Mobility Metrics
Measuring the Current State and Setting Goals in Rochester, NY

May, 2024

Prepared for
Rochester-Monroe Anti-Poverty Initiative

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Summary

The Rochester-Monroe Anti-Poverty Initiative (RMAPI) is making a shift from reducing poverty to boosting upward mobility. RMAPI's new Unity Agenda embraces a three-part definition of mobility developed by the Urban Institute, a national nonprofit research organization. The three-part definition calls for not just economic success, but also power and autonomy, and dignity and belonging for all residents.

To inform decisions, priorities and measurement of progress toward this vision, RMAPI selected Mobility Metrics. These metrics draw from a set developed by the Urban Institute of measures that are supported by strong evidence of predictive relationships to mobility that can be influenced by local and state policies. In addition, RMAPI added measures that provide important dimensions to round out the picture, for a total of 36 measures. Each measure falls under one of the six pillars in RMAPI's Theory of Change.

This Data Book provides baseline data on the Mobility Metrics for the City of Rochester and Monroe County, including available breakdowns for racial and ethnic groups and information for comparable areas where readily accessible.

The picture the data paints is multi-faceted, displaying many areas of persistent challenge and racial disparities along with bright spots and areas of progress. Noteworthy trends or comparisons include:

- Homeownership rates for Black and Latino residents in the City and County that are about half that for White residents and have not improved since 2000.

- More than half of Black and Latino residents in the County lacked or did not use conventional banking/financial services in 2021, compared to just 14% of White residents. This can mean reliance on expensive or even abusive financial services.

- A low income for a white resident in the County (20th percentile, or $32,500) was about the same as a middle income for a Black resident of the County (5oth percentile, or $35,000).

- Rochester stands out among comparable areas in the concentration of poverty, with 53% of Latino residents and 42% of Black residents in the City experiencing poverty and living in a high-poverty neighborhood.

- Short commutes are a benefit of living in Monroe County – 83% of drivers spend 30 minutes or less getting to work. But this doesn't extend to people using public transportation, a third of whom have commutes of an hour or more.

- Arrest rates remain racially disparate, but arrest rates for both Black and White people in both the City and County have declined 60% or more since 2000.

- Almost 90% of City residents live within a 10-minute walk of a park, and this is true across racial and ethnic groups.

- More than comparison counties, Monroe County schools have Black and Latino students inequitably enrolled in high-poverty schools. Due to very low rates of White students in

high-poverty schools, Black and Latino students are about 7 times more likely to attend a high-poverty school than White students.

- Monroe County residents in zip codes with more than 20% of residents living in poverty had a life expectancy 10 years lower than those in lower poverty zip codes. Since 2000, the life expectancy for Black, Non-Hispanic residents in Monroe County has been on average more than 7½ years less than any other race/ethnicity.

- Less than half of the voting-eligible population voted in Rochester in 2020, among the lowest rate in a set of comparable cities.

Acknowledgements

Staff Team

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Introduction

The Rochester-Monroe Anti-Poverty Initiative (RMAPI) is making a shift from reducing poverty to boosting upward mobility. This isn't semantics - RMAPI's new Unity Agenda adopts a broader view, embracing a three-part definition of mobility developed by the Urban Institute, a national nonprofit research organization. The three-part definition calls for not just economic success, but also power and autonomy, and dignity and belonging for all residents.

- Economic Success - factors that directly contribute to individuals' and families' material well-being.
- Power and Autonomy - Control over one's life, the ability to make choices and the collective capacity to influence larger policies and actions that affect one's future.
- Dignity and Belonging - Feeling the respect, dignity and sense of belonging that comes from contributing to one's community.

The Unity Agenda includes six pillars that express RMAPI's view of upward mobility in our community.

We envision a community where everyone:

- Lives in a safe, inclusive and **opportunity-rich neighborhood;**
- Accesses **quality education and skill-building** that equips them for success;
- Engages in **rewarding work** that provides dignity and builds financial security and stability for their families;
- Lives in healthy environments and gets access to **quality, affordable health and social care;**
- Relies on **equitable, accountable, and responsive local government**, public safety and legal systems;
- Experiences **inclusion, dignity and belonging**, leading to greater well-being and increased participation in civic institutions and community life.

Mobility Metrics

To inform decisions, priorities and measurement of progress toward this vision, RMAPI selected Mobility Metrics. These metrics draw from a set developed by the Urban Institute of measures that are supported by strong evidence of predictive relationships to mobility that can be influenced by local and state policies. In addition, RMAPI added measures that provide important dimensions to round out the picture, for a total of 36 measures. Each measure falls under one of the six pillars in RMAPI's Theory of Change.

This Data Book provides baseline data on the Mobility Metrics, including available breakdowns for racial and ethnic groups and information for comparable areas where readily accessible. For Mobility Metrics sourced through the Urban Institute, we include data for three areas selected by RMAPI because they have a similar population to Rochester and Monroe

County: Milwaukee and Milwaukee County (WI), Dayton and Montgomery County (OH), and Akron and Summit County (OH).

Sources are listed for each metric – in many cases, the source is identified as ACT Rochester or the Urban Institute. The original source of the data for many metrics is the U.S. Census Bureau's American Community Survey, Most of the metrics are updated once a year. For more on the Urban Institute metrics, including sources and calculations, see: https://upward-mobility.urban.org/metrics-and-evidence.

Purpose of the Metrics

This data will be used by RMAPI and the broader community to better understand the upward mobility challenge, to identify priorities for action, and to gauge progress. Analysis of the data can shed light on our path in several ways:

- Show where our community is significantly better or worse than other communities.
- Identify groups within our population or places in our county that are most impacted.
- Show trends over time – what is getting better, what's staying the same and what's getting worse.
- Analyze the key factors positively and negatively the measure to develop a "story behind the curve" that will inform action.

We have made a start on drafting a story behind the curve for each of the measures. This concept comes from Results-Based Accountability, a framework for using data and analysis to achieve results that RMAPI has adopted. This story describes the high-level trends and comparisons in the data and identifies some of the factors contributing to and hindering progress toward better outcomes. In RBA, changemakers seek to identify not only easily observed factors or proximate causes but also to unearth root causes including systemic factors.

As the reader examines measures in the Data Book, we encourage you to think about these questions:

- What measures are relevant to my and/or my organization's work?
- How does my work impact the factors contributing to or hindering progress?
- What underlying structures or factors that could make a difference haven't yet been identified?
- What else do we need in our community to boost upward mobility?

Glossary of Terms

We have some specific definitions in mind for certain terms used in this effort and in this report, shared below.

Upward mobility: Generally defined as the ability to capacity for rising to a higher social or economic position, upward mobility to us includes the additional dimensions of power and autonomy, and dignity and belonging discussed above as a three-part definition.

Story behind the curve: A term used in Results-Based Accountability to describe the key factors underlying the historic baseline and forecast for an indicator or performance measure, including contributing factors that support progress and restricting factors that hinder progress.

Turning the curve: Progress is defined as turning the curve of the baseline (or accelerating the curve if it is already headed in the right direction).

Metrics by Pillar

Below is the baseline data for each Mobility Metric, organized by pillar. As discussed above, this includes the story behind the curve, outlining trends and factors contributing to progress as well as factors hindering progress.

Rewarding Work and Financial Security

Homeownership rate

The number of owner-occupied units (not rented) as a percent of all occupied units (not vacant), overall and for various racial and ethnic groups.

Homeownership Rate

Homeownership Rates, by Race/Ethnicity
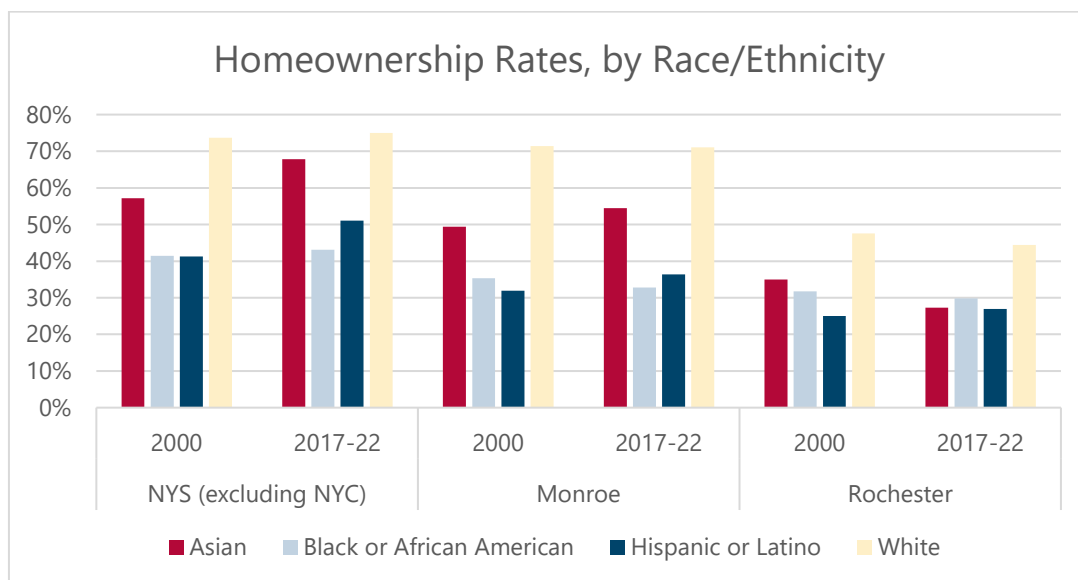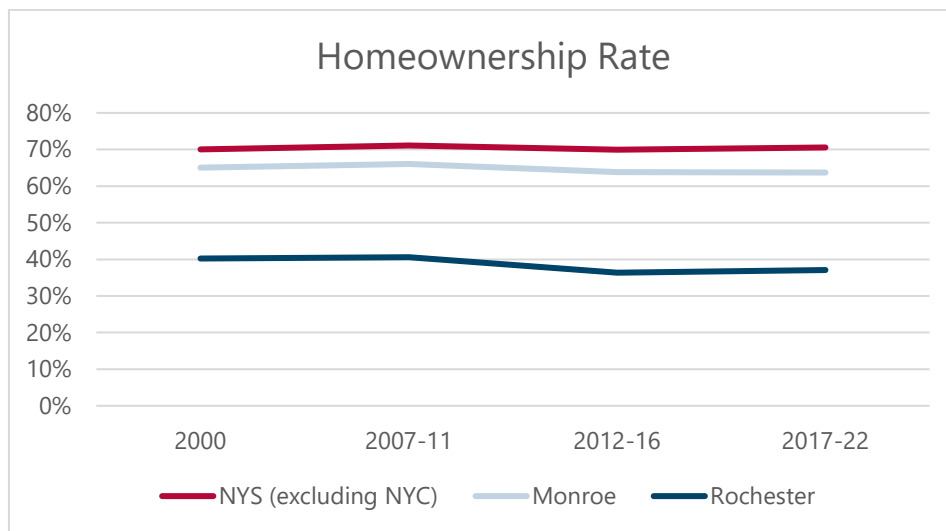
Source: Census' American Community Survey

> **Story behind the curve**
>
> **Homeownership rates are higher Monroe County than in the City and higher among White and Asian residents than among Black or Latino residents.**
>
> **Factors contributing to progress: Not much progress has been made, however, assistance for first-time homebuyers, and anti-discrimination housing and lending laws could lead to improvement.[1]**
>
> **Factors hindering progress: Lack of enforcement of anti-discrimination housing and lending laws, long-lived legacy of redlining and segregation.**

[1] See NYS Attorney General Nov. 2023 report: https://ag.ny.gov/sites/default/files/reports/oag-report-racial-disparities-in-homeownership.pdf

Housing wealth

Ratio of the share of a community's housing wealth held by a racial or ethnic group to the share of households of the same group. Housing wealth means the value of housing. A ratio of 1 means the share of housing wealth equals the share of population. Less than 1 means the group does not have an equitable share of housing wealth. More than 1 means the group has more housing wealth than its share of the population.
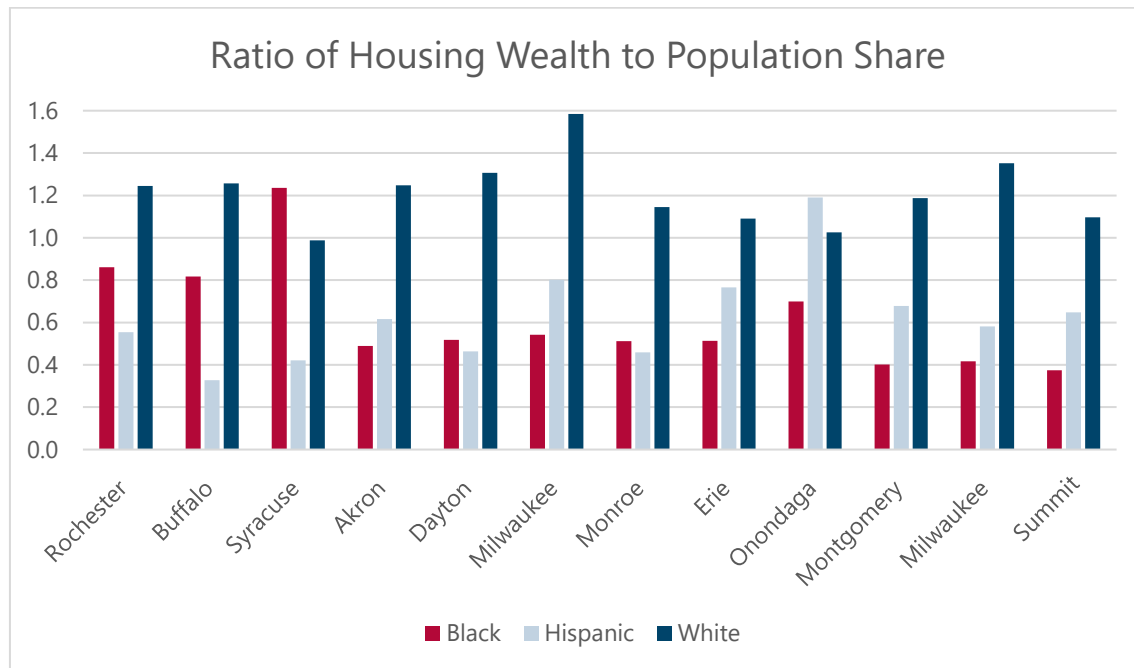
Tables show the shares of housing wealth and population wealth in each group for each year.

City		Black	Hispanic	Other	White
Rochester	2014	18.4%:34.3%	10.4%:14.6%	5.3%:4.8%	65.9%:46.3%
	2015	18.7%:35.7%	10.2%:14.7%	2.8%:5.3%	68.3%:44.3%
	2016	19.4%:36.1%	5.3%:14.2%	14.2%:3.8%	61.1%:45.9%
	2017	21.5%:34.9%	9.9%:14.6%	5.8%:5.2%	62.8%:45.2%
	2018	21.4%:35.9%	10.8%:15.4%	5.4%:5.0%	62.3%:43.7%
	2019	21.2%:35.7%	10.1%:16.1%	4.6%:4.4%	64.0%:43.8%
	2021	27.7%:32.2%	7.7%:13.9%	5.2%:6.2%	59.4%:47.7%

County		Black	Hispanic	Other	White
Monroe	2014	4.2%:12.9%	3.0%:6.3%	4.1%:4.4%	88.7%:76.4%
	2015	4.0%:13.5%	3.6%:6.4%	3.4%:4.1%	89.0%:76.0%
	2016	4.6%:13.6%	1.6%:6.0%	4.6%:4.1%	89.3%:76.4%
	2017	5.0%:13.4%	3.2%:7.0%	4.4%:4.9%	87.5%:74.8%
	2018	4.2%:13.7%	3.1%:6.8%	4.2%:3.8%	88.5%:75.7%
	2019	5.2%:14.3%	3.2%:7.1%	4.5%:4.3%	87.1%:74.3%
	2021	6.5%:12.7%	3.4%:7.4%	5.9%:6.4%	84.2%:73.5%

Source: Urban Institute
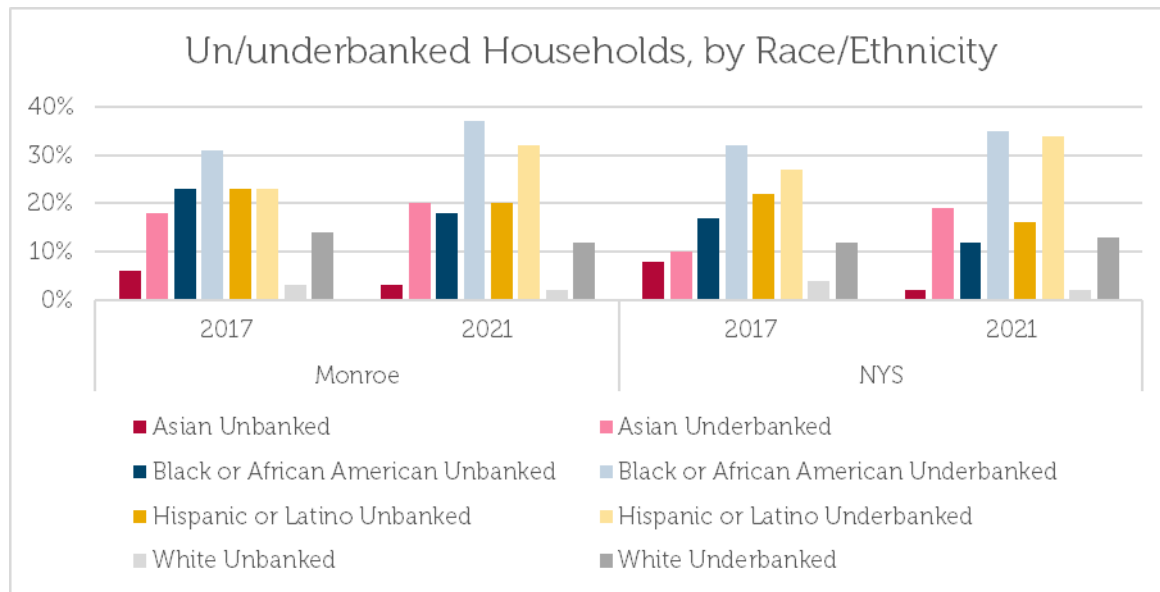
Story behind the curve

Although homeownership rates have shown little change since 2000, the share of housing wealth held by Black and Latino households in Monroe County and Rochester has increased since 2014, while the White share has declined. However, wealth was still disproportionately held by White homeowners in 2021 (latest year available).

Factors contributing to progress: Assistance for first-time homebuyers, and anti-discrimination housing and lending laws could lead to improvement.

Factors hindering progress: Lack of enforcement of anti-discrimination housing and lending laws, long-lived legacy of redlining and segregation.

Un- and underbanked

The percentage of households that have neither a checking nor savings account (unbanked) or have an account but instead relied on alternative financial services (underbanked) in the past 12 months.[2]

Source: Prosperity Now

Story behind the curve

Black and Latino households had higher rates of unbanked or underbanked households in Monroe County and New York State.

Factors contributing to progress: Financial services designed to reach underserved populations.

Factors hindering progress: Historical policies to exclude people of color from financial systems and capital included redlining, and incidents such as the demise of the Freedman's Savings and Trust in 1874 which resulted in a $2.9 million loss for mostly

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[2] Note that estimates at local geographies (cities, counties, Congressional Districts, tribal areas, and smaller metro areas) are derived from Prosperity Now's statistical modeling process using the FDIC's most recent biennial survey data and five-year American Community Survey estimates. For more, see: https://scorecard.prosperitynow.org/methodology#household-wealth-local

Black depositors lacking federal insurance, contributed to ongoing mistrust of financial institutions. Today, there is a dearth of bank branches in some neighborhoods and people of color tend to pay more for bank products such as car loans or mortgages even when they have comparable credit ratings as white peers.

Debt in collections

The share of households in an area with debt that has progressed from being past due to being in collections. While credit bureau data do not include information about race, debt value can be disaggregated by subarea when used in combination with the American Community Survey to identify the racial or ethnic composition of neighborhoods (zip codes) with more or less debt in collections. Zip codes are categorized as majority non-Hispanic white or majority nonwhite, with 60% of residents defining a majority.

