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SECTION SIX: OPPORTUNITY IN THE REGION

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Where you lives matters because it determines your position within the regional landscape of opportunity. Place of residence influences both the level of access and the assortment of opportunities available to you because access to opportunities such as jobs, high-performing schools, and safe neighborhoods varies by place.

To the extent that people of color and low-income people cannot live in communities of their choice, they cannot access the specific types of opportunities those communities offer. This means that opportunities vary not only by place but also by race. The barriers that limit the housing choices of residents of color create place-based differences in access to opportunities, which contribute to the region's growing racial and ethnic disparities.

Section Six examines the uneven landscape of opportunity in the Twin Cities region. It identifies the types of place-based opportunities that matter to the region's residents and evaluates the region's communities based on the access they provide to these opportunities. By using a method called 'cluster analysis', this section groups the region's communities into opportunity clusters that share similar mixes of access to opportunities.

Examining RCAPs within the context of the opportunity clusters, this section explores the extent to which RCAPs offer different levels of access to opportunities than other areas of the region. It then investigates place-based variations in access to *each* type of opportunity, demonstrating how these variations result in racial and ethnic disparities in access to opportunity.

Measuring opportunity in the Twin Cities region

In order to identify the types of opportunities that matter to the region's residents, the Council's research team surveyed the nation to identify regions that conducted a spatial analysis of opportunity.[i] The team examined these areas in order to create an extensive list of opportunity indicators used in the nation.[ii] Local stakeholders and project partners were then consulted to identify what kinds of opportunities matter most to the residents of the Twin Cities region. As a result of this process, five indicators emerged as the most important aspects of opportunity in the Twin Cities region:

- quality education
- proximity to jobs
- safety
- environmentally healthy neighborhoods
- access to social services and basic necessities

The Council team worked with a Data and Mapping Team of 15 members over the course of seven months to choose the metrics to measure these five dimensions of opportunity. Appendix H includes a list of the specific metrics and data sources used to measure each opportunity dimension, describing why these metrics were chosen over others. It also summarizes the methodology and the technical details of the cluster analysis.

This report intentionally defines opportunity from both a universal approach and the specific perspective of historically disadvantaged residents. While regional planning addresses the needs of all communities

[i] Regions that conducted similar spatial analyses of opportunities are: Atlanta; Austin; Boston; Hartford; Denver; Detroit; King County, WA; Portland, Oregon; Puget Sound, Seattle; Sacramento; and Washington County, Oregon.
[ii] The list of opportunity indicators included metrics such as school proficiency; unemployment rates; public assistance rates; housing stability; poverty rates; job access; neighborhood health; transit access; hazard exposure; health care; crime; affordable housing; healthy food options; recreational services; voter turnout rates; and arts and culture.

and areas of the region, the region as a whole cannot thrive without addressing the unique challenges that historically disadvantaged populations face. Opportunities that matter to low-income residents may matter less to other residents of the region.

For instance, while access to jobs is important to the region's residents as a whole, accessing jobs with low educational requirements may be more relevant to low-income residents. Similarly, historically disadvantaged residents might value access to transit and social services such as food shelves or community clinics more than other residents of the region. In order to capture the unique needs of historically disadvantaged communities, specific access metrics were created to measure access to low-skill jobs and social services in addition to general metrics of access to total jobs and basic necessities such as grocery stores and parks.

The report also deliberately focuses on place-based indicators of opportunity rather than people-based ones. Place-based indicators analyze the type of opportunities that a place offers to its residents. A people-based indicator, in contrast, evaluates the characteristics of a place based on the demographics of its residents. The demographics of a place can change as people move in and out of neighborhoods. However, the location of the neighborhood stays the same regardless of the demographics of the neighborhood. A place-based approach allows this analysis to examine how access to opportunity varies spatially and contributes to disparities in people-based outcomes.[iii]

Places and people are tightly intertwined. Neighborhoods that are not well connected to opportunities may undermine the life chances and capabilities of the people who live in these communities. People who live in neighborhoods exposed to toxic air emissions tend to have higher rates of asthma than others. People face higher risks of obesity if they cannot access stores with healthy, affordable food or do not feel safe enough to walk, run or bike in their neighborhoods. Communities with low-performing schools have a hard time increasing the educational attainment and labor participation levels of their residents. It is harder to reduce unemployment in lower-income communities that are isolated from job opportunities.

Comparing a Cumulative Opportunity Index and Cluster Analysis

Many regions across the U.S., as well as HUD, use a Cumulative Opportunity Index to examine the spatial distribution of opportunity and analyze existing disparities in access to opportunity. A Cumulative Opportunity Index evaluates how opportunity-rich a region's communities are by focusing on essential dimensions of opportunity such as jobs, education and safety, and then ranks communities in terms of their overall access to all the opportunities considered. However, the Index has two significant shortcomings.

First, by weighting all dimensions equally, the Index presumes that all residents place the same value on different opportunity factors. Simply summing or averaging scores for different dimensions of opportunity can misrepresent how opportunity-rich a community is to different types of residents. For example, residents with school-age children might prioritize good schools more than the region's senior residents, who might prioritize access to transit or parks and open spaces more. In other words, the Index fails to capture that a community offers different opportunities to different types of residents. A

[iii] The decision to choose place-based indicators over people-based ones eliminated many of the people-based opportunity indicators used by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and other regions. For instance, HUD included poverty rates and a labor engagement index among the five indicators it used to rank communities. Similarly, regions such as Denver and Portland used people-based health indicators such as asthma and obesity rates as a proxy for neighborhood quality. Leaving out metrics such as poverty, educational attainment, unemployment, asthma and obesity rates, however, does not imply ignoring existing racial disparities in these areas. On the contrary, this place-based methodology puts these racial disparities in the context of spatial differences in access to opportunity.

second shortcoming of the Index is that it categorizes communities as either low or high opportunity rather than recognizing each community's mix of assets and shortcomings. Consequently, it fails to capture the multi-dimensional nature of communities without labeling and stigmatizing some communities as 'bad' communities.

To avoid these shortcomings, this report uses a method called Cluster Analysis. This method evaluates communities along multiple dimensions of opportunity and assigns communities to groups based on shared characteristics. The members of each group resemble each other as much as possible in the types and levels of opportunities they provide. The resulting clusters can then be characterized by the mix of opportunities they provide, rather than as inferior or superior opportunity places. For example, the members of one cluster might, as a group, show above-average access to jobs, below-average access to high-performing schools, and above-average crime rates. However, not all members of the cluster will necessarily show exactly this mix of characteristics, though they are more similar to one another than to communities in a different cluster. The analysis allows communities to be characterized by the mix of their strengths and weaknesses in a more nuanced way than a simple Cumulative Opportunity Index. (See Figure 6.1)

6. 1 Comparing methods on measuring opportunity

Cumulative Opportunity Index	Cluster Analysis
• Ranks communities from "high opportunity" to "low opportunity"	• Recognizes the assets of all communities • Characterizes communities by the types and levels of opportunities they provide • Avoids stigmatizing areas as "low opportunity"
• Assumes that all residents define opportunity the same	• Creates groups of communities that share similar opportunity profiles • Allows for different priorities for opportunity
• Weights all dimensions of opportunity factors equally	• Captures the multi-dimensional nature of opportunity

The landscape of opportunity in the Twin Cities region

The cluster analysis of the spatial distribution of opportunity in the Twin Cities region produced three clusters characterized by distinct mixes of opportunities across the five opportunity dimensions. Map 6.A shows the boundaries of these three clusters and demonstrates the specific landscape of opportunity in the Twin Cities region.

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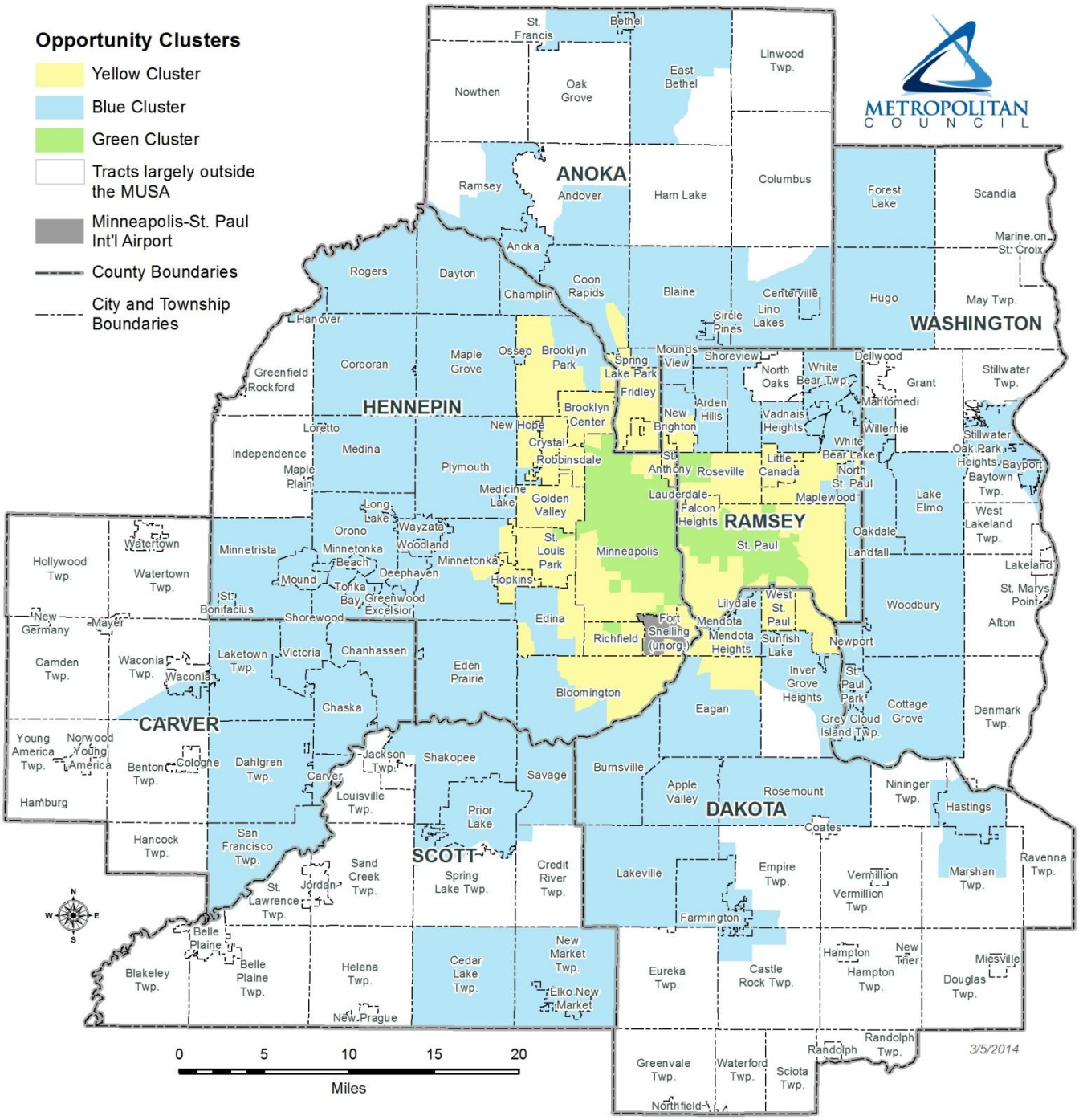
Map 6.A Opportunity clusters in the Twin Cities region



Source: Cluster analysis by Institute on Metropolitan Opportunity, informed by the Fair Housing and Equity Assessment Data and Mapping Team.

Figure 6.2, which summarizes the characteristics of the green, yellow, and blue clusters, shows that there is no cluster that includes communities that rank high on all dimensions. Similarly, none of the clusters rank low on all dimensions. Instead, the places in each cluster offer tradeoffs in terms of the opportunities they provide. For instance, one cluster may have better access to good schools than jobs, while another one may have better access to services than safe neighborhoods. This means that depending on their specific needs, different types of households might prefer to live in areas which offer the types of opportunities that they most care about.

6.2 Characteristics of opportunity clusters

Cluster	Characteristics
Green Cluster	• High proximity to jobs • High access to social services and basic necessities • Below average school performance • High exposure to pollutants • High crime rates
Yellow Cluster	• Moderate proximity to jobs • Moderate access to social services and basic necessities • Average school performance • Moderate exposure to pollutants • Moderate crime rates
Blue Cluster	• Low proximity to jobs • Low access to social services and basic necessities • Above average school performance • Low exposure to pollutants • Low crime rates

Not every community in each cluster is exactly alike. In fact, they can be significantly different in some dimensions. For instance, Map 6.A shows that both southwest Minneapolis and Columbia Heights are part of the yellow cluster despite being different communities on a number of dimensions. The value of the cluster analysis is that it categorizes the region's communities based on all of the five opportunity dimensions simultaneously to describe their assets as well as their shortcomings. As such, it paints a holistic picture of the region's landscape of opportunity. The opportunity analysis, however, still provides a score for each community in each individual dimension of opportunity. This makes it possible to evaluate individual communities by ranking them on individual opportunity dimensions. Specific maps that show the regional distribution of each type of opportunity will be discussed below.

The region's population is unevenly distributed across the three clusters. The blue cluster is home to the majority of the region's residents with a population share of 52%. In comparison, the green and yellow clusters are home to 14% and 27% of the metro residents, respectively.[iv] Figure 6.3 summarizes the distribution of each racial and ethnic group across clusters. The majority of the region's white residents—58%—lives in the blue cluster while the majority of the region's various communities of color lives in either the green or the yellow clusters.

[iv] Approximately 6% of the region's residents live in primarily rural or unsewered tracts (labeled as "Outside MUSA" in Figures 6.3 and 6.4). These tracts were left out of the cluster analysis because the Metropolitan Council does not intend to extend additional services to these areas in the next planning cycle. These communities, however, were ranked in terms of their access to each type of opportunity in order to show the geography of opportunity in the entire Twin Cities region.

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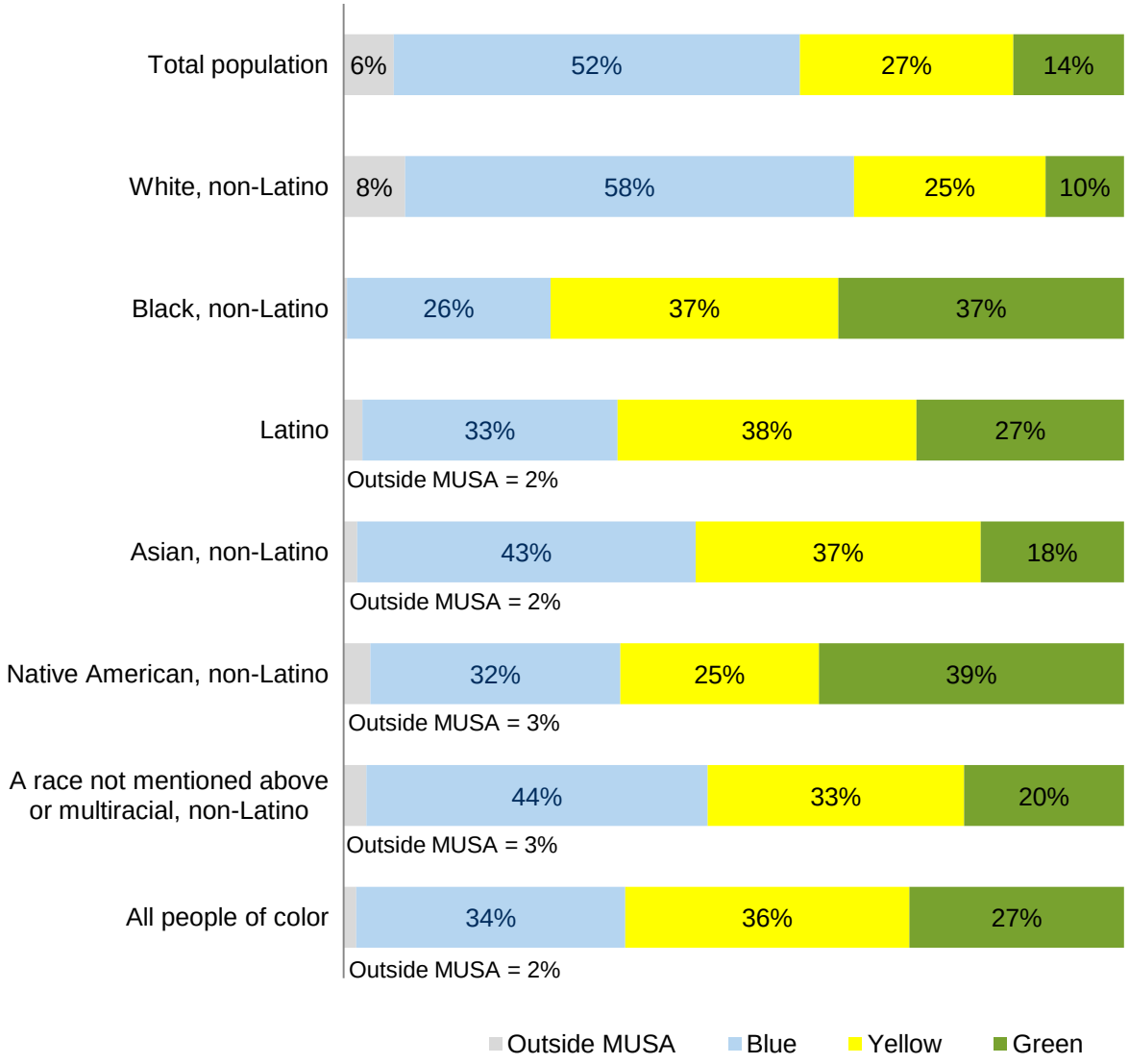
Among people of color, a larger share of Native American and black residents (39% and 37%, respectively) live in the green cluster compared with Latino and Asian residents (27% and 18%, respectively). In comparison, only one in ten white residents lives in the green cluster. The shares of various residents of color in the yellow cluster are relatively similar with the exception of Native Americans. While 37% of blacks, 38% of Latinos, and 37% of Asians reside in the yellow cluster, only one-quarter of Native American reside there. In contrast, a quarter of all white residents live in the yellow cluster. Lastly, while only 58% of white residents live in the blue cluster, only 26% of the black residents reside there. In comparison, 43% of Asian residents and roughly one-third of Latino and Native American residents (33% and 32%, respectively) live in the blue cluster.

6.3 Race and ethnicity of residents by opportunity cluster, 2010



Source: Cluster analysis performed by Institute for Metropolitan Opportunity staff, informed by Fair Housing Equity and Assessment Data and Mapping Team, and analyzed by Metropolitan Council staff; U.S. Census Bureau, Decennial Census, 2010.

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The racial and ethnic distribution of residents across clusters, however, looks different for low-income households.[v] Figure 6.4 shows that while 38% of the region's low-income households live in the blue cluster, 34% and 24% live in the yellow and green clusters, respectively.

The distribution of low-income households across clusters varies significantly by race. For instance, while 44% of the region's white low-income households live in the blue cluster, only 20% of low-income households of color are located in this cluster. Black and Native American households have the lowest shares of low-income households who live in the blue cluster—14% and 22%, respectively.

