their homes.

Low-income homeowners face additional barriers to maintaining their homes as well. A recent investigation by Syracuse.com found that the Syracuse property tax system favors wealthier homeowners. The report found that many assessments are out of date, with over 32,000 residential property assessments not updated since 1996. This benefits wealthy and middle-class homeowners, as homes in prosperous neighborhoods gain value faster than homes in poor neighborhoods, which lose value. Since 2016, of the 550 homes sold for $140,000 or more, 87% were sold for higher than the city assessment. Of homes sold for $70,000 or less, 75% were sold for less than the assessed value. Map 29 below shows home sales since 2016 in Syracuse, with green dots signifying homes sold for at least 15 percent more than assessed value, red dots signifying homes sold for at least 15 percent less than assessed value, and gray dots signifying homes sold within 15 percent of assessed value. There is a concentration of red dots in poorer neighborhoods such as the Southside and Northside, demonstrating that

homeowners in these neighborhoods are paying tax rates higher than their homes’ current value. Green dots are concentrated in the University Area and Meadowbrook neighborhoods, amounting to a de facto tax break for landlords and wealthier homeowners in these areas. Notably, those neighborhoods with a higher concentration of homes sold at 15 percent or more below their assessed value tend to have a greater proportion of residents of color as compared to neighborhoods with a higher concentration of homes sold at 15 percent or more above their assessed value.

MAP 29: HOME SALE PRICE COMPARED TO ASSESSED VALUE IN SYRACUSE, 2016-2019

Both the City of Syracuse and Onondaga County operate a number of programs to assist homeowners and increase homeownership opportunities for area residents, some of which have been mentioned previously. These programs include loans and grants for new homeowners as well as owners of homes in need of repairs, grants for residents with mobility impairments to improve accessibility, and lead abatement grants to help make older homes safe for children. The City of Syracuse provides funding for a number of non-profit groups and the Greater Syracuse Land Bank to conduct neighborhood revitalization and housing rehabilitation programs. The City of Syracuse reports that in the 2018-2019 Fiscal Year, 277 potential first-time homebuyers were provided with education and budgeting assistance, 53 families bought their own homes through the use of down payment assistance, and 243 preserved their homes through improvements and foreclosure prevention services. The County operates its own housing rehabilitation program that renovates homes and then provides a subsidy to lower the purchase cost to buyers who meet income qualifications as well.

Affordable Housing

Fair housing and affordable housing are not one and the same, although there is a point at which the two may intersect. While there is no uniform definition of “affordable housing,” the term generally refers to housing which is deemed to be affordable to residents of modest or low economic means. Public and subsidized housing fall into this category, as do certain programs or products which make home ownership affordable for lower-income families. Fair housing refers to the availability of housing on an equal basis, without regard to protected class, which in New York includes race, color, national origin, religion, gender, disability, familial status, marital status, age, military status, sexual orientation, gender identity, and source of income. In some instances, affordable housing may be designed specifically for such protected classes, such as housing for the elderly or disabled. Additionally, members of certain protected classes often rely on affordable housing at disproportionate rate. Yet while members of certain protected classes often have a disproportionate need for affordable housing, the provision of such housing does not ensure fair housing practices have been followed.

With this distinction in mind, the disproportionate need for affordable housing among certain protected classes warrants a look at how affordable housing policies have affected housing choice. Table 9 below compares demographic characteristics of residents of subsidized housing in Onondaga County with the general population of the County along several protected bases. Households participating in HUD programs are more than five times more likely than the general population to have a female head of household and are more than four times more likely to be female-headed households with children. There are also significant differences in the percentage of people with disabilities living in HUD subsidized housing than in the general population. While the percentage of the total population in the County with a disability is 12.6 percent, among residents of HUD programs, which includes all members of the household, 24 percent have a disability. The percentage of subsidized housing residents where the head of household or their spouse has a disability is even larger. For all HUD programs, 37 percent of households have a head of household or spouse under the age of 61 who is disabled.

Table 9 also highlights the disproportionate proportion of non-white households residing in HUD-subsidized housing in the County. Black individuals make up only 11 percent of the County’s population, but 39 percent of subsidized housing residents and 57 percent of public housing residents. Hispanic or Latinx households are also disproportionately represented among residents of HUD-subsidized housing.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 9: Demographic Characteristics of Subsidized Housing Residents in Onondaga County, 2019</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Demographic Characteristics of Subsidized Housing Residents in Onondaga County 2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female head of household</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female head of household with children</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage of persons with disability</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age 61 and younger w/ head of household or spouse disabled</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age 62 and older w/ head of household or spouse disabled</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White, non-Hispanic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Native American</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian or Pacific Islander</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

SOURCE: 2019 HUD PICTURE OF SUBSIDIZED HOUSING.
One commonly used measure of housing affordability is the proportion of a household’s income that is spent on housing, with households that spend over 30 percent of their income on housing considered cost-burdened and those that spend more than half of their income on housing considered severely cost-burdened. Map 30 shows the percentage of households that are cost-burdened according to this definition. Despite the fact that housing costs are generally higher in Onondaga County’s suburban communities than in the City of Syracuse, City residents generally face a much higher housing cost burden than their suburban counterparts in the County. However, significant proportions of the population are housing cost-burdened in the towns of Clay and Salina as well. Most of the census tracts in the lowest quintile of cost-burdened households lay within the more rural communities of Onondaga County, although four lie within the outer neighborhoods of the City. Map 31 demonstrates that, within the City of Syracuse, the areas with the highest concentrations of cost-burdened households are largely found in the center of the City, with the exception of downtown. In 20 percent of Syracuse’s census tracts, approximately 50 percent or more of households are housing cost-burdened. Expectedly, low-income residents are disproportionately housing cost-burdened. Of the 34,500 households in the City that earn below 80 percent of the Area Median Income, approximately 62 percent are housing cost-burdened. Among such households, nearly 60 percent face severe housing costs burdens, meaning they spend over half of their income on housing.46

Another measure of housing affordability is the number of hours an individual earning the state’s minimum wage would have to work per week in order to afford an apartment at the HUD-established Fair Market Rent without spending more than 30 percent of her or his income on rent. According to the National Low Income Housing Coalition, a minimum wage worker in Onondaga County (earning $11.80 per hour) would have to work 47 hours per week for 52 weeks per year to afford a one-bedroom apartment at Fair Market Rent ($723) and 59 hours to afford a two-bedroom apartment at Fair Market Rent ($900).47 In other words, an individual earning the state

minimum wage while working a full-time job is unable to rent a one- or two-bedroom apartment at Fair Market Rent without being housing cost-burdened.

The chart below identifies differences in the housing cost burden experienced by renters versus homeowners in Onondaga County. According to the data, 48 percent of renters face a housing cost burden, more than double the percentage of homeowners with a mortgage with a housing cost burden, and 3.5 times the percentage of homeowners without a mortgage with a housing cost burden. In 2015, of the approximately 12,600 households that spent greater than 50 percent of their income on housing, 10,800 of them were renters.48

48 City of Syracuse 2020-2024 Draft Consolidated Plan.
There are significant differences in the percentage of housing cost burdened households across racial and ethnic groups. Figure 21 shows the percentage of households with moderate and severe housing cost burdens by racial and ethnic group for the Syracuse metropolitan area. Overall, a smaller percentage of white households are cost burdened than other racial and ethnic groups. Of particular note is the high incidence of cost burden among Black and Asian households. More than half of Asian households and nearly two thirds of Black households are cost burdened and for both groups, more than 40 percent of households are severely cost burdened.

**FIGURE 21: COST BURDENED HOUSEHOLDS BY RACE & ETHNICITY, SYRACUSE MSA 2016**

![Cost-Burdened Households by Race & Ethnicity, Syracuse Metro Area](https://www.jchs.harvard.edu/ARH_2017_COST_BURDENS_BY_RACE)

**Supply of Affordable Housing**

There are two particular issues of concern related to affordable housing and its impact on housing choice: the shortage of quality affordable housing and the location of subsidized housing. There remains a substantial unmet need for additional quality affordable rental housing in Syracuse and Onondaga County. The City of Syracuse estimated in 2018 that within the City, 45,157 residents need affordable housing and 28,072 residents live in subsidized housing, leaving a gap of 17,084 renters. In a 2017 report on affordable housing, the City of Syracuse found that only 10.7 percent (6,596) of 61,329 occupied housing units in Syracuse were affordable. Affordable homes are not distributed evenly across the City, as 21 census tracts had two or fewer affordable housing units. The Southside neighborhood had the highest number (1,077) of affordable homes, followed by the Near Westside neighborhood (733). Map 32 below demonstrates the number of affordable units per census tract, while Map 33 represents the percentage of affordable units by census tract. Notably, as shown when comparing Maps 32 and 33 to Map 31 above, many census tracts with the highest numbers of affordable homes also had high housing cost burdens, demonstrating that many households struggle to pay rent even with a greater supply of affordable housing.