Share of households with debt in collections, 2018
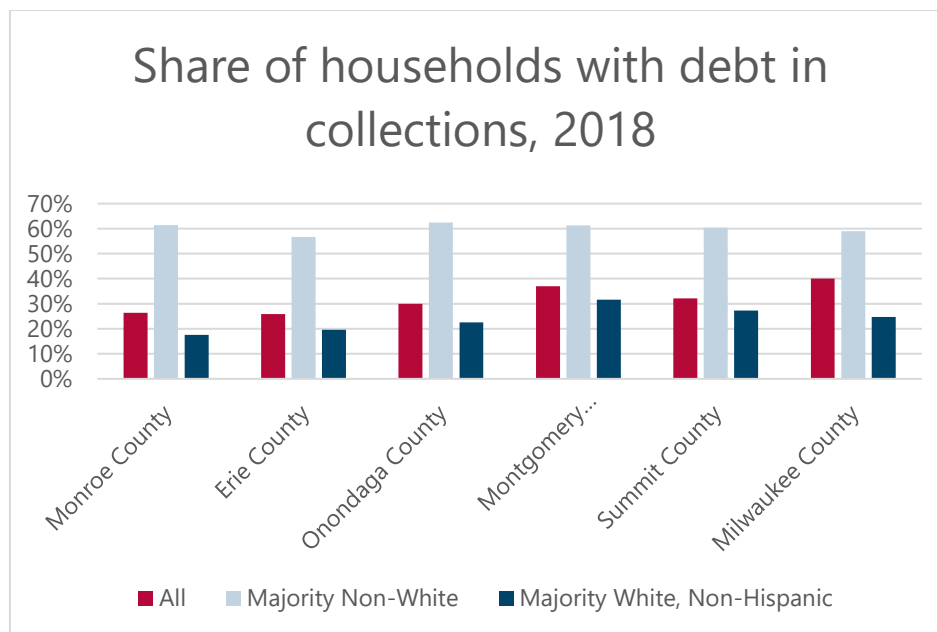
Source: Urban Institute
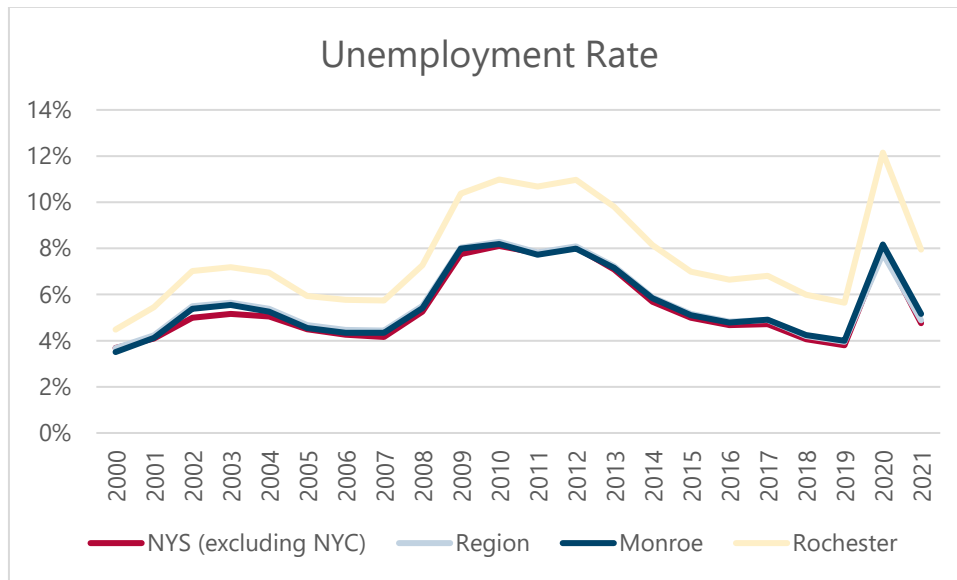
> *Story behind the curve*
>
> *Majority non-White zip codes have a much higher share of households with debt in collections than White, non-Hispanic zip codes.*
>
> *Factors contributing to progress: Access to reasonably priced credit, higher incomes.*
>
> *Factors hindering progress: Lack of financial literacy, lower incomes and economic opportunities, predatory lending practices.*

Unemployment rate

Unemployed individuals are those without jobs who are able, available and actively seeking work. The unemployment rate is the number of unemployed people as a percentage of the total labor force (the total number of employed and unemployed individuals 16 or older and not living in prisons, mental hospitals or nursing homes).

Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics
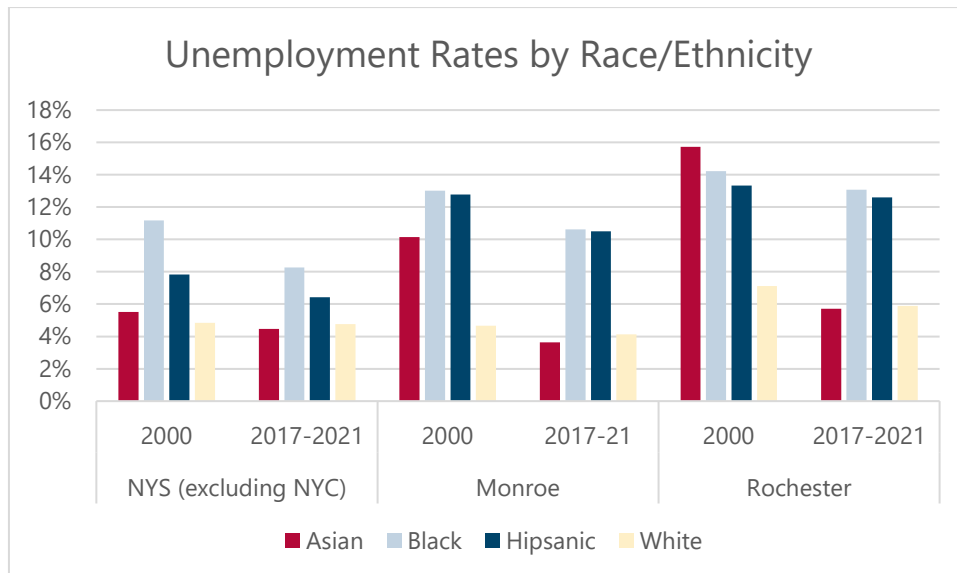
Source: Census' American Community Survey
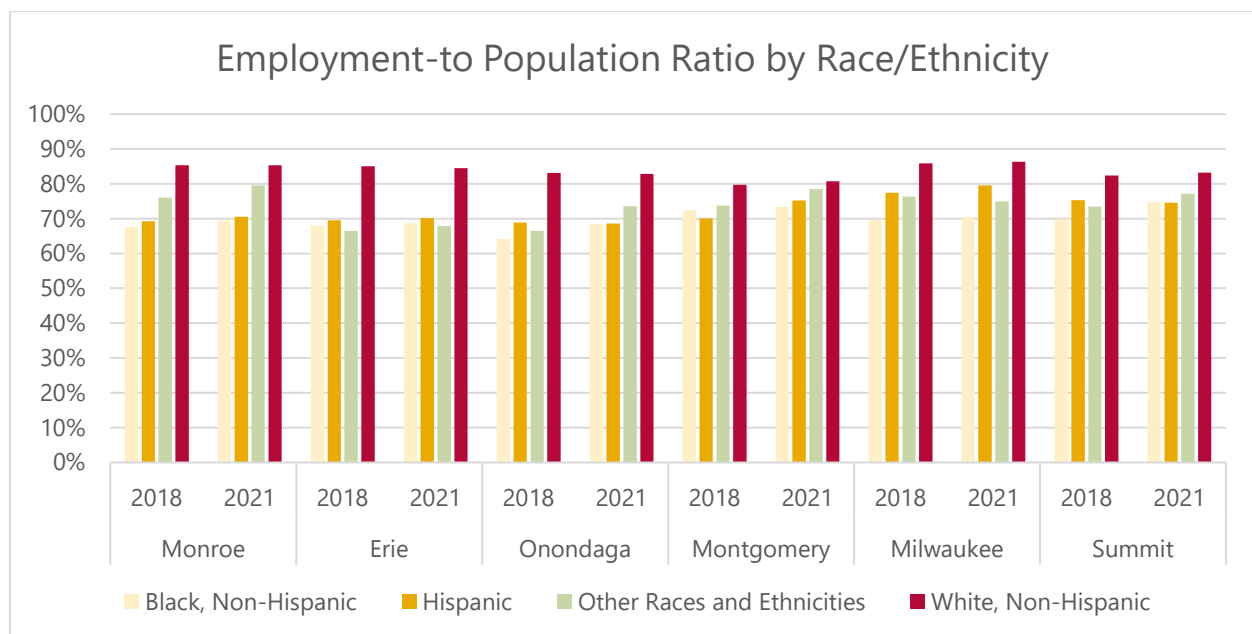
> *Story behind the curve*
>
> *Looking at long-term trends, unemployment rates have tended to be higher in the City of Rochester and among Black and Latino residents of the City and Monroe County. However, in Monroe County, unemployment decreased since 2000 for Black and Latino residents. Monthly unemployment estimates are also available and the Monroe County rate had fallen to 4.1% by March 2024.*
>
> *Factors contributing to progress: Education, training programs, diversity and anti-discrimination initiatives in workplaces.*
>
> *Factors hindering progress: Employment discrimination, lack of adequate access to education and training programs.*

Employment-to-Population Ratio (adults 25 to 54)

The ratio of the number of employed adults ages 25 to 54 in a given jurisdiction to the total number of adults in that age range living there. This differs from the unemployment rate because it includes in the denominator the entire population within the age range, including people not in the workforce/not looking for work.

Employment-to-Population Ratio, 2021

Employment-to Population Ratio by Race/Ethnicity
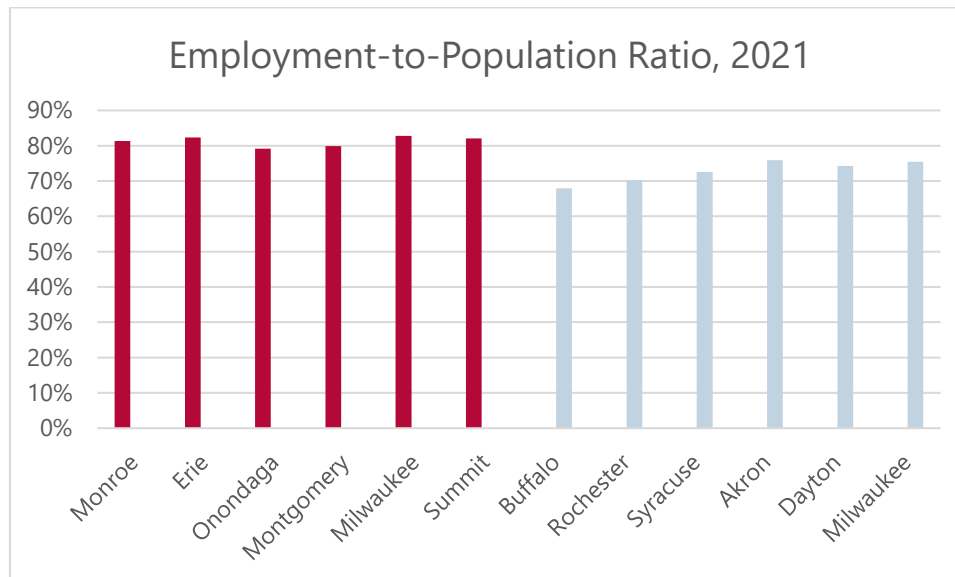
Source: Urban Institute

Story behind the curve

Employment rates were lower in cities than in their home counties and lower among Black and Hispanic residents than Whites.

Factors contributing to progress: Education, training programs, diversity and anti-discrimination initiatives in workplaces.

Factors hindering progress: Employment discrimination, lack of adequate access to education and training programs.

Household income

At 20th, 50th and 80th percentiles. In the first chart, County data from 2018 and City data from 2021.

Household Incomes

Household Incomes, by Race/Ethnicity

Household Incomes, by Race/Ethnicity

Legend:
- (Black, nh) 20th percentile
- (Black, nh) 50th Percentile
- (Black, nh) 80th Percentile
- (Hispanic) 20th percentile
- (Hispanic) 50th Percentile
- (Hispanic) 80th Percentile
- (Other, r&e) 20th Percentile
- (Other, r&e) 50th Percentile
- (Other, r&e) 80th Percentile
- (White, Non Hispanic) 20th Percentile
- (White, Non Hispanic) 50th Percentile
- (White, Non Hispanic) 80th Percentile

Source: Urban Institute

Story behind the curve

Incomes at all levels were lower in cities than in counties. In addition, at all levels (20th, 50th and 80th percentiles), Black and Hispanic incomes were below White incomes.

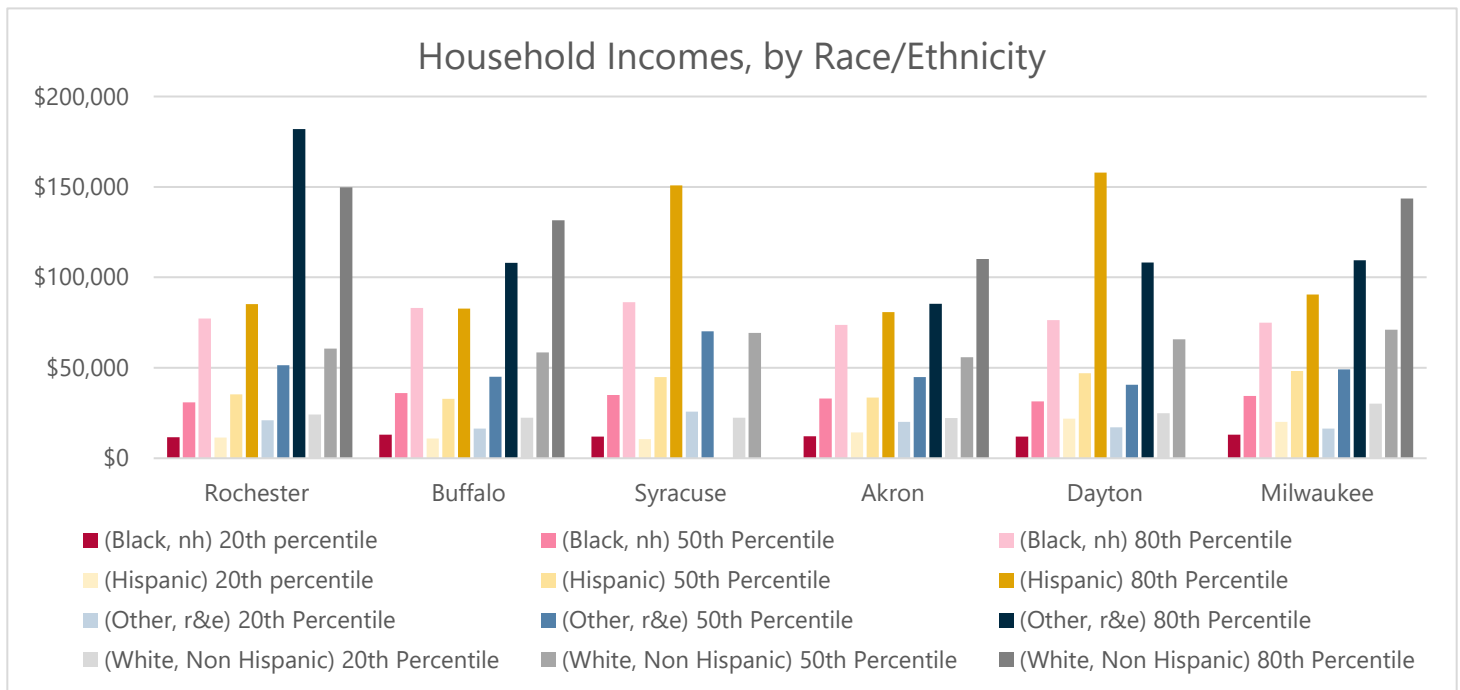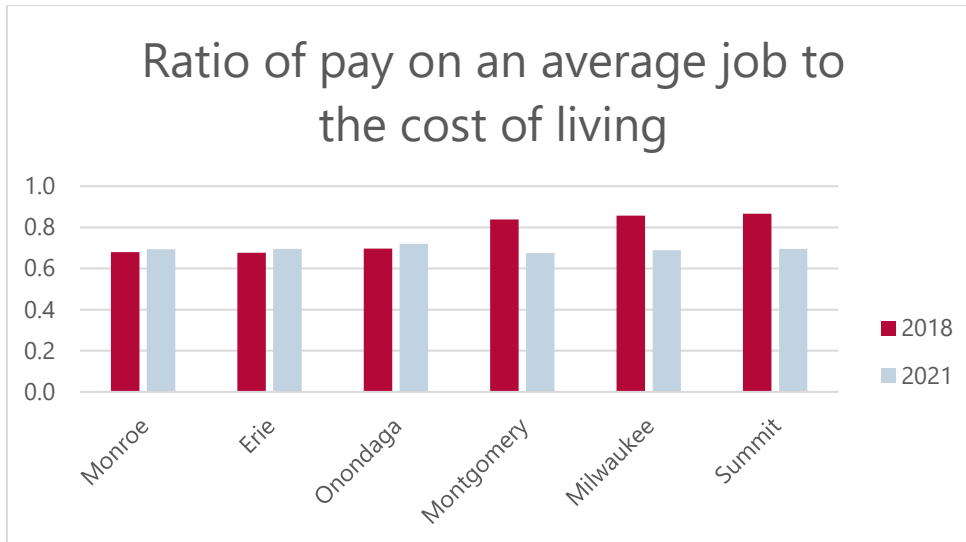*Factors contributing to progress: As incomes are directly tied to employment, the factors are similar - education, training programs, diversity and anti-discrimination initiatives in workplaces.*

Factors hindering progress: Employment discrimination, lack of adequate access to education and training programs.

Average pay / Living wage

Data on wages are available quarterly from the BLS's Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages and estimates of the cost of meeting a family's basic needs, referred to as a living wage, are available annually from MIT.

Source: Urban Institute

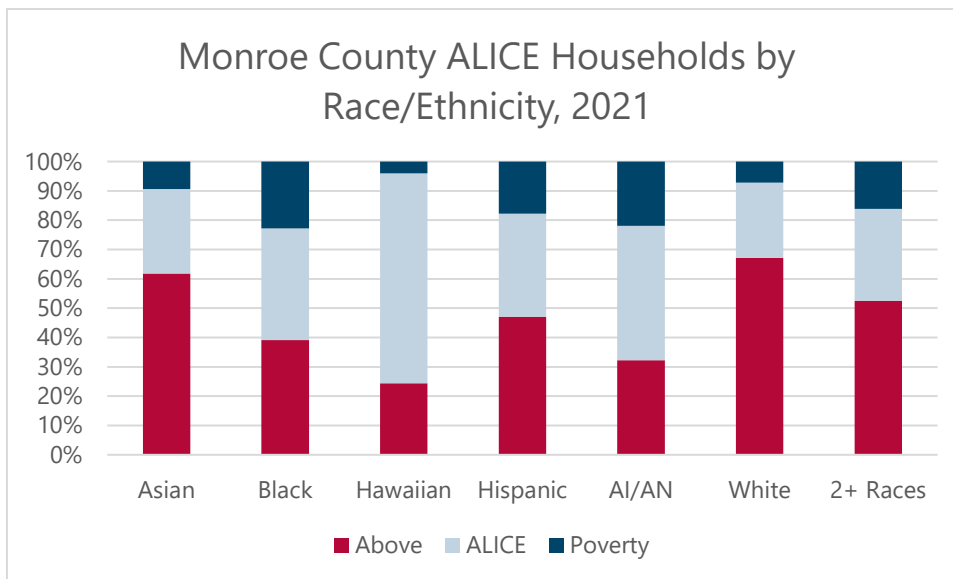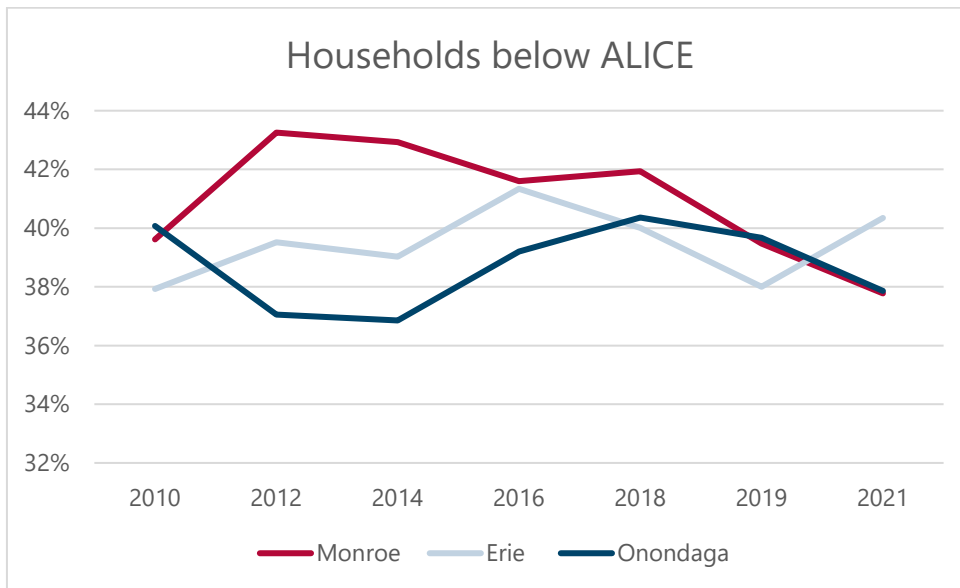*Story behind the curve*

The ratio has inched up in Monroe County to nearly 70% in 2021 similar to other counties in the same year.