The share of low-income households who live in the green cluster varies by race as well. Nearly half of the black and Native American low-income households and around one-third of the Latino and Asian low-income households live in the green cluster. In contrast, only 18% of white low-income households reside in this cluster.

The share of low-income households who live in the yellow cluster does not vary much by race. For instance, 41% of low-income Latino, 39% of low-income Asian, 37% of low-income black households live in the yellow cluster. In comparison, 33% of low-income white and 30% of low-income Native American households reside in this cluster.

[v] Note that unlike Figure 6.3, which shows the distribution of *individuals* by race and cluster, Figure 6.4 illustrates the distribution low-income *households* by race and cluster. Figure 6.4 uses household data rather than individual data because income distribution by race is only available at the household level. In addition, the white households included in Figure 6.4 are non-Latino while the households of color include households of color who identify as Latino. This is because income distribution data is only available by race and not by ethnicity.

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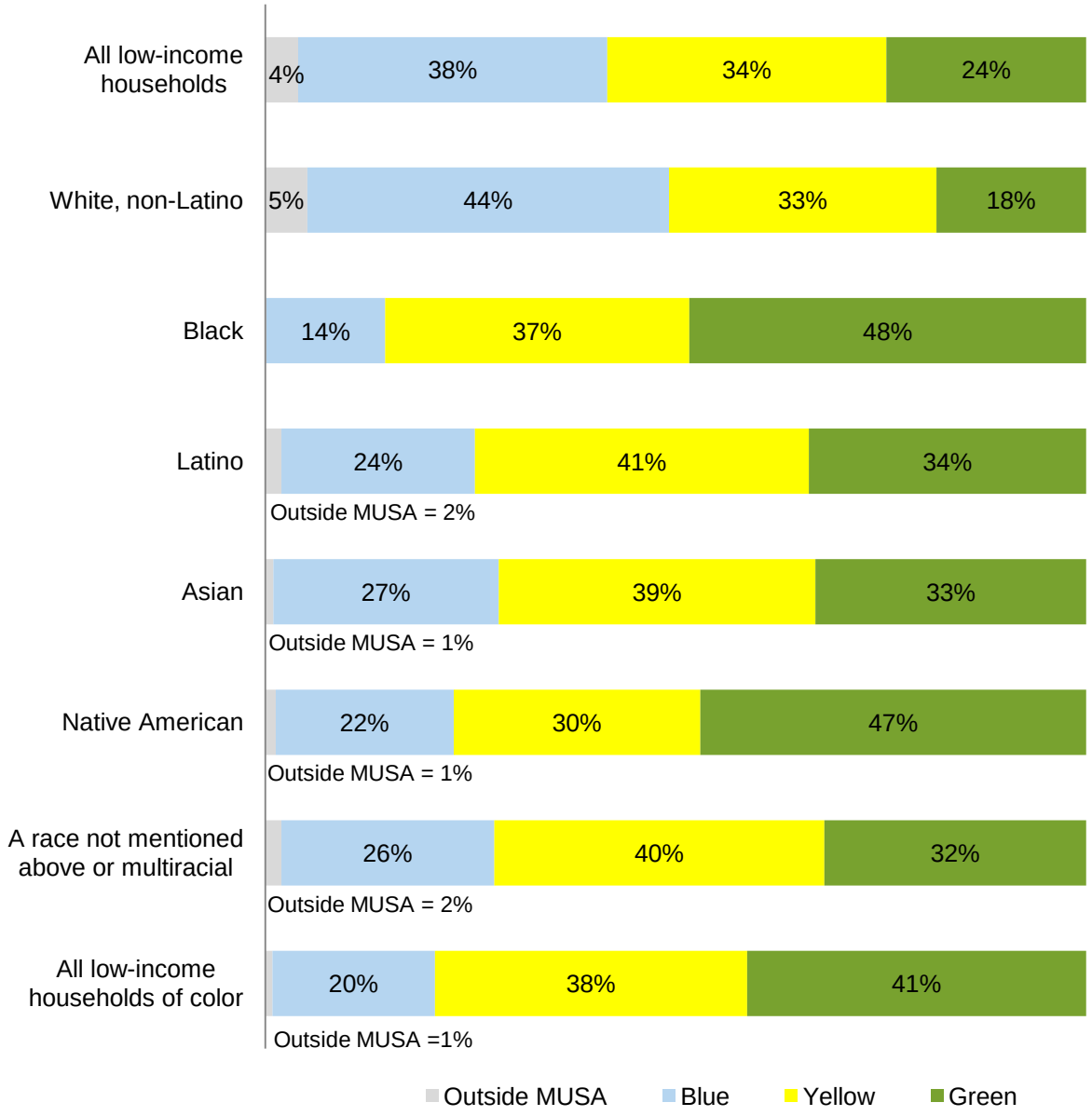
6.4 Low-income households by race and opportunity clusters, 2007-2011



Source: Cluster analysis performed by Institute for Metropolitan Opportunity staff, informed by Fair Housing Equity and Assessment Data and Mapping Team, and analyzed by Metropolitan Council staff; American Community Survey, 2007-2011.

Note: The racial and ethnic categories used in analyzing the income breakdown of various racial and ethnic groups are different from the categories used in the rest of the report due to unavailability of data. While the white category only includes non-Latino whites, the classification for people of color include Latinos as well as non-Latinos.

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The region's RCAPs are mostly in the green and to a lesser extent in the yellow cluster (Map 6.B). In 2010, 62% of the RCAP residents lived in the green cluster while the remaining 38% lived in the yellow cluster. All of the region's suburban RCAPs were in the yellow cluster. In contrast, all but one of the RCAP tracts in Minneapolis was in the green cluster. Unlike Minneapolis, Saint Paul had a number of RCAP tracts that were in the yellow cluster. These tracts were in the East Side and West Side RCAPs, along with parts of the North End RCAP. The Dale-Summit-University RCAP was the only Saint Paul RCAP that was fully in the green cluster.

Depending on which cluster they are in, RCAPs offer varying levels of access and face different types of challenges. Despite these variations, however, RCAPs have one thing in common: none of them is the in the blue cluster. This means that RCAP residents are not able to access the specific mix of opportunities offered by the blue cluster. Compared with communities that are in the blue cluster, RCAPs generally have lower-performing schools, higher crime and higher exposure to environmental hazards. Yet, they also provide better access to jobs and social services and basic necessities.

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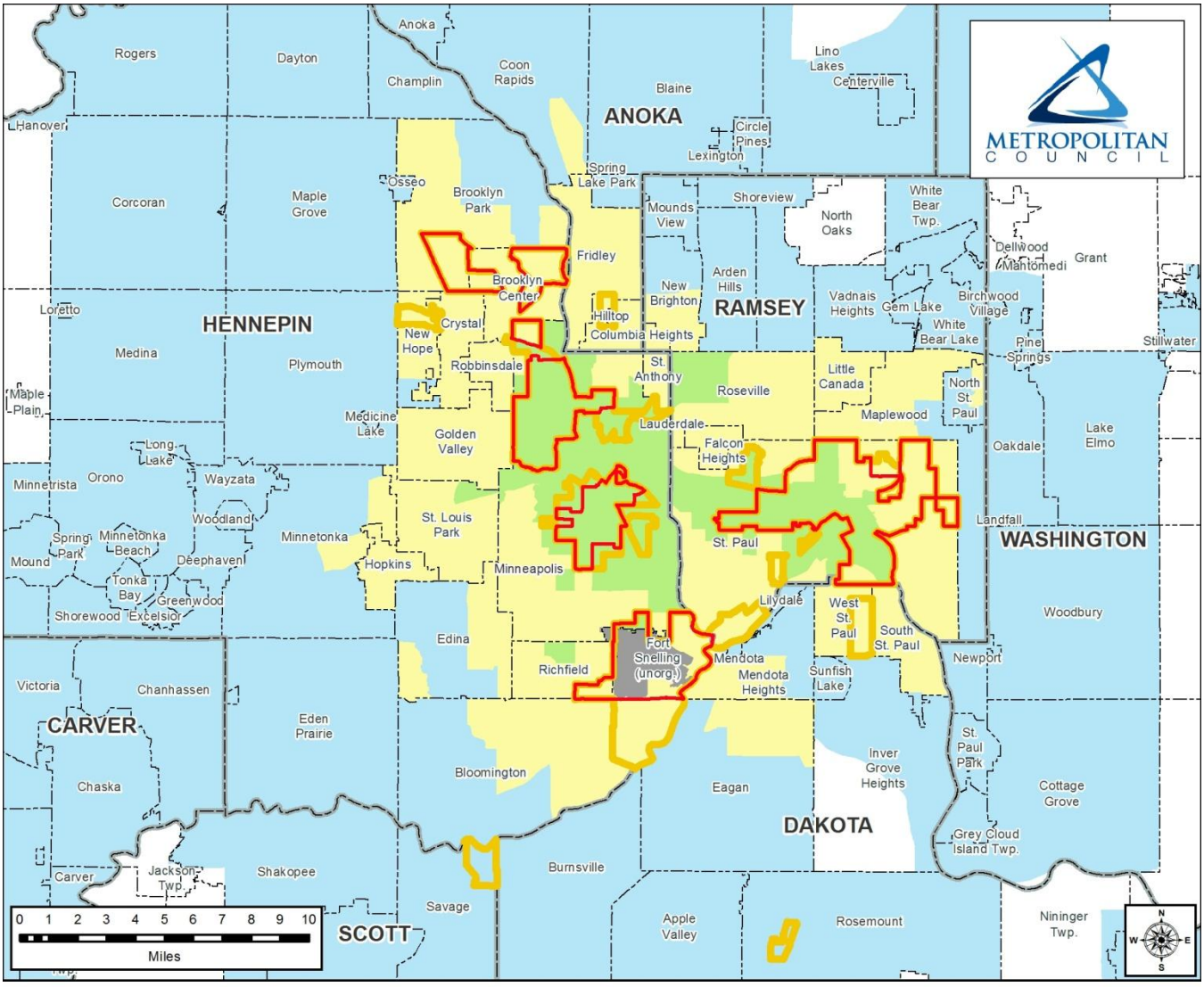
Map 6.B Opportunity clusters, areas of concentrated poverty and RCAPs



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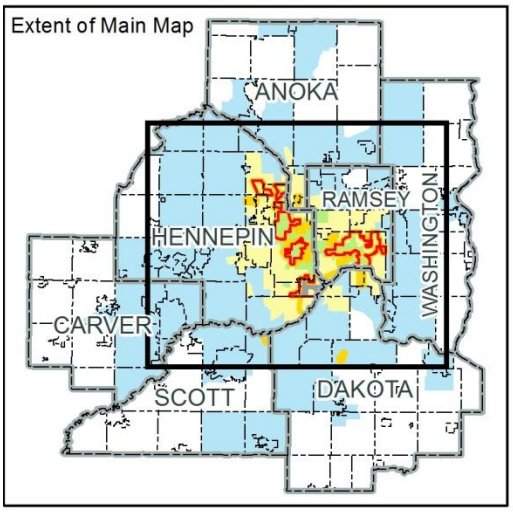

County Boundaries
City and Township Boundaries
RCAP (40% Poverty and 50% People of Color)
Area of Concentrated Poverty (40% Poverty)

Opportunity Clusters

- Yellow Cluster
- Blue Cluster
- Green Cluster
- Tracts largely outside the MUSA
- Minneapolis-St. Paul Int'l Airport

Source: RCAPs and Areas of Concentrated Poverty as defined by Metropolitan Council on March 6, 2013; Cluster analysis by Institute on Metropolitan Opportunity, informed by the Fair Housing and Equity Assessment Data and Mapping Team.

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The uneven distribution of opportunity across the region

The cluster-based analysis of opportunity reveals that different parts of the region have varying levels of access to different kinds of opportunities. This has important equity implications because there are systematic differences in where residents of color and white residents live. The analysis below discusses how access to specific types of opportunities differ by place of residence and by race and ethnicity.

The specific places of residence examined in the context of each opportunities measure are described in Figure 6.5 and illustrated in Map 6.B above.

6.5 Description of analysis areas examined in the opportunity analysis

Area of analysis	Definition	Size
Areas of concentrated poverty (ACP) *Mapped with gold outline*	Census tracts in which 40% or more of the residents have family incomes below 185% of poverty.	Data from 2007-2011 show that 106 census tracts meet the definition of ACPs. Overall, 12% of the region's population lives in these high-poverty areas.
Racially Concentrated Areas of Poverty (RCAPs) *Mapped in red*	Census tracts in which 40% or more of the residents have family incomes below 185% of poverty *and* more than 50% of the population are residents of color.	RCAPs are a subgroup of ACPs; 80 census tracts meet the RCAP definition. Overall, 9% of the region's population lives in an RCAP.
Areas of concentrated poverty that are not RCAPs. *Areas in map with gold outline but not red*	Census tracts in which 40% or more of the residents have family incomes below 185% of poverty and less than 50% of the population are residents of color.	This group consists of the 26 census tracts that are ACPs but not RCAPs. Overall, 3% of the region's population lives in these high-poverty areas.
RCAP Communities	RCAPs are subdivided into eight distinct areas. See Section Five for a detailed description of each RCAP community.	RCAP communities vary in size from 2 to 20 census tracts. See Section Five for detailed descriptions of each area's demographics.

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Proximity to Jobs

Employment is strongly correlated with income, which in turn is strongly correlated with overall well-being. Particularly for working-age adults, employment—especially in a job with wages that can support a household—is the single largest component of access to current and future opportunities. Proximity to employment opportunities is a key consideration when choosing where to live.

In September and October of 2013, the Metropolitan Council conducted six roundtable discussions with Section 8 voucher holders across the region. These discussions were designed to solicit their feedback to the opportunity clusters and evaluate whether or not the clusters accurately described the characteristics of their communities. The participants were also asked about the types of opportunities that mattered to them in deciding where to live. Proximity to jobs came up frequently as a factor that influenced their residential choices, as the following comments illustrate:

> *"I moved closer to my job and place of worship and it's quieter. I was in transitional housing prior to moving here and from there I was able to make that decision."*
>
> *"Mine was a job—I was offered a better position. I did not want to work that far from home."*
>
> *"I go to school here. I have a job here."*
>
> *"(Roseville) There is a lot of jobs out there."*
>
> *"(Eden Prairie) We got a job here first and then moved here because we like it."*
>
> *"Employment and transportation. Close to an existing job. Previously did not have a job. Didn't have a car. I was using a bicycle in Edina. Many opportunities to work in Edina. Very good job availability by bus, bike, or foot. Employment is more important."*
>
> *"Job loss and it is an issue if I can't move closer to new job. It is hard to travel away from kids for job, and not have a person I know nearby to watch the children if I work."*
>
> *"(Brooklyn Park) "Access to freeways. To get to my job it only takes me 10 minutes now. I'm a single parent, and I need to get home to my son quickly. I don't need a 45-minute commute. …If there were no jobs here, I couldn't be here either."*

Map 6.C shows that jobs in the region are not evenly distributed. For instance, one in six of the region's jobs are in the four largest job centers: downtown Minneapolis, downtown Saint Paul, the University of Minnesota and the airport/Mall of America. These four job centers each have over 50,000 jobs in a contiguous area. Another one in six of the region's jobs are in 12 regional job centers, areas that have 15,000 to 49,999 jobs. In total, half of the region's jobs are in employment centers that have at least 7,000 contiguous jobs and at least 10 jobs per acre.

Because employment is denser in the region's core, people living in the core are closer to more jobs than people living in certain suburbs or rural areas of the region. For example, a resident who lives at the corner of University Avenue and Highway 280—close to the border between Minneapolis and Saint Paul—could reach more than 750,000 jobs in a 20-minute drive and over 360,000 jobs in a 45-minute transit trip. In contrast, as a result of less dense employment and a less dense transportation network, a resident who lives in downtown Prior Lake could reach only 66,000 jobs within a 20-minute drive and no jobs in a 45-minute transit trip.

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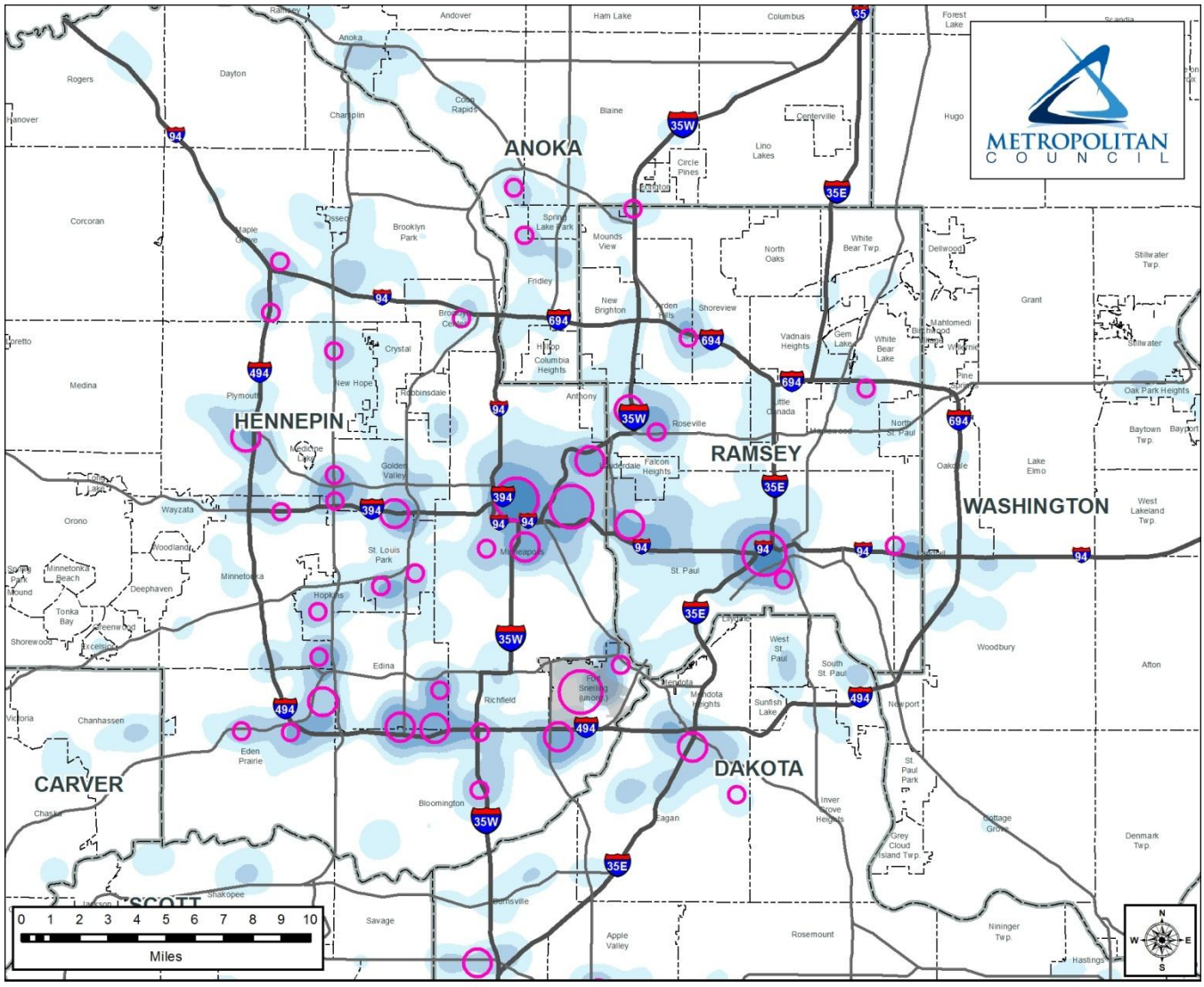
Map 6.C Major, regional, and subregional job centers in the Twin Cities region, 2011



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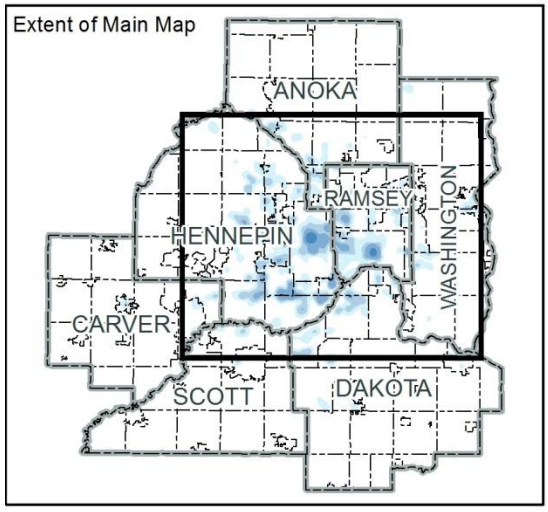

Employment Centers

- Major (> 50,000 Jobs)
- Regional (> 15,000 Jobs)
- Subregional (> 7,000 Jobs)
- County Boundaries
- City and Township Boundaries

Jobs per Acre, 2011

- Less than 2
- 2 to 4.9
- 5 to 9.9
- 10 to 39.9
- 40 to 152.6
- Minneapolis-St. Paul Int'l Airport

Source: Employment density data from U.S. Census Bureau, Longitunal Employer - Household Dynamics (LEHD) Origin - Destination Employment Statistics (LODES), 2011, Employment Centers defined based on Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development, Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages, 2012.