---

MAP 32: NUMBER OF AFFORDABLE HOUSING UNITS BY CENSUS TRACT, SYRACUSE, 2017

Number of Affordable Housing Units by Census Tract

This map illustrates the concentration of number of affordable housing units in the City of Syracuse by census tract. The census tract with the highest number of affordable housing units is 52, with 777 units.

SOURCE: THE CITY OF SYRACUSE, NEIGHBORHOOD AND BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT.
Although the cost of living in Syracuse is lower than major cities nationwide, increasing rents and high poverty levels make it difficult for low-income families to afford rent. Figure 22 demonstrates that the share of rents under $750 has decreased from approximately 83 percent to 65 percent from 2010 to 2018, with the proportion of rents under $500 decreasing and the proportion of rents over $750 increasing. The proportion of rents over $1,000 has also more than doubled. Rent increases can be partially attributed to the development of luxury apartments downtown and in the Inner Harbor and the completion of luxury student apartments near the University. In a December 2019 survey of Onondaga County residents, concern was expressed that gentrification of Downtown and the University Area will raise rents across the City, leading to more displacement. Gentrification is also an important concern due to the planned removal of I-81 and the redevelopment land surrounding the viaduct and the East Adams neighborhood, which contains a significant portion of the public housing in the City.
The problem of finding quality housing for individuals in extreme poverty continues to be the problem of finding quality housing for individuals in extreme poverty continues to be especially challenging. For individuals relying on public assistance, the monthly subsidy is too small to find housing that meets minimum standards of habitability. In addition to the cost barrier, recipients of public assistance face significant difficulties in finding properties that will accept this source of income. Although source of income discrimination was made illegal in the City of Syracuse in 2016 and statewide in 2019, an unpublished CNY Fair Housing survey of local service providers and residents found that source of income discrimination is still persistent, with housing service providers identifying it as the most frequent type of discrimination in Syracuse and Onondaga County.

Extremely low-income tenants may also struggle to pay a security deposit, as there is no cash security deposit assistance available for persons on public assistance and Onondaga County’s Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG) funds are only available to households with employment or receiving social security.50 A survey of local housing providers suggests that credit history is also a barrier for many tenants, including for New Americans with limited credit history. The opening of the Financial Empowerment Center in 2019, which provides free financial counseling services available to all Syracuse residents, may help with addressing this barrier.

Both the City of Syracuse and Onondaga County recognize the need for more quality affordable rental housing in their Consolidated Plans. The City of Syracuse’s 2020-2021 Action Plan’s first goal is to promote and preserve safe,
affordable, and stable housing through direct home improvement assistance, development of affordable housing, eviction prevention, homelessness prevention, and reduction of barriers to fair housing. Waiting lists for subsidized housing programs are extremely long, demonstrating the acute need for affordable homes. The Syracuse Housing Authority (SHA) has found that families remain on the waitlist for an average of two years, while families in need of a four or five bedroom apartment wait six years or more. Prior to 2020, SHA’s Section 8 waiting list had been closed to new applicants for 10 years. In March 2020, the Housing Authority scrapped its previous outdated waiting list and allowed applicants to fill 3,500 new spots.

**Location of Subsidized Housing**

Subsidized housing in Onondaga County is largely located in Syracuse, limiting affordable housing options in the suburbs and contributing to the concentration of poverty in the City. HUD-subsidized housing units and Low Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) units provide location-based affordable housing for low income populations. Subsidized housing units consist of units developed through the public housing program, the section 236 program, and other HUD multi-family housing programs. According to HUD’s 2019 subsidized housing unit estimates, there are approximately 5,948 HUD-subsidized units in Onondaga County, excluding units occupied by households participating in the Housing Choice Voucher program, as shown in Table 10. Of those units, 4,031, or 68 percent are located within the City of Syracuse. Table 11 below shows the percentage of total housing units that are HUD-subsidized within Onondaga County, Syracuse, and Onondaga County excluding the City of Syracuse. Looking at location-based subsidy programs, roughly 9.4 percent of housing units in Syracuse are subsidized to be affordable for low-income families whereas only 2.1 percent of all units within the County (excluding Syracuse) are subsidized to be affordable. There are no public housing units outside of the city boundary in Onondaga County, a fact which is unlikely to change under current law, as the construction of new public housing units is effectively banned by the 1999 Faircloth Amendment. Yet, even apart from the complete lack of public housing outside the City, there are also significantly fewer housing units subsidized through other HUD programs in Onondaga County’s suburban areas as well.

Renters utilizing the variety of tenant-based rental assistance programs, such as Housing Choice Vouchers (commonly referred to as Section 8), VASH vouchers, and HOPWA vouchers, are concentrated within Syracuse as well. Families and households that receive such vouchers are free to choose any rental unit that meets housing quality standards and falls within payment standards that reflect the HUD-established Fair Market Rent for the Syracuse area. Once a unit is chosen, participating households are generally required to contribute 30 percent of their income toward rent, with the voucher covering the remainder. By enabling families to move to areas with higher-performing schools, greater economic opportunity, and improved environmental quality, vouchers are a potentially powerful tool for improving family outcomes through the provision of housing assistance. However, of the approximately 5,716 tenant-based rental assistance vouchers used by families in Onondaga County in 2019, roughly 75.2 percent were used in the City of Syracuse, as shown in Table 10. Table 11 demonstrates that Housing Choice Vouchers make up 6.4 percent of total housing units in the City of Syracuse, making it the largest subsidized housing program within the City. However, within Onondaga County excluding Syracuse, vouchers make up only 1 percent of total housing units. Moreover, the number of vouchers used outside the City has remained largely

---

51 The definition of low income populations varies by the type of program. Typically households that earn between 50% and 80% of the HUD Area Median Income are considered “low income”; households that earn between 30% and 50% of the HUD Area Median Income are considered “very low income; and households that earn below 30% of the HUD Area Median Income are considered “extremely low income.”
the same since 2012 while the number of vouchers within the City has increased, primarily due to the conversion of subsidies that were previously location-based.\textsuperscript{52}

The Low Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) program provides tax credits to investors who invest in the construction of affordable rental housing. These types of projects can be targeted towards specific sub-populations, such as low-income elderly or low-income disabled populations. As of 2019, there are 3,364 LIHTC units in Onondaga County with 69 percent, located in Syracuse. In the 2014 Analysis, there were 2,570 LIHTC units in Onondaga County with 61 percent, located in Syracuse. While there was some new construction of LIHTC units in the City since 2014, much of the increase in the number of LIHTC units within the City can be attributed to the conversion and rehabilitation of a handful of properties that were previously HUD-funded.

Looking at all federal housing programs combined, there continue to be significant disparities in the availability of subsidized housing units in the City versus the remainder of the County. In the City, 15.8 percent of all housing units receive some form of federal housing assistance. In the rest of Onondaga County outside of the City, only 3.1 percent of all housing units receive any such assistance. Looked at another way, the City of Syracuse contains one third of all housing units in Onondaga County but 71 percent of all units receiving federal housing assistance.

\begin{table}[h]
\centering
\caption{Number of Housing Units that Receive Federal Housing Assistance, 2019}
\begin{tabular}{|l|c|c|c|}
\hline
 & Syracuse & Onondaga County (Excluding Syracuse) & Onondaga County \\
\hline
Summary of all HUD programs & 8332 & 3332 & 11664 \\
Public Housing & 2313 & 0 & 2313 \\
Housing Choice Vouchers & 4301 & 1415 & 5716 \\
Project Based Section 8 & 1453 & 1292 & 2745 \\
Section 236/BMIR & 181 & 212 & 393 \\
\textit{S202/PRAC} & 39 & 422 & 461 \\
\textit{S811/PRAC} & 36 & 0 & 36 \\
LIHTC Units & 2319 & 1045 & 3364 \\
Total Housing Units & 67256 & 140311 & 207567 \\
\hline
\end{tabular}
\end{table}

\textsuperscript{52} HUD Picture of Subsidized Households, \url{https://www.huduser.gov/portal/datasets/assthsg.html}.
TABLE 11: HOUSING UNITS THAT RECEIVE FEDERAL HOUSING ASSISTANCE, 2019