Factors contributing to progress: Increasing competition for workers, organized labor and other campaigns to increase wages.

Factors hindering progress: Globalization (transfer of jobs from the US overseas) and automation are two trends that help keep wages low.

ALICE

Asset-Limited, Income-Constrained, Employed: ALICE provides a measure of households that do not earn enough to fully provide for basic household needs such as housing, food, transportation, child care, health care, and necessary technology to participate in the modern economy, such as internet access - even though many have income higher than the federal poverty level.

Households below ALICE

Monroe County ALICE Households by Race/Ethnicity, 2021

Source: United for Alice

Story behind the curve

The share of households below the ALICE threshold has decreased in Monroe County to 38% from 43% in 2012. Black, Hawaiian, Hispanic and American Indian/Alaskan Native households had the highest shares below the ALICE threshold.

Factors contributing to progress: Increasing wages and income.

Factors hindering progress: Inflation, especially in the cost of necessities.

Opportunity Rich Neighborhoods

Violent Crimes

This indicator shows the number of reported serious violent crimes per 10,000 residents. Murder, rape, robbery, and aggravated assault are included in the serious violent crimes measure.

Violent Crimes Per 10,000 Residents
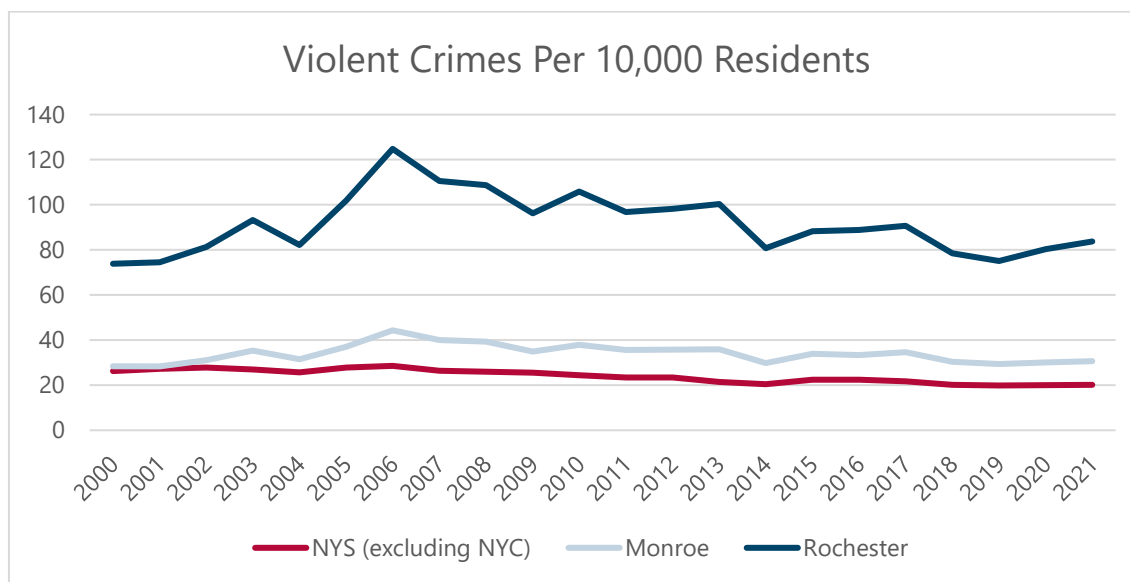
Source: ACT Rochester

Story behind the curve

Violent crime is higher in the City of Rochester than in Monroe County or New York State, and increased post-pandemic to 84 incidents per 10,000 residents. However, it remains significantly below the 2006 high of 125 incidents per 10,000 residents.

Factors contributing to progress: Evidence-based solutions to violent crime include community-based violence interventions,[3] prevention programs including quality prekindergarten programs,[4] and effective probation approaches.[5]

[3] https://www.americanprogress.org/article/community-based-violence-interventions-proven-strategies-to-reduce-violent-crime/
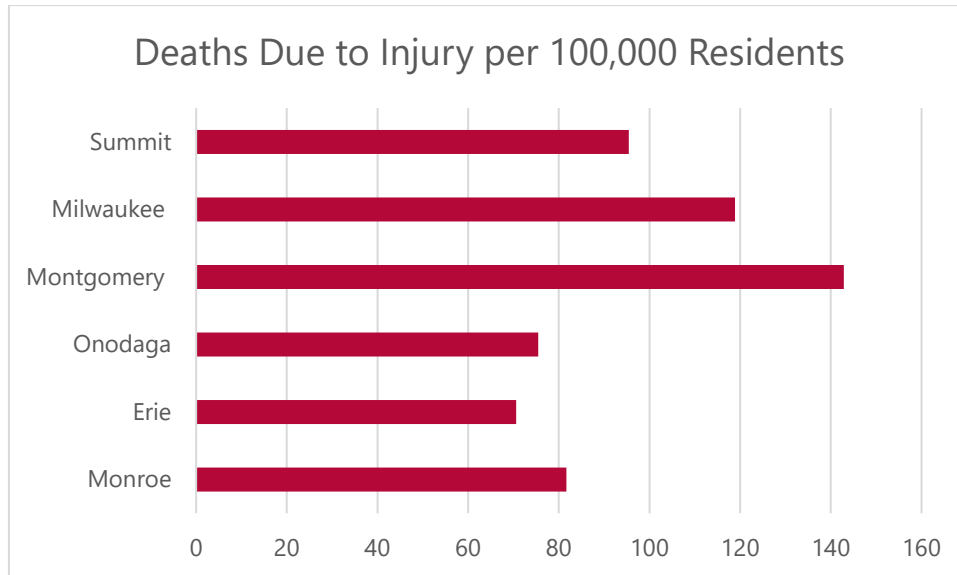[4] chrome-extension://efaidnbmnnnibpcajpcglclefindmkaj/https://www.ojp.gov/pdffiles/171676.pdf
[5] https://projects.csgjusticecenter.org/tools-for-states-to-address-crime/10-ways-states-can-lower-crime/

Factors hindering progress: Access to weapons, lack of quality education and employment opportunities, discrimination and mistreatment, and overuse of alcohol and drugs can all contribute to violent crime.

Deaths due to injury

Deaths due to injury per 100,000 residents in 2019. Injuries include both intentional injuries such as homicide or suicide, unintentional injuries such as motor vehicle deaths and drug overdoses.

Deaths Due to Injury per 100,000 Residents

County	Deaths per 100,000
Summit	~95
Milwaukee	~119
Montgomery	~143
Onodaga	~76
Erie	~70
Monroe	~82

Source: Urban Institute
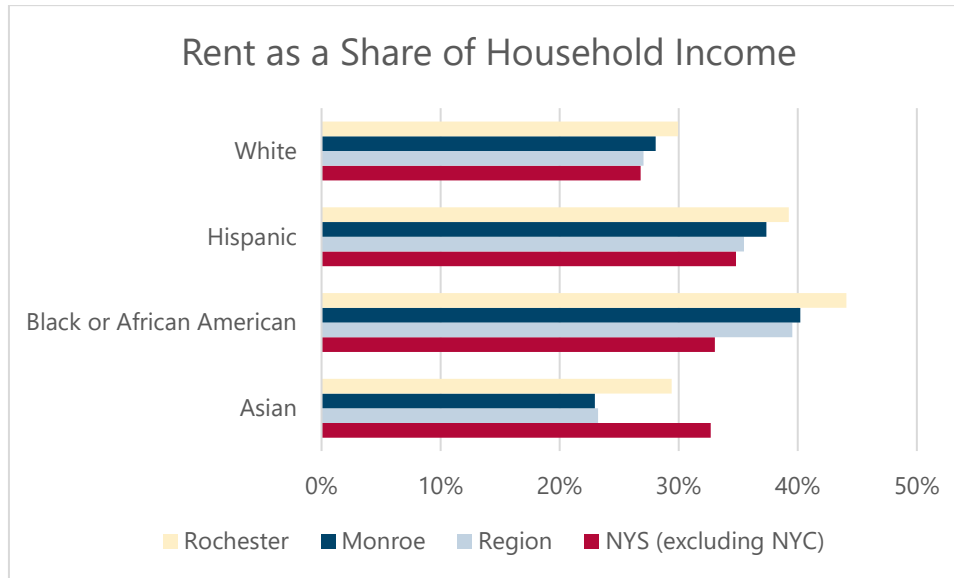
> **Story behind the curve**
>
> **In 2019, Monroe County's injury death rate was higher than Erie and Onondaga counties but lower than other comparison counties.**
>
> **Factors contributing to progress: A wide variety of preventive measures and investments can increase community safety, including crime prevention programs, traffic design to make streets safer, and health education and promotion initiatives.**
>
> **Factors hindering progress: Injury-related deaths can be reflective of both individual-level factors and structural factors such as neighborhood design, crime rates, and access to mental health services.**

Rent as a percentage of income

The proportion of household income that goes toward monthly rent, utilities and fuel, calculated by dividing median rent by median household income for renters, with 30% or less considered affordable.

Rent as a Share of Household Income

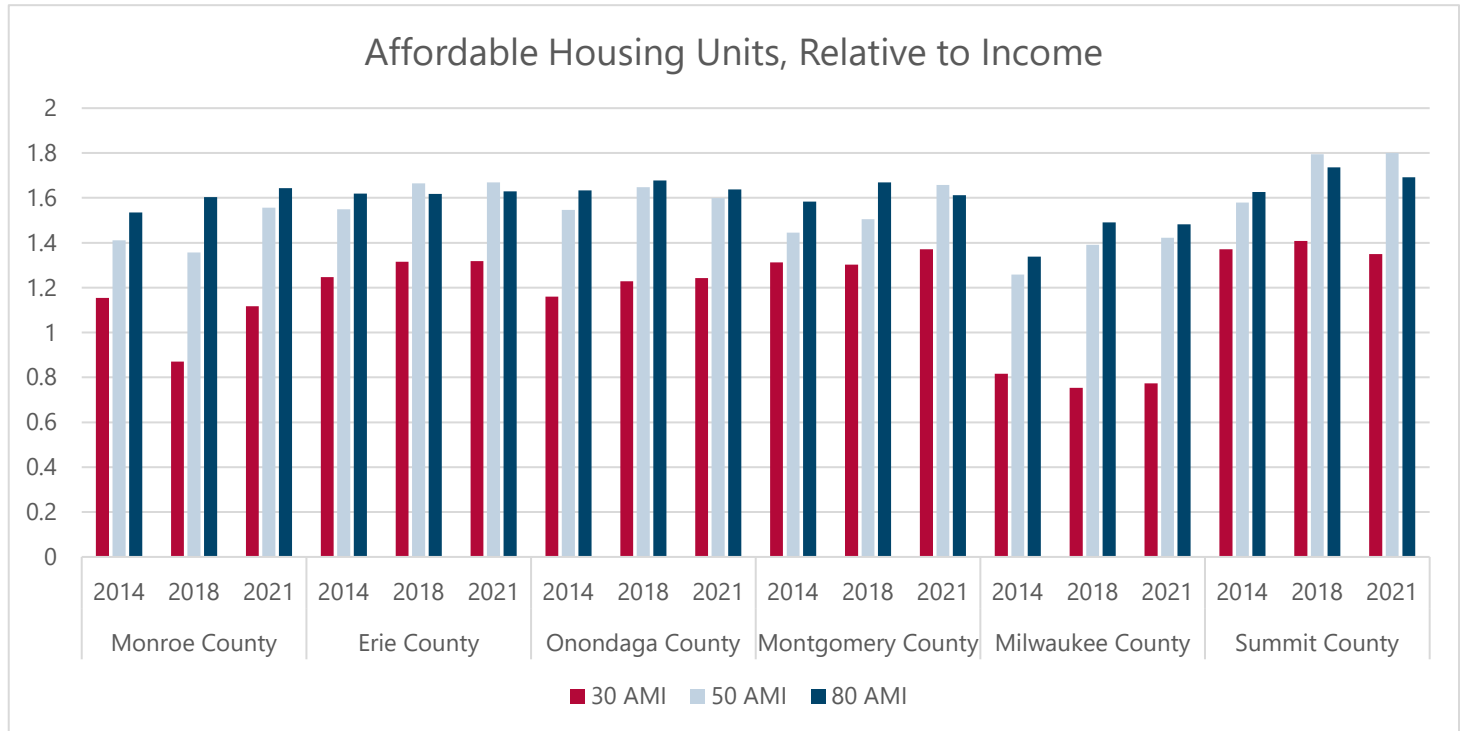*Source: ACT Rochester*

> **Story behind the curve**
>
> The rent burden is highest for Black households in the City of Rochester at 44% of income. Latino households in the City are not far behind at 39%, followed by White (30%) and Asian (29% households). These racial disparities are similar in Monroe County and the larger region and wider than found statewide.
>
> Factors contributing to progress: Rental assistance programs and government housing subsidies ease the burden for families who qualify.
>
> Factors hindering progress: Inadequate supply of quality, affordable rental housing makes rent a difficult burden for many.

Affordable housing units at different levels of income

The number of available housing units affordable for households with low (below 80 percent of area median income, or AMI), very low (below 50 percent of AMI), and extremely low (below 30 percent of AMI) incomes relative to every 100 households with these income levels. Housing units are defined as affordable if the monthly costs do not exceed 30 percent of a household's income. Housing units include vacant and occupied units and rental and homeowner units.

Affordable Housing Units, Relative to Income

Affordable Housing Units, Relative to Income, 2021
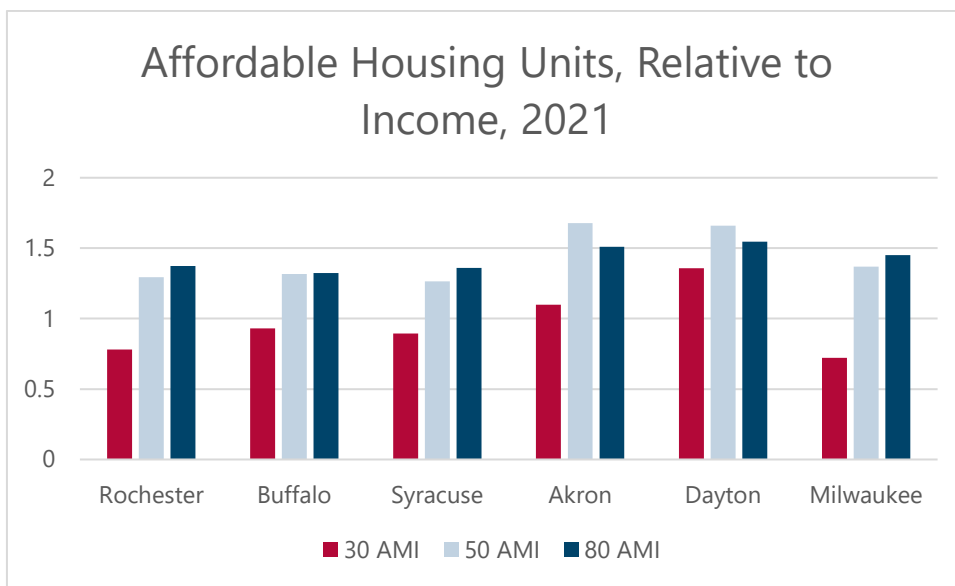
Source: Urban Institute
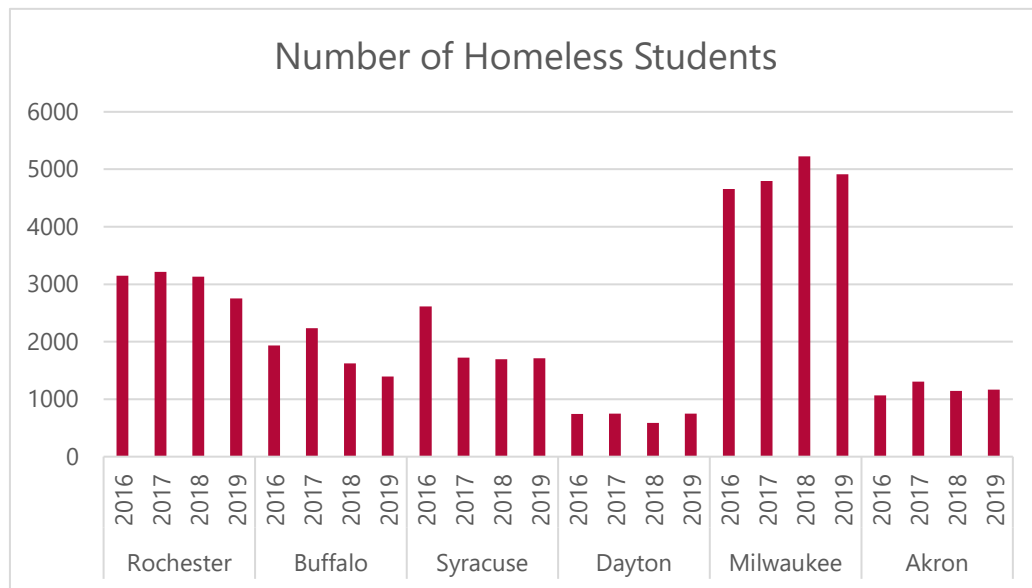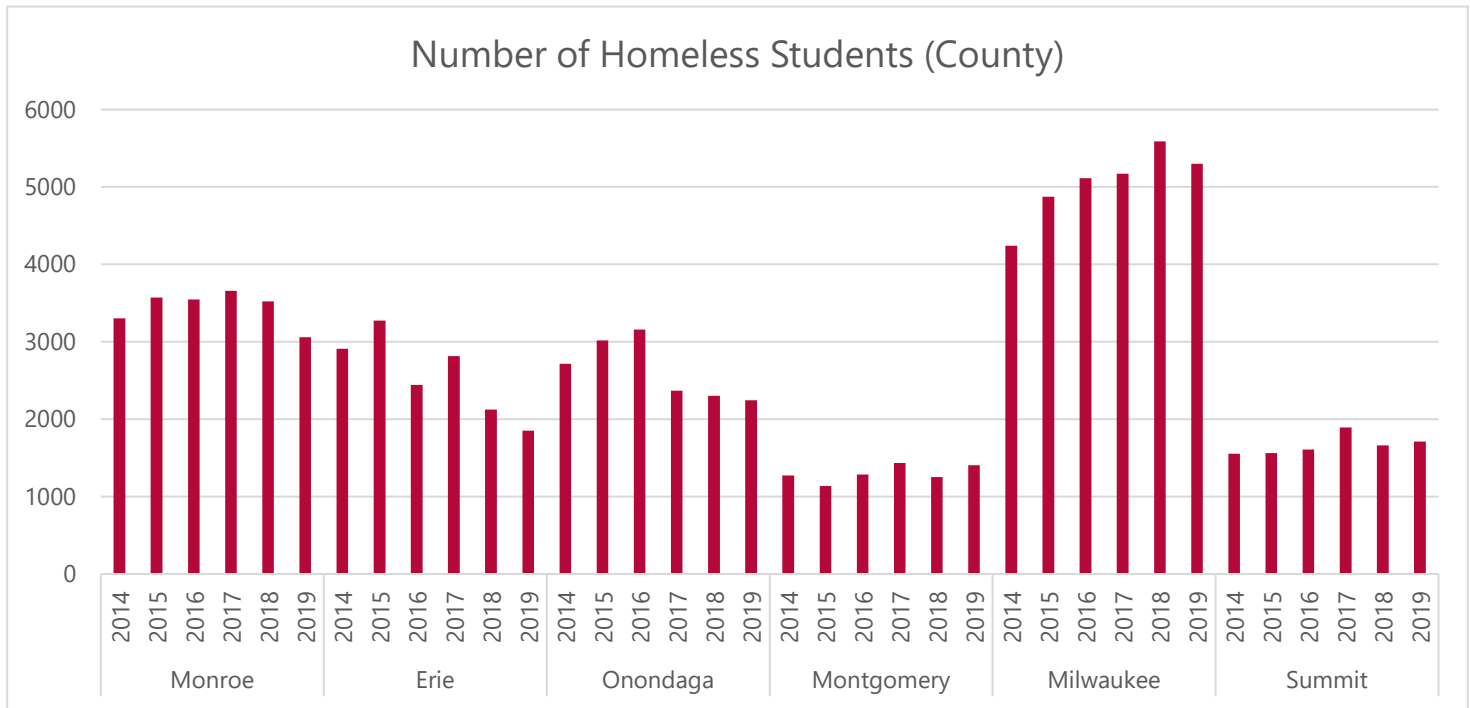
Story behind the curve

In Monroe County and the City of Rochester, the closer a household is to the AMI, the more affordable housing units available. The availability of affordable housing decreases exponentially as households move further away from the AMI level. In Monroe County in 2021, for every 100 households with extremely low income (less than 30% of the area median income), there were 112 affordable housing units, compared to 161 for households with low income (80% of area median income). In the City of Rochester, there were only 87 affordable housing units for every 100 households with extremely low income.