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Before going into a more detailed analysis of spatial variations in physical access to jobs, it is important to note that this report primarily focuses on physical access or proximity to jobs. Yet, physical proximity to jobs by itself does not guarantee access to these jobs for low-income residents, especially low-income residents of color. These residents face many other obstacles to gainful employment that contribute to significant racial and ethnic disparities in unemployment in the region. For instance, local analyses of these disparities identified some of these obstacles:[1]

- Disparities in educational attainment.
- Structure and funding of workforce development, education, and summer job programs.
- Limited direct exposure to the working world among youth of color.
- Discriminatory practices and unexamined racial bias among employers.
- Location of jobs that match the educational attainment levels of people of color.

The response of Section 8 voucher holders to the analysis of job proximity within the opportunity clusters varied and their comments revealed nuances that are not fully captured by the analysis:

> *"I am in a blue area (cluster) and it's hard for transportation. Jobs are very limited."*
>
> *"(Participant from the green cluster) As far as jobs, it is not high access."*
>
> *"There are jobs in the city but they don't pay well. The better-paying jobs are in the suburbs but you have no means to get there. If you miss the bus one way, you are stuck."*
>
> *"Maps were biased because more jobs in the suburban areas than shown, particularly Chanhassen."*
>
> *"Always better paying jobs in the suburbs. Transportation should match the places where the better paying jobs are."*
>
> *"I don't feel like I have high access to jobs in the green cluster."*
>
> *"Wages are not high enough. A lot of people move in and out. They cannot afford their house. Some people move in with their families. Jobs are there but wages are not. Minnetonka is a safe place. Deers are my neighbors. Jobs are there but it is too far out. Lots of people on bikes out there. Bus fees are getting higher."*

Since the region's areas of concentrated poverty are located in the region's core, where major employment centers are located, working-age residents living in these areas tend to be closer to more jobs than the residents of the region as a whole. Figure 6.6 illustrates how proximity to jobs varies by place of residence. The figure shows that 49% of the residents living in areas of concentrated poverty have very high proximity to jobs, compared to only 17% of the region's residents.

However, proximity to jobs in high-poverty areas varies depending on the racial composition of these areas. Within high-poverty areas, working-age residents of RCAPs are less likely than residents in other impoverished areas to have very high proximity to jobs. In areas of concentrated poverty that are not RCAPs, 59% of working-age residents have very high access to jobs. In contrast, only 47% of the working-age RCAP residents have the same level of proximity. This suggests that race and ethnicity remains a factor in determining physical access to crucial opportunities such as jobs.

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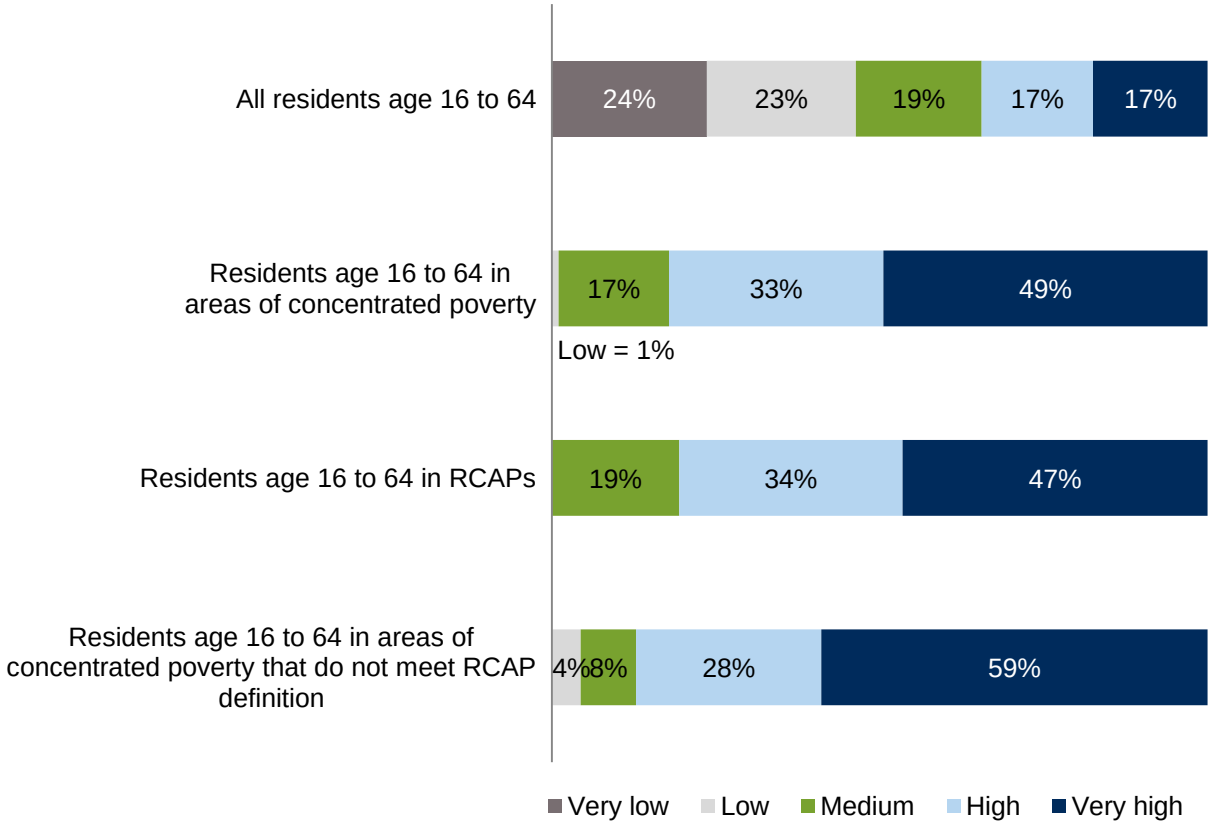
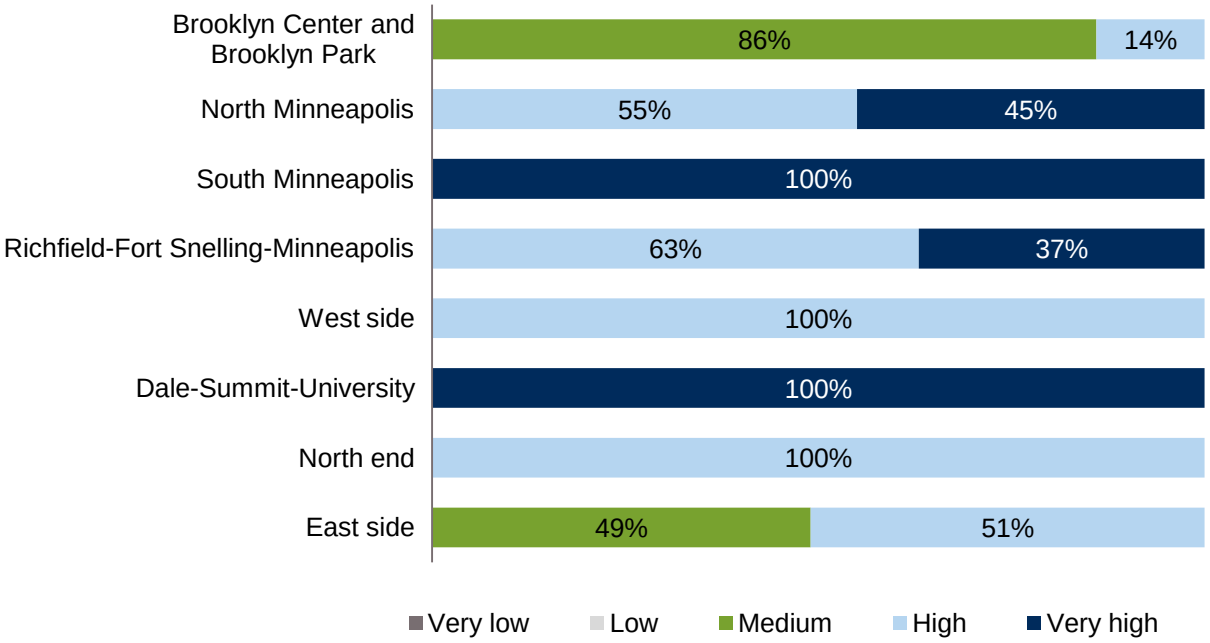
6.6 Proximity to jobs by place of residence



Source: Cluster analysis performed by Institute for Metropolitan Opportunity staff, informed by Fair Housing Equity and Assessment Data and Mapping Team, and analyzed by Metropolitan Council staff; American Community Survey, 2007-2011.

Moreover, individual RCAPs have varying levels of proximity to jobs, as shown by Figure 6.7. In six of the region's eight RCAPs, *all* residents live either in high or very high proximity to jobs. In contrast, RCAP residents in Brooklyn Center and Brooklyn Park and East Side have relatively lower levels of proximity to jobs. For instance, 86% of the RCAP residents in Brooklyn Center and Brooklyn Park and 49% of the RCAP residents in East Side live in medium proximity to jobs.

6.7 Proximity to jobs by RCAP community



Source: Cluster analysis performed by Institute for Metropolitan Opportunity staff, informed by Fair Housing Equity and Assessment Data and Mapping Team, and analyzed by Metropolitan Council staff; American Community Survey, 2007-2011.

An analysis of RCAP commuter sheds, which shows the employment locations to which RCAP residents commute, depicts a picture of actual physical access to jobs rather than plain physical proximity. Map 6.D shows the commuter sheds for residents living in each of the region's RCAPs. Residents living in the North Minneapolis and South Minneapolis RCAP neighborhoods are working closer to where they live compared to other RCAP neighborhoods. Residents living in the Dale-Summit-University and East Side RCAPs are primarily working in major employment centers, such as downtown Minneapolis and downtown Saint Paul. In contrast, employed residents of the Brooklyn Center and Brooklyn Park, Richfield-Fort Snelling, North End and West Side RCAP communities work in a wider range of areas further from where they live.

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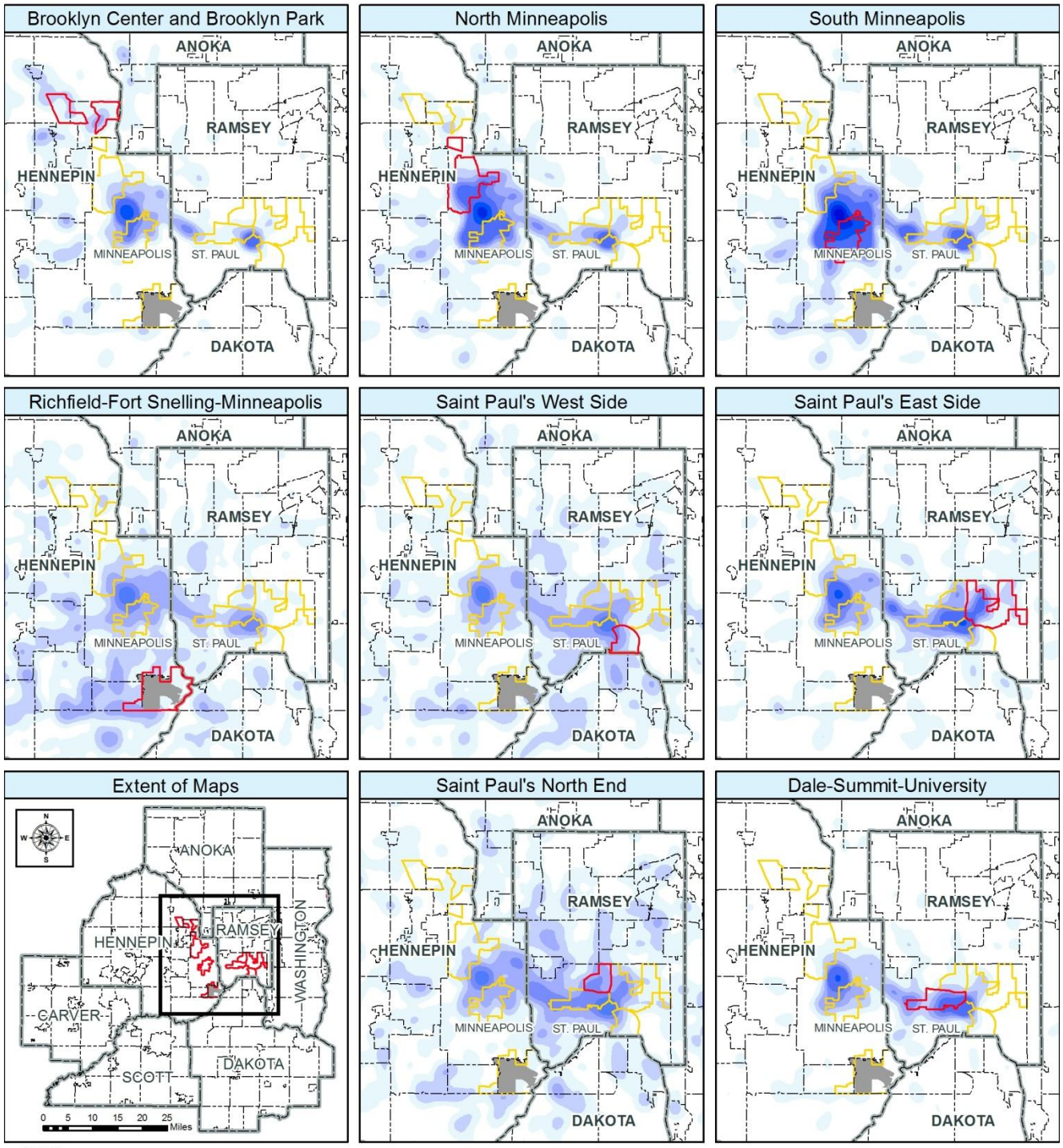
Map 6.D Commuter sheds of RCAP communities



Source: Jobs from U.S. Census Longitudinal Employment-Household Dynamics (LEHD) Origin-Destination Employment Statistics (LODES), 2011; RCAP andAreas of Concentrate Poverty as defined by Metropolitan Council on March 6, 2013.

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Map 6.E shows how the region fares in terms of proximity to jobs. Areas with the highest proximity are in the region's core, where most of the region's large employment centers are, and proximity to jobs gradually declines as one moves away from the core. Map 6.E also demonstrates where working-age residents of color live within this geography. Since working-age residents of color primarily live in core areas of the region where proximity to jobs is high, they have better spatial access to jobs than their white counterparts.