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Housing Units that Receive Federal Housing Assistance as Percentage of Total Housing Units</th>
<th>Syracuse</th>
<th>Onondaga County (Excluding Syracuse)</th>
<th>Onondaga County</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Housing Choice Vouchers</td>
<td>6.4%</td>
<td>1.0%</td>
<td>2.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HUD Programs (excluding Housing Choice Vouchers)</td>
<td>6.0%</td>
<td>1.4%</td>
<td>2.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LIHTC Units</td>
<td>3.4%</td>
<td>0.7%</td>
<td>1.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HUD (excluding HCV) &amp; LIHTC Units</td>
<td>9.4%</td>
<td>2.1%</td>
<td>4.5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Housing Instability

High levels of housing cost burden, low supply of affordable housing, and substandard conditions can lead to high levels of housing instability, which negatively impacts both household and neighborhood health. People who are forced to frequently move are more likely to lose their jobs, have material hardship and chronic housing problems, and less likely to graduate high school. According to the City of Syracuse’s 2020-2024 Consolidated Plan, 20.3 percent of residents citywide and 37 percent of residents in more distressed neighborhoods moved in 2019, significantly higher than the national average of 11.2 percent. Although there is no comprehensive public data on eviction, the Post Standard has reported that 11,000 Syracuse residents were formally evicted from their homes in 2017, which is an estimated 7 percent of all residents and 13 to 16.7 percent of renters. This does not include informal evictions, in which a tenant is not taken to court, but instead is locked out, thrown out, or otherwise forced to leave under duress. Map 34 represents the number of eviction cases by census block in which tenants were represented by the Volunteer Lawyers Project of Onondaga County, which provides counsel in a substantial portion of, but not all, eviction cases. Eviction cases are most prevalent in the Northside, Near Westside, and Southside neighborhoods. Eviction and the consequent housing instability is expected to increase with the COVID-19 pandemic.

Due to the detrimental effects of housing instability, the City of Syracuse rolled out multiple new initiatives in 2019 to improve housing stability. An eviction prevention pilot program, which City Hall is working to expand, identified tenants at risk of eviction for non-payment of rent and worked with their landlord to develop a payment plan. The program was shown to have decreased the eviction rate in Syracuse Housing Authority properties by 75% in 2018. The City is also exploring measures such as a rent escrow account program (REAP), in which tenants in homes with outstanding code violations can pay their rent to a city escrow account, which the landlord can access only to make repairs until the violation is fixed. Other potential initiatives include: a crowdfunding platform for emergency housing expenses, an online grading platform to rate rental properties, a program to recognize and applaud good landlords, assistance in supporting a local tenants union to offer legal advice and services to tenants, proactive rental registry inspections, healthy homes information campaigns, and developing a mechanism that require landlords to have valid rental registrations before filing evictions. Many of these initiatives are still in progress. Although Syracuse does have a rental registry, it was estimated that as of August 2020 only 40 percent

of rental properties were registered.\textsuperscript{58} The City also established a Bureau of Administrative Adjudication (BAA) by local law in 2017 to adjudicate property code violations and improve compliance by issuing tickets, fines, and penalties for landlords with unresolved violations. The BAA was finally launched in April 2019.\textsuperscript{59}

Housing instability can lead to homelessness, which disproportionately impacts certain protected classes. An unpublished report by the Center for Social Innovation (C4) partnering with the Housing and Homeless Coalition of Central New York (HHC) and other service providers found that although Black individuals only compose 9.7 percent of Central New York’s population, they are drastically overrepresented in the homeless population, at 43.6 percent in HHC’s Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) database and 39 percent in the 2016 point-in-time count. Although white individuals constitute 82.6 percent of Central New York’s population, they constitute only 46.6 percent of individuals in the HMIS system. Individuals with disabilities are also overrepresented in Central New York’s homeless population, with 38.6 percent of clients in the HMIS database identified as having a disability compared to 9.2 percent of the population as a whole. Although there was no significant association between race and the outcome of exiting shelters into homelessness or exiting shelters into permanent housing with a subsidy, Black individuals were 16.1 percent more likely to exit into permanent housing without a subsidy.

Qualitative interviews revealed that pathways into homelessness for people of color are often driven by poverty and trauma. Four mechanisms that play a role are: social network impoverishment; behavioral health issues; violence, especially intimate partner violence; and family destabilization, which the other three pathways also contribute to. Interviews also found that people of color face systemic barriers to exiting homelessness as well, such as prior criminal justice system involvement, lack of economic mobility, insufficient quality affordable housing, inadequate transportation, and difficulty navigating the social service system. The report ultimately identified three “structural change objectives” to address racial inequity in homelessness: implementing trauma-informed care and anti-racist principles in both policy and practice, improving staff diversity and inclusion, and promoting housing quality. The report also emphasizes the need to stabilize people before they become homeless through targeted eviction prevention and collaboration with the criminal justice, child welfare, and public health systems. Research also suggests a need for improved outreach to Latinx communities and better data on the needs of trans homeless individuals, especially those of color.

**OTHER FACTORS AFFECTING HOUSING CHOICE**

**EXCLUSIONARY ZONING IN ONONDAGA COUNTY**

Zoning and other local land use regulations not only govern what types of development are allowed within a given community, but also indirectly determine who is able to live within that community. Zoning policies that place restrictions on the construction of smaller or lower-cost housing options limit both economic\textsuperscript{60} and racial diversity\textsuperscript{61} within neighborhoods and across jurisdictions and create a significant impediment to fair housing choice. Exclusionary zoning practices can take many different forms, including: restrictions on the location or density of multi-family housing; additional permitting and review requirements for multi-family housing

construction; restrictions on manufactured housing or mobile homes; minimum lot-size, lot-width, and building-size requirements; and maximum building and lot coverage restrictions.

Examples of such exclusionary zoning policies can be found in the zoning codes of many, if not all, of the municipalities that comprise Onondaga County. In the Village of Skaneateles, for instance, multi-family housing is allowed in only a select number of districts that comprise only a small portion of the Village’s total land area. Furthermore, even in districts where multi-family housing is allowed, the Village’s zoning ordinance restricts the size of any multi-family development to just four units and requires that developers obtain a special use permit. The Towns of Skaneateles and Camillus, the Village of Fayetteville, and other jurisdictions within the County similarly prohibit multi-family housing development by right in any zoning district, requiring instead that such development obtain a special use permit or site plan approval from a planning board. These additional review requirements often increase the costs of housing construction by lengthening the permitting process and creating uncertainty for developers while also creating greater opportunities for community opposition and NIMBYism.

Minimum lot size requirements, maximum building and lot coverage limitations, and parking space mandates also impose a barrier to lower-cost housing options in many Onondaga County municipalities. For example, the Town of Dewitt requires a minimum lot size of 20,000 square feet (nearly half an acre) for two-family housing and an additional 4,000 square feet for any additional dwelling unit above two. By comparison, the Town requires a minimum lot size of 9,600 square feet for single-family homes located in the same zoning district. Thus, Dewitt requires a larger minimum lot size per dwelling unit for two-family housing than for single-family homes. When combined with the Town’s maximum building and lot coverage limits and its minimum parking requirements – which restrict the amount of land on a given lot that can be covered by buildings, parking, and other accessory uses and at the same time mandate two parking spaces per dwelling unit – the Town’s minimum lot size requirement inflates the cost of multi-family housing construction by requiring the acquisition of large land parcels, even though at least half of such parcels must be left undeveloped.

Exclusionary zoning practices are not limited to those that target multi-family housing. Zoning policies can also limit the construction of lower-cost single-family housing. As with requirements for multi-family housing, large lot size requirements for single-family housing also increases the cost of such housing. In the Town of Onondaga, for example, the vast majority of land in the jurisdiction is zoned for single-family housing for which the minimum lot size is 20,000 square feet if the lot is connected to public water and sewer and two acres if it is

---

63 Village of Skaneateles Code at § 225-43 and Permitted Use Chart.
64 Town of Skaneateles, New York Code § 148-8 and Town of Skaneateles, New York Use Table.
66 Town of Fayetteville, New York Code § 187-7
68 Code of the Town of Dewitt, New York § 192-38
69 Id. (for single-family homes connected to public sewer and water).
70 Id. at § 192-38.
71 Id. at § 192-103.
72 See, e.g., Levitt, supra note 8 at 6.
Another example of a zoning policy that effectively excludes affordable single-family housing is minimum building size requirements that prohibit the construction of homes below a certain size. In the Village of Manlius, for instance, homes built in districts limited to single-family housing generally must have a minimum living area of 1,800 square feet.