Factors contributing to progress: The supply of affordable housing is boosted by private and public support for its development, including government policies to encourage building in a variety of localities, such as inclusive zoning.

Factors hindering progress: High construction costs and restrictive zoning policies (such as those requiring minimum lot sizes and setbacks) limit the supply of affordable housing.

Homeless students

Public-school children who are ever homeless during the school year.

Number of Homeless Students (County)

Number of Homeless Students

Homeless Students by Race/Ethnicity, 2019

Legend:
- Black, Non-Hispanic
- Hispanic
- Other Races and Ethnicities
- White, Non-Hispanic
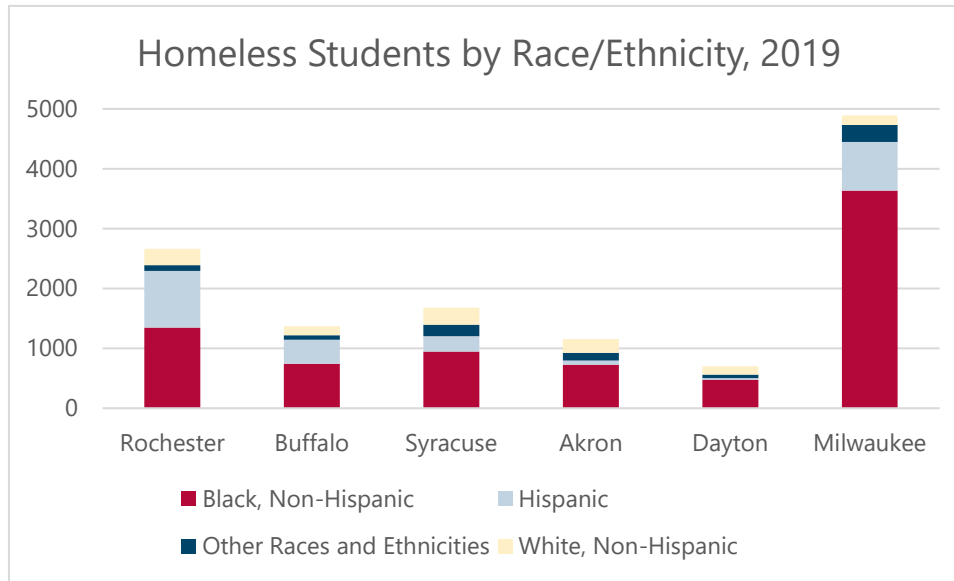
Source: Urban Institute

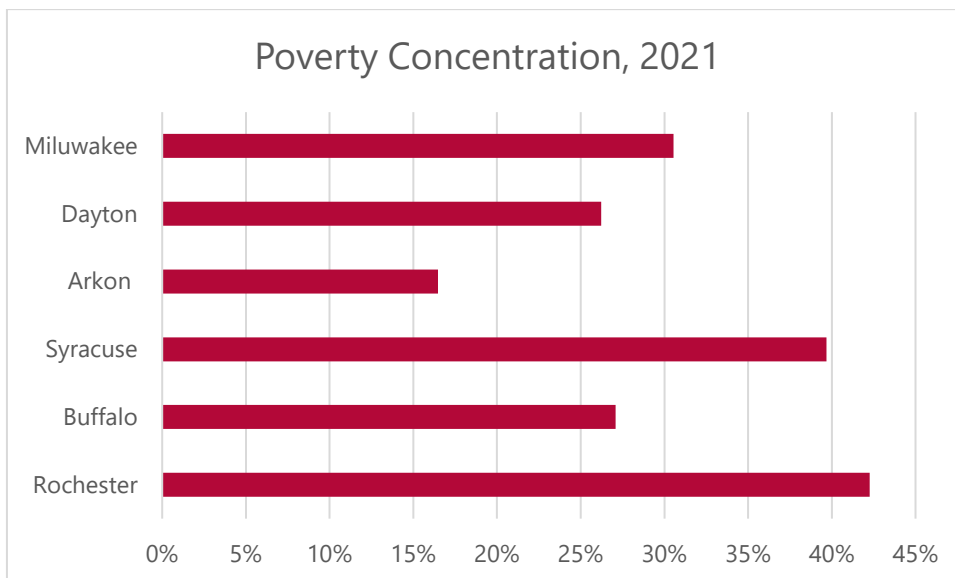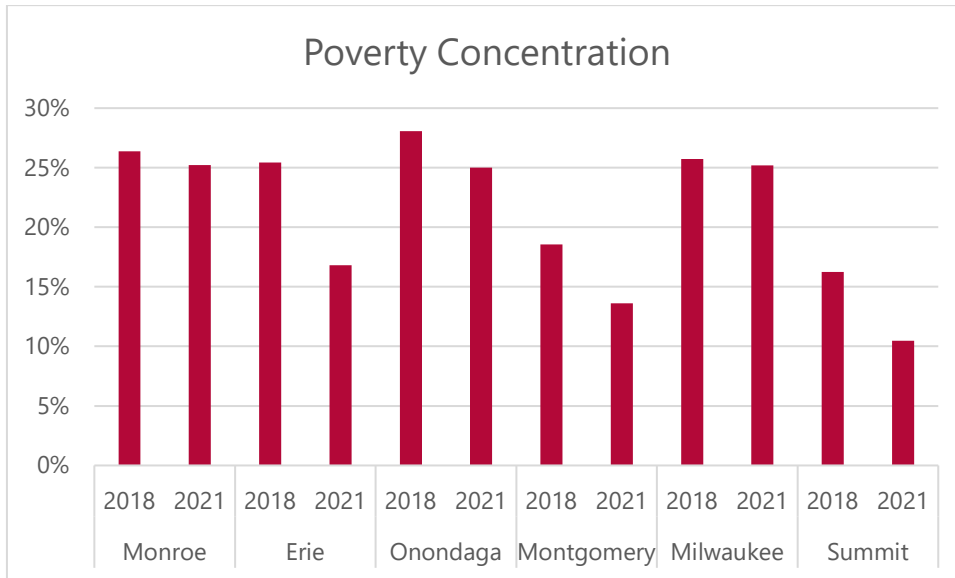> **Story behind the curve**
>
> The number of homeless students in Monroe County declined 13% from 2018 to 2019 and 7% between 2014 and 2019. Other comparison counties also posted declines over the time period. Among cities in 2019, Syracuse had the largest share of students who had been homeless at 7% while Rochester's figure was 5%. Black students comprised the largest group of homeless students in all the cities and Rochester had the highest share of homeless Latino students at 34% of the total.
>
> Factors contributing to progress: Financial support for families and the supply of affordable or subsidized families are key factors in keeping families and youth housed. Family therapists who work to address in-home relationships and ensure that children can coexist with their family also play a role in reducing youth homelessness. In addition, nonprofits that provide housing/shelter for homeless youth and foster homes can help ameliorate the impact of homelessness on students.
>
> Factors hindering progress: Lack of access to affordable housing and family conflict are two causes of youth homelessness.

Poverty Concentration

The share of residents in an area who are experiencing poverty and who live in high-poverty neighborhoods (measured by census tract). A high-poverty neighborhood is one in which over 40 percent of the residents are experiencing poverty.

Poverty Concentration

Poverty Concentration, 2021

Poverty Concentration by Race/Ethnicity, 2021

Legend: All · Black · Hispanic · Other Races and Ethnicities · White, Non-Hispanic
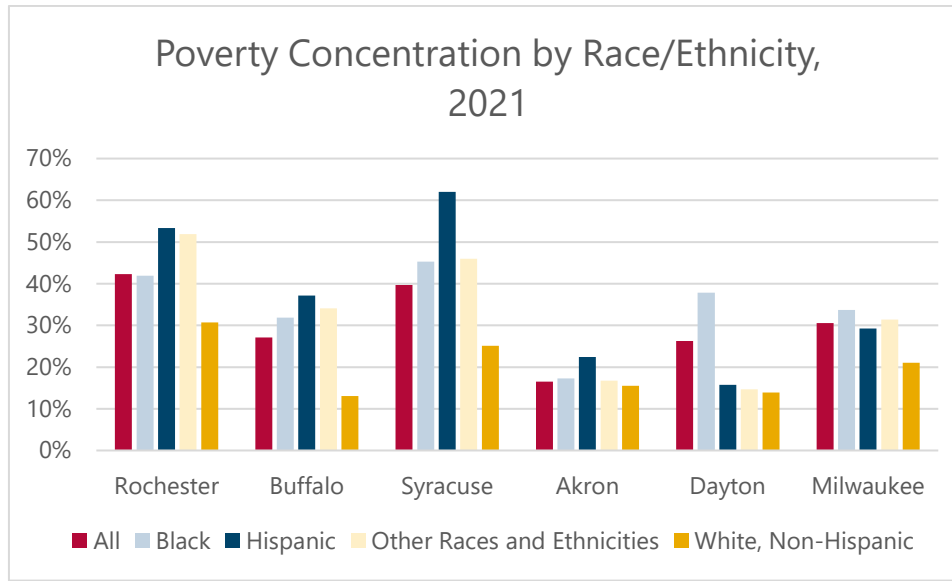
*Source: Urban Institute*

Story behind the curve

Poverty concentration was higher in cities than counties, and Rochester had the highest concentration among the comparable areas with 42% of residents in concentrated poverty in 2021. In Rochester, poverty concentration was highest among Latino households (53%) followed by Black households (42%).

Factors contributing to progress: Inclusive zoning allowing more affordable housing in a variety of local areas helps to reduce poverty concentration, as does investment in high-poverty areas.

Factors hindering progress: Restrictive zoning requiring minimum lot sizes and setbacks, among other things, concentrates low-cost housing in particular areas, usually in cities.

Commute Time

The share of workers with long, medium and short commutes, presented by type of transportation used on a daily basis by workers over the age of 16 who commute to work.

Means of Travel by Commute Time from 2017-2021
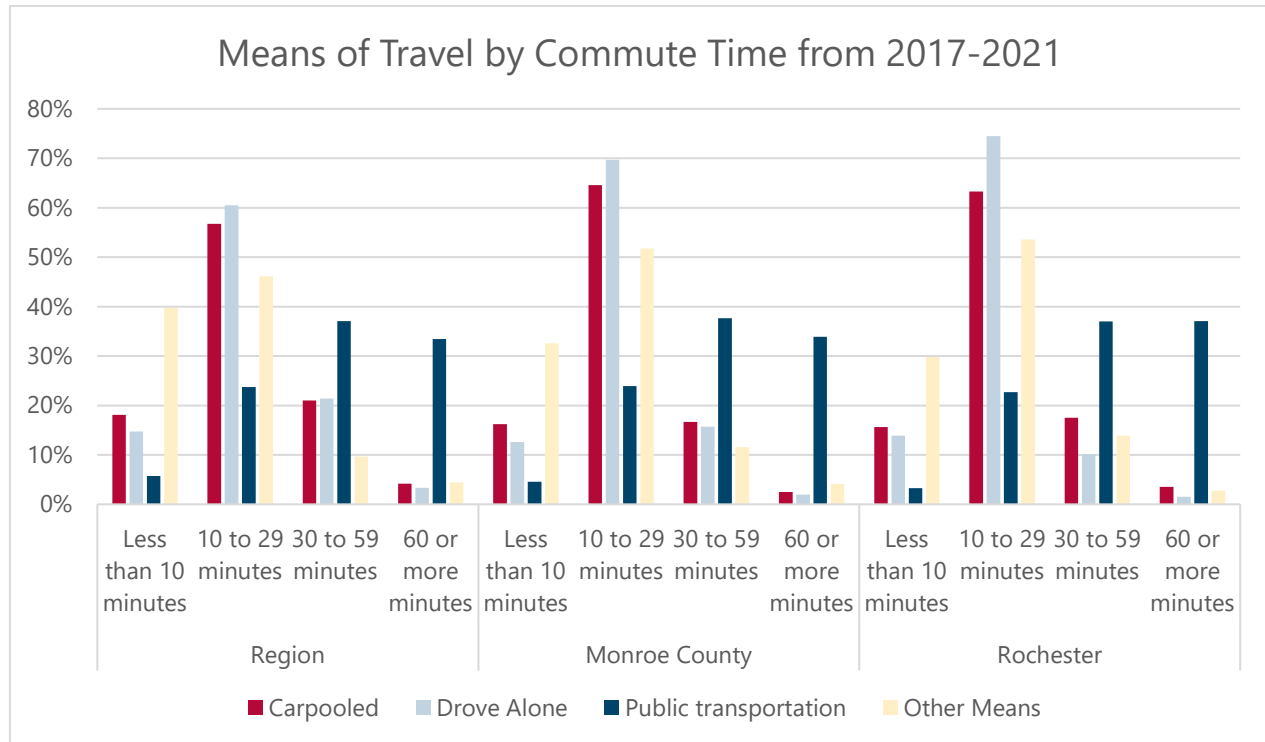
Source: ACT Rochester

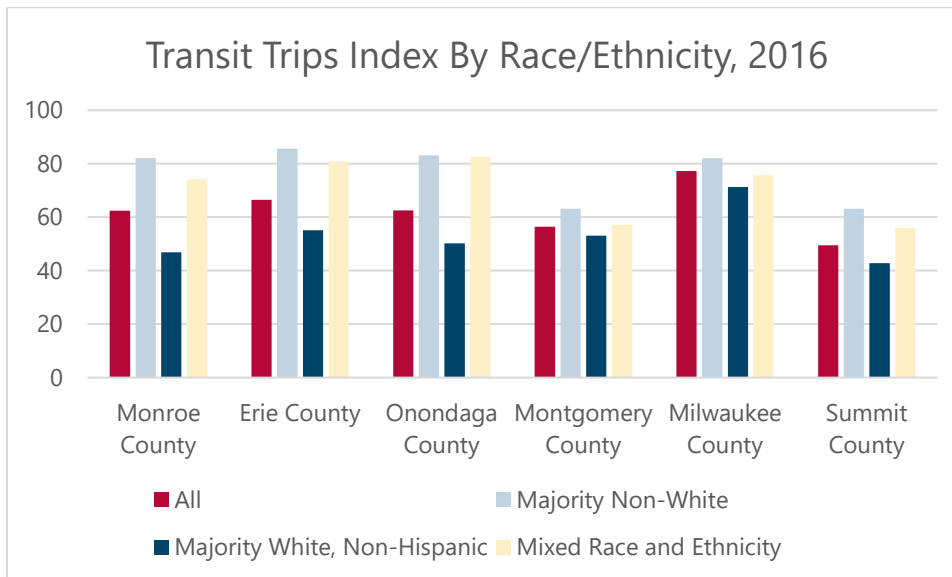> **Story behind the curve**
>
> A third of commuters in our region using public transportation had a commute of an hour or more in 2017-21, compared to 3% of those who drove alone. By contrast, just 30% of those using transit got to work in less than 30 minutes compared to 75% of those who drove alone. The largest group with very short commutes (less than 10 minutes) was cyclists, walkers, motorcyclists and those using cabs or other means - 40% of whom got to work within 10 minutes. These trends were similar in the City of Rochester and Monroe County.
>
> Factors contributing to progress: More frequent bus service could shorten commutes and make public transportation a better option for commuters, including lower income workers who are more reliant on transit.

Factors hindering progress: Smaller metro areas like Rochester have trouble reaching the density levels that allow for frequent and cost-efficient bus routes.

Transit trips index

The number of public transit trips taken annually at the census tract level by a three-person single-parent family with income at 50 percent of the area median income for renters. This number is percentile ranked nationally into an index with values ranging from 0 to 100 for each census tract. Higher scores reflect better access to public transportation.

Transit Trips Index, 2016

Transit Trips Index By Race/Ethnicity, 2016
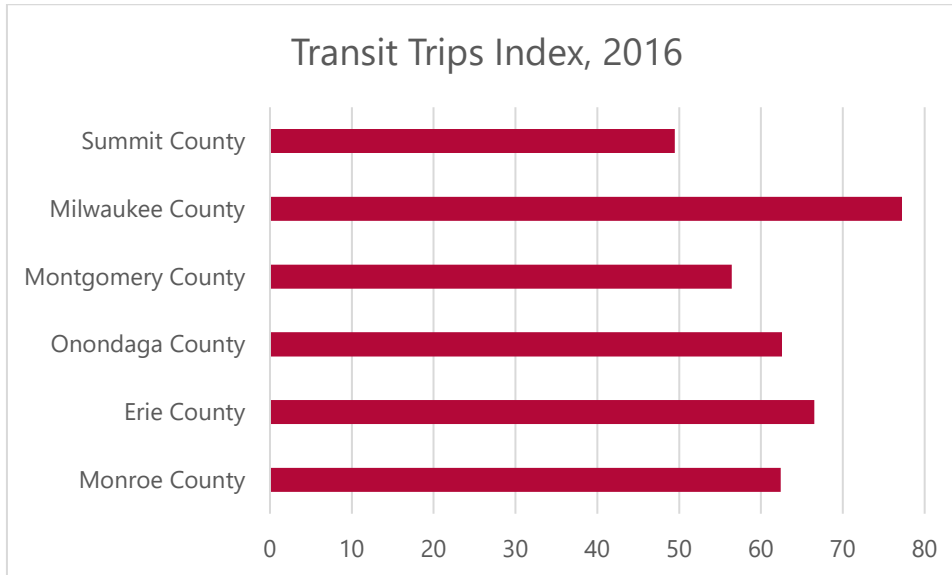
Source: Urban Institute

Story behind the curve

Monroe County's score of 62 in 2016 was below Erie and Milwaukee counties, about the same as Onondaga and above Montgomery and Summit counties. Transit use was higher among majority non-White census tracts in all the counties, but the non-White to White disparity was highest in Monroe County.