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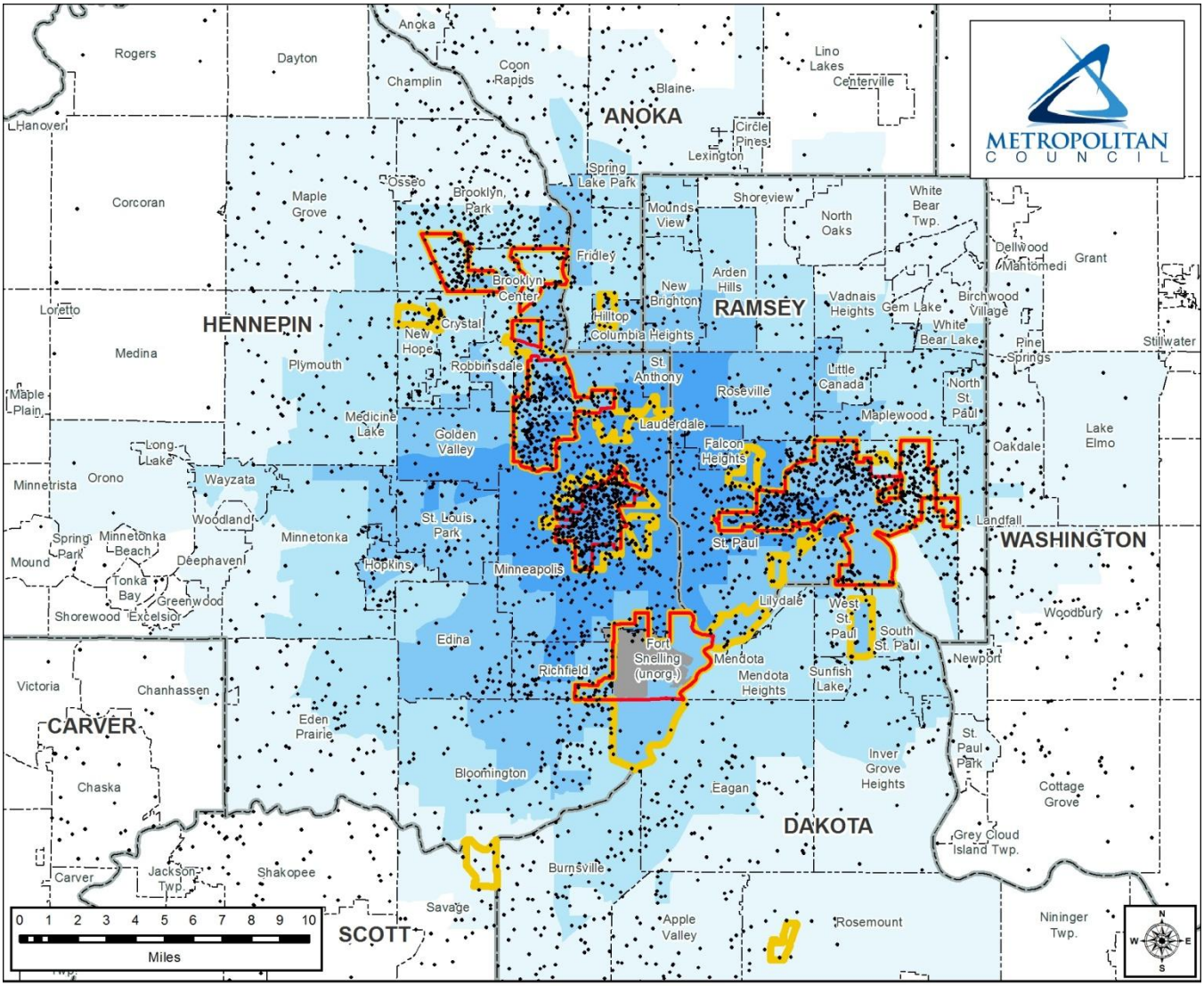
Map 6.E Proximity to jobs and working-age residents of color



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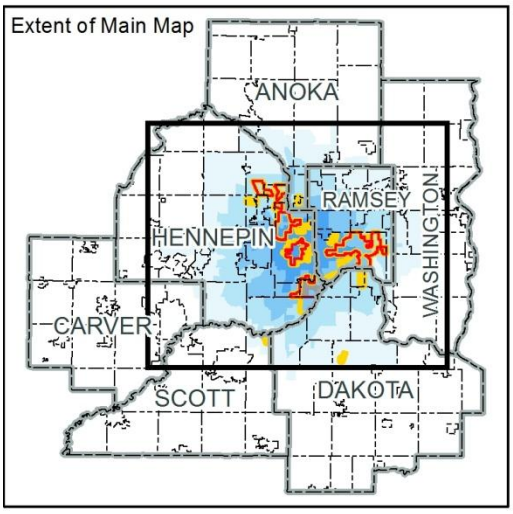

People of Color, Ages 16 to 64, 2010

- 1 Dot = 100
- RCAP (40% Poverty and 50% People of Color)
- Area of Concentrated Poverty (40% Poverty)
- County Boundaries
- City and Township Boundaries

Access to Jobs

- Very Low
- Low
- Medium
- High
- Very High
- Minneapolis-St. Paul Int'l Airport

Source: Population from U.S. Census Bureau, Decennial Census, 2010; Jobs from Department of Employment and Economic Development's Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages, 2010; RCAPs and Areas of Concentrated Poverty as defined by Metropolitan Council on March 6, 2013; Cluster analysis by Institute on Metropolitan Opportunity, informed by the Fair Housing and Equity Assessment Data and Mapping Team.

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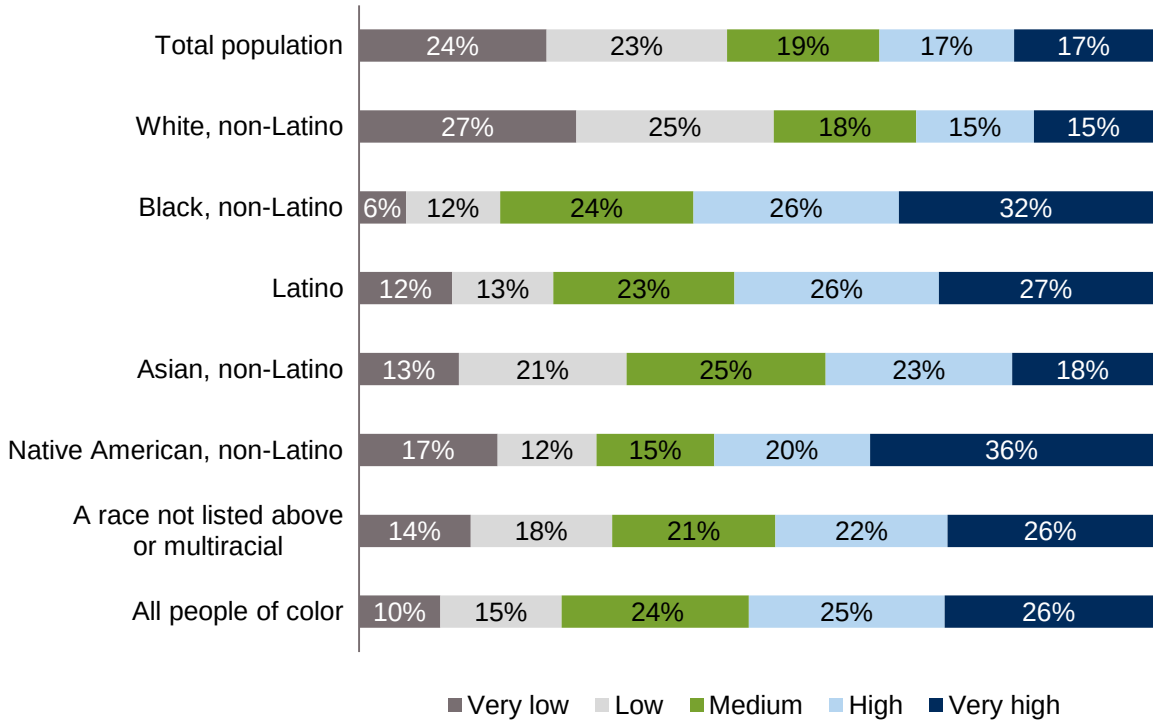
Figure 6.8 illustrates the racial and ethnic disparities in spatial access to jobs. Of the region's working-age residents of color, 51% live in locations with high or very high proximity to jobs, compared to 30% of the region's working-age white residents. Of all racial groups of color, Asian residents are the least likely to live in areas with very high or high proximity to jobs.

6.8 Proximity to jobs by race and ethnicity of working-age residents in the Twin Cities region



Source: Cluster analysis performed by Institute for Metropolitan Opportunity staff, informed by Fair Housing Equity and Assessment Data and Mapping Team, and analyzed by Metropolitan Council staff; American Community Survey, 2007-2011.

Access to Quality Schools

While adults need jobs, children need a quality education to launch them on a path to personal and economic success. Education is vital for the long-term life chances of low-income people as it directly affects their future employment options, income, and wealth. The quality of schools is a key concern for families with school-age children when deciding where to live. Section 8 voucher holders were not an exception in this regard; many expressed that schools played a key role in deciding where to locate. Especially for voucher holders with children, schools were as important as transportation, jobs, or other opportunity measures, if not more so. When asked what mattered to them most in choosing where to live, voucher holders stated:

> *"Basically good schools."*
>
> *"Education for my son. A good school system."*
>
> *"I am raising my grandson and I am retired. I picked the area for the schools. There are good schools by me."*
>
> *"(Minneapolis) I am so glad to be back where I was raised over North. Education. Schools."*
>
> *"A good community to raise children. A neighborhood without violence, and one that has values—where people want to get an education and not stand on the corner."*
>
> *"(Xane Avenue, Brooklyn Park) Good education and safety."*
>
> *"Before, it was schools and safety but now that my kids are grown it has changed."*

Many Somali voucher holders in Eden Prairie expressed the importance of schooling in their residential choices. One Somali voucher holder, for instance, commented:

> *"Children are our asset. We are focused on keeping our children safe and getting a good education. We are less concerned with transportation and jobs."*

Voucher holders complained of their limited ability to choose schools because of housing issues:

> *"We have to get to a place before we can think about schools and jobs. That is when we choose. And then we can choose schools."*
>
> *"Green areas have good schools too but it is more expensive to live in the green area and can't get a voucher that covers the cost. I would like to be closer to good schools in the core and there are some good schools there but I can't get a place."*
>
> *"(Eden Prairie) Even though we moved to suburban area with good schools, we still have housing problems. It is hard to find a Section 8 house."*

Voucher holders living in suburban areas such as Brooklyn Park, Edina, Plymouth and Maplewood brought up the importance of good schools in their decision-making process. One voucher holder described her experience as follows:

> *"(Plymouth) I have a child of color. I did not want him to go to the inner city. He went to a IBS school and then now he is in law school. Good schools. Clean air. Buses not as good."*

Yet opinions about the quality of schools in different locations varied among voucher holders. Many Somali voucher holders in Eden Prairie stated that they decided to move out of Minneapolis because they had problems with the schools. A number of these Somali voucher holders, however, noted that there are better schools in Minneapolis than suggested by the maps, adding that they would like to go back to Minneapolis for more services but could not find a place to live by the good schools.

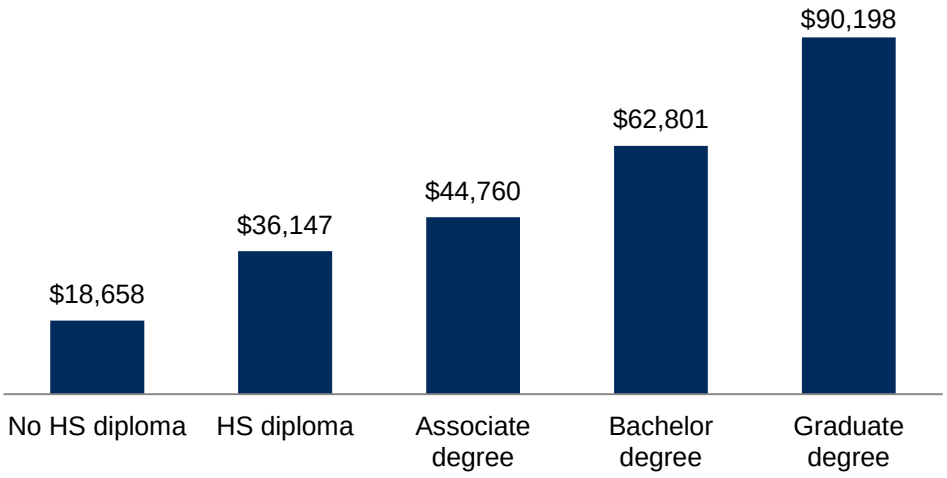
Other voucher holders of color noted the importance of cultural competence in evaluating the quality of schools. For instance, one voucher holder of color complained of the differential treatment of children of color in suburban schools:

> *"Schools in suburbs are more hostile to kids of color. Culture. It's best for my kids to go to school in the city. You know what I mean? Children of color are more misunderstood in suburban schools."*

A number of Somali voucher holders living in Eden Prairie similarly complained of cultural conflicts between the Somali students and the teachers in Eden Prairie but described the teachers' attitude toward them as "separate but equal."

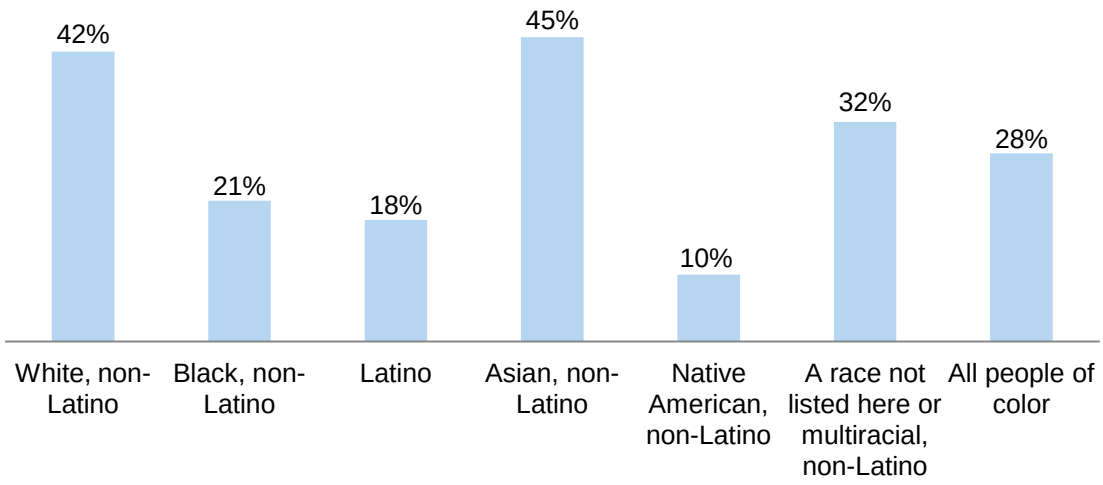
While opinions as to what constitutes a good school differ, access to academically high-performing schools still matter. Continuing disparities in access to high-performing schools are especially detrimental to historically disadvantaged communities, because these disparities in access perpetuate and further concentrate poverty. Attending high-performing schools can be the key to breaking free from generational poverty. As Figure 6.9 shows, higher levels of educational attainment are strongly correlated with higher incomes. However, residents of color in the Twin Cities region have lower educational attainment than white residents and this limits their future employment opportunities (Figure 6.10).

6.9 Personal per capita income by educational attainment in the Twin Cities region, 2007-2011



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, Public Use Microdata Sample, 2007-2011.

6.10 Percent of residents age 25+ with a bachelor's degree in the Twin Cities region, 2007-2011



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, Public Use Microdata Sample, 2007-2011.

Disparities in educational attainment have many drivers. Poverty status of individual students certainly plays a key role. There are significant racial and ethnic disparities in the poverty status of children. In 2012, for instance, 46% of black children, 38% of Native American children and 30% of Latino children in the state of Minnesota lived in poverty, compared to 9% of white children.[2] Children from families living in poverty often experience housing instability, frequently changing homes and schools—a factor that undermines their school performance among other things.

The types of schools attended by children of color also contribute to these educational disparities. This report focuses on this place-based source of educational disparities. The race-specific barriers to housing choice that disproportionately expose households of color to areas of concentrated poverty directly impacts children of color. Since schools tend to draw students from surrounding neighborhoods, children living in high-poverty neighborhoods often attend high-poverty schools.[vi] The disproportionate exposure of people of color to areas of concentrated poverty thus implies that children of color are much more likely to attend high-poverty schools than their white counterparts.[3]

Attending high-poverty schools tends to compound the effects of being poor. The financial and human resources of high-poverty schools are often overtaxed because they serve a student body with additional needs. As a result, high-poverty schools tend to have higher teacher turnover and struggle with hiring and retaining experienced teachers—a factor that impacts the quality of teaching in these schools.[4] High-poverty schools tend to have less vigorous curricula, which limits the educational and occupational options and aspirations of students.[5] High-poverty schools often lack crucial social resources such as positive peer influence and parental involvement.[6]

[vi] In Minnesota, the close relation between neighborhoods and schools is somewhat severed by the presence of school choice options such as open enrollment, magnet schools, and charter schools. Open enrollment allows school-age children to attend schools other than their neighborhood schools; lacking specific attendance zones, magnet schools and charter schools draw students from all neighborhoods. Since this report uses data from public schools with defined attendance zones and excludes data from private, charter, and magnet schools, it does not account for the factors that sever the relation between the demographic makeup of neighborhoods and schools. It is important to note, however, that the data does not reflect the performance of students who live in specific areas. Instead, it reflects the educational outcomes of the schools that serve these areas regardless of where students live.

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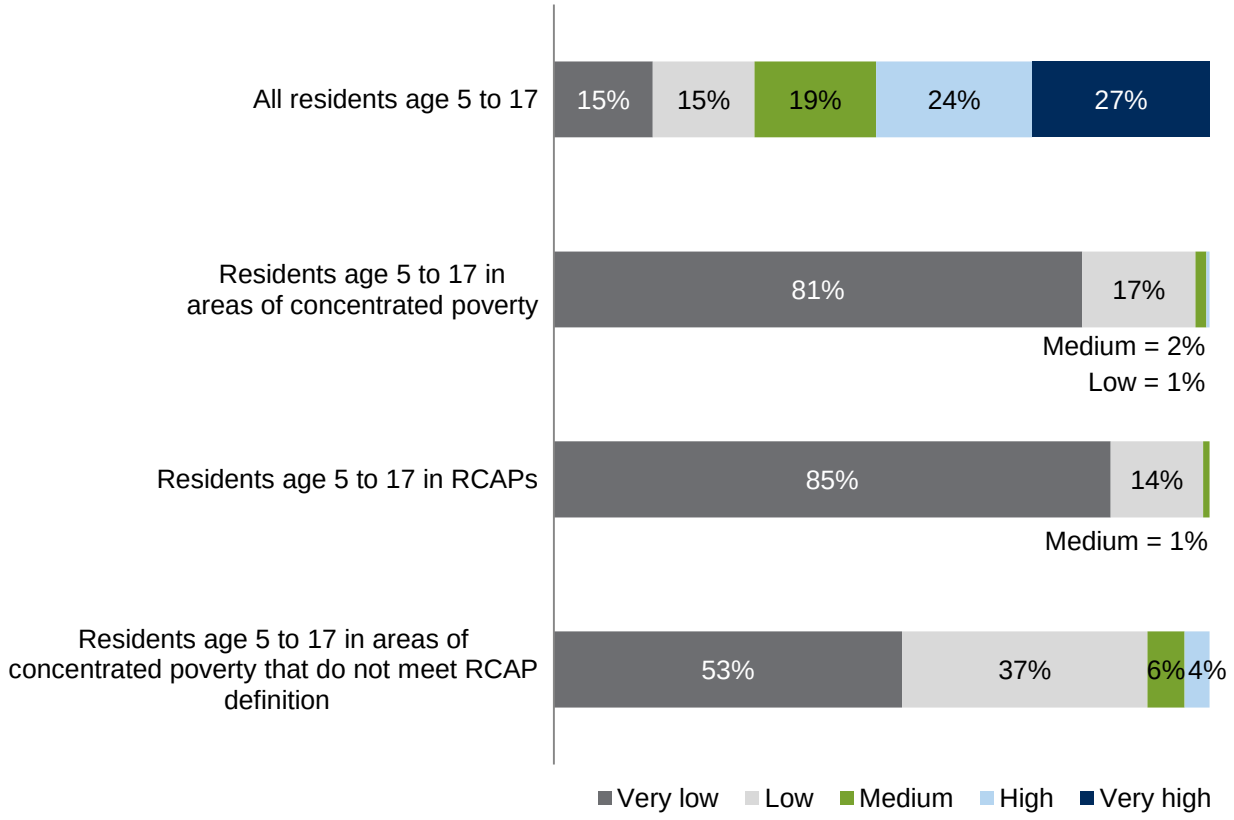
These characteristics of high-poverty schools impact the learning environment and undermine the educational outcomes of the students. As a result, students attending high-poverty schools have lower test scores, lower graduations rates, lower college attendance rates, and lower earnings later in life.[7] Students of color disproportionately suffer from these disadvantages as they are more likely to attend high-poverty schools than their white counterparts. One recent study finds that students of color in the Twin Cities region are more than five times as likely to attend high-poverty schools as white students.[8]

Figure 6.11 illustrates the degree to which living in areas of concentrated poverty limits the access of school-age residents to high-performing schools. The place-based disparities in school performance are striking for the school-age residents who live in areas of concentrated poverty, especially in RCAPs. An overwhelming 85% of the school-age residents of RCAPs live in areas with very-low-performing public schools and an additional 14% live in areas with low-performing schools. Only 1% of school-age residents of RCAPs live in areas with medium-performing schools or better. In contrast, only 30% of the region's school-age residents attend low- or very-low-performing schools. High poverty places that are not yet RCAPs fare better than those in RCAPs, once again suggesting that race and ethnicity—in addition to poverty—is a factor in access to quality schools.