Exclusionary zoning practices can also be found within City of Syracuse. For example, the development of multi-family housing and higher-density single-family development are not permitted in much of the City, particularly in higher opportunity neighborhoods with lower concentrations of poverty. Concerns about zoning in the City will be discussed in the next section. While a comprehensive survey of potentially exclusionary zoning practices across all 34 jurisdictions in Onondaga County is beyond the scope of this AI, a review of a sample of local zoning codes indicates that many if not all municipalities in the County enforce one or more zoning policies that present a significant barrier to the construction of more affordable housing options.

**REZone Syracuse, I-81 Redevelopment, and Blueprint 15**

Several pending projects in the City of Syracuse will greatly impact housing choice for area residents. While the ReZone Syracuse, I-81 redevelopment, and Blueprint 15 projects are distinct, they create similar concerns about the availability of affordable housing and both the temporary and permanent displacement of low-income residents. With I-81 and Blueprint 15 involving the redevelopment of large areas of potentially high value land, decisions about how that land is developed and who it is developed for (decisions largely shaped by zoning), raise significant concerns about equity.

As background, plans for the replacement of the I-81 viaduct with a community grid are moving forward. The removal of the viaduct should improve housing conditions for those currently living adjacent to it, particularly public housing residents in the East Adams Street neighborhood and Southside neighborhood residents whose immediate proximity to the Interstate highway exposes them to vehicle exhaust, road dust, and other environmental hazards. The replacement of the viaduct with the community grid should also improve the connectedness of these neighborhoods, which are currently isolated from the higher opportunity neighborhoods around them. However, while the choice of the community grid option is a positive development, several concerns remain regarding the project. High among them is whether the impacts of construction on residents living adjacent to the highway viaduct – a disproportionate percentage of which are low-income residents of color and individuals with disabilities\(^{75}\) – will be adequately mitigated. Additional concerns raised by the planned replacement of the I-81 viaduct include whether land made available for development by the removal of the viaduct will be used to create affordable housing and economic opportunities for low-income residents of color, and whether there will be any efforts to compensate those families whose homes and livelihoods were destroyed to make room for the highway in the first place. These are all concerns that both the City and County should address as the project moves forward.

At the same time, the Blueprint 15 project that is currently being planned would redevelop the East Adams Street neighborhood adjacent to I-81. Blueprint 15 is a non-profit partnership of the City of Syracuse, Syracuse Housing Authority, and Syracuse City School District with support from the Allyn Foundation and Purpose Built

---


\(^{75}\) New York State Department of Transportation, Draft Design Report/Draft Environmental Impact Statement: I-81 Viaduct Project, Onondaga County, New York, 2019 at Table 6-2-2-6, Figure 6-2-3-2, and Table 6-2-3-2, available at: https://www.dot.ny.gov/i81opportunities/library.
Communities, a national organization that has spearheaded similar redevelopments in cities across the country. The area, which is largely owned by the Syracuse Housing Authority, is currently home to around 1,000 units of public housing disproportionately occupied by households of color. The Blueprint 15 project would replace these 1,000 units of public housing with 1,100 - 1,400 units of mixed income apartments and bring new amenities to the area aimed at addressing the health and educational needs of residents.\(^{76}\) While the project has the potential to improve housing quality and access to economic and recreational opportunities for neighborhood residents, questions and concerns remain about the displacement of current public housing residents from the area. Of primary concern is whether there will be a sufficient number of deeply subsidized units included in the redeveloped neighborhood and whether residents will be sufficiently supported if they are temporarily or permanently displaced.

The City is currently in the final stages of ReZone Syracuse, a project intended to overhaul the City’s original 1922 zoning ordinance. The City considered the current zoning ordinance problematic because of its “strict separation of land uses, lack of effective design standards and complex administration.”\(^{77}\) The ReZone plan would help the City achieve the overarching goals of its new land use plan, which are identified as follows:

1. Preserve and enhance Syracuse’s existing land use patterns
2. Protect and enhance the character and "sense of place" of Syracuse’s neighborhoods
3. Ensure high-quality, attractive design throughout the City,
4. Promote environmentally sustainable land use patterns, transportation options, and site plans, and
5. Ensure that development regulations and review processes are efficient, predictable, and transparent.\(^{78}\)

A review of the most recent draft of the plan raises several concerns related to housing affordability, residential segregation, and inequality of neighborhood opportunity. First, the proposed re-zoning plan preserves single-family housing as the only allowable residential land use in vast swaths of the City, particularly in some the City’s highest-opportunity neighborhoods. Correspondingly, the revised zoning ordinance would continue to significantly limit the areas in which multi-family housing can be built. In fact, the restrictions on multi-family development under the proposed ordinance make no size-based distinctions between any housing of three dwelling units or more. Thus, three- or four-family homes would be subject to the same development constraints as large, high-rise apartment buildings. This failure to distinguish between large-scale apartment buildings and much smaller multi-family dwellings threatens to artificially limit the availability of lower-cost housing options that can readily be provided in complete conformity with existing neighborhood character in historically lower-density residential areas.

A second major concern is the extent to which each revision of the ReZone plan has reduced the number of “mixed-use” blocks within lower poverty and whiter neighborhoods, such as Tipp Hill, Westcott, and Washington Square, while maintaining higher density mixed-use designations in higher poverty neighborhoods of color, particularly on the City’s Southside.

Considered together, these first two concerns give rise to a third concern: gentrification. By continuing to place strict limits on multi-family and mixed-used development in higher opportunity and whiter neighborhoods, while simultaneously re-zoning historically disinvested neighborhoods of color for high-density residential and commercial development, the proposed ReZone plan threatens to displace low-income, minority residents. The potential for such gentrification is perhaps most pronounced in the areas around the I-81 viaduct and East.

---

\(^{76}\) [https://www.blueprint15.org/](https://www.blueprint15.org/)

\(^{77}\) [http://www.syrgov.net/ReZoneSyracuse.aspx](http://www.syrgov.net/ReZoneSyracuse.aspx)

\(^{78}\) Ibid.
Adams Street neighborhood that are designated as “Urban Core” or “Central Business” districts. This concern is further exacerbated by suggestions by the New York State Department of Transportation that land to made available for development by the removal of the I-81 viaduct would be ideal for the development of luxury one- and two-bedroom units.

In its current form, the ReZone plan misses the opportunity to meaningfully address concentrated poverty and create not just mixed-use, but also mixed-income neighborhoods. Notably, the proposed plan as it exists currently is completely silent on the issue of affordable housing. Without further revision, future growth and development under the revised zoning scheme is likely to result in the displacement of low-income residents, particularly residents of color. To avoid such displacement, reduce residential segregation, and create a more equitable distribution of neighborhood opportunity, the ReZone plan should incorporate a two-pronged strategy of increasing affordable housing opportunities in high-opportunity neighborhoods, while also preserving and expanding such opportunities in lower-opportunity neighborhoods that are targeted for investment and revitalization. To achieve these goals, the ReZone plan could go further in allowing multi-family development in a greater number of neighborhoods while still maintaining appropriate unit and dimensional restrictions that are consistent with existing neighborhood character, allowing accessory dwelling units in all residential zones, and incorporating inclusionary zoning provisions that require affordable housing as part of any new development.

JUSTICE SYSTEM INVOLVEMENT

Both nationally and locally, individuals with a history of justice system involvement often face significant difficulty in finding housing. CNY Fair Housing routinely receives complaints from individuals who have been denied housing due to a criminal record. Often, this leads formerly incarcerated individuals and even individuals with mere arrest records to resort to living in substandard housing or staying in the homes of family or friends without reporting it to the housing provider. Because housing instability often contributes to recidivism, addressing the housing needs of this population is essential. In Onondaga County, as in the rest of the nation, people of color are arrested and sentenced at rates disproportionate to their share of the general population and disproportionate to the rate at which they engage in criminal conduct. In 2018, of the 482 County residents that were sentenced to state prison, 55 percent were Black while only 11 percent of the general population of the County is Black, as shown in Table 12.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TABLE 12: ONONDAGA COUNTY JUSTICE INVOLVEMENT BY RACE &amp; ETHNICITY, 2018</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Race/Ethnicity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Unknown</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

SOURCE: NEW YORK STATE COMPUTERIZED CRIMINAL HISTORY REPOSITORY.


Since 2019, Onondaga County’s jail population has decreased by 20 percent in large part due to New York State’s 2019 Bail Reform, as those charged with violations, misdemeanors, and non-violent felonies are not being booked into jails. By reducing the number of individuals who are locked up while awaiting trial simply because they cannot afford bail – and thereby eliminating the significant disruption to employment, childcare, or other daily responsibilities that being jailed often causes – these reforms should help increase housing stability for many low-income households with justice system involvement.