Factors contributing to progress: Low costs, safety, frequent and convenient stops, and on-time service can all improve access to public transit.

Factors hindering progress: High costs, perceived or real safety concerns, and infrequent or unreliable service can hamper access to transit.

Transportation cost index

This index reflects local transportation costs as a share of renters' incomes in 2016, accounting for both transit and cars. This index is based on estimates of transportation costs for a three-person, single-parent family with income at 50 percent of the median income for renters for the region (i.e., a core-based statistical area). Values are inverted so the higher the value, the lower the cost of transportation in that neighborhood.

Transportation Cost Index, 2016

Transportation Cost Index by Race/Ethnicity, 2016
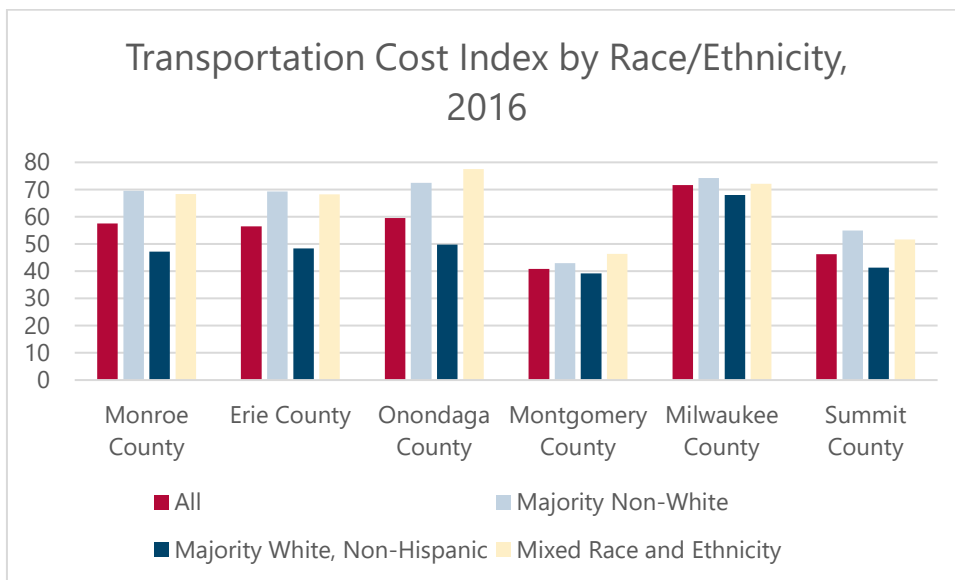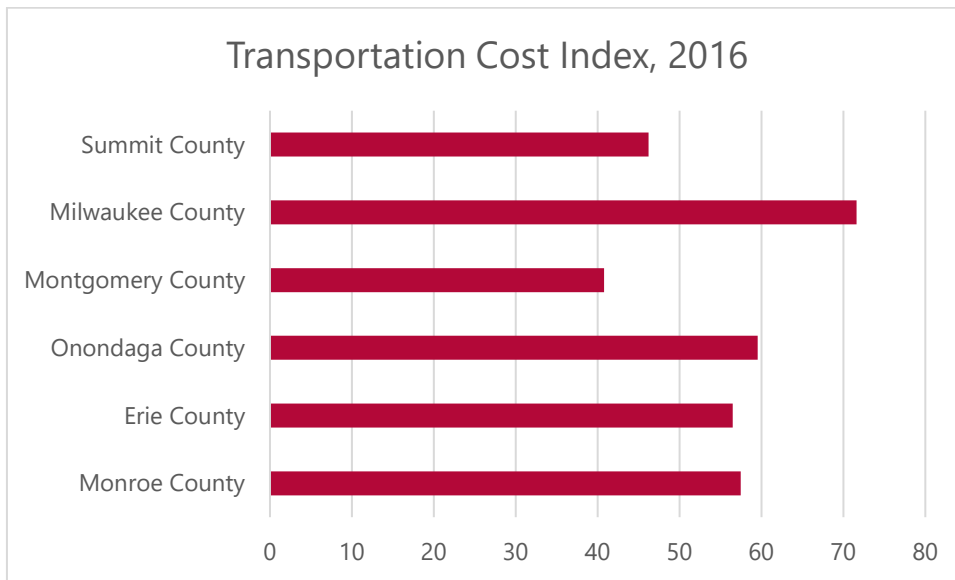
Source: Urban Institute

Story behind the curve

Monroe County's score of 58 in 2016 indicates transportation was less expensive for low-income families than it was in Montgomery or Summit counties. Monroe's score was similar to Erie and Onondaga's and below Milwaukee. Scores were higher in majority non-White census tracts in Monroe County, indicating more affordable transportation for low-income families, relative to White census tracts.

Factors contributing to progress: Support for transit and programs expanding access to cars can reduce the cost index.

Factors hindering progress: Auto costs have risen dramatically since 2016, making that form of transportation even more unaffordable.

Access to parks

The percentage of the population living within a 10-minute walk of a park in 2022.

Share of Population Living Close to Park

Share of Population Living Close to Park, by Race/Ethnicity
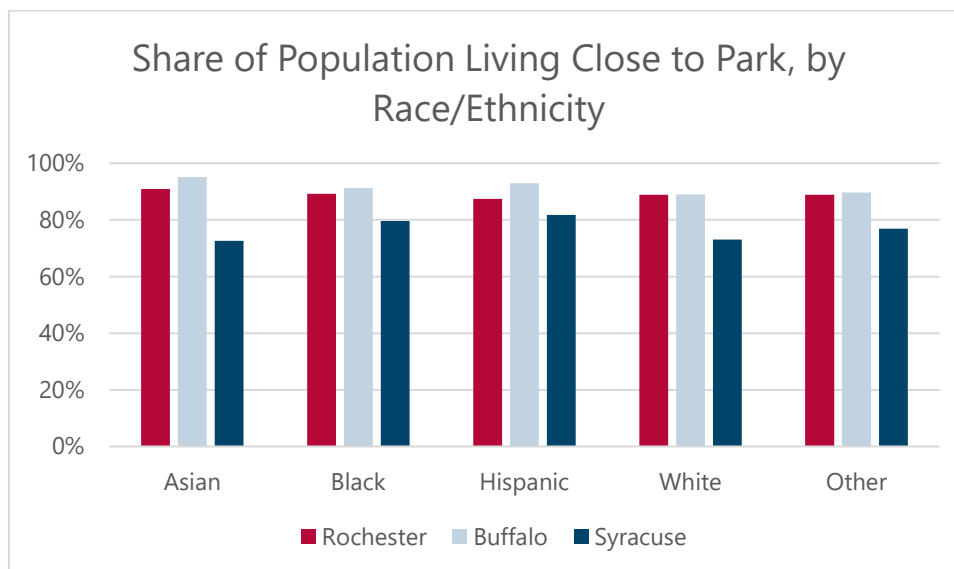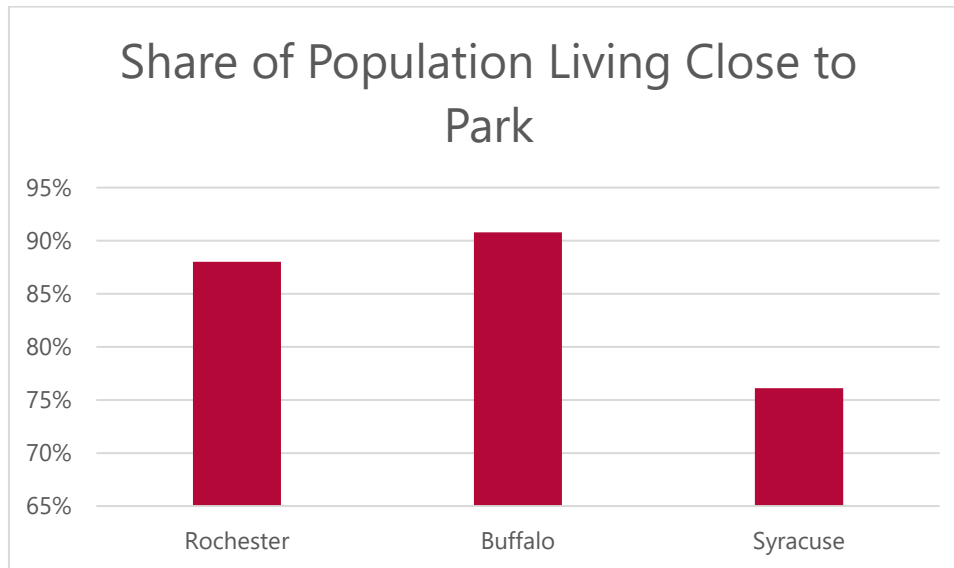
Source: City Health Dashboard

> *Story behind the curve*
>
> *In Rochester in 2022, 88% of the population had a park within a 10-minute walk of their home, above Syracuse and close to Buffalo's level. The rates were similar across racial and ethnic groups in Rochester.*

Factors contributing to progress: The City of Rochester and its metropolitan area has over 3,500 acres of park lands and over 100 parks. The geography of Upstate NY and the Finger Lakes region combined with the emphasis placed on parks and green spaces contribute to the abundance of access to parks and green space.

Factors hindering progress: Rochester is a former Rust Belt city with abandoned factories that take up large areas of space.

Quality Education and Skill-Building

Share of children enrolled in preschool

The percentage of 3- and 4-year-olds enrolled in preschool or nursery school.

Share Enrolled in Preschool

% Share in Preschool by Race/Ethnicity

Note that 2018=2014-18 and 2021=2017-21 - 5-year American Community Survey data
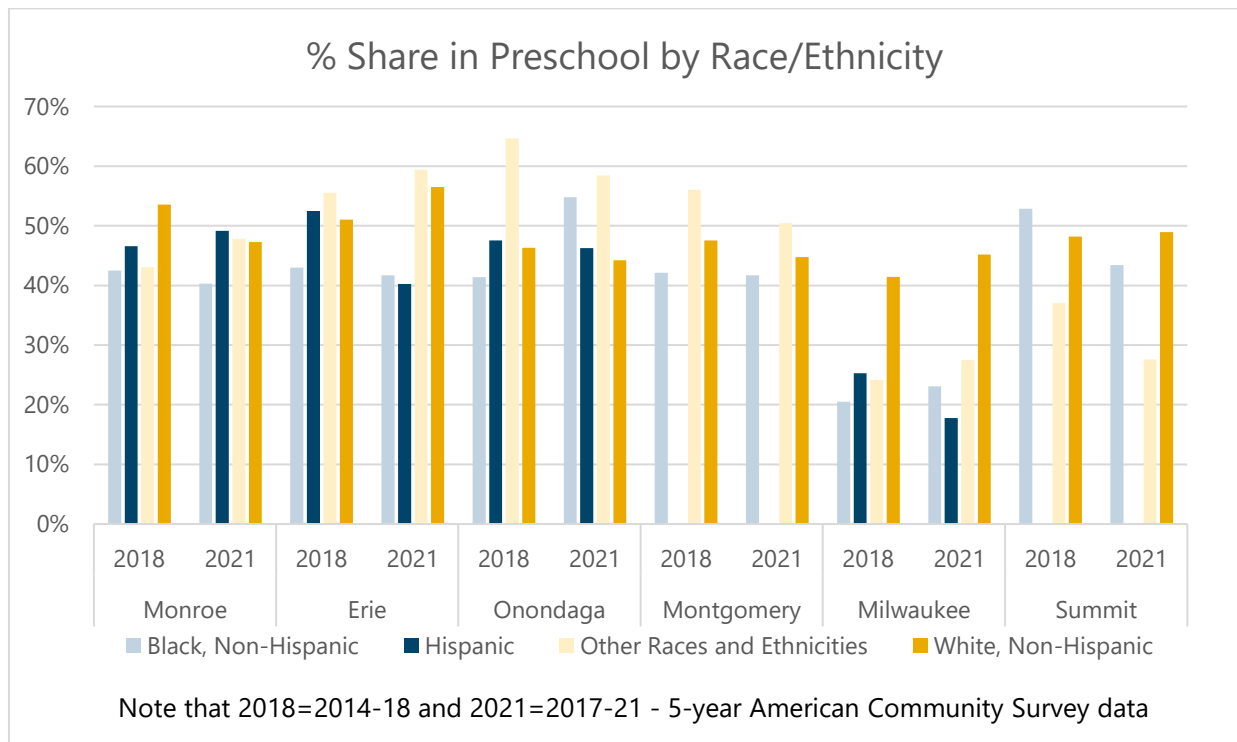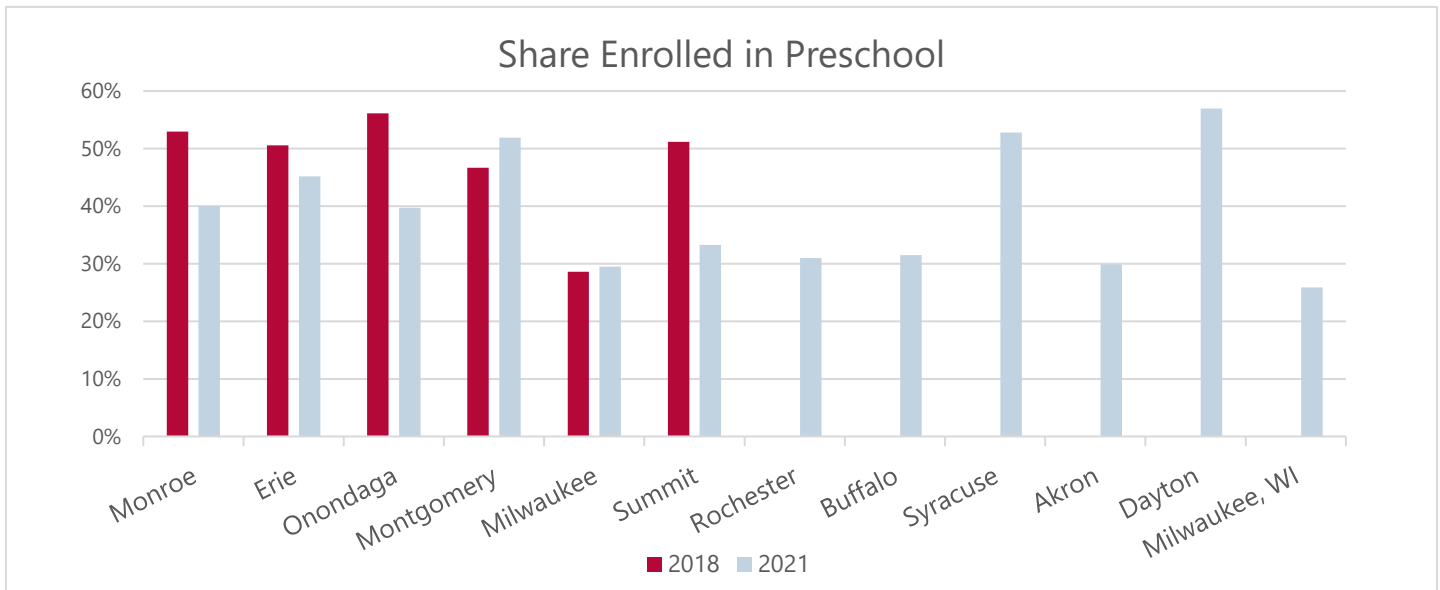
Source: Urban Institute

> **Story behind the curve**
>
> **Preschool enrollment declined 13 percentage points in Monroe County from 2018 to 2021, with the COVID pandemic likely a key factor.**
>
> **Factors contributing to progress: Government support such as a $300,000 Monroe County grant to develop and expand in-home childcare businesses and federally funded Early Head Start programs help expand access to preschool.**
>
> **Factors hindering progress: Transportation to and cost of some programs can be barriers to enrollment.**

Kindergarten readiness

Kindergarten readiness serves as a way to measure the basic skills a child should have when they start kindergarten. Data is only available for the City of Rochester because there is no standard kindergarten readiness assessment across local areas. The assessment used in the City is called COR Advantage.

Kindergarten Readiness by Race

■ 2021-22 ■ 2022-23

Kindergarten Readiness, by Ethnicity

■ Latino ■ Other

Kindergarten Readiness, by Gender
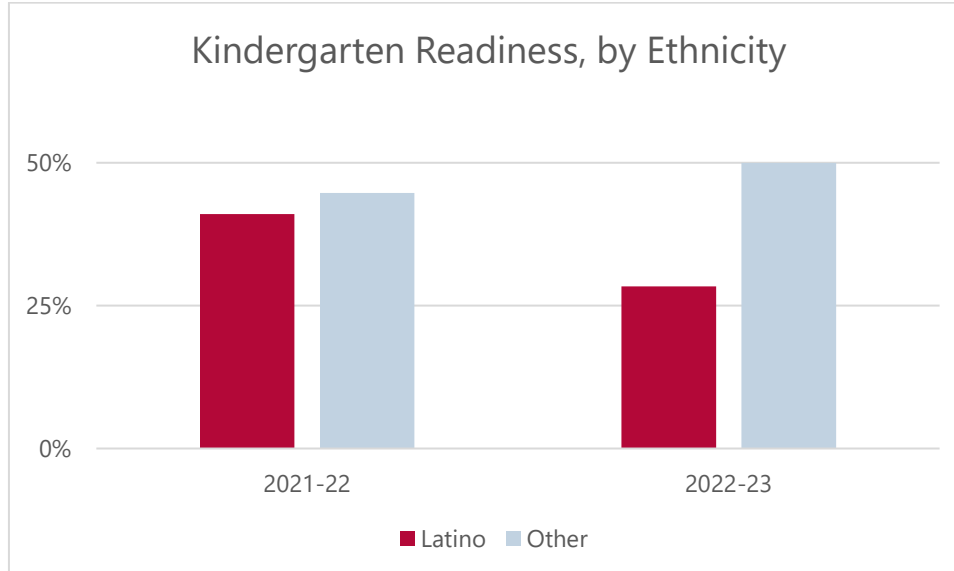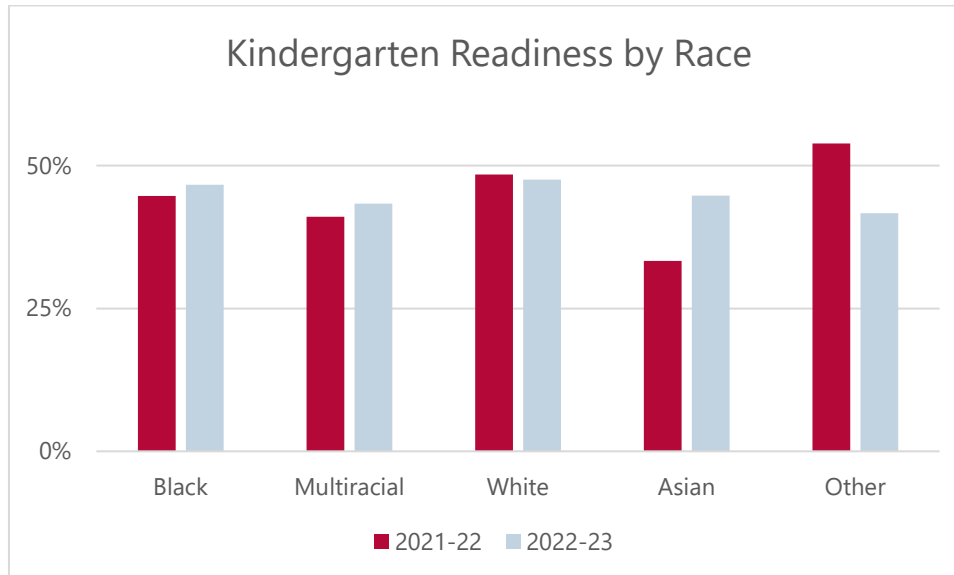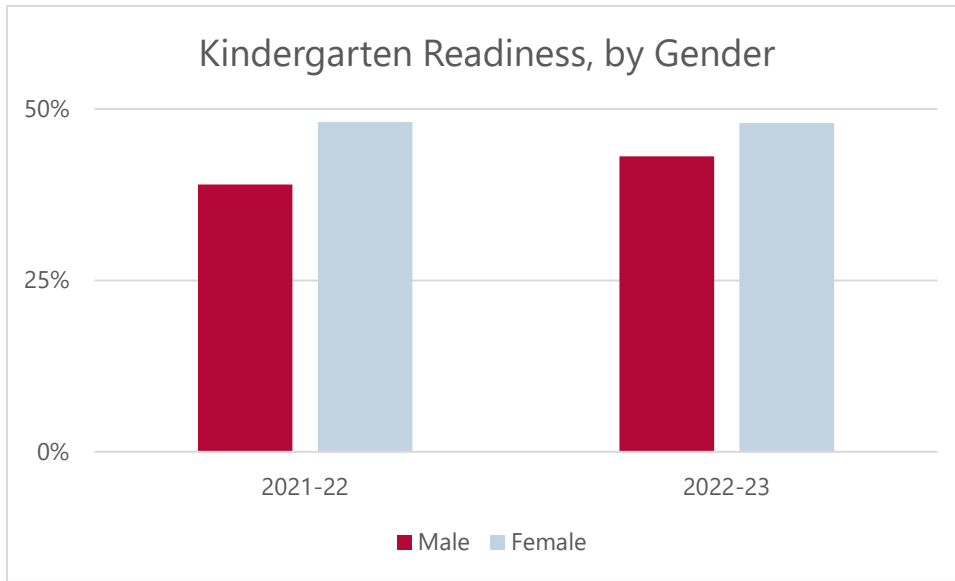
Source: Children's Institute

> ***Story behind the curve***
>
> *More than half of students entering kindergarten in the City of Rochester were not ready across all groups. The highest readiness rates for 2022-23 were among females (48%), White (48%) and Black (47%) students. From 2021-22 to 2022-23, there were small changes in readiness rates among the groups, most positive, though one troubling exception was a decline among Latino children to 28%.*
>
> *Factors contributing to progress: Childhood development programs such as Head Start and preschool programs provide foundational skills. Public preschool programs help increase kindergarten readiness.*
>
> *Factors hindering progress: Lack of family income and resources can put children at a disadvantage in being ready for school although low incomes do not necessarily mean low resources.*

Students attending high-poverty schools

The share of students in each major racial/ethnic group attending high-poverty schools, defined as those where over 40 percent of the student body receives free or reduced-price meals.