6.11 Access to quality schools by place of residence



Source: Cluster analysis performed by Institute for Metropolitan Opportunity staff, informed by Fair Housing Equity and Assessment Data and Mapping Team, and analyzed by Metropolitan Council staff; American Community Survey, 2007-2011.

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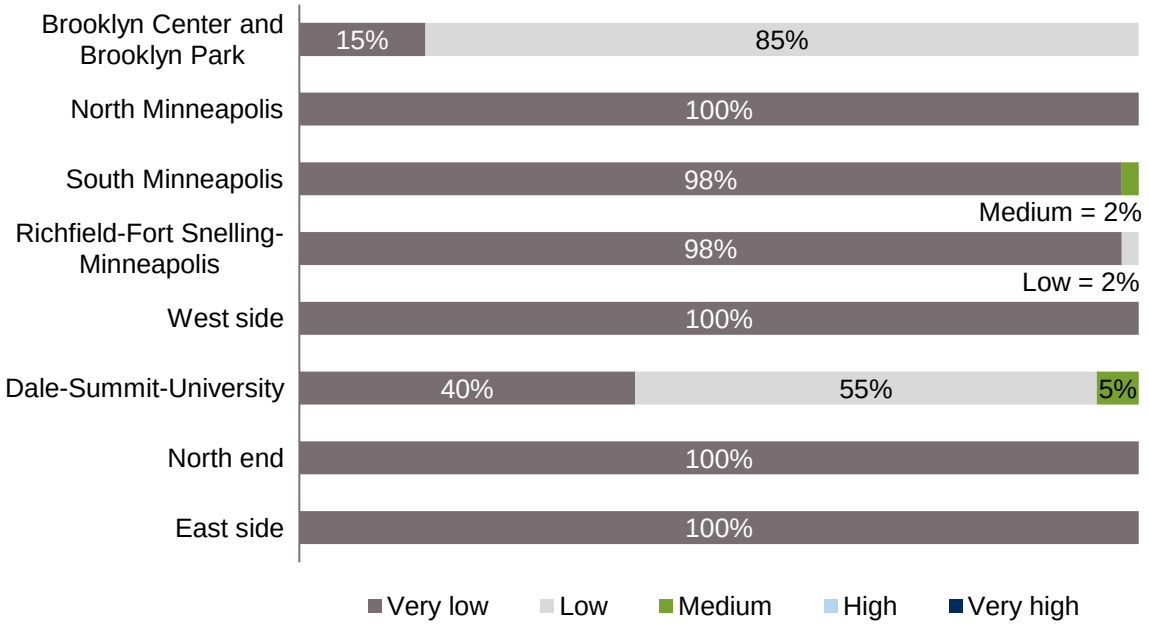
RCAPs in North and South Minneapolis and the East Side of Saint Paul have some of the region's lowest-performing schools. While suburban RCAPs in Brooklyn Park and Brooklyn Center have access to schools that perform slightly better than their urban counterparts, the overall performance of these schools remain relatively low (Figure 6.12).

6.12 Access to quality schools by RCAP community



Source: Cluster analysis performed by Institute for Metropolitan Opportunity staff, informed by Fair Housing Equity and Assessment Data and Mapping Team, and analyzed by Metropolitan Council staff; American Community Survey, 2007-2011.

Map 6.F illustrates the geography of school performance and the distribution of school-age residents of color. Map 6.F shows that schools with the lowest test scores and graduation rates are primarily in Minneapolis and Saint Paul and, to a lesser extent, some adjacent suburban areas of the region. Suburban communities to the west and south of Minneapolis and to the northeast of Saint Paul have some of the highest-performing schools in the region. Since most of the region's school-age residents of color live in the region's core, where schools with the lowest test scores and graduation rates are, students of color disproportionately attend low-performing schools.

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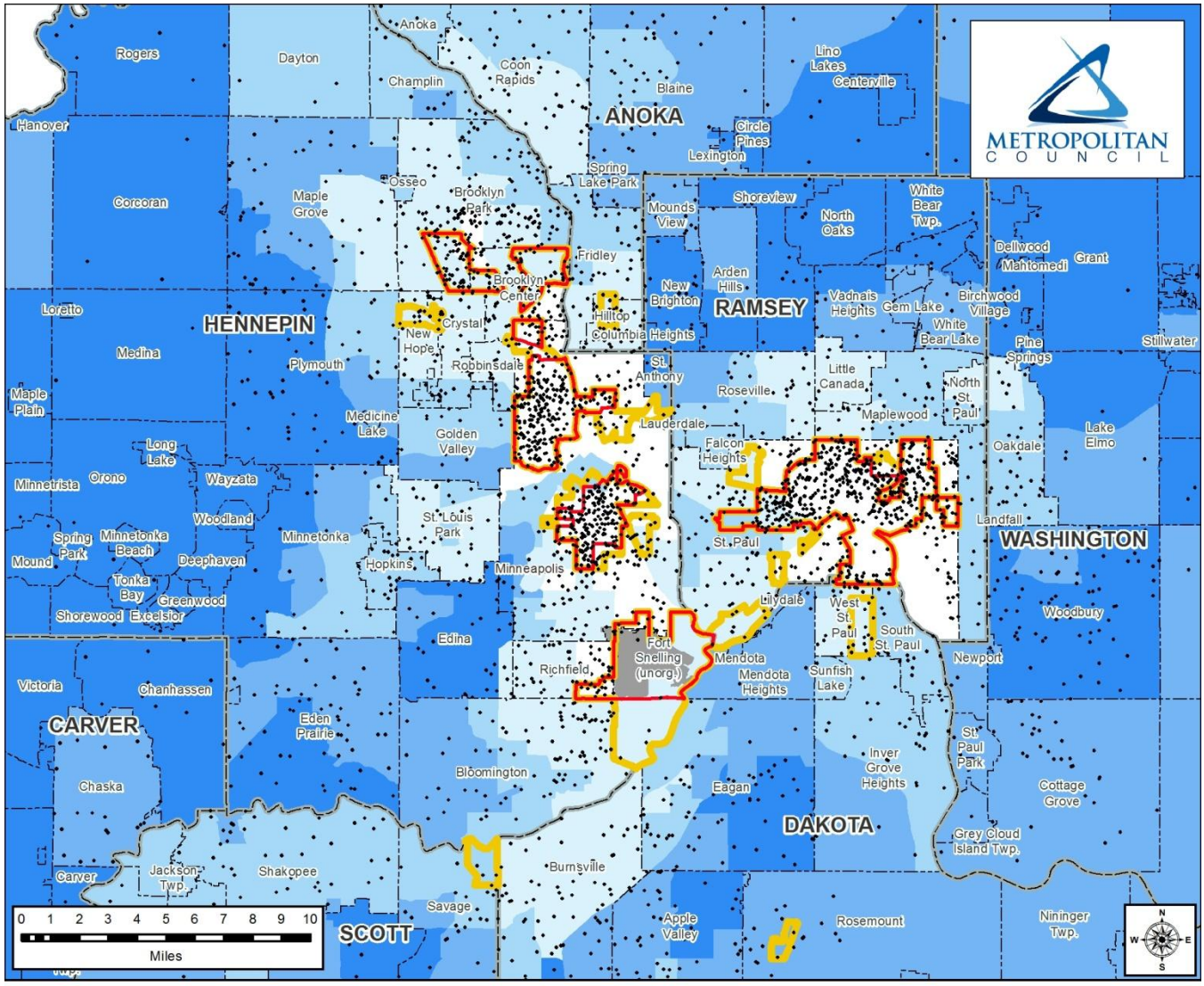
Map 6.F Access to quality schools and school-age residents of color



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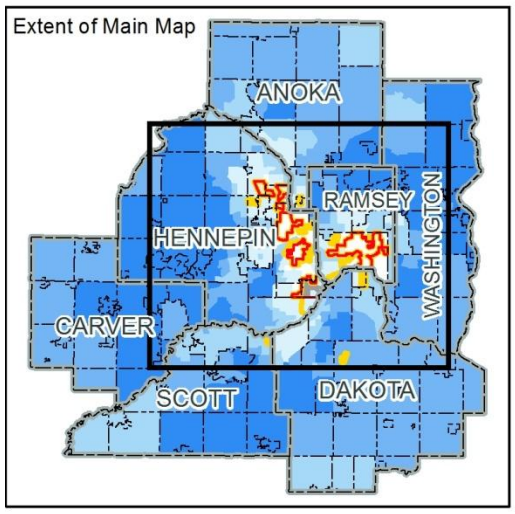

Children of Color, Ages 5 to 17, 2010

- 1 Dot = 50
- County Boundaries
- City and Township Boundaries
- RCAP (40% Poverty and 50% People of Color)
- Area of Concentrated Poverty (40% Poverty)

Access to Quality Schools

- Very Low
- Low
- Medium
- High
- Very High
- Minneapolis-St. Paul Int'l Airport

Source: Population from U.S. Census Bureau, Decennial Census, 2010; School data from Minnesota Department of Education, 2011-2012; RCAPs and Areas of Concentrated Poverty as defined by Metropolitan Council on March 6, 2013; Cluster analysis by Institute on Metropolitan Opportunity, informed by the Fair Housing and Equity Assessment Data and Mapping Team.

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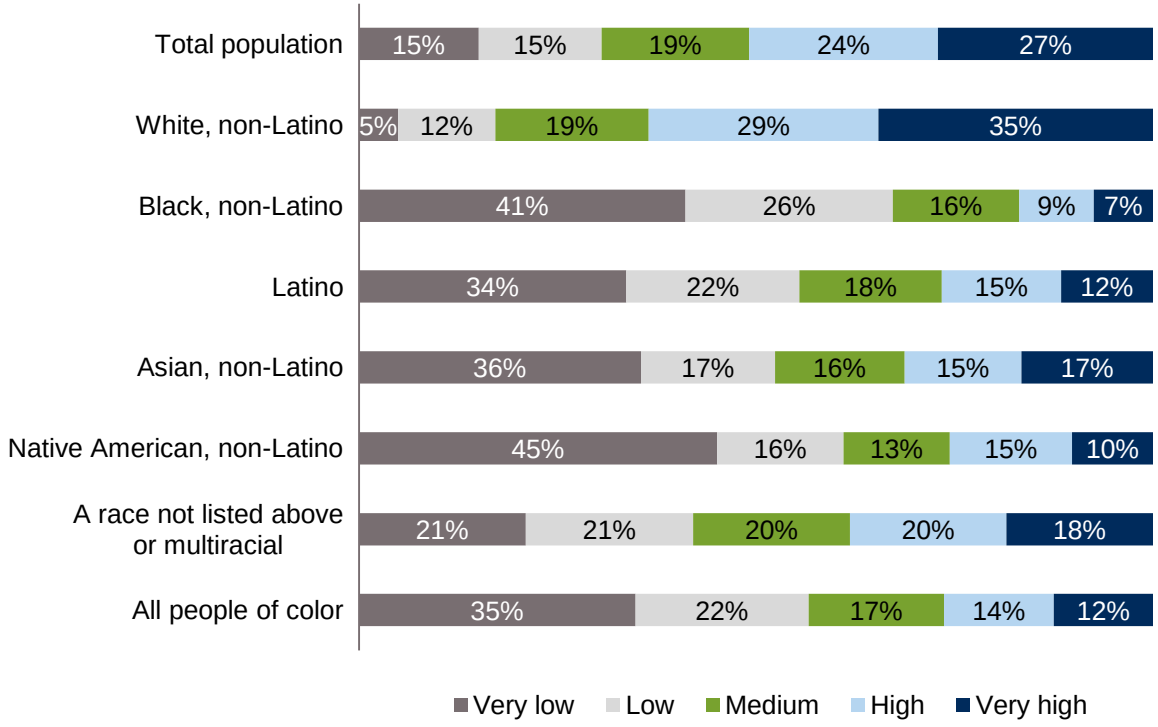
Figure 6.13 reveals substantial racial and ethnic disparities in access to good schools. While 57% of school-age residents of color live in communities with low- or very-low-performing schools, only 17% of the white residents are located in these communities. Overall, nearly two-thirds of the metro's white school-age residents live in communities with high- or very-high-performing schools, in contrast to about one-quarter of school-age residents of color. Lack of access to quality schools is a problem for blacks and Native Americans in particular; 67% of black and 61% of Latino school-age residents live in communities with low- or very-low-performing schools. Significant racial and ethnic disparities exist in terms of access to high- or very-high-performing schools as well. For instance, 64% of the white school-age students live in proximity to high- and very-high-performing schools, while only 16% of black school-age residents do.

6.13 Access to quality schools by race and ethnicity of school-age residents in the Twin Cities region



Source: Cluster analysis performed by Institute for Metropolitan Opportunity staff, informed by Fair Housing Equity and Assessment Data and Mapping Team, and analyzed by Metropolitan Council staff; American Community Survey, 2007-2011.

Exposure to Crime

People assess the safety of neighborhoods in deciding where to live. In a 2011 survey conducted for Minnesota Housing, 85% of respondents said that "having a low crime rate" was "critically important" for their choice of housing location—the highest of any factor reported.[9] "Low crime rate" was the top factor identified across all categories—including homeowners and renters as well as among low- and moderate-income survey respondents. Living in neighborhoods plagued with consistently high crime rates may lead to fear, anxiety over personal safety and stress. Studies show that exposure to traumatic crime leads to post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) among victims—at rates comparable to war veterans.[10] Higher crime rates may also discourage retail establishments from locating in an area and may increase property insurance costs.

Safety and crime were topics of universal concern among voucher holders, emerging in every roundtable discussion. When asked why they chose their particular neighborhood, many residents indicated safety or low crime was an important factor:

> *"Avoiding violence is the most important thing to me."*
>
> *"Where I live now is not what I wanted. There are too many disturbances involving police."*
>
> *"I choose a place where it is quiet and there is not a lot of crime. It's peaceful."*
>
> *"I chose my area because of low crime and location for being close to school and other family owned businesses.I live in Minnetonka near the high school. Very community-oriented."*

Voucher holders with children were particularly interested in choosing a safe neighborhood:

> *"I choose safety over education. I have an 11-year old son."*
>
> *"A good community to raise children—a neighborhood without violence that has values, a place where people want to get an education and not stand on the corner."*
>
> *"As a single mom, I ask myself, 'Does this neighborhood feel safe? Look safe?'"*
>
> *"Everyone said my son would get killed moving here (closer to the cities) from rural Minnesota 25 years ago. But I chose an area I thought was safe, where I had friends and knew people."*
>
> *"Safety. I lived here for 50 years. I have raised my kids here. Crime is not an issue."*
>
> *"In Lakeville, there was a better education system. I didn't have the worries of my son wearing the right color. Just peace of mind for a black male, and the mother of a black male."*
>
> *"Safety. My kids have moved since then. But for me now, I am attending school and I wanted to attend a good school that is safe."*

Perceptions of safety differed somewhat among the participants and they had different opinions on the report's assessment of crime:

> *"I lived in Saint Paul but I chose to move to White Bear. Quieter; more stores; less crime."*
>
> *"I pretty much agree with what what you're saying. There is more crime in town. I choose to live downtown because I don't drive. It pretty much sucks for my son."*

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> *"I don't like living in Saint Paul. It doesn't feel safe."*
>
> *" They say suburbs are better for crime etc. I don't believe it. I have lived in the suburbs 21 years. It is quieter not safer in suburbs and more scary; no better. Guy murdered his wife out there. This is my first time living in the city."*
>
> *"There is lower crime in the suburbs but there is crime—drugs, meth labs—things you don't see."*
>
> *"In a manicured neighborhood, it is more 'hidden' crime."*

Exposure to crime varies quite a bit from community to community in the Twin Cities region.[vii] Yet, areas of concentrated poverty, regardless of their racial composition, tend to have higher crime rates. Figure 6.14 presents levels of exposure to crime for residents living in different types of communities. It shows that 77% of the residents living in areas of concentrated poverty are exposed to high or very high crime, compared to 35% of residents of the region. The corresponding figures for RCAPs and other areas of concentrated poverty that are not RCAPs, are 77% and 76%, respectively.

[vii] It is important to note a number of limitations associated with the safety measure used in this report. First, safety is measured by using census-tract level crime rates for 2010. This single-year measure of safety might not capture the safety of communities accurately especially when there are unusual deviations from the norm in 2010. Averaging multiple years of crime rates for each census tract would improve the accuracy of this safety measure significantly. Within the limited time frame of this report, however, the Council staff was unable to gather crime data for multiple years. Future analysis of safety should use a more robust measurement that is based on multiple years of crime data. Second, safety as a concept involves more than exposure to crime. A more comprehensive measure of safety should include, for instance, exposure to traffic-related accidents by various modes of transportation such as automobiles and bicycles. Further analysis should explore data sources for death and injury rates associated with automobile and bicycle accidents.

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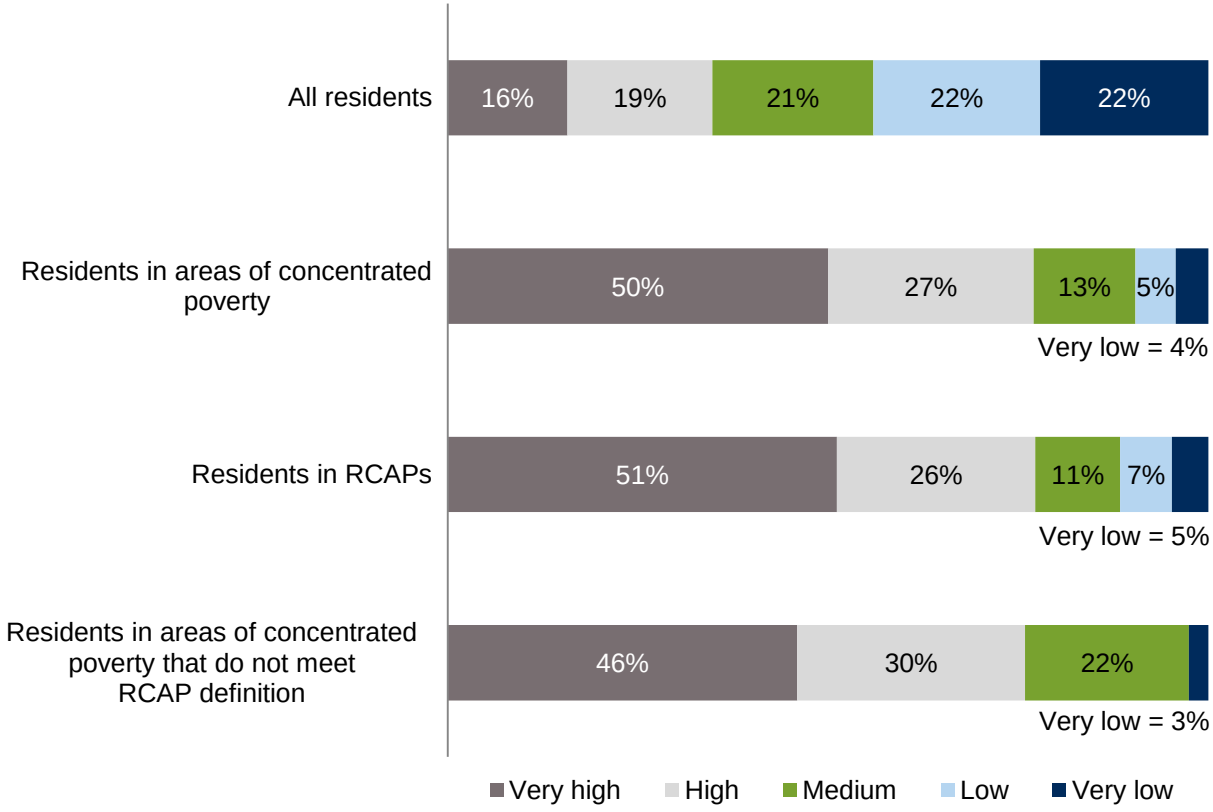
6.14 Exposure to crime by place of residence



Source: Cluster analysis performed by Institute for Metropolitan Opportunity staff, informed by Fair Housing Equity and Assessment Data and Mapping Team, and analyzed by Metropolitan Council staff; American Community Survey, 2007-2011.