In 2016, HUD issued guidance on the Fair Housing Act’s applicability to housing providers’ use of criminal record screening policies. In the guidance, HUD warned housing providers that blanket bans on admission due to criminal history are presumed to have an unlawful discriminatory effect on applicants of color. To avoid potential liability, housing providers must conduct an individualized assessment of justice involved applicants that takes into account the nature of their criminal record, how long it has been since conviction, and the individual’s tenant history and other relevant conduct in the intervening time.

New York State law provides individuals with justice system involvement additional protections from housing discrimination based on their criminal record. In July 2019, the New York State Human Rights Law was amended to prohibit housing providers from inquiring about or denying housing to individuals based: on any prior arrests or criminal accusations that were resolved in the individual’s favor; youthful offender adjudications; pending arrests that have been adjourned in contemplation of dismissal; and certain convictions that have been sealed under New York State Criminal Procedure Law.\(^2\) Additionally, housing providers operating properties that receive funding from New York State Homes and Community Renewal (HCR) are subject to additional limits on the types of criminal records they may consider when evaluating applicants and must adhere to specific due process procedures and recordkeeping requirements when considering applicants’ criminal records. Despite the issuance of the HUD guidance and the adoption of additional protections under New York State law, discrimination based on criminal history remains commonplace.

Since the last writing of this report, Syracuse Housing Authority partnered with the Center for Community Alternatives to develop Freedom Commons, a 54-unit affordable housing complex specifically designed to provide housing and supportive services for individuals and families with justice system involvement. While this is a positive step and provides critically-needed housing for this hard-to-house population, Freedom Commons is located in a census tract of concentrated poverty. It is important that concerted efforts are made to locate any future developments of this type in areas of higher opportunity.

**FAIR HOUSING ENFORCEMENT**

**FAIR HOUSING ACTIVITY**

As recipients of CDBG funds, both the City of Syracuse and Onondaga County must affirm that they support fair housing and are working to affirmatively further fair housing in their jurisdictions. That commitment can be evaluated in two ways: first, by examining whether the jurisdiction’s own governmental actions have helped to promote open housing patterns, and second, by assessing whether residents have access to a range of fair housing services.

Both the City of Syracuse and Onondaga County have shown a continued commitment to providing fair housing services to residents in the community. Both the City and the County have consistently funded CNY Fair Housing to conduct both enforcement and educational activities through the CDBG program. As a sub-recipient of CDBG

---

\(^2\) N.Y. Exec. Law § 296(16).
funding, CNY Fair Housing accepts and investigates complaints of discrimination, conducts systemic testing of
discrimination in rental, lending, sales, and homeowners insurance, provides advocacy and counseling for
members of protected classes, and provides free legal representation to victims of housing discrimination. CNY
Fair Housing also conducts education and outreach programs to educate the public, social service workers, and
housing providers on fair housing rights and responsibilities. This includes the distribution of public service
announcements and educational materials and trainings for housing providers and service workers whose clients
may face discrimination. Finally, CNY Fair Housing is available to provide technical expertise to municipal leaders
and local organizations receiving federal funds on their obligations to affirmatively further fair housing.

In addition, both Syracuse and Onondaga County provide funding to ARISE to provide advocacy and financial
assistance to individuals with disabilities in need of ramps or other accessibility modifications to their homes.

The City of Syracuse took a significant step in expanding fair housing rights for its citizens by amending its anti-
discrimination law in 2016 to include legal source of income as a protected characteristic, in alignment with the
recommendations of the prior AI. The law, which passed the Syracuse Common Council with overwhelming
support, made it illegal to discriminate against someone based on their “legal source of income,” which includes
Section 8 vouchers, public assistance, and SSI/SSD amongst others. The goal of this law was to help ensure that all
residents can access safe and quality housing and deconcentrate poverty.

**Enforcement Capacity**

As part of its contracts with the City of Syracuse and Onondaga County, CNY Fair Housing has worked in recent
years to improve its enforcement capacity and to build awareness about fair housing in the community. These
efforts include conducting trainings for service providers, landlords, and tenants, and increasing overall capacity
for both investigation and enforcement of fair housing complaints. CNY Fair Housing has also been working to
build partnerships with other groups in the community, which has proven particularly helpful in generating
referrals of potential complaints. The agency also has significantly increased its staff over the past year, allowing
for more capacity to investigate potential complaints.

**Complaints**

CNY Fair Housing accepts around 350 to 400 complaints per year. Of these complaints, an average of about 70
percent come from Onondaga County, with around 40 percent coming from within the City of Syracuse. About
half of the complaints the agency receives are not necessarily fair housing related but relate to landlord/tenant
issues such as habitability, evictions, and privacy. CNY Fair Housing advises these individuals of their rights and
provides referrals when needed. However, if the complainants are members of protected classes, cases are
investigated to determine if the landlord/tenant conflict is a result of discrimination.

Since December 2015, the agency has conducted over 1,000 client intakes with roughly 75 percent of these intakes
alleging fair housing discrimination. Around 60 percent of the fair housing complaints received by CNY Fair
Housing are related to disability. Some of these cases involve denials of housing or disparate treatment due to a
disability, but most have to do with requests for reasonable accommodations or modifications. Often overlapping
with disability, CNY Fair Housing has seen a dramatic increase in source of income complaints since New York
State’s 2019 amendment to the Human Rights Law to ban this type of discrimination. After these classes, familial
status discrimination continues to be the next most frequent basis for complaints, followed by race. CNY Fair
Housing has also seen an increase in recent years in sexual harassment cases, particularly following an
investigation and litigation against a prominent landlord in neighboring Oswego County.
An unpublished survey by CNY Fair Housing found that Onondaga County service providers believe that between 50 and 95 percent of fair housing complaints go unreported. The vast majority of these service providers believe that people do not report incidents of housing discrimination due to a lack of knowledge about rights, emphasizing the importance of education and community outreach. More than half of the service providers find residents do not report discrimination because of fear of retaliation, also highlighting the importance of retaliation protections.

**SYSTEMIC INVESTIGATIONS**

CNY Fair Housing also conducts systemic investigations to test whether patterns of discrimination exist against a particular protected class and/or within a particular geographic area. Much of the recent work has been focused on disability, as the majority of complaints received allege some form of disability discrimination. Recently, an investigation into the treatment of people with disabilities at a series of local senior housing complexes has led to the discovery of significant disparities. Enforcement action is being pursued at the time of writing of this report. An additional disability-based investigation was conducted of local homeowners’ insurers, which uncovered a pervasive pattern of discrimination. As a result, outreach to housing professionals has been increased.

**IDENTIFICATION OF IMPEDIMENTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

The last Analysis of Impediments for Syracuse and Onondaga County was completed in November 2014. That document identified a set of recommendations for both the City and County that aimed to improve housing choice and opportunity. Progress on those recommendations was varied, as demonstrated in the table at the beginning of this report. However, some of the recommendations were intended as a conversation starter, to “spark a discussion that is long overdue in this community about what kind of opportunities we think all residents of Central New York should have.” Since that report’s publication, this conversation has been happening and concerns about equity and opportunity have been more at the forefront of many policy discussions, particularly by City leaders and the County administration. This has been amplified by the recent protests over police brutality and awareness of racial inequities revealed by these injustices and the COVID pandemic. Now it is time for that conversation to continue in our towns and villages and neighborhoods, to the places where the decisions and policies of a planning board or unwelcoming comments of neighbors continue to limit housing choice. And now is the time for concerted and deliberate action, particularly at the County level, to address these disparities that continue to define our community.

**IMPEDEMENT 1**

The isolation of and poor housing quality in Syracuse’s inner-city neighborhoods restrict housing choice for many low-income households, people with disabilities, and residents of color.

The largest impediment to housing choice in Syracuse and Onondaga County remains the self-sustaining effects of overtly discriminatory government policies from the past. People of color, individuals with disabilities, and families with female headed households are frequently isolated in neighborhoods with little economic, educational, and housing opportunities. Addressing this impediment requires two approaches: expanding opportunity and improving housing quality within these historically marginalized neighborhoods and reducing barriers to housing in neighborhoods of opportunity.