Share of Students Attending High-Poverty Schools, by Race/Ethnicity

Share of students attending high-poverty schools, by student race or ethnicity
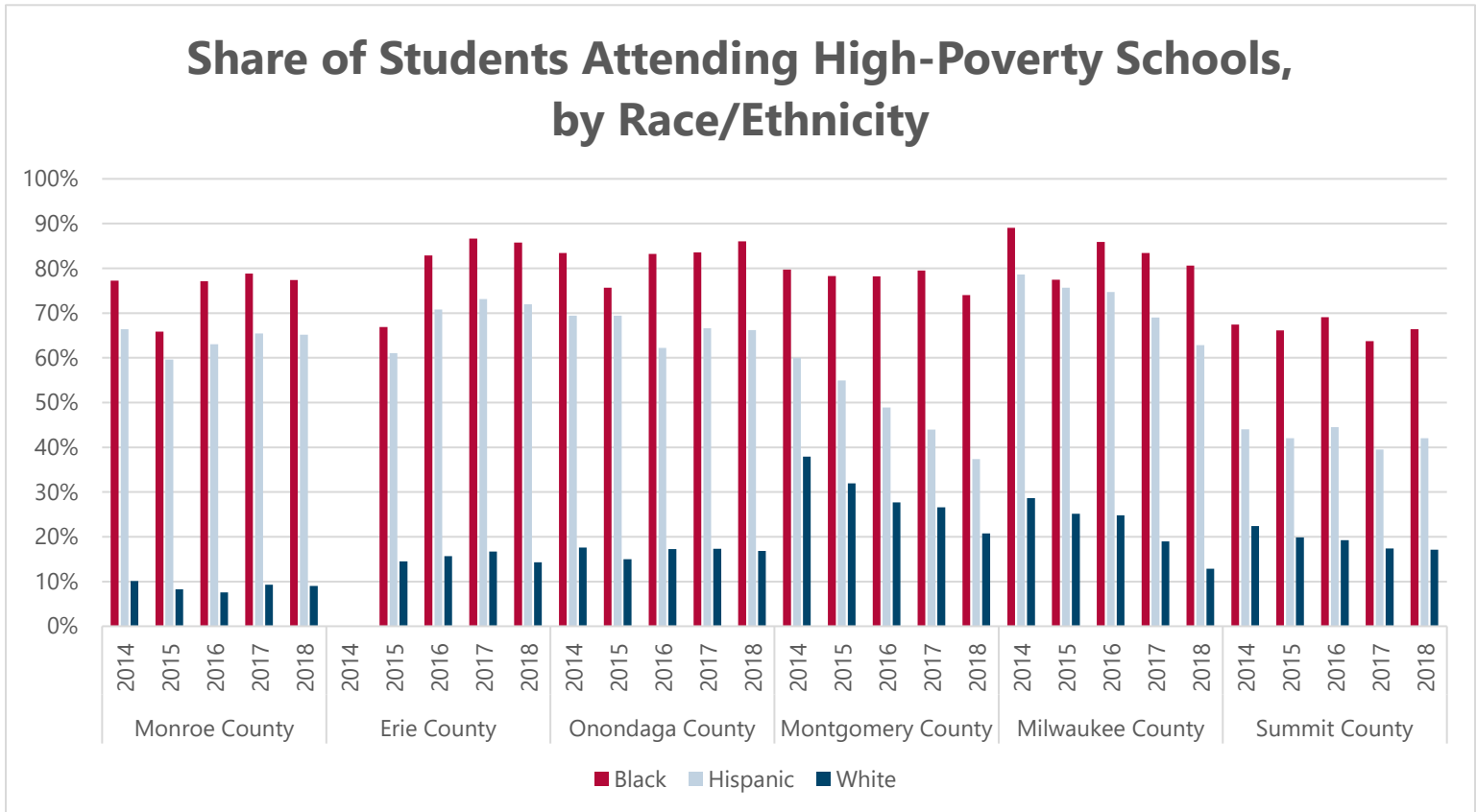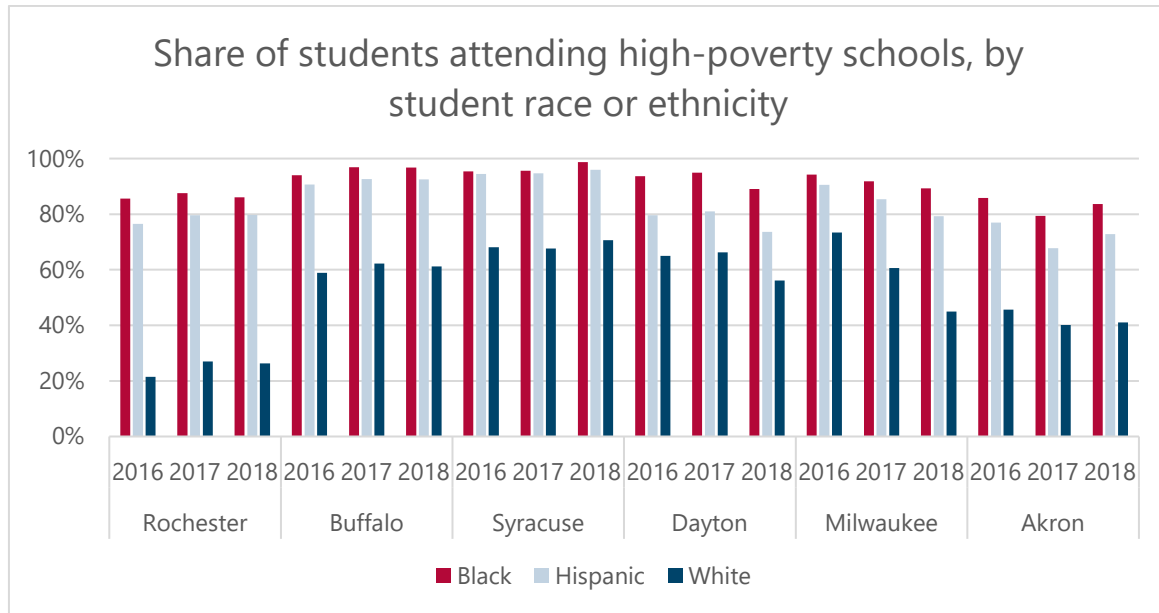
Story behind the curve

In Monroe County from 2014-18, Black and Latino students were about 7 times more likely to attend a high-poverty school than White students. This disparity was similar across the comparison counties though more pronounced in Monroe primary due to the very low likelihood of White students attending high-poverty schools. The same pronounced disparity was true for the City of Rochester, relative to other cities.

Factors contributing to progress: The Urban-Suburban program that buses underrepresented students to schools in more affluent school districts provides opportunities for students to get out of high-poverty schools. Economic development and other investments in high-poverty areas can also help to reduce poverty exposure for students.

Factors hindering progress: Concentrated poverty combined with transportation barriers narrow schooling options. Also, disinvestment in urban areas and housing discrimination help to segregate students economically.

Broadband access

Share of households with a digital Internet connection.

% of households with broadband access

% Share of household with broadand access by Race/Ethnicity

Legend:
- Monroe County
- Erie County
- Onondaga County
- Montgomery County
- Milwaukee County
- Summit County

Ccgr
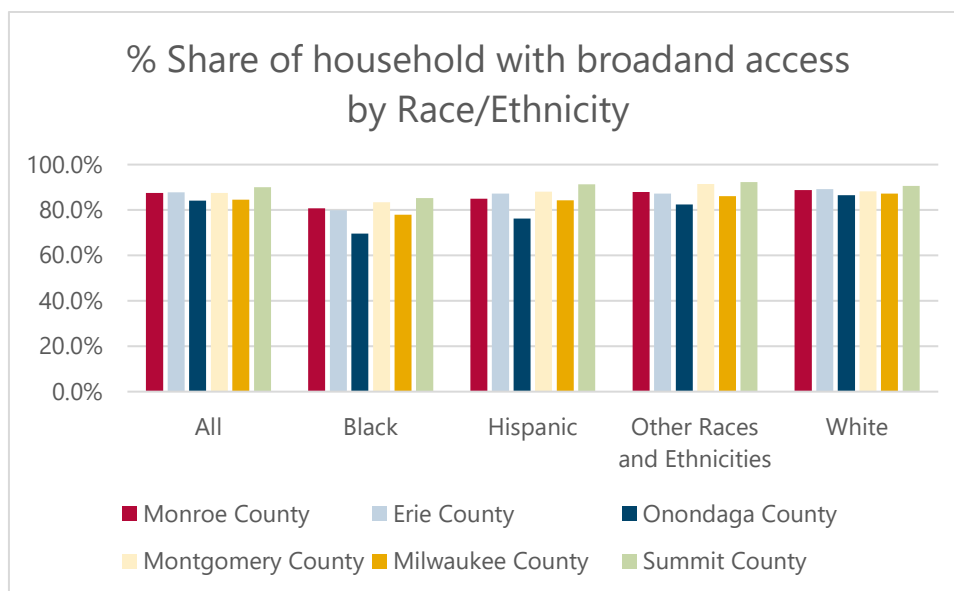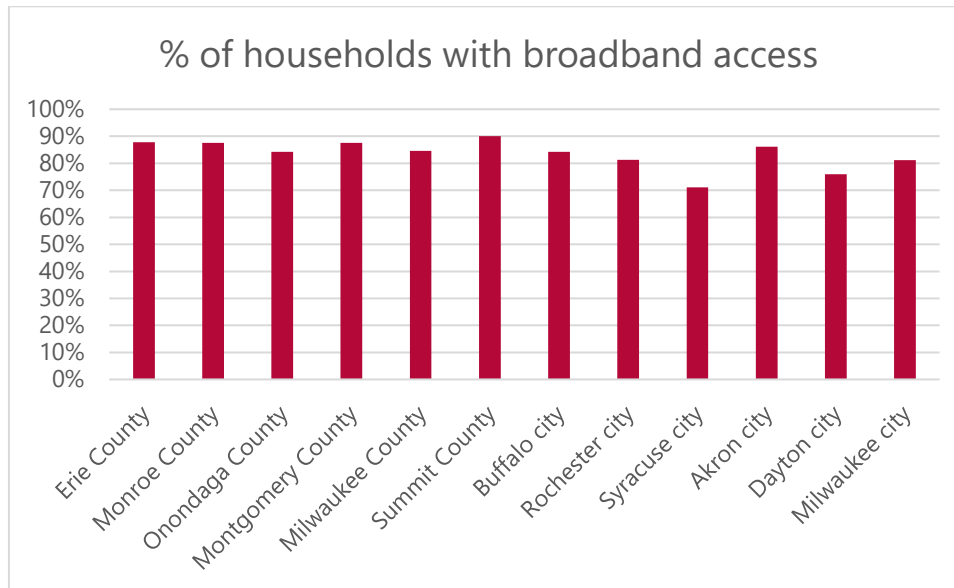
Story behind the curve

In 2021, 88% of households in Monroe County had digital access, similar to comparison counties. Black households had the lowest share of broadband access at 81% in Monroe County, a disparity common across counties. Data was not available/comparable from prior years.
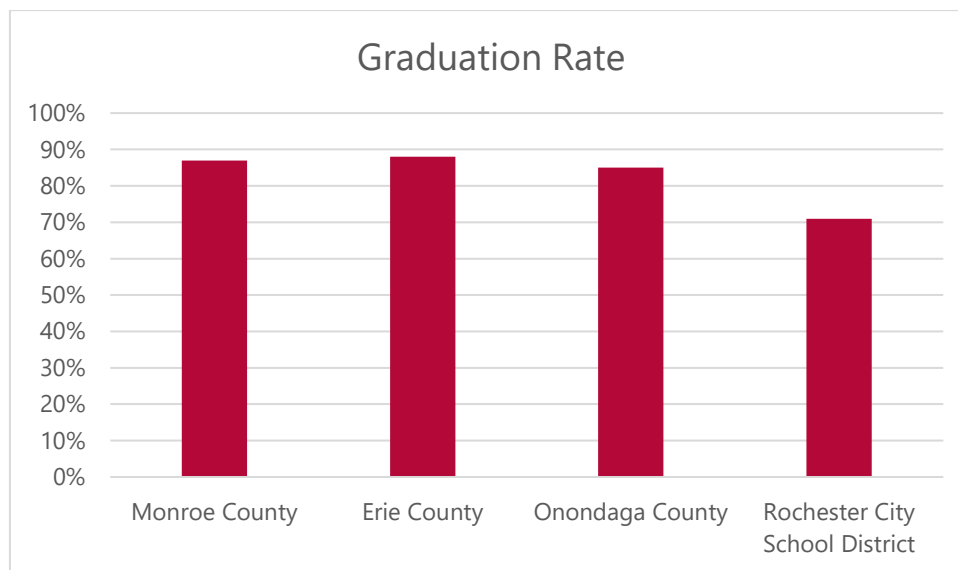
Factors contributing to progress: American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funding was devoted to expanding access to broadband services throughout Monroe County in underserved areas.

Factors hindering progress: Exclusion of service to areas on the outskirts and often in low-income areas of inner cities. Cost of service can also be a barrier.

Graduation rates

The number of students graduating after four years of high school (measured through August of the graduation year), as a percentage of their cohort. The cohort is the class of ninth-graders beginning high school in the same academic year. Data is for the 2018 cohort with a graduation year of 2022.

Economically disadvantaged students are those are those who participate in, or whose family participates in, economic assistance programs, such as the free or reduced-price lunch programs, Social Security Insurance (SSI), Food Stamps, Foster Care, Refugee Assistance (cash or medical assistance), Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC), Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP), Safety Net Assistance (SNA), Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA), or Family Assistance: Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF).

Graduation Rate

Monroe County: ~87%
Erie County: ~88%
Onondaga County: ~85%
Rochester City School District: ~71%

Graduation Rate by Economic Level

Economically Disadvantaged ■ Not Economically Disadvantaged

Graduation Rate by Race/Ethnicity

■ Monroe County ■ Erie County ■ Onondaga County ■ Rochester City School District

Diploma Type

Legend: Local · Regents · Advanced Regents · Non-Diploma Credential · Still Enrolled · GED · Dropout

(Categories across x-axis: Monroe County, Erie County, Onondaga County, Rochester City School District)

Diploma Type by Race/Ethnicity

Legend: Black · Hispanic · Asian or Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander · White

(Categories across x-axis for each county — Monroe County, Erie County, Onondaga County, Rochester City School District: Local, Regents, Advanced Regents, Non-Diploma Credential, GED)

cgr

Diploma Type By Economic Level

Source: NYS Education Department

Story behind the curve

Graduation rates were approximately 88% in all counties. Regents and Advanced Regents diplomas were the most common. The Rochester City School District had the lowest graduation rate at 71%. Students in Monroe and similar countries earned an Advanced Regents diploma at more than three times the rate of RCSD graduates. Economically disadvantaged students earned Advanced Regents diploma at lower rates than those without economic disadvantage, as did Black and Latino students compared to White and Asian students.

Factors contributing to progress: Schools that can engage students in learning, offer relevant curriculum and build positive relationships with students and families can help ameloriate the entrenched inequities in educational systems and outcomes.

Factors hindering progress: Socioeconomic status is the strongest measure to predict if a student will graduate high school. School systems in the United States are highly segregated, and students of color disproportionately attend schools with high proportions of low-income students who may

not have benefited from early learning opportunities at the same rate as other students. Schools also have different levels of resources ranging from qualified/experienced teachers to advanced courses to facilities and technology, and schools with large Black and Latino populations often have lower levels. In addition, teachers across all school systems tend to be disproportionately white, and teaching practices and curriculum may not be culturally relevant to students of color.

Quality Health/Social Care

Maternal health

Morbidity is defined here as births in which women had complications leading to short- or long-term adverse health consequences, expressed as a rate per 10,000 deliveries. These include things such as renal (kidney) failure, sepsis (extreme response to infection) or respiratory (breathing) distress.
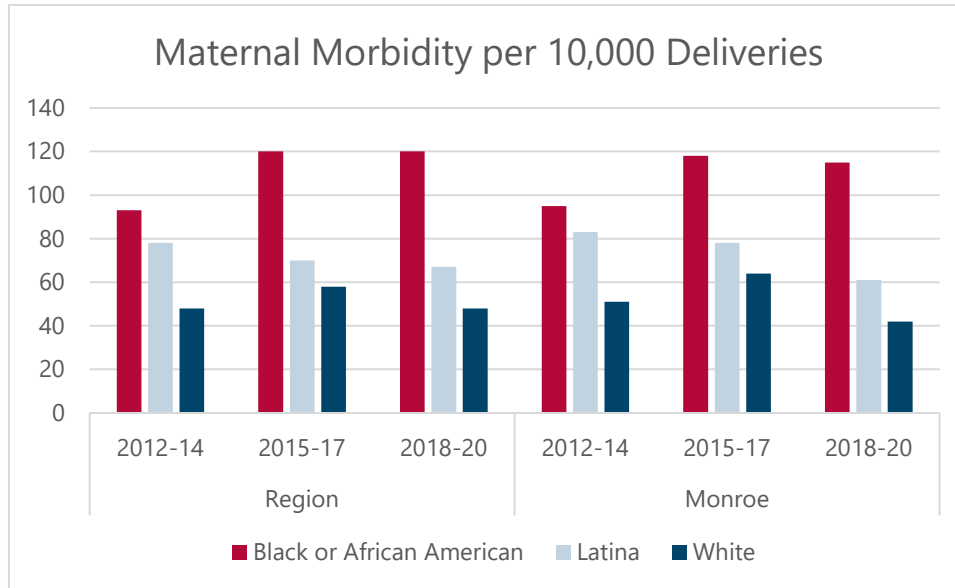
Source: Common Ground Health

Story behind the curve

Maternal morbidity rates in Black women increased from 2012-2014 to 2015-17 and then plateaued. Rates have declined for both Latina and White women. Rates remained far higher for Black women than other groups.