However, exposure to crime varied from one RCAP to another. Overall, residents of suburban RCAPs were less exposed to crime than those living in urban RCAPs, except for the West Side RCAP. Figure 6.15 shows, for instance, that 30% of the residents in the Brooklyn Center and Brooklyn Park RCAP and 36% of those living in the Richfield-Fort Snelling-Minneapolis RCAP had high or very high exposure to crime. In contrast, virtually all residents living in the North Minneapolis, Dale-Summit-University, North End RCAPs and 95% of the residents living in the South Minneapolis RCAP were exposed to similar levels of crime. The West Side RCAP was exceptional among the urban RCAPs in that 78% of its residents had low exposure to crime while rest of the residents experienced very high exposure to crime. Meanwhile, more than half of the East Side RCAP residents had high or very high exposure to crime.

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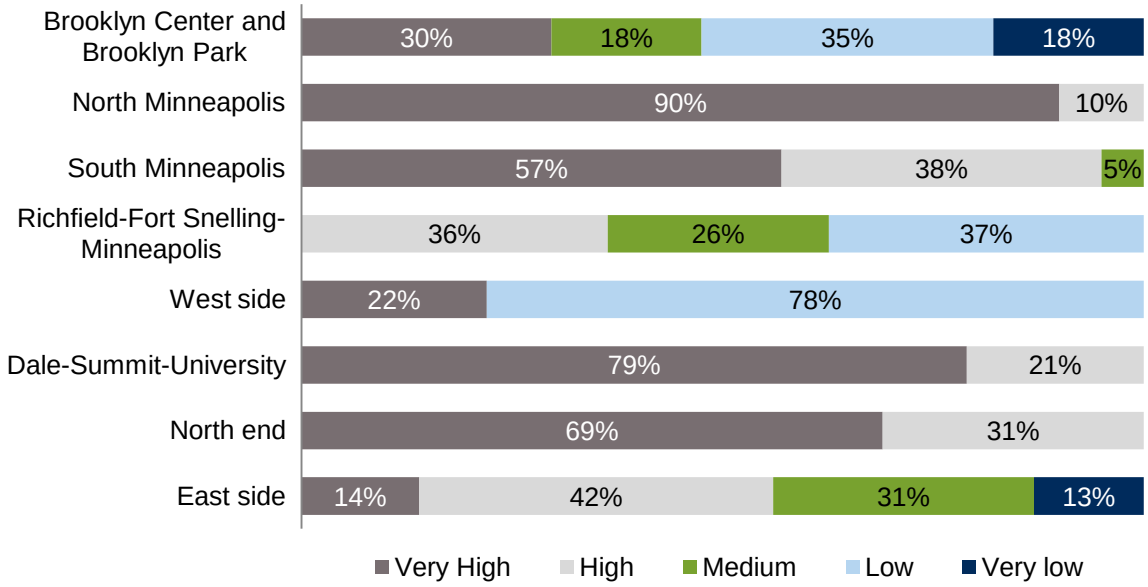
6.15 Exposure to crime by RCAP community



Source: Cluster analysis performed by Institute for Metropolitan Opportunity staff, informed by Fair Housing Equity and Assessment Data and Mapping Team, and analyzed by Metropolitan Council staff; American Community Survey, 2007-2011.

Map 6.G displays a patchwork of crime rates without a clear geographic pattern. However, the map also shows that residents of color in the region live in areas where they are exposed to higher levels of crime.

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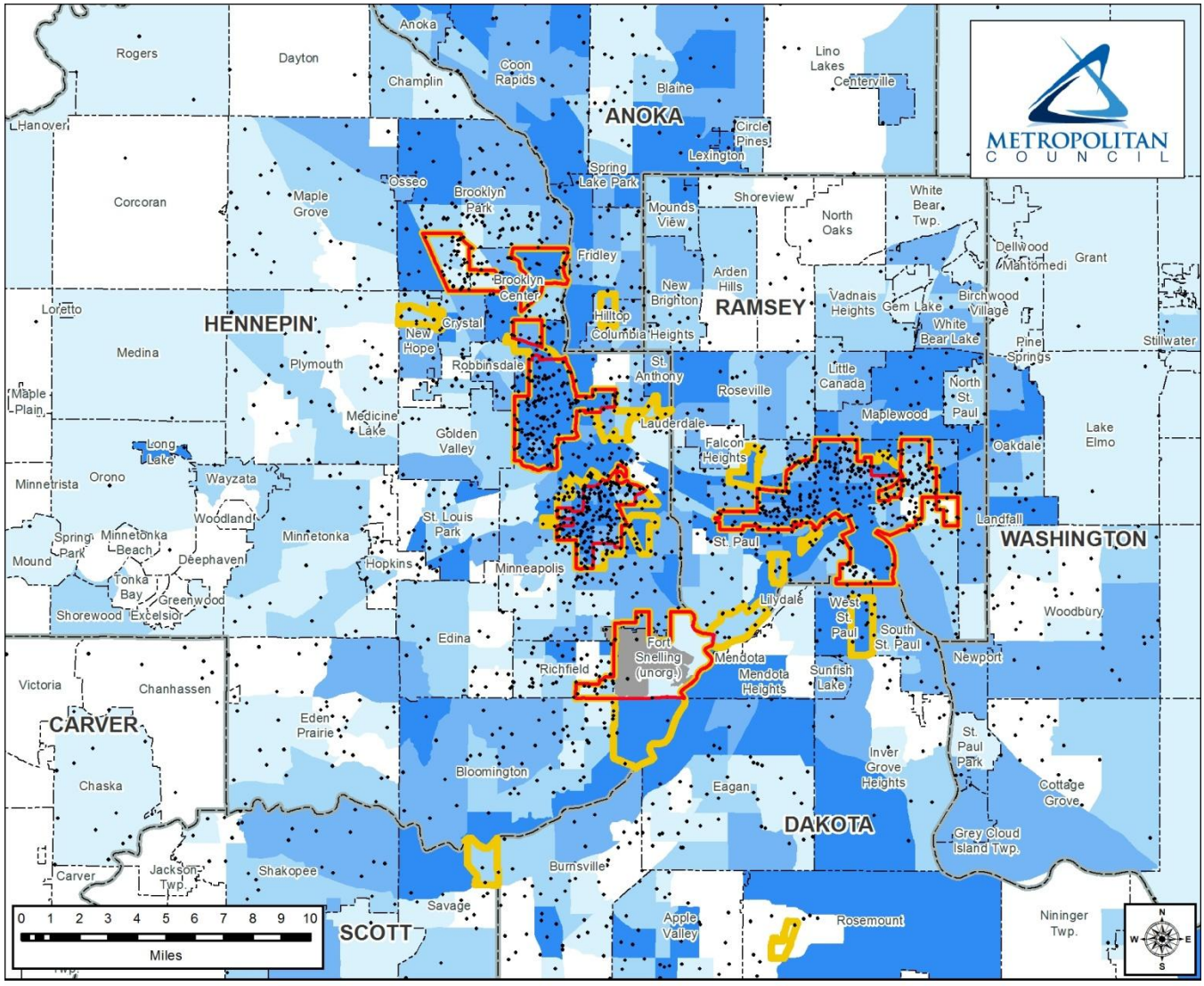
Map 6.G Exposure to crime and residents of color



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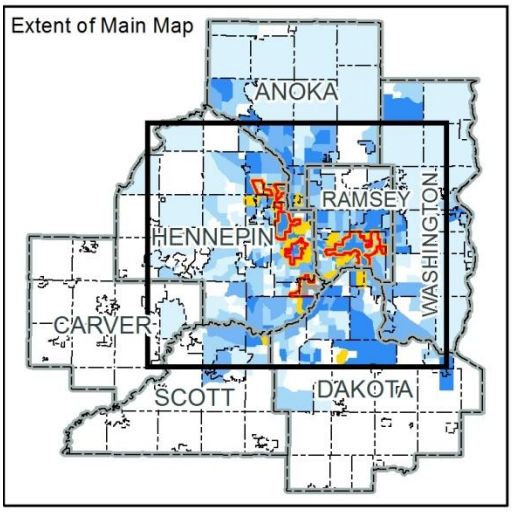

People of Color, 2010

- 1 Dot = 300
- County Boundaries
- City and Township Boundaries
- RCAP (40% Poverty and 50% People of Color)
- Area of Concentrated Poverty (40% Poverty)
- Minneapolis-St. Paul Int'l

Exposure to Crime

- Very High
- High
- Medium
- Low
- Very Low

Source: Population from U.S. Census Bureau, Decennial Census, 2010; Crime data from LOGIS (Local Government Information Systems) consortium and the FBI's Uniform Crime Report, 2012; RCAPs and Areas of Concentrated Poverty as defined by Metropolitan Council on March 6, 2013; Cluster analysis by Institute on Metropolitan Opportunity, informed by the Fair Housing and Equity Assessment Data and Mapping Team.

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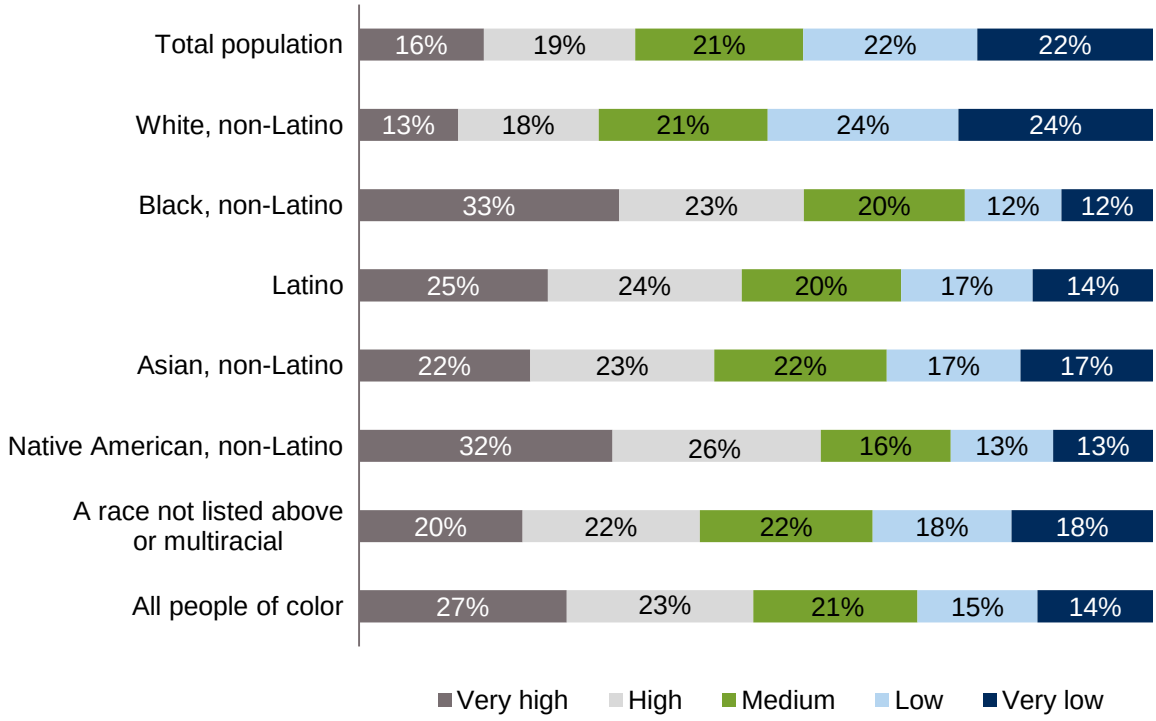
Figure 6.16 shows that residents of color suffer from crime disproportionately. Half of the region's people of color reside in communities with high or very high exposure to crime in contrast to 31% of white residents. High exposure to crime particularly hurts Native American and black residents, 58% and 56% of whom are located in places with high or very high crime levels, respectively. Meanwhile, 49% of Latinos and 45% Asians reside in communities with the same characteristics.

6.16 Exposure to crime by race and ethnicity of residents in the Twin Cities region



Source: Cluster analysis performed by Institute for Metropolitan Opportunity staff, informed by Fair Housing Equity and Assessment Data and Mapping Team, and analyzed by Metropolitan Council staff; American Community Survey, 2007-2011.

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Exposure to environmental hazards

Exposure to environmental hazards can create serious health impacts and diminish the quality of life. Environmental hazards include contaminated sites, landfills, and toxic facilities—many of which result from former industrial uses—as well as air pollutants around highways. The spatial pattern of exposure to such hazards mostly reflects the region's industrial landscape and the footprint of its transportation networks. Since housing near polluted areas and close to heavy traffic flows tends to be cheaper, it is not surprising that low-income residents live in places with high or very high exposure to environmental hazards. Section 8 voucher holders who participated in the roundtable discussions made several references to exposure to toxic environments.[viii] One participant, for instance, offered the following comment:

> *"I always think about it and wonder why do they build houses for the poor next to the railroad tracks and pollutants? If they put us in an environment not safe and we get sick, we are behind [in] everything."*

Residents in areas of concentrated poverty experience much higher rates of exposure to environmental hazards than do other residents. As Figure 6.17 shows, 67% of residents in high-poverty areas live with high or very high exposure to environmental hazards, while just 34% of all residents are exposed to compromised environments. Residents of RCAPs tend to be less exposed to environmental hazards than do residents of other high poverty areas.

[viii] Many of the participants complained about mold in their rented units. This report focuses on place-based environmental hazards that are present in neighborhoods rather than the health hazards that are present in housing units. Such domestic health hazards are a serious concern for low-income households given the limited abatement of toxins such as lead and mold in rental units. Future studies of exposure to environmental hazards should explore this common type of exposure to toxins, which are especially harmful for children.

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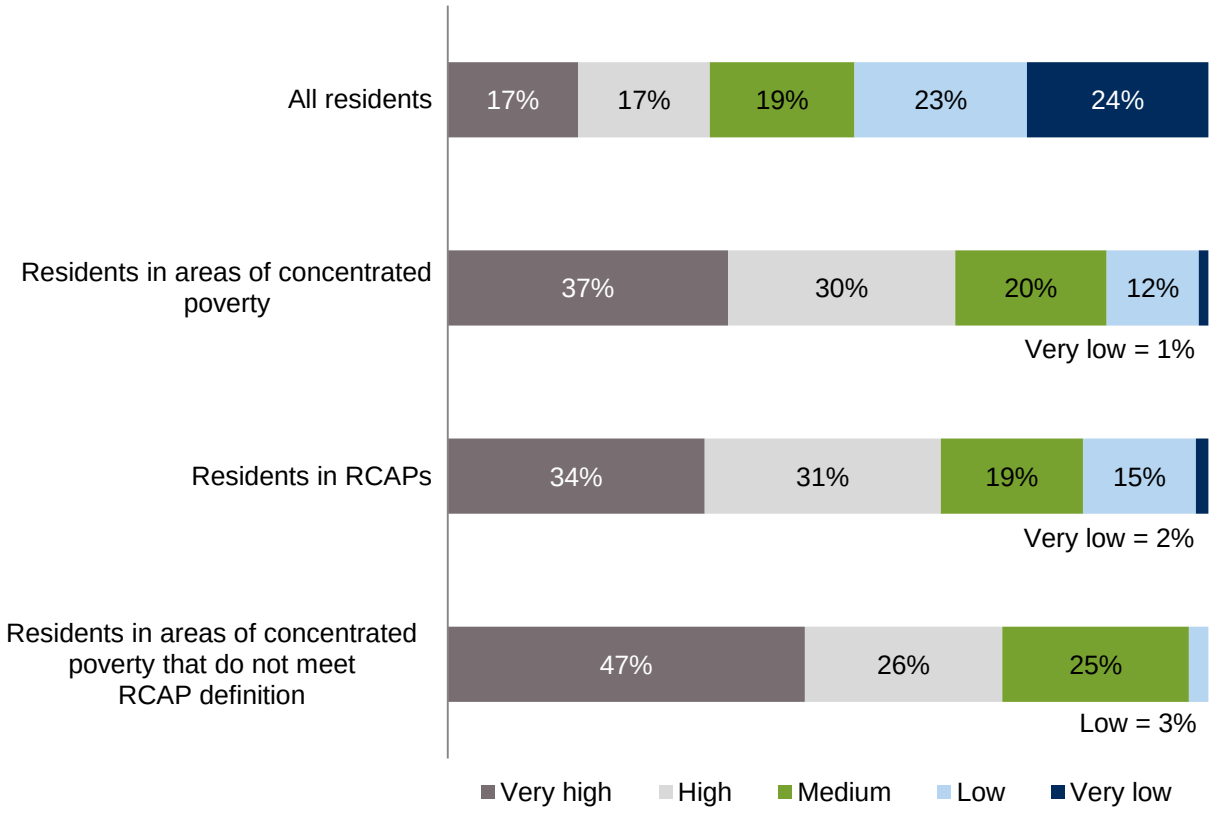
6.17 Exposure to environmental hazards by place of residence



Source: Cluster analysis performed by Institute for Metropolitan Opportunity staff, informed by Fair Housing Equity and Assessment Data and Mapping Team, and analyzed by Metropolitan Council staff; American Community Survey, 2007-2011.

Exposure to environmental hazards was especially severe for the South Minneapolis RCAP residents, 93% of whom experienced high or very high exposure to these hazards. Figure 6.18 shows that residents of the North Minneapolis and Dale-Summit-University RCAPs were also exposed to considerable levels of environmental hazards. More than three-quarters of the residents in North Minneapolis and nearly two-third of the residents in Dale-Summit-University RCAPs experienced high or very high exposure to environmental hazards. In contrast, only 38% of East Side residents experienced similar levels of exposure.