---

83 AI 2014
Recommendations:

1. Expand opportunity in economically distressed neighborhoods.
   a. Expand upon programs to improve housing quality in City neighborhoods and areas of low opportunity in the County such as inner-ring suburban neighborhoods.
      - Continue efforts to improve code enforcement and accountability of landlords.
      - Increase transparency and professionalism in the code enforcement process, particularly in the towns and villages. Develop and improve online systems to track property conditions with a focus on ease of access for tenants and the general public.
      - Continue and expand on efforts to address lead hazards through education, funding for remediation, and strict enforcement of relevant regulations.
      - Expand emergency funding for moving, security deposit, and other expenses incurred by households that are displaced by housing code violations and/or condemnations.
   b. Work to equalize educational opportunity.
      - Continue and expand efforts to develop regional schools.
      - Advocate for changes in the school funding system in New York State to reduce reliance on property taxes to fund education.
      - City of Syracuse: Continue and expand investment in programs to improve schools such as the Say Yes to Education program.
      - Onondaga County: Analyze the feasibility of consolidating school districts into a County-wide district.
   c. Link future real estate investment in distressed neighborhoods to workforce development among un- and underemployed residents.
      - Expand MWBE and local hiring requirements for real estate development projects that receive grants, tax abatements, taxpayer-subsidized financing, or other local development incentives. Developers should be required to advertise, interview, and hire local candidates first, before making the positions available to a broader applicant pool. Developers should also be required to fill a specified percentage of new jobs with local candidates.
      - Develop a job training program in partnership with the Greater Syracuse Land Bank to teach construction trade skills to participants while renovating Land Bank-acquired properties.

2. Reduce concentrations of poverty by increasing the geographic dispersal of affordable housing.
   a. Increase the development of mixed-income housing, particularly in low-poverty areas.
      - Require any residential or mixed-use developments receiving grants, tax abatements, taxpayer-subsidized financing, or other local development incentives to include income-restricted affordable housing units.
      - Provide expedited permitting, fee waivers, or additional development incentives to qualifying properties that provide mixed-income housing in low-poverty neighborhoods.
      - Implement inclusionary zoning policies that require and/or incentivize affordable housing set-asides for all new residential development. In some communities, all new multi-unit housing over a certain size is required to make a percentage (usually 15-20%) of units available at reduced rates. Such a policy at the County level would significantly increase the availability of affordable housing and, if required of all new multi-family
housing developments, would reduce the NIMBYism regularly associated with the development of affordable housing.

- Update zoning policies to reduce barriers to multi-family housing, including increasing the number of zoning districts where multi-family housing is permitted as of right to reduce barriers to development.

b. Promote inclusive development in the City of Syracuse and ensure that developing and redeveloping neighborhoods remain available to low-income households.

- Preserve and expand affordable housing opportunities and ensure a right of return for public housing residents affected by the Blueprint 15 project;
- Require the provision of affordable housing as part of any residential development on land made available for redevelopment along the I-81 viaduct corridor; and
- Create policies and programs to increase the development of affordable housing in areas that have seen an increase in the development of market-rate and luxury housing such as Downtown, the Inner Harbor, and the University Neighborhood.

c. Encourage the creation of scattered site subsidized housing throughout the County, particularly in areas of higher opportunity.

d. Develop a county-wide affordable rental housing plan that incorporates fair share housing principles and measurable goals for each municipality in the County.

e. Establish a property acquisition fund that provides affordable housing developers with ready access to capital and allows them to act quickly to acquire land or buildings as they become available, rather than having to wait to obtain permanent financing through traditional public funding cycles.

f. Create a mobility counseling program for recipients of housing subsidies that supports individuals’ efforts to move to high-opportunity areas. This is particularly important for residents of public housing that may be displaced by the redevelopment of the East Adams Street neighborhood.

g. Conduct training for municipal leaders in the County CDBG consortium including elected officials, planning, and zoning officials on fair housing, affordable housing, and their obligation to affirmatively further fair housing. Support community-wide education on the history of housing discrimination in Central New York.

h. Investigate practices and models of community planning that foster greater public support for and/or limit neighborhood opposition to development perceived as undesirable.

i. Work to develop coalitions of community members in suburban towns to support and advocate for inclusive housing development.

j. Encourage and support the development of scattered site and mobile provision of social services by county departments and local human service providers.

**IMPEDIMENT 2**

The lack of accessible, affordable housing is a significant barrier to finding housing for people with disabilities.

With an aging housing stock and only a small percentage of housing stock built after the implementation of accessibility standards, there is a significant shortage of accessible housing for people with disabilities, especially at moderate- or low-income levels. With an aging population in Onondaga County, this problem will only become
more significant in the coming years and it is therefore essential that housing be created to allow people to age in place.

**Recommendations:**

1. Target incentives to properties that build accessible units at all cost ranges and in particular to projects that incorporate accessible units into the rehabilitation of existing buildings that are not otherwise subject to the design and construction requirements of the Fair Housing Amendments Act.
2. Lobby state lawmakers for the adoption of a tax credit to encourage private development and rehabilitation of single-family homes to meet visitability standards.
3. Educate landlords and housing developers on the value and importance of building and rehabilitating housing that is accessible.
4. Support investigations of properties for violations of accessibility requirements of the Fair Housing Amendments Act and Americans with Disabilities Act.

**IMPEDIMENT 3**

Private rental market practices disadvantage people of color, families with children, people with disabilities, justice-involved individuals, and individuals receiving housing assistance.

A number of private market practices continue to limit housing choice but may be mitigated by action by the municipalities. These include facially discriminatory practices, such as denying rental housing to individuals with mental illness, families with children, or those receiving housing assistance, as well as housing practices that have a disparate impact on protected classes, such as language requirements that disproportionately exclude households based upon national origin.

**Recommendations:**

1. Support systemic investigations of housing discrimination. Areas of investigation include discrimination against refugees and new Americans, individuals with mental illness, and individuals receiving housing assistance.
2. Explore options to add additional protections to human rights laws for people with criminal justice system involvement. Support enforcement and education of the Fair Housing Act’s disparate impact protections for people with criminal records.
3. Support research on housing issues for refugees and new Americans to identify common housing rights’ violations, such as unlawful withholding of security deposits.
4. Support and monitor education efforts for housing providers. Ensure individuals involved in the leasing of housing receive accurate, helpful information regarding their responsibilities to adhere to fair housing laws.
5. Continue to support fair housing education for vulnerable populations. Information on fair housing and what to do if you are a victim of housing discrimination should be made available on the websites for the City of Syracuse and Onondaga County as well as websites of the municipalities in the CDBG consortium.
6. Support tenants’ rights education and enforcement for all renters. Education on tenants’ rights and available local resources should be made widely available.
Homeownership rates for African American, Hispanic/Latinx, and Asian households remain well below homeownership rates for white, Non-Hispanic households.

Recommendations:
1. Increase access to sustainable mortgage products for people of color. Continue to support homeownership, financial literacy, and credit repair programs that contain affirmative marketing plans and cultural competency to increase homeownership rates.
2. Research and encourage best practices to increase utilization of the Section 8 homeownership program by area housing authorities, other administering agencies, and their program participants.
3. Establish a community land trust to provide affordable, shared equity homeownership opportunities, with a particular focus on land made available for development by removal of the I-81 viaduct and properties acquired by the Greater Syracuse Land Bank.
4. Seek state authorization to implement a property tax relief program for low-income homeowners and renters in neighborhoods that experience rapid increases in property values and corresponding increases in property taxes.
5. Support systemic investigations into discriminatory practices that impact homeownership such as differential treatment and steering in real estate sales and home lending.

Limited public transportation options restrict the ability of many residents to choose where they would like to live.

Access to public transportation is limited in many areas and where it does exist, routes are infrequent and often do not run later in the day.

Recommendations:
1. Deliberately link the development sites of affordable housing to public transportation and preserve and expand affordable housing options in areas where cars are not required to access services and employment opportunities. Identify desirable locations in suburban towns for affordable housing development that are accessible to households without cars.
2. Explore the possibility of creating special Call-A-Bus districts to service existing subsidized housing locations that are not currently served by public transportation.
3. Identify and eliminate bus service gaps in neighborhoods of opportunity that may discourage protected classes from seeking housing in those areas.

"The road to segregation is paved with weak intentions—which is a reasonably accurate description of the Federal establishment today. Its sin is not bigotry (though there are still cases of bald discrimination by Federal officials) but blandness; not a lack of goodwill, but a lack of will." - Senator Edward Brooke, February 6, 1968.

The challenges of social and economic segregation discussed in this report have developed over generations and are rooted in historical practices that continue to shape our community today. As recipients of CDBG grants, Onondaga County, the City of Syracuse, and the other municipalities within the County have a legal obligation to not only refrain from engaging in discriminatory acts and respond to private acts of housing discrimination, but
also to proactively improve housing choice and access to opportunity for members of protected classes. While we continue to fight instances of discrimination that limit housing choice through enforcement of fair housing laws, addressing the origins of inequality and injustice will require a stronger commitment on the part of public officials in this community.