Factors contributing to progress: Anti-discrimination and education efforts in health care.

Factors hindering progress: Discrimination in health care, including documented bias on medical staff's part in taking Black women's concerns seriously. Stress, lower incomes, and other social determinants of health also contribute.

Low birth-weight babies

The number of babies born with low birth weight (less than 2,500 grams or about 5.5 pounds) expressed as a percentage of all live births.

Low Birth-Weight Babies

Low Birth-Weight Babies, by Race/Ethnicity
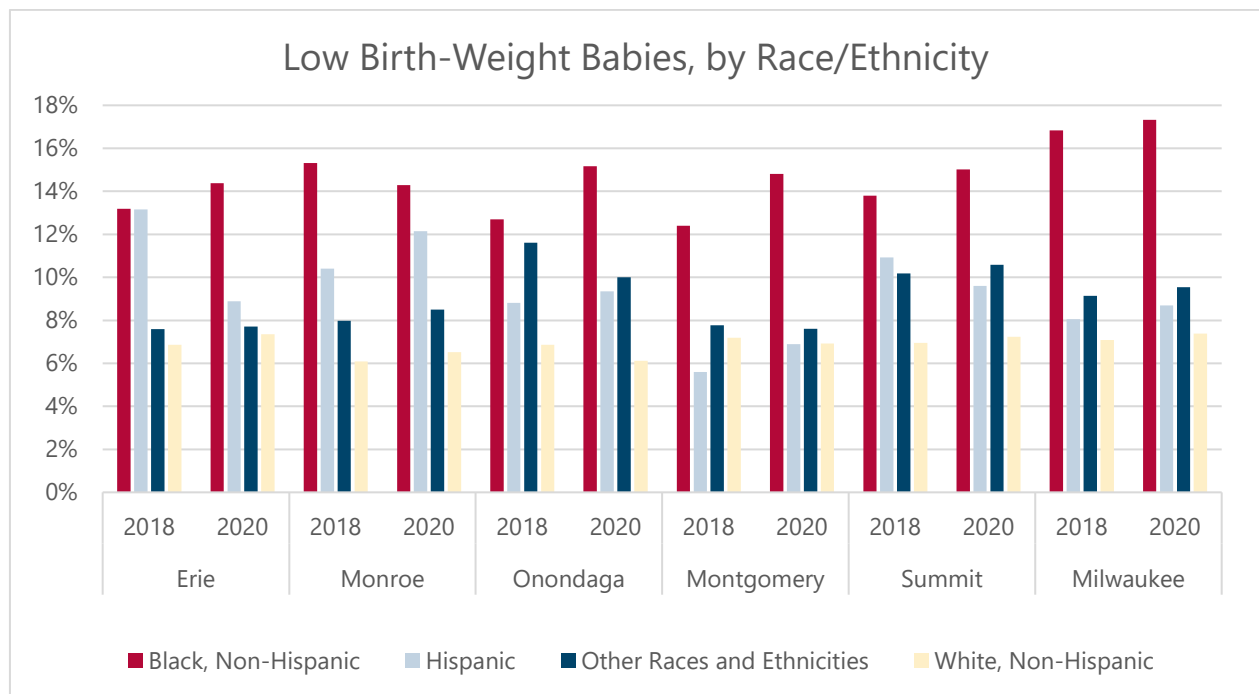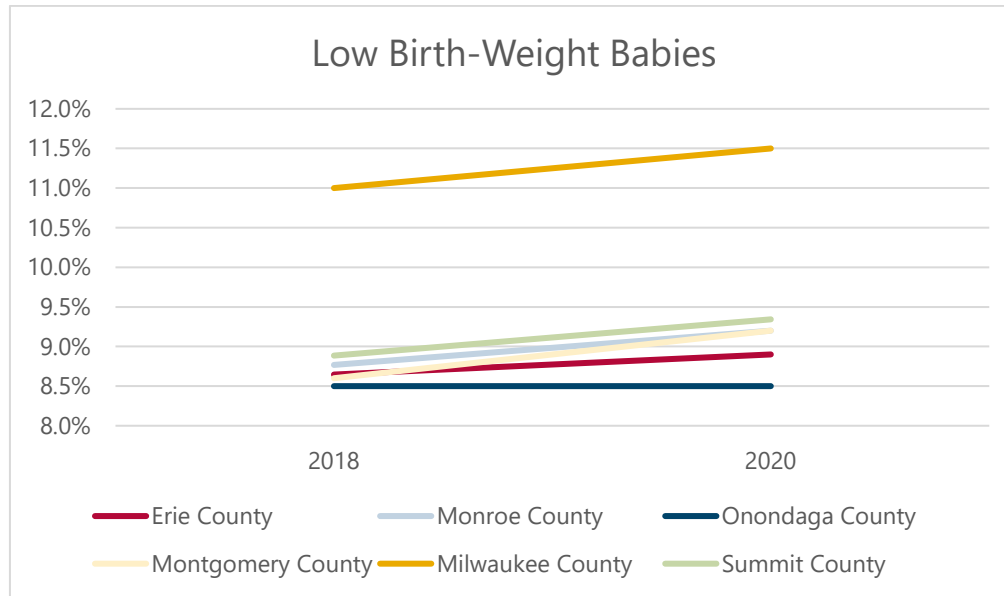
Source: Urban Institute

Story behind the curve

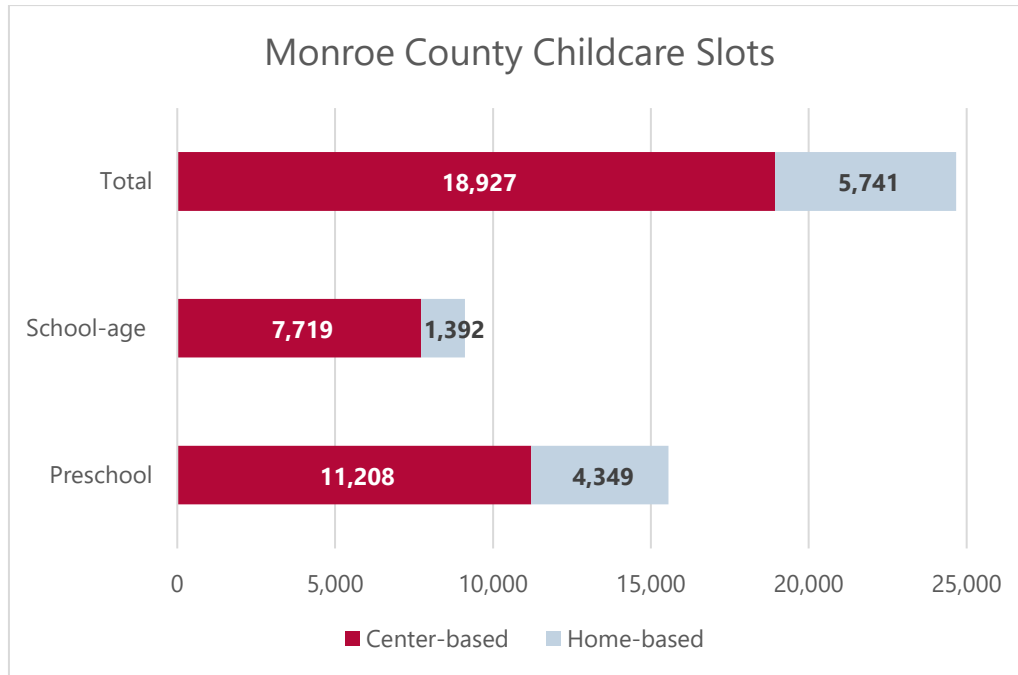*The rate of low-weight births is much higher among Black births than any other group in all of the counties. The rate declined 1 percentage point in Monroe County from 2018 to 2020. The rate among Latinas increased 1.7 percentage points and the rate among Whites increased slightly as well.*

Factors contributing to progress: Support for pregnant women including access to prenatal care and doulas who support women during childbirth can positively impact birth outcomes including healthy weights. Legislative policies such as the proposed MOMMIES Act in Congress can help ensure such support is funded and available to women. Importantly, the MOMMIES Act is specifically aimed at providing support for Black women and other women of color.

Factors hindering progress: Social determinants of health such as food security, economic security, and environmental quality (including air quality) contribute to stress and birth outcomes, as well as health behaviors such as smoking and drinking alcohol.

Childcare slots

The number of licensed childcare slots in different settings for two age groups – school-age and preschool (including infants, toddlers and preschoolers) in Q1 2024. For context, there were more than 150,000 children under 18 in Monroe County in 2022.

Monroe County Childcare Slots

Category	Center-based	Home-based
Total	18,927	5,741
School-age	7,719	1,392
Preschool	11,208	4,349

■ Center-based ■ Home-based

Source: NYS Office of Children and Family Services

> **Story behind the curve**
>
> *The number of childcare slots available in center-based providers in Monroe County is three times higher than in home-based programs. In 2023, 72% of preschool and 85% of school-age slots are in centers.*
>
> *Factors contributing to progress: Financial support for parents and providers can help increase the supply of childcare slots. While the U.S. provides childcare subsidies to families who are income-eligible, some other countries provide direct support to childcare providers.[6] There are also policy changes that can*

[6] https://blogs.worldbank.org/developmenttalk/three-ways-how-governments-can-support-affordable-childcare#:~:text=Providers%20may%20receive%20financial%20support,facilities%20and%20enhancing%20service%20quality.
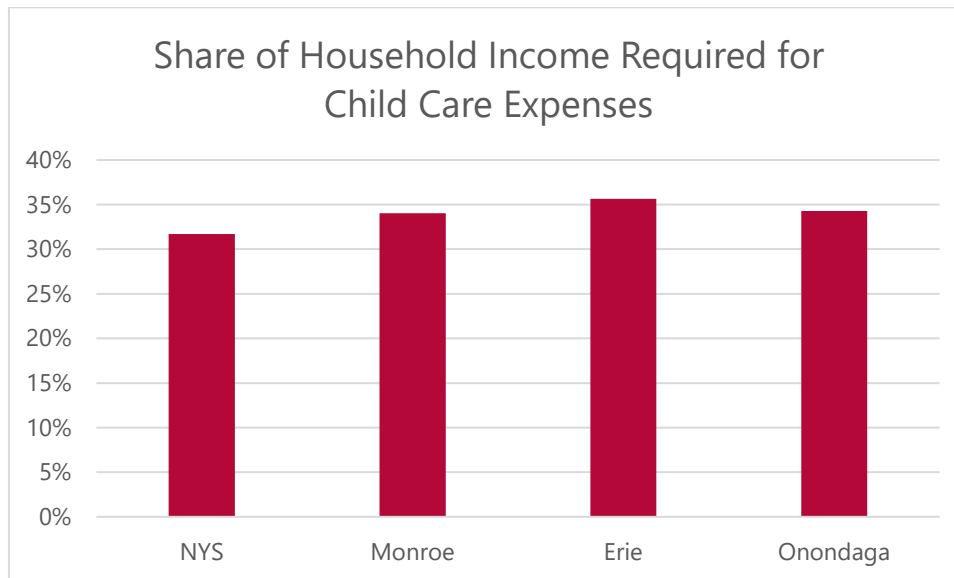
increase the supply of home-based care, such as investments in quality and professional development and assistance with administration and financial management.[7]

Factors hindering progress: The Covid pandemic produced a lot of strain on childcare providers, and it remains difficult for many providers to retain adequate staff. Increased childcare regulations and provider requirements are also factors in reducing the supply of childcare.

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[7] https://www.urban.org/urban-wire/six-ways-states-can-leverage-funding-increase-supply-and-quality-home-based-child-care

Childcare cost burden

Cost for care for 2 children as a percentage of median income.

Share of Household Income Required for Child Care Expenses

A bar chart titled "Share of Household Income Required for Child Care Expenses" with a y-axis from 0% to 40% in 5% increments. Bars: NYS approximately 32%, Monroe approximately 34%, Erie approximately 35.5%, Onondaga approximately 34%.

Source: County Health Rankings
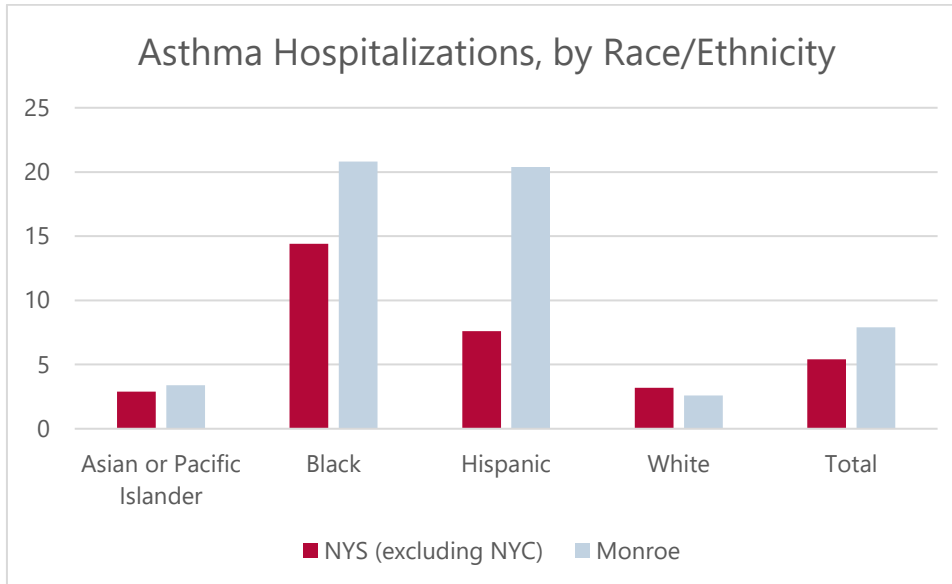
Story behind the curve

Childcare for 2 children consumed more than a third of income in a household with median income in Monroe County in 2021/22. This was similar to the values for neighboring counties and New York State. Data was not available/comparable for prior years.

Factors contributing to progress: Childcare subsidies help lower-income parents afford child care, and programs such as Head Start and publicly funded prekindergarten provide free care, though usually not for a full day or week. In addition, sibling, military, or other discounts can ease the burden somewhat.

Factors hindering progress: Childcare is a labor-intensive industry in which many operators struggle to pay staff a decent wage while keeping costs somewhat affordable for families. Government regulations can contribute to costs (such as maximum child-to-staff ratios), though regulations can be critically important in ensuring children's safety and well-being.

Asthma

Age-adjusted hospitalizations due to asthma, per 10,000 people.

Asthma Hospitalizations, by Race/Ethnicity

Source: New York State Department of Health

Story behind the curve

Black and Hispanic asthma hospitalization rates in Monroe County were far higher than other racial and ethnic groups and above levels in New York State in 2018-20.
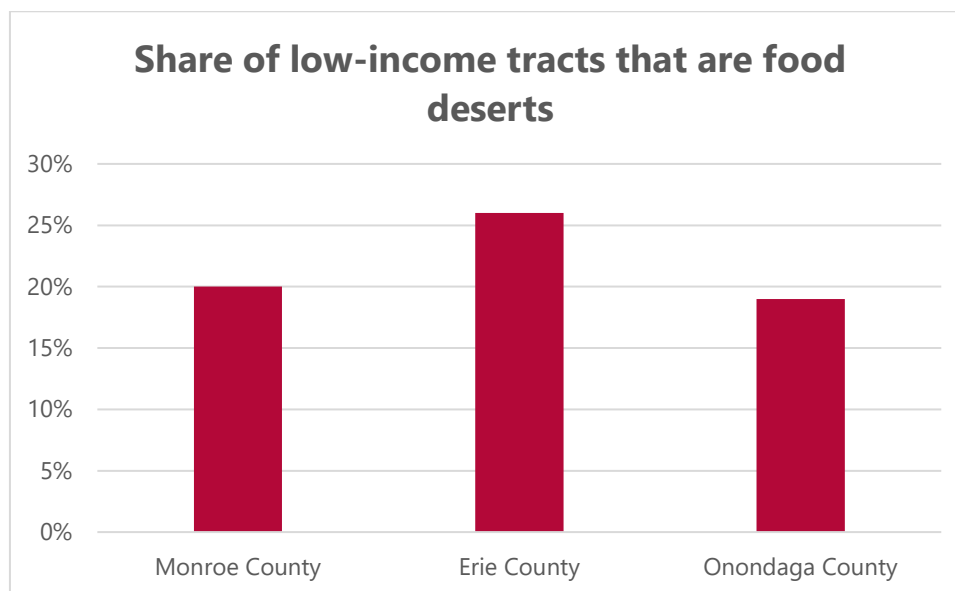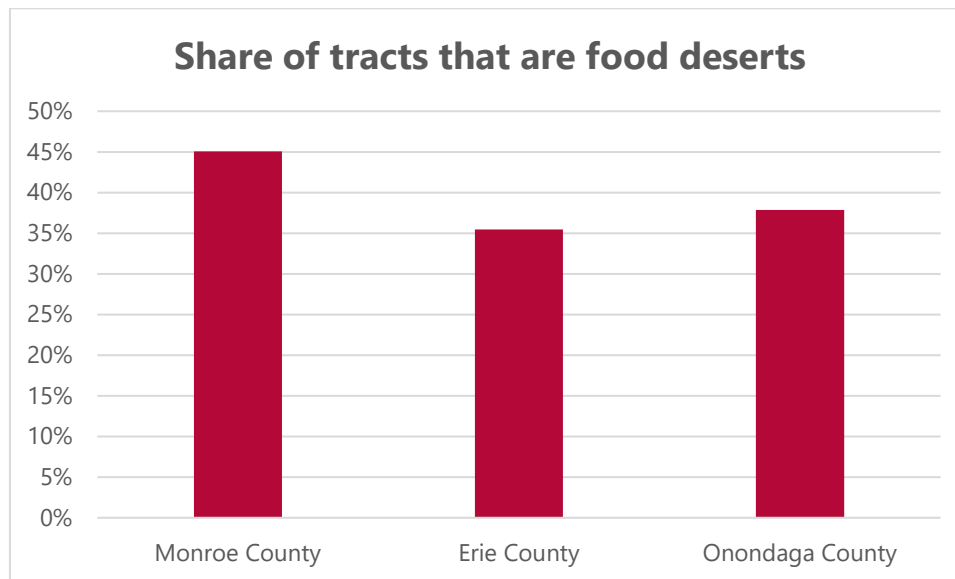
Factors contributing to progress: Strategies to reduce asthma hospitalizations include improving environmental conditions through home weatherization and improving workplace air quality, and controlling asthma through medication access and management, and home visits to identify and remediate triggers.

Factors hindering progress: Risk factors for asthma prevalence include poor air quality, older housing in some parts of the community, stress, chronic asthma in families, obesity, and food insecurity. Asthma-related hospitalizations are linked to socioeconomic factors (income) and demographic factors (race) as well as asthma severity.

Food deserts

The share of census tracts in an area that were food deserts in 2019. In this dataset, a food desert is defined as a census tract where at least 500 people or 33 percent of the population live more than 1 mile from the nearest food store (supermarket, supercenter, or large grocery store) in an urban area or more than 10 miles from such a store in a rural area.

We also show low-income census tracts that were food deserts. Tracts are considered low-income if they have a poverty rate of 20% or more or if median family income is below or equal to 80% of the state or metro area median.

Share of tracts that are food deserts

County	Share
Monroe County	~45%
Erie County	~35%
Onondaga County	~38%

Share of low-income tracts that are food deserts

County	Share
Monroe County	~20%
Erie County	~26%
Onondaga County	~19%

Source: USDA Food Access Research Atlas
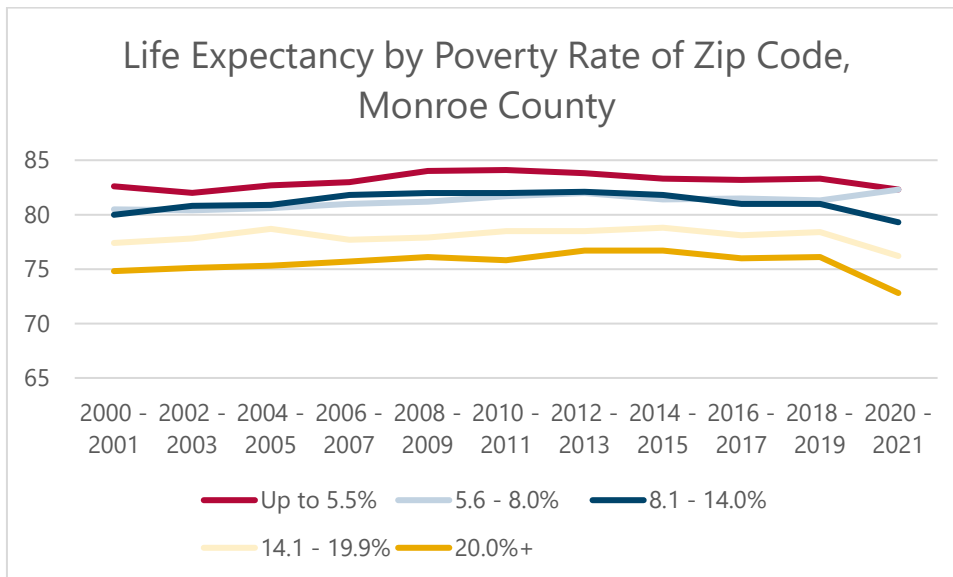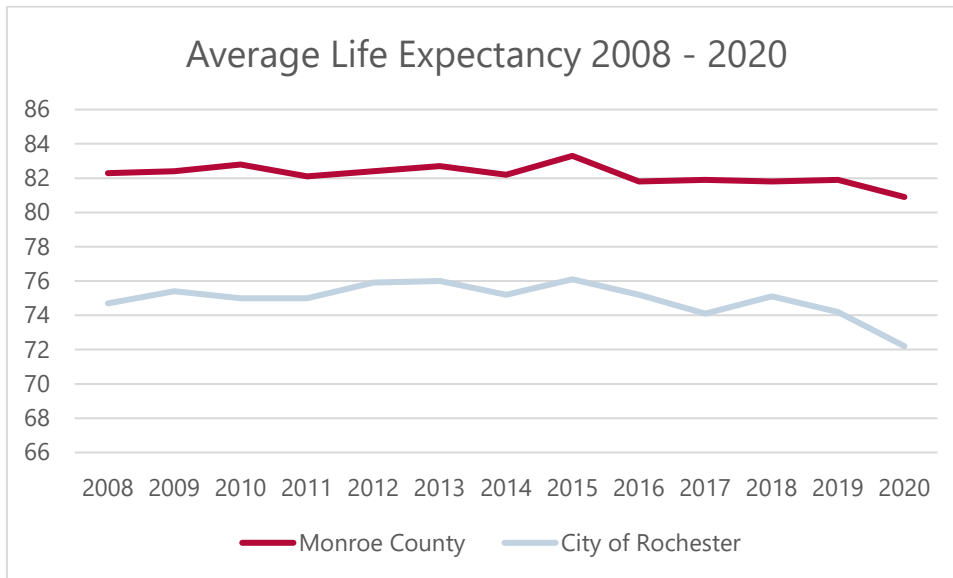
Story behind the curve

Monroe County had a higher overall share of census tracts that are food deserts, but a lower share than Erie County of low-income tracts that are food deserts. Information was only available for one year (2019).
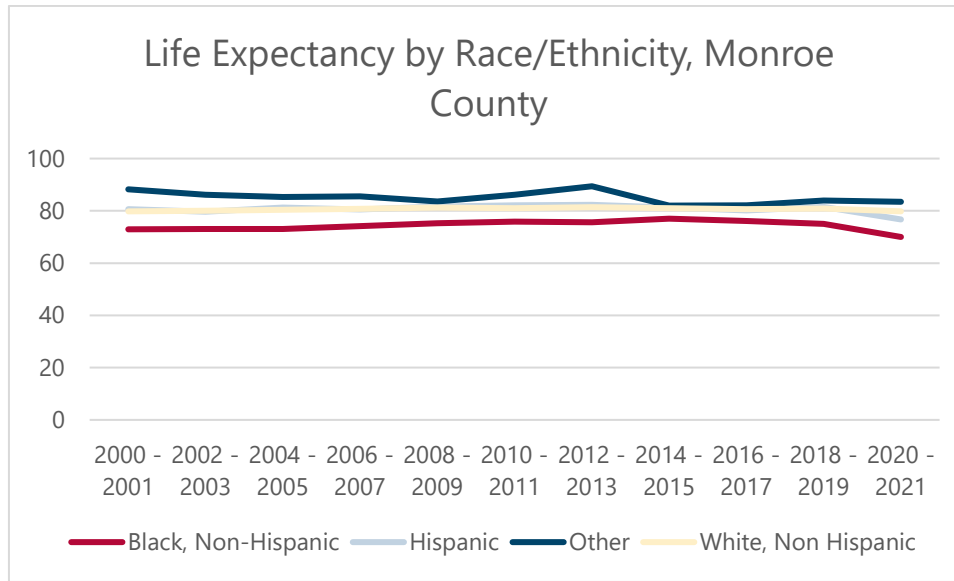
Factors contributing to progress: Grocery stores and other food outlets, especially affordable ones, broadly available in all parts of a community.

Factors hindering progress: The concentration of food stores in parts of communities, to the exclusion of other areas (often lower-income areas). Food desert tracts tend to have smaller populations, higher rates of abandoned or vacant homes, and residents who have lower levels of education, lower incomes, and higher unemployment. Structural racism is cited as a major factor contributing to food deserts, leading some to prefer the term "food apartheid."

Life Expectancy

The average life span of a resident of a given area.

Average Life Expectancy 2008 - 2020

Life Expectancy by Poverty Rate of Zip Code, Monroe County

Life Expectancy by Race/Ethnicity, Monroe County

Source: Common Ground Health

> **Story behind the curve**
>
> Since 2008, the average life expectancy for a City of Rochester resident has been nearly 7 and a quarter years shorter than that of a Monroe County resident. The COVID-19 pandemic and drug overdoses likely contributed to life expectancy for both City and County residents declining in 2020. In that same year, the gap between City and County residents reached a recent high of 8.7 years.
>
> Both poverty and race/ethnicity play an influential role in reducing life expectancy. People in zip codes with more than 20% of residents living in poverty had a life expectancy 10 years lower than those in lower poverty zip codes in 2020. Since 2000, the life expectancy for Black, Non-Hispanic residents in Monroe County has been on average more than 7½ years less than any other race/ethnicity.
>
> Factors contributing to progress: Monroe County public health agencies that engage in the Community Health Improvement Workgroup who triennially conducts both a Community Health Needs Assessment plan and a Community Health Improvement Plan. Its guidance informs practices that County nonprofits, organizations dedicated to youth & adult health and safety and food banks use to address the health needs of residents.
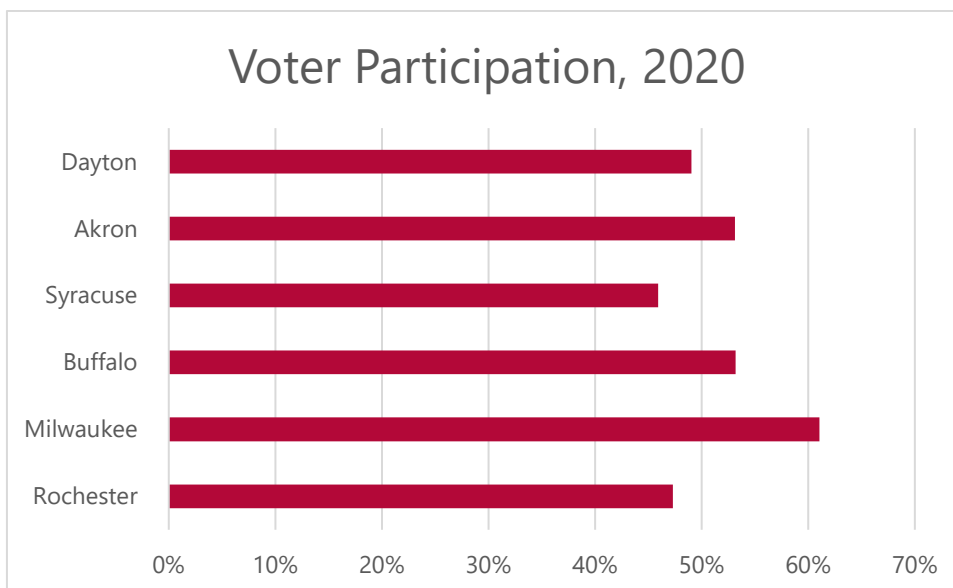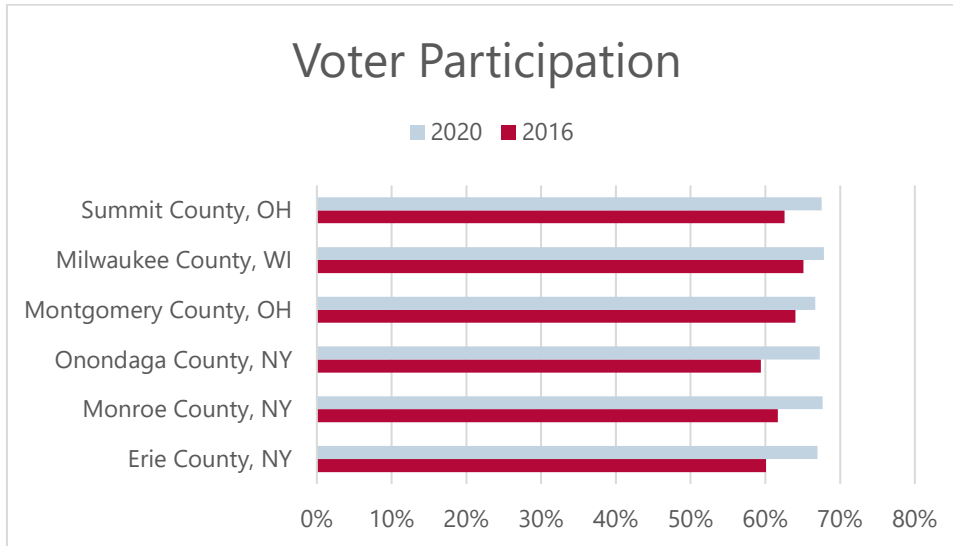
Factors hindering progress: Increased incidence of lethal diseases like cancer & heart disease, with contributing factors such as food insecurity and lack of exercise increase the likelihood of premature death. In addition, the prevalence of violence and concentrations of poverty in the City of Rochester play a key role in lowering life expectancy for a City resident.

Dignity, Inclusion & Belonging

The source for all data in this pillar is the Urban Institute.

Voter participation rate

Share of the voting-eligible population that voted in the local election in a year with a presidential election.

Voter Participation

■ 2020   ■ 2016

- Summit County, OH
- Milwaukee County, WI
- Montgomery County, OH
- Onondaga County, NY
- Monroe County, NY
- Erie County, NY

0% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50% 60% 70% 80%

Voter Participation, 2020

- Dayton
- Akron
- Syracuse
- Buffalo
- Milwaukee
- Rochester

0% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50% 60% 70%

Story behind the curve

Voter participation was lower in cities in 2020, including Rochester, than in counties. Less than half of the voting-eligible population voted in Rochester in 2020.

Factors contributing to progress: Voter awareness and education, policies that make voting more accessible and convenient.

Factors hindering progress: Policies making voting more difficult, including prohibiting people incarcerated from voting or requiring those with criminal records to re-register to vote.

Neighborhood exposure

The share of a person's neighbors who are people of other races and ethnicities. This metric is constructed separately for each racial or ethnic group and reports the average share of that group's neighbors who are members of other racial or ethnic groups.

For example, the exposure index would report the share of people who are Black and Latinx in the census tract of the average white person, the share of people who are white and Latinx in the census tract of the average Black person, and the share of people who are Black and white in the census tract of the average Latinx person. Higher values of the index indicate more neighborhood diversity and more day-to-day exposure of people to neighbors of different races and ethnicities.

Neighborhood Exposure, Cities
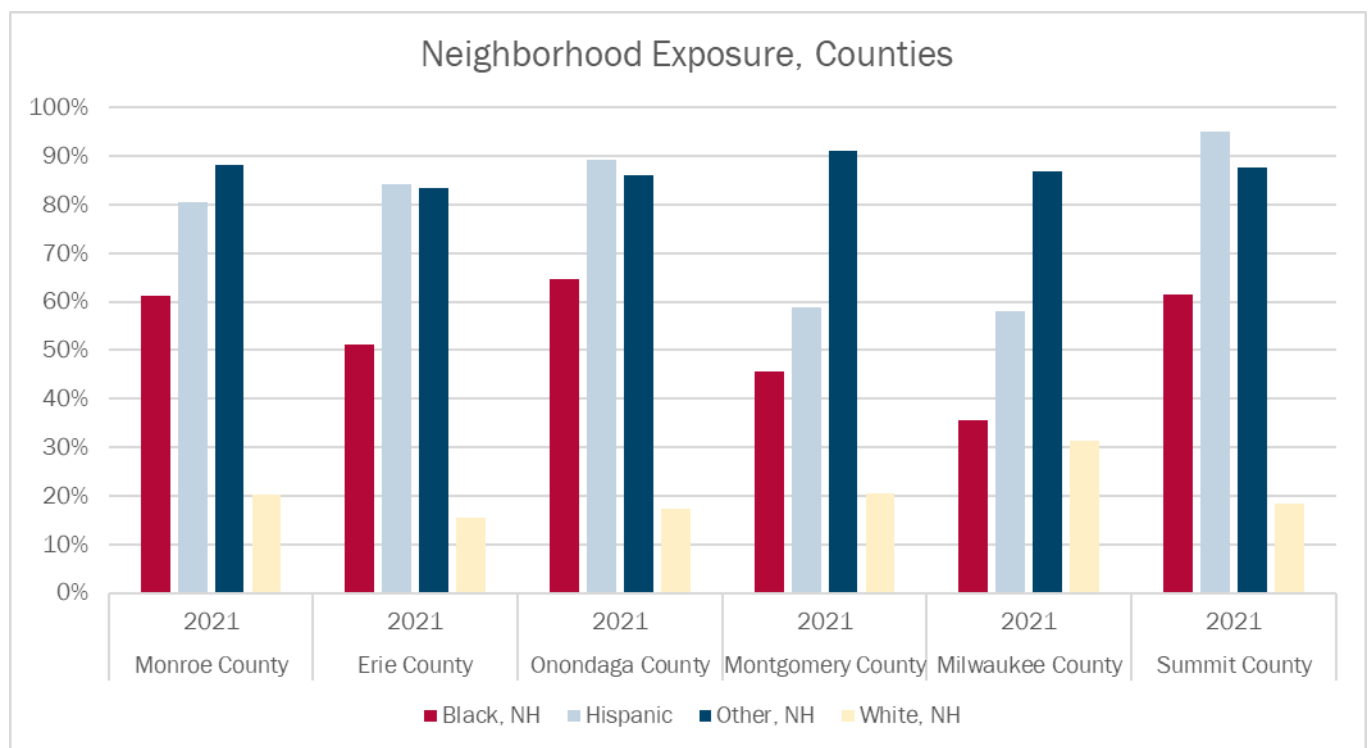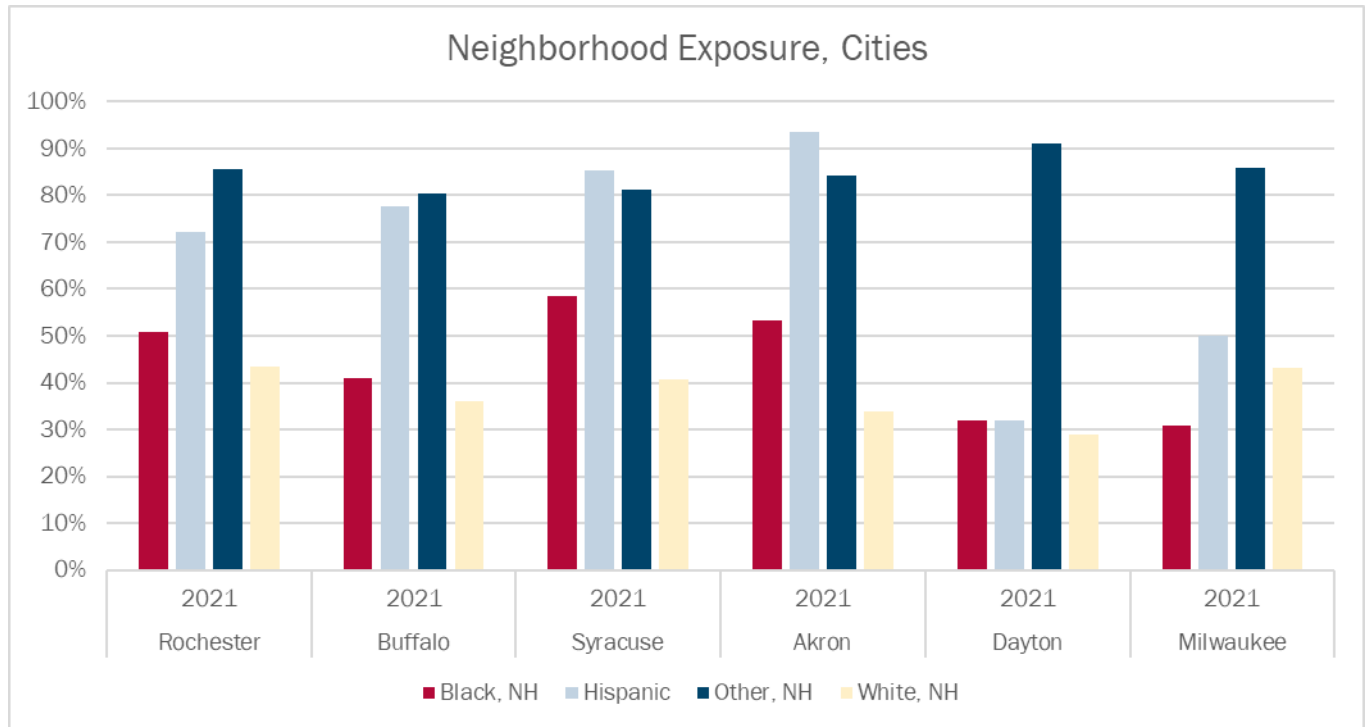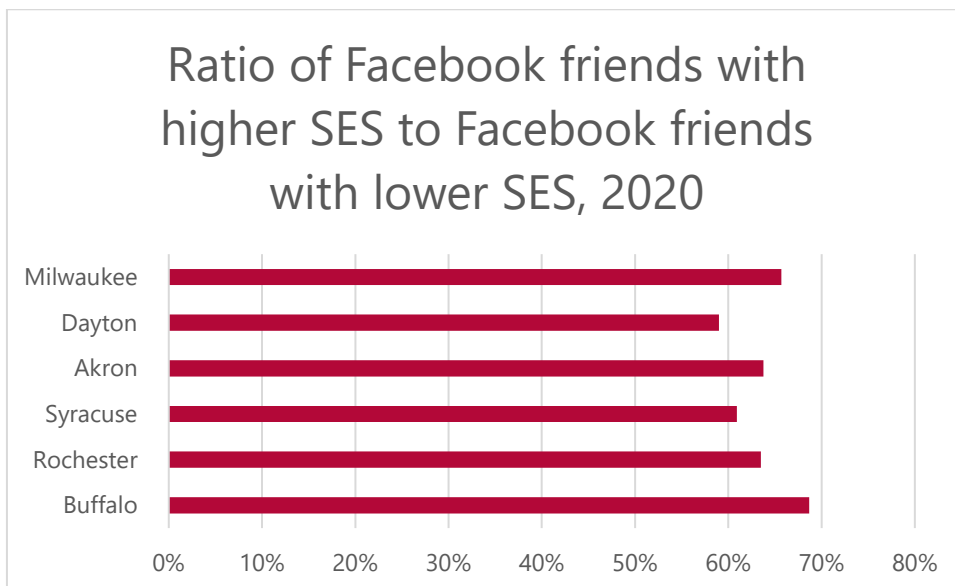