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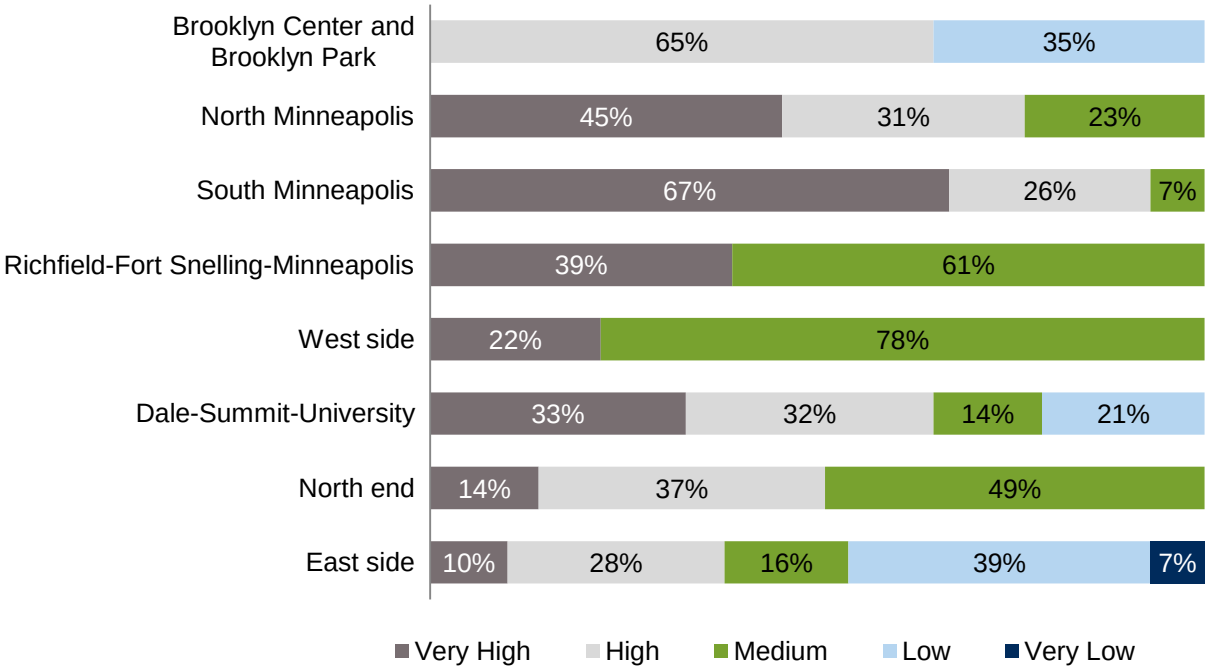
6.18 Exposure to environmental hazards by RCAP community



Source: Cluster analysis performed by Institute for Metropolitan Opportunity staff, informed by Fair Housing Equity and Assessment Data and Mapping Team, and analyzed by Metropolitan Council staff; American Community Survey, 2007-2011.

As discussed in Section Four, communities that evolved into RCAPs were historically located near manufacturing sites; Map 6.H reflects this historical legacy. The map shows that densely populated areas tend to have higher levels of exposure to environmental hazards. Yet, many suburban communities also have compromised areas, especially along the region's highways.

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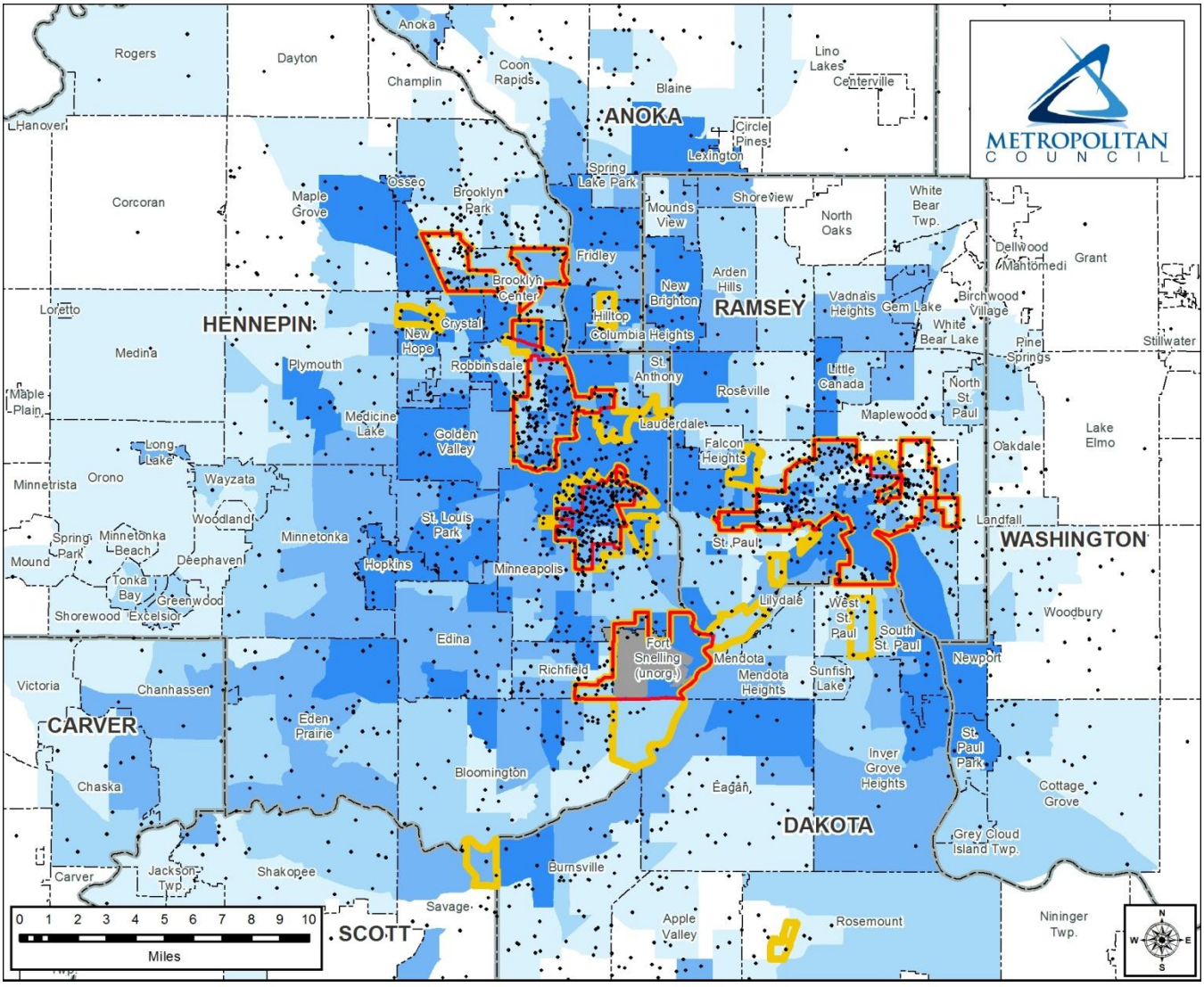
Map 6.H Exposure to environmental hazards and residents of color



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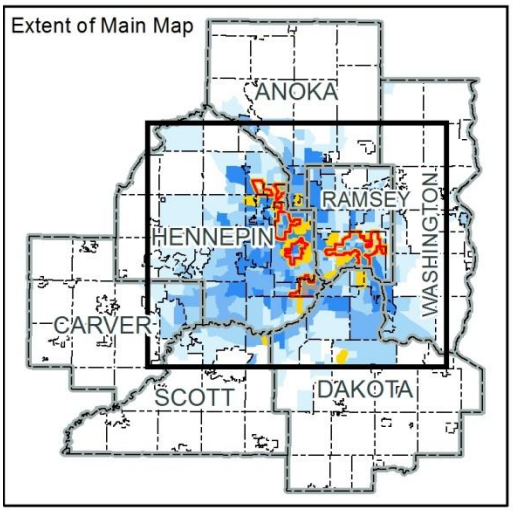

People of Color, 2010

- 1 Dot = 300

County Boundaries

City and Township Boundaries

RCAP (40% Poverty and 50% People of Color)

Area of Concentrated Poverty (40% Poverty)

Minneapolis-St. Paul Int'l Airport

Exposure to Environmental Hazards

- Very High
- High
- Medium
- Low
- Very Low

Source: Population from U.S. Census Bureau, Decennial Census, 2010; Environmental Hazards from EPA's Toxic Release Inventory, MPCA's "What's in My Neighborhood?" dataset, and Metropolitan Council's Generalized Land Use, 2010; RCAPs and Areas of Concentrated Poverty as defined by Metropolitan Council on March 6, 2013; Cluster analysis by Institute on Metropolitan Opportunity, informed by the Fair Housing and Equity Assessment Data and Mapping Team.

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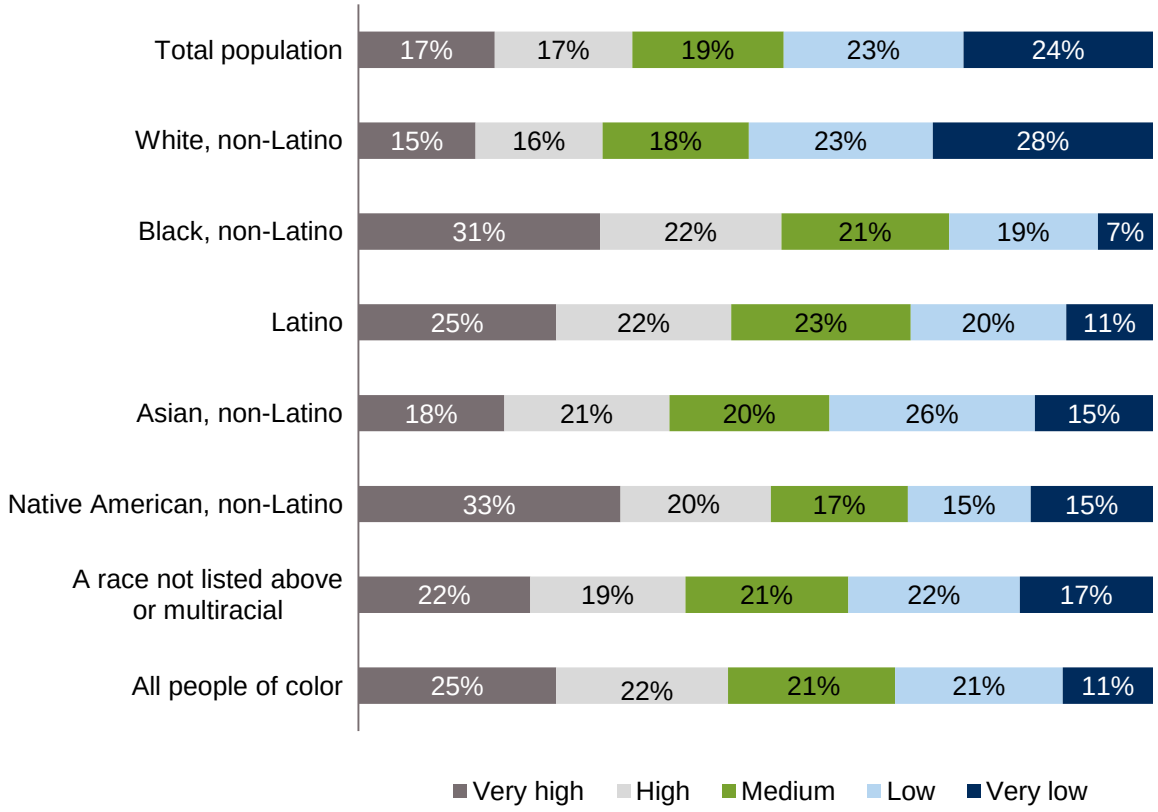
Since the region's residents of color are disproportionately located in relatively densely populated areas, they are more exposed to environmental hazards. Figure 6.19 reveals racial and ethnic disparities in exposure to pollutants. In the Twin Cities region, 34% of all residents live in areas which have high or very high exposure to environmental hazards. In contrast, 47% of the residents of color and 31% of the white residents live in highly- or very-highly polluted areas. Once again, Native American and black residents are most extensively impacted by exposure to pollutants: 53% of reside in highly or very highly polluted communities. Exposure rates to similarly polluted places for Latino and Asian residents are 47% and 39%, respectively. Similarly, while over half of the white people in the region live in places with low or very low exposure to environmental hazards, only one in three people of color live in such places.

6.19 Exposure to environmental hazards by race and ethnicity of residents in the Twin Cities region



Source: Cluster analysis performed by Institute for Metropolitan Opportunity staff, informed by Fair Housing Equity and Assessment Data and Mapping Team, and analyzed by Metropolitan Council staff; American Community Survey, 2007-2011.

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Access to social services and basic necessities

While education and employment help people move up the economic ladder, social services and basic necessities play a key role in their day-to-day lives. Grocery stores provide people access to healthier food than that available at convenience stores. Health care clinics, hospitals, and pharmacies treat illness and injury. Places of worship and social service sites offer assistance to those in need. Libraries and job training centers give people access to computers and help people research and find employment opportunities. Child care, particularly affordable child care, lets parents work. Not surprisingly, many of these services and necessities came up during the roundtable discussions with the Section 8 voucher holders.

Participants emphasized the importance of convenient access to basic necessities such as groceries and stores:

> *"(Participant from the yellow cluster) It's pretty decent where I stay at, I don't have complaints. I walk right out my building and there is the bus, restaurants and stores. It's right there."*
>
> *"Where I'm at is because there is a grocery store and drugstore. I have limited mobility. And it's near the bus line."*
>
> *"I get up at 5 am to get my bus to my volunteer work. But I do have access to stores, churches, etc. where I live."*
>
> *"Stores and restaurants are convenient."*
>
> *"I agree. Convenience."*
>
> *"Convenient location. Short walk to bus."*
>
> *"Access to grocery stores is good. Moving away from busy streets."*
>
> *"(Saint Paul) "I lived in Brooklyn Park. If you have a car, it's not bad for suburbs; but they shut down. Buses go out there but not as frequent. The train is coming. Now I live in Midway.I have grocery stores; I like the convenience of buses, stores etc. I have everything. I am near everything."*
>
> *"I like where I live. Everything is close. Close to groceries, stores, jobs etc. I like Saint Paul."*
>
> *"Grocery store."*
>
> *"Grocery store. Whenever I want to go, I have to call my friend."*
>
> *"I am close to grocery stores, clinics and the bus line should something happen to my vehicle."*
>
> *"(Brooklyn Park) Lived here for 19 years. The neighborhood changed a bit. Grocery stores. Daughter lives so far from the store that she needs to drive to the store. Am I going to need a ride everywhere I go? Will I need a bus? If my van died tomorrow, I don't have to panic. I work so I like to see the buses around."*
>
> *"Relocated from Michigan. My first time in an apartment complex. I'm happy with the location. My car broke down. So bus line is important. Library. Services."*

> *"Pharmacy. Library. School."*
>
> *"Closer to shopping malls."*
>
> *Close to clinic and pharmacy."*

Senior and disabled residents mentioned proximity to medical services as an important factor:

> *"Age appropriate services and safety. They got Y, medical places for senior citizens."*
>
> *"(Waconia) I use Metro Mobility. Access to services is most important because I can't drive."*
>
> *"I moved to Anoka area because of serious medical issues. I have to be near hospitals and clinics and have easy access. I was considering Brainerd/International Falls but they don't have what I need, the medical specialists."*
>
> *"I have a car. There are services but I am not interested in them. I moved to where I am because of the proximity to hospitals and health care clinics."*
>
> *"Transportation and service. I need to go to my doctor appointments. Transportation. Yes, I like to live in the yellow area maybe but I choose to live in the city."*

Those with children mentioned parks, day care facilities as well as recreation and community centers:

> *"I would like to see more community centers and public areas for kids. I am from East Side of Saint Paul and there is more access to better schools here but the sports are more expensive."*
>
> *"Add a category for kid-friendly parks, parks. I need to know where the amenities are at and not just schools. What apartment buildings have a community room? Some buildings have a community room, others do not."*
>
> *"There is a drop-off center for the children."*
>
> *"Affordable day care and day care for children with disabilities."*

The availability of social services and basic neccessities available to them was another important factor when choosing a place to live:

> *"(Roseville) I am in a green area and there are a lot of jobs, especially at the mall. There is a really good school. Roseville public schools are good. A lot of services out there too. We have a food shelf that is open daily, and services for seniors. Where I live is what I was looking for and I have access."*
>
> *"I wanted to stay in Anoka County because of the (social) services and resources. In Hennepin County the system was maxed. It's not just where things are. How functional are the services and systems? It's not just where they are. There is a fine line between too far out. Nature and presence of parks makes it (Anoka County) a nicer place to live too. My community feels like a community, and that's important—community gardens, farmers markets."*

> *"I live in Coon Rapids. I am used to the town I live in. I have always lived in this area. It has good access to a lot of things like a library and stores and you can get a lot of information about government assistance; they (county employees) can help you. My income is limited. I was a single parent, trying to make ends meet and attend school and received assistance through the County. Anoka County is good. The schools in this area are good, and they have sports and extracurricular activities for kids."*

> *"The further you move away from Minneapolis and Saint Paul the more they have as far as services go. I moved from Saint Paul to Hopkins. There are things, services and resources, in Hopkins that people in Saint Paul aren't aware of because you have to be that city's resident."*

> *"(Blaine) Limited homeless and family homeless shelters in this area."*

> *"Access to services and low crime rate. Wanted senior building where it is quiet. Needed rest. Can't drive anymore. Out in Waconia. Lost ability to drive and really needed social services. I loved it out there in Waconia. Very low crime. It was lovely by the lake. Wanted to feel safe in the cities. Had no idea where to go and wanted a senior building where it was quiet. I use Metro Mobility. Access to services is most important because I can't drive. I just found out other transportation options from another attendee that I did not know existed."*

In addition, participants brought up the importance of social networks in making decisions about where to live, expressing the importance of proximity to family, friends and churches:[ix]

> *"I had to live in a place one year and I wanted to be near church and family."*

> *"Closer to my family."*

> *"My friends are in North Minneapolis. It is easy for them to get to me. I also wanted to live in a senior place."*

> *"I also wanted to live downtown Chaska where it is close to my church and my mom's house."*

> *"I live in Eden Prairie close to church and like the community. I love being close to Eden Prairie Center."*

> *"In Brooklyn Park, I have a church nearby, my child's school and a fire station. It is a good environment for the kids. It's safe for children. The police come around and talk to children, the church is involved with them; hosts activities."*

> *"Family and relatives."*

> *"Everything is closeby. Relatives. School. Housing is cheaper in the city."*

Others expressed specific preferences about their communities:

> *"Culture best. Out in suburbs, different standards of living. If I sit out front and laugh too loud, I don't want to be racially profiled. Education and culture."*

[ix] The importance of social networks in deciding where to live was not captured in the cluster analysis because of the difficulty of measuring proximity to these networks.