Over the last five years since the last Analysis of Impediments was released, there has been increased focus and attention on racial disparities in our community. Shortly after the 2014 AI, the Century Foundation published its Architecture of Segregation report, identifying Syracuse as the worst city in the country for racially and ethnically concentrated poverty. The debate over I-81 raged and issues of equity were raised by local advocates and highlighted in national news articles like the Atlantic article, “How to Decimate a City,” and the Washington Post article, “In Syracuse, a road and reparations.” The attention of stakeholders and policy makers has clearly been drawn to these issues and several initiatives arose out of that focus. Now we see more widespread focus on and support for addressing racial inequities as a result of the Black Lives Matter movement, with protests occurring not only in the City of Syracuse, but in exclusive suburban communities like Manlius and Skaneateles.

But the needle hasn’t shifted very far yet and what small gains have been made since the 2014 report are threatened by the current pandemic. The anti-eviction pilot programs and other new housing initiatives that hold so much promise are now at risk as the City, County, and State face an unprecedented budget crisis. At the same time, there has never been more widespread recognition and support to address these longstanding disparities. As we stated in 2014, overcoming these challenges will require “financial resources, time, and political will.” While budgets may be uncertain right now, there is plenty that can be accomplished that only requires the will to do so.

APPENDIX LISTING

Appendix A: Methodology & Miscellaneous
   Human Service Provider Survey Questions

Appendix B: Maps
APPENDIX A: METHODOLOGY & MISCELLANEOUS
Fair Housing Survey for Residents

Greetings! CNY Fair Housing is preparing the 2019 Fair Housing Assessment for the City of Syracuse and Onondaga County and is seeking input from residents of the City and County to identify the barriers to fair housing choice. Survey results will be utilized in the future planning and spending of federal funds. Individual responses from the survey will be confidential. Please complete the survey by December 11, 2019.

One participant will be randomly selected to win a $50 Visa gift card. The winner will be notified via phone or email on December 13, 2019.

1. What is your zip code?

2. What type of home do you live in?

Mark only one oval.

- Single family home
- Duplex
- 3-4 unit building
- 5+ unit apartment building
- Mobile home
- Other:

3. How close is your home to public transit (a bus stop)?

Mark only one oval.

- Less than 1/4 mile
- 1/4 to 1/2 mile
- 1/2 to 1 mile
- More than a mile
- I do not know
4. **Do you rent or own your home?**

   *Mark only one oval.*

   - [ ] Own, with a mortgage
   - [ ] Own, no mortgage
   - [ ] Rent from a private landlord (with no assistance)
   - [ ] Rent in a public housing complex
   - [ ] Rent in an income-qualified complex (affordable housing)
   - [ ] Rent from a private landlord with public assistance or Section 8
   - [ ] Living with others
   - [ ] Living in a shelter or homeless

5. **What best describes your household?**

   *Mark only one oval.*

   - [ ] Single person under 65
   - [ ] Single person over 65
   - [ ] Single parent with children under 18 in the home
   - [ ] Married couple (no children) under 65
   - [ ] Married couple over 65
   - [ ] Married couple with children under 18 at home
   - [ ] Unmarried couple (no children) under 65
   - [ ] Unmarried couple over 65
   - [ ] Unmarried couple with children under 18 at home
   - [ ] Inter-generational (3 or more generations living together)
   - [ ] Other: ________________________________

6. **How many people live in your household?**

   ________________________________
7. How much of your household income do you spend on housing (including insurance and utilities)?

*Mark only one oval.*

- [ ] Less than 10%
- [ ] 10-19%
- [ ] 20-24%
- [ ] 25-29%
- [ ] 30-34%
- [ ] 35-49%
- [ ] More than 50%

8. What is your annual household income before taxes?

*Mark only one oval.*

- [ ] Less than $20,000
- [ ] $20,000 to $24,999
- [ ] $25,000 to $29,999
- [ ] $30,000 to $44,999
- [ ] $45,000 to $59,999
- [ ] $60,000 to $74,999
- [ ] $75,000 or above
9. Which age group represents the age of the head of household?

*Mark only one oval.*

- [ ] 18 to 24 years old
- [ ] 25 to 34 years old
- [ ] 35 to 44 years old
- [ ] 45 to 54 years old
- [ ] 55 to 64 years old
- [ ] Over age 65

10. What is the gender of the head of household?

____________________________________________________________________

11. What race/ethnicity best describes the head of household?

*Mark only one oval.*

- [ ] Caucasian (white), Non-Hispanic
- [ ] Caucasian (white), Hispanic
- [ ] Black, Non-Hispanic
- [ ] Black, Hispanic
- [ ] Asian
- [ ] Native America
- [ ] Multi-racial
- [ ] Other

12. What is the primary language spoken at home?

____________________________________________________________________
13. Is anyone in the household disabled?

*Mark only one oval.*

- Yes
- No

14. How long have you lived in Syracuse or Onondaga County?

*Mark only one oval.*

- Less than 1 year
- 2-4 years
- 5-9 years
- 10+ years

15. Have you experienced any of the following in the past five years? (Check all that apply).

*Check all that apply.*

- Difficulty paying rent or mortgage
- Eviction because of failure to pay rent
- Eviction for any other reason
- Requesting a reasonable accommodation on the basis of disability
- Inability to find housing in your budget
- Housing provider lying about available housing
- Housing providers using discriminatory advertising
- Inability to receive a mortgage
- Lack of access to banking services in your neighborhood
- Deceiving rent to own programs
- Landlords or property managers threatening evictions unless tenants pay additional fees
16. Have you experienced housing discrimination in the past five years?

Mark only one oval.

☐ Yes
☐ No
☐ Unsure

17. If yes, was the discrimination based on? (Check all that apply).

Check all that apply.

☐ Race/Color
☐ Gender
☐ Religion
☐ National Origin
☐ Age
☐ Familial Status (families with children under 18 years old)
☐ Disability Status
☐ Military Status
☐ Source of Income (using assistance like Section 8 or public assistance to pay rent)
☐ Gender Identity
☐ Sexual Orientation

18. What do you think are the barriers to housing choice in Onondaga County? (Check all that apply).

Check all that apply.

☐ Accessibility for people with disabilities
☐ Condition of housing units
☐ Cost of housing
☐ Distance to employment
☐ Transportation/access to public transit
☐ Discrimination

Other: ☐
19. If other, please specify?

________________________________________________________________________

20. If you were discriminated against, who would you call?

________________________________________________________________________

21. What is your email address or phone number? Only required for Visa gift card raffle eligibility.

________________________________________________________________________

This content is neither created nor endorsed by Google.

Google Forms
Fair Housing Survey for Service Providers

Greetings! CNY Fair Housing is preparing the 2019 Fair Housing Assessment for the City of Syracuse and Onondaga County and is seeking input from service providers in the City and County to identify barriers to fair housing choice. Survey results will be utilized in the future planning and spending of federal funds. Individual responses from the survey will be confidential. Please complete the survey by December 11, 2019.

1. How knowledgeable do you feel you and/or your staff are regarding fair housing issues?

Mark only one oval.

- Very Knowledgeable
- Somewhat Knowledgeable
- Not Knowledgeable

2. What types of populations do you primarily serve? (Check all that apply).

Check all that apply.

- Elderly
- Persons with mental illness
- Immigrants and/or Refugees
- Low income individuals
- Persons with substance abuse/addiction
- Persons with developmental disabilities
- Persons with physical disabilities
- Victims of domestic violence
- Persons and families who are homeless
- Persons with HIV/AIDS
- Female-headed households

Other:  

---------------------------------------------------------
3. Does your agency/organization handle any of the following? (Check all that apply).

Check all that apply.

- Housing provider
- Affordable housing provider
- Emergency housing assistance
- Housing for persons with disabilities
- Advocacy or case management to persons with disabilities
- Housing education and outreach
- Homebuyer or homeowner counseling
- Fair housing complaint intake or referral
- Substance abuse treatment

Other: _______________
4. How often do you believe your clients have experienced housing discrimination?