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> *"Education and community. It is a diverse place."*

> *"Community organization. A community that tries to improve itself. There is communication with residents, and people build relationships. We can ask each other questions."*

Some participants disagreed with the findings of the cluster analysis and the opportunity maps:

> *"It's 10 miles away to get to Rainbow. My bus service runs only every 45 minutes. You have to have a bike or car. After 8pm at night you're stranded. I live in Saint Louis Park. The map doesn't tell the story."*

> *"(Roseville) I have no church or parks. The bus service is limited, and there is none on Sundays. I have to walk far or take three buses or go into a downtown area. I live at Larpenteur and Snelling. They kept cutting off the bus service. It doesn't feel like green (cluster); it's like blue."*

> *"(Roseville) I am in a green area and there are a lot of jobs especially at the mall. There is a really good school. Roseville public schools are good. A lot of services out there too. We have food shelf that is open daily, and services for seniors. Where I live is what I was looking for and I have access."*

> *"(Saint Paul) I choose to live downtown because I don't drive. It pretty much sucks for my son. There needs to be a good grocery store; Dollar Tree. Not Lund's. I can't afford to shop at Lund's. Even Walgreen's a rip off. Something like Dollar Tree."*

The spatial pattern of access to social services and basic necessities generally mirrors the overall density of the Twin Cities region. The location of publicly operated services and necessities—social service sites, libraries, job training centers—aligns with where the customers most likely to need or use the services live. Nonprofit service providers and private-sector entities—including health care clinics, hospitals, pharmacies and grocery stores—locate in proximity to their target customers. As a result, the metro's RCAPs in general have high or very high access to these resources.

Residents of areas of concentrated poverty live in closer proximity to social services and basic necessities than a typical resident in the region does. Fully 80% of residents in high poverty areas have high or very high physical access to these resources, while just 33% of all residents do. All RCAP residents live in places with at least medium access to social services and basic necessities, compared with 53% of residents of the region as a whole (Figure 6.20).

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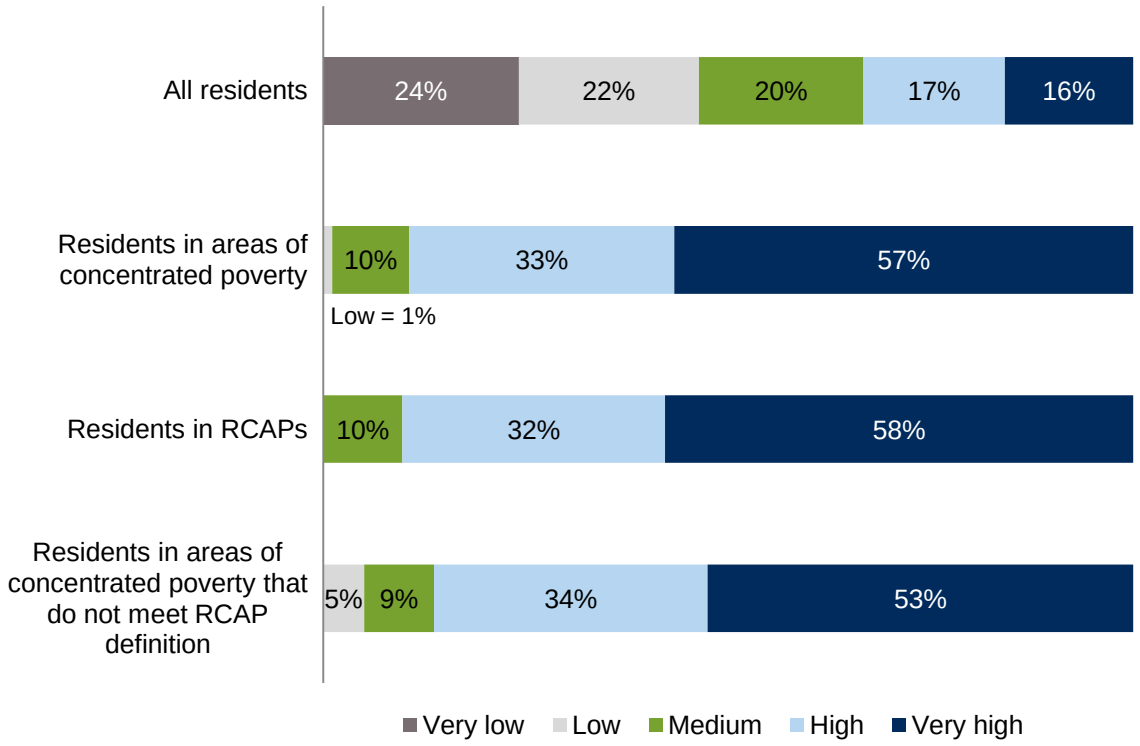
6.20 Access to services and necessities by place of residence



Source: Cluster analysis performed by Institute for Metropolitan Opportunity staff, informed by Fair Housing Equity and Assessment Data and Mapping Team, and analyzed by Metropolitan Council staff; American Community Survey, 2007-2011.

Access to social services and basic necessities is especially high in South Minneapolis, Dale-Summit-University and North End RCAPs. Virtually all of the residents in these RCAPs have very high physical access to these resources. Similarly, in North Minneapolis, all of the residents benefit from high or very high proximity to social services and basic necessities. Meanwhile, all of the residents living in the Richfield-Fort Snelling-Minneapolis RCAP and 97% of the residents in the West Side RCAP live in high proximity to social services and basic necessities. In contrast, residents living in the Brooklyn Center and Brooklyn Park RCAPs have relatively limited physical access; 85% of the residents live in medium proximity to these sources, while 15% reside in place with high proximity (Figure 6.21).

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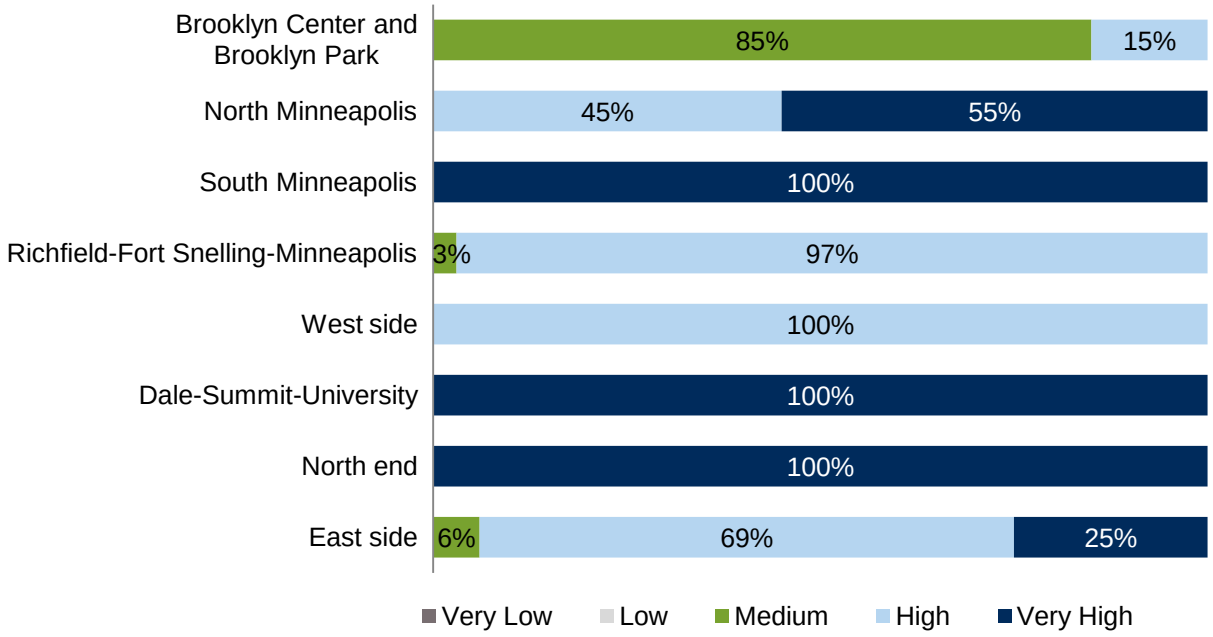
6.21 Access to services and necessities by RCAP community



Source: Cluster analysis performed by Institute for Metropolitan Opportunity staff, informed by Fair Housing Equity and Assessment Data and Mapping Team, and analyzed by Metropolitan Council staff; American Community Survey, 2007-2011.

Map 6.I shows that areas in the region's core have physical access to more social services and basic necessities than areas on the fringe because of the benefits of cumulative accessibility. For instance, a central location allows access to multiple grocery stores while a more distant location may be in proximity to only one. As Map 6.I demonstrates, Minneapolis and Saint Paul and their surrounding areas have the highest rankings while proximity to these resources declines as one moves toward the outer rim of the metro.

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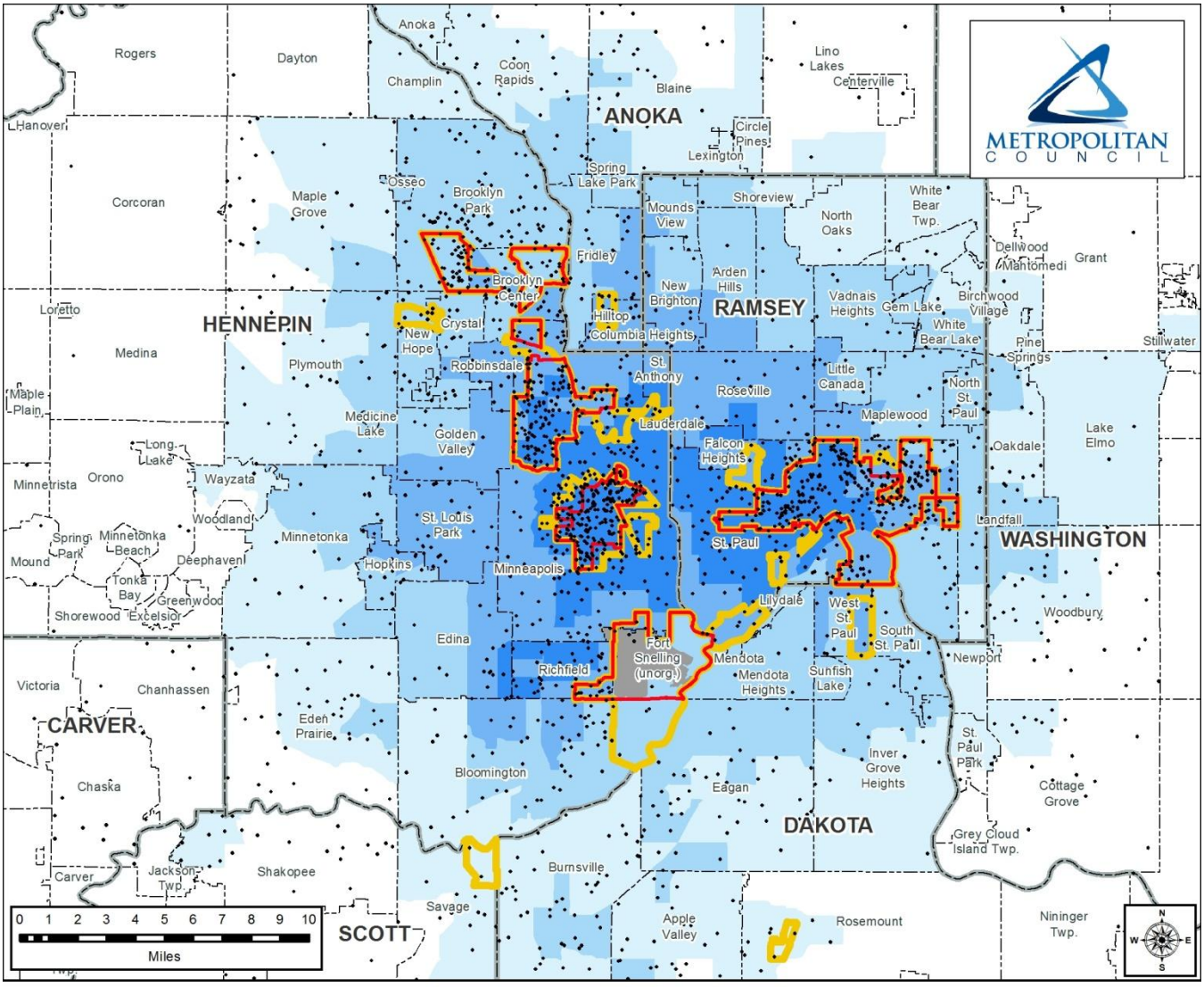
Map 6.I Access to services and necessities and residents of color



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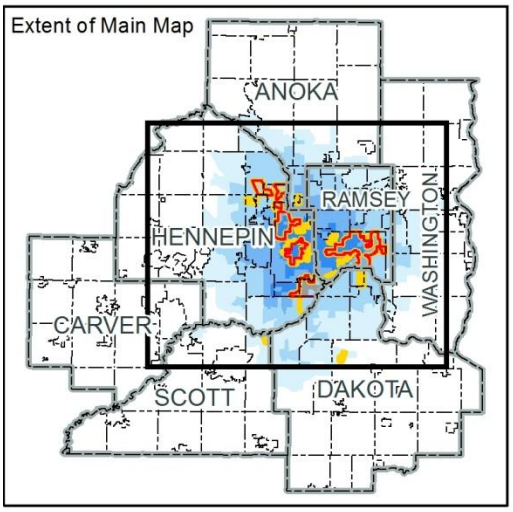

People of Color, 2010

- 1 Dot = 300
- County Boundaries
- City and Township Boundaries
- RCAP (40% Poverty and 50% People of Color)
- Area of Concentrated Poverty (40% Poverty)
- Minneapolis-St. Paul Int'l

Access to Social Services and Basic Necessities

- Very Low
- Low
- Medium
- High
- Very High

Source: Population from U.S. Census Bureau, Decennial Census, 2010; Services and Necessities data from the Minnesota Child Care Resource and Referral Network, U.S. Department of Agriculture Food and Nutrition Services, Minnesota Public Libraries website, Minnesota Department of Health, Minnesota Council of Nonprofits, Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development, and the Metropolitan Council's Landmark Dataset, all 2012; RCAPs and Areas of Concentrated Poverty as defined by Metropolitan Council on March 6, 2013; Cluster analysis by Institute on Metropolitan Opportunity, informed by the Fair Housing and Equity Assessment Data and Mapping Team.

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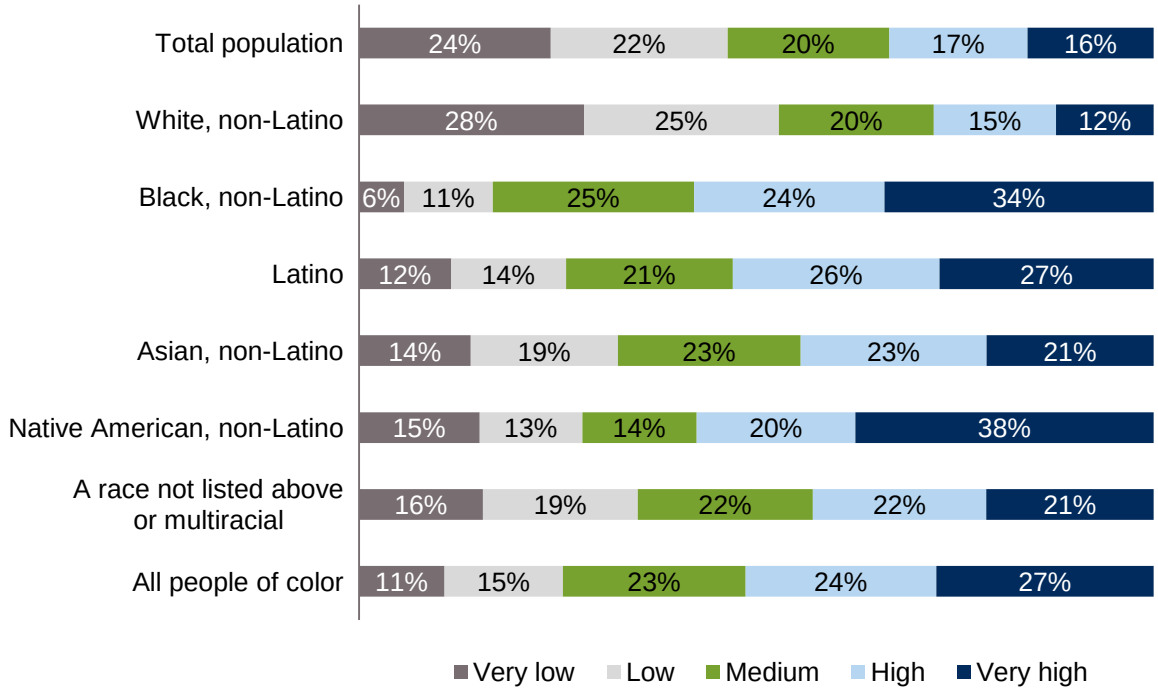
Since residents of color are concentrated in the region's core, they tend to have higher physical access to social services and basic necessities. Figure 6.22 shows that 51% of people of color live in communities with high or very high access, as opposed to 27% of whites. Physical access to these resources is especially high among Native Americans and blacks, 58% of whom live in high- or very high-access areas. The share of Latino and Asian residents in high- or very high-access communities is 53% and 44%, respectively.

Conversely, 46% of the metro's residents live in communities with low or very low access to social services and basic necessities. In comparison, 53% of whites and only 26% of people of color live in low- or very low-access communities. Yet, 33% of Asians, 26% of Latinos and 28% of Native Americans still live in communities with low- or very low-access to social services and basic necessities.

6.22 Access to services and necessities by race and ethnicity of residents in the Twin Cities region



Source: Cluster analysis performed by Institute for Metropolitan Opportunity staff, informed by Fair Housing Equity and Assessment Data and Mapping Team, and analyzed by Metropolitan Council staff; American Community Survey, 2007-2011.

Summary of access to opportunity

Overall, a cluster-based analysis of opportunity reveals that different parts of the region have varying levels of access to different kinds of opportunities. This has important equity implications in terms of access to opportunities because there are systematic differences in where residents of color and white residents live. For instance, if none of the RCAP residents live in the blue cluster, they cannot attend high-performing schools, live in safe neighborhoods with low crime rates and in communities with low

exposure to pollutants. These place-based differences create important racial and ethnic disparities in accessing opportunities that contribute to racial and ethnic inequalities in the region.

These inequalities can only be addressed by changing the uneven landscape of opportunity in ways that enhance opportunity for all residents. On the one hand, for instance, the residential choices of people of color living in RCAPs could be expanded so that they can exercise their choice to live in the blue cluster if they choose to do so. On the other hand, RCAP residents who would like to remain in their green- and yellow-cluster communities should be able to enjoy the same types of opportunities that the blue cluster communities offer.

Public policies and investments play a significant role in changing and remaking the region's landscape of opportunity in order to enhance access to opportunities for all residents of the region. Place-based public interventions can come through two basic strategies. 1) A people-based strategy focuses on connecting residents to opportunity by moving the residents to areas which offer the types of opportunities they are interested in accessing. 2) In contrast, a place-based strategy focuses on enhancing access for residents by bringing the opportunities to the areas where the disenfranchised residents live. Used in combination, these two strategies can make a significant dent in leveling the playing field for all residents of region, regardless of their race and ethnicity.

Section Seven will turn to the place-based public policies and investments that can potentially reshape the region's landscape of opportunity and enhance access to opportunities for all residents of the region.

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