*Mark only one oval per row.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Very Often</th>
<th>Often</th>
<th>Not At All</th>
<th>Not Certain</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Elderly</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Youth</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Families with Children</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Racial Minorities</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethnic Minorities</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Immigrants/Refugees</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Persons with a physical disability</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Persons with mental illness</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low-income individuals</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Persons receiving Section 8 or Public Assistance</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Person with substance abuse or addiction</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Person with a developmental disability</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Victims of domestic violence</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Persons and families who are homeless</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1t-EIPCn_PHCrBcRSi0YwhvgkMLr2JS3v5JgrCnMIATA/edit 3/9
5. In your opinion, which of the following reasons for discrimination occur most frequently in Syracuse and Onondaga County? (Check up to three).

Check all that apply.

☐ Race/Color
☐ Ethnicity/National Origin
☐ Gender
☐ Sexual Orientation
☐ Religion
☐ Familial Status (families with children)
☐ Disability
☐ Age
☐ Marital Status
☐ Military Status
☐ Gender Identity
☐ Source of Income (using Section 8 or public assistance to pay rent)

Other: ☐ ________________________________

6. What types of discriminatory activities do you believe are most widespread in the City of Syracuse and Onondaga County? (Check up to three).

Check all that apply.

☐ Housing providers refusing to make reasonable accommodations or modifications for tenants with disabilities
☐ Housing providers placing tenants in the least desirable units in a development
☐ Housing providers refusing to rent to households receiving Section 8 or Public Assistance
☐ Housing providers refusing to rent to families with children or families with large numbers of children
☐ Apartment or manufactured/mobile home managers or owners threatening evictions unless tenants pay additional fees and rents
☐ Housing providers using discriminatory advertising
☐ Real estate agents directing clients to rental or sale housing only in certain neighborhoods
☐ Sellers of homes refusing to negotiate with certain buyers
☐ Lenders refusing to lend to certain applicants, lending at unfavorable rates, or steering members of protected classes to particular loan products

Other: ☐ ________________________________
7. What types of discrimination are your clients most likely to experience? Please describe and list by client type if relevant.

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

8. Have you ever assisted with a fair housing complaint?

*Mark only one oval.*

☐ Yes
☐ No

9. If yes, please explain what occurred.

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

10. Do you know where to refer a fair housing complaint if you needed to?

*Mark only one oval.*

☐ Yes
☐ No
11. If yes, please explain where.

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

12. What percentage of fair housing violations do you believe are not reported?

________________________________________________________________________

13. What do you think are the reasons that some people do not report incidents of housing discrimination? (Check up to three).

Check all that apply.

☐ Lack of knowledge about rights
☐ Lack of knowledge about how to file a complaint
☐ Fear of retaliation
☐ Fear of losing housing opportunity
☐ Belief that the laws won't protect them
☐ Other matters are more pressing
☐ Unsure

Other: ☐  

________________________________________________________________________
14. What do you feel is the best way to inform the public about fair housing rights and responsibilities? (Check all that apply).

*Check all that apply.*

- [ ] Public meetings
- [ ] Fair Housing information available in public facilities (City Hall, Libraries, etc.)
- [ ] Information on city and county website
- [ ] Radio announcements
- [ ] TV advertising
- [ ] Bilingual advertisements

Other: ___

15. Are you aware of any zoning or land use laws that create barriers to fair housing choice or encourage housing segregation?

*Mark only one oval.*

- [ ] Yes
- [ ] No

16. If yes, please describe the laws.

__________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________
17. Please evaluate the POTENTIAL barriers to fair housing in Syracuse and Onondaga County.

Mark only one oval per row.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Potential Barriers</th>
<th>Not a barrier</th>
<th>A minor barrier</th>
<th>A modest barrier</th>
<th>A serious barrier</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lack of knowledge among residents regarding fair housing</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of knowledge among landlords/property managers regarding fair housing</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of knowledge among real estate agents regarding fair housing</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of knowledge among bankers/lenders regarding fair housing</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of knowledge among insurance agencies regarding fair housing.</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economic barriers (employment, income)</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transportation issues</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abusive lending, including &quot;payday&quot; lending and &quot;rent to own&quot;</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shortage of affordable rental housing</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shortage of accessible rental housing</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concentration of low-income housing in certain areas</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concentrations of group homes in certain neighborhoods</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Limits on construction of multi-</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
family housing in certain neighborhoods

Limits on number of properties accepting Section 8 or Public Assistance

Lack of diversity in housing in neighborhoods

Zoning or land use laws

NIMBYism

18. What suggestions or considerations do you have for potential changes in fair housing practices and/or to remove impediments to fair housing choice?

19. Additional comments?
APPENDIX B: MAPS
2018 Percentage of the Population that is Foreign Born, in Onondaga County, NY

Legend
Foreign Born Population
mean 8%; standard deviation 8%
- 0% - 4%
- 5% - 8%
- 9% - 14%
- 15% - 26%
- 27% - 43%

Base Layers
- Onondaga County Towns
- Syracuse University and South Campus
- Incomplete Data
- Waterbodies

Source: 2014-2018 ACS 5-year estimates
Legend
Median Household Income in quintiles
- $0.00 - $31,537.00
- $31,537.01 - $51,754.00
- $51,754.01 - $65,625.00
- $65,625.01 - $83,063.00
- $83,063.01 - $123,846.00

Base Layers
- Onondaga County Towns
- Syracuse University and South Campus
- Incomplete Data
- Waterbodies

Source: 2014-2018 ACS 5-year estimates
Racially and Ethnically Concentrated Areas of Poverty
in Syracuse, NY

Legend
Racially and Ethnically Concentrated Areas of Poverty
- RECAP

Base Layers
- Neighborhood Boundaries
- Syracuse University and South Campus
- Waterbodies

Source: HUD Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing, Syracuse and Onondaga County, NY 2020
2018 Percentage of the Population with a Disability in Syracuse, NY

Legend
Disabled Population in quintiles
5% - 10%
11% - 14%
15% - 16%
17% - 21%
22% - 33%

Base Layers
- Neighborhood Boundaries
- Syracuse University and South Campus
- Waterbodies

Source: 2014-2018 ACS 5-year estimates
2018 Percentage of the Population that is Foreign Born in Syracuse, NY

Legend
Foreign Born Population in quintiles
- 1% - 5%
- 6% - 8%
- 9% - 13%
- 14% - 22%
- 23% - 43%

Base Layers
- Neighborhood Boundaries
- Syracuse University and South Campus
- Waterbodies

Source: 2014-2018 ACS 5-year estimates
2018 Percentage of Household with Children Under 18 in Syracuse, NY

Legend
Households with Children in quintiles
- 0% - 16%
- 17% - 26%
- 27% - 32%
- 33% - 41%
- 42% - 54%

Base Layers
- Neighborhood Boundaries
- Syracuse University and South Campus
- Waterbodies

Source: 2014-2018 ACS 5-year estimates
2018 Percentage of Households with Adults 65 years and older in Syracuse, NY

Legend
Households with Seniors in quintiles
- 0% - 15%
- 16% - 21%
- 22% - 24%
- 25% - 28%
- 29% - 45%

Base Layers
- Neighborhood Boundaries
- Syracuse University and South Campus
- Waterbodies

Source: 2014-2018 ACS 5-year estimates
2018 Percentage of Households that are Owner Occupied in Syracuse, NY

Legend
Owner Occupied Households
in quintiles
1% - 14%
15% - 26%
27% - 42%
43% - 59%
60% - 88%

Base Layers
- Neighborhood Boundaries
- Syracuse University and South Campus
- Waterbodies

Source: 2014-2018 ACS 5-year estimates

Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing, Syracuse and Onondaga County, NY 2020
2018 Median Household Income in Syracuse, NY

Legend
Median Household Income in quintiles

Source: 2014-2018 ACS 5-year estimates

Base Layers
Neighborhood Boundaries
Syracuse University and South Campus
Waterbodies

Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing, Syracuse and Onondaga County, NY 2020
2018 Poverty Rate in Syracuse, NY

Legend

2018 Poverty Rate
- 0% - 20%
- 21% - 40%
- 41% - 80%

Base Layers
- Neighborhood Boundaries
- Syracuse University and South Campus
- Waterbodies

Source: 2014-2018 ACS 5-year estimates

Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing, Syracuse and Onondaga County, NY 2020
2018 Percentage of Households that are Housing Cost Burdened in Syracuse, NY

Legend
Cost Burdened Households in quintiles
- 14% - 25%
- 26% - 37%
- 38% - 45%
- 46% - 52%
- 53% - 68%

Base Layers
- Neighborhood Boundaries
- Syracuse University and South Campus
- Waterbodies

Source: 2014-2018 ACS 5-year estimates
CNY Fair Housing
731 James Street, Suite 200
Syracuse, NY 13203
Phone: (315) 471-0420
Fax: (315) 471-0549
Email: info@cnyfairhousing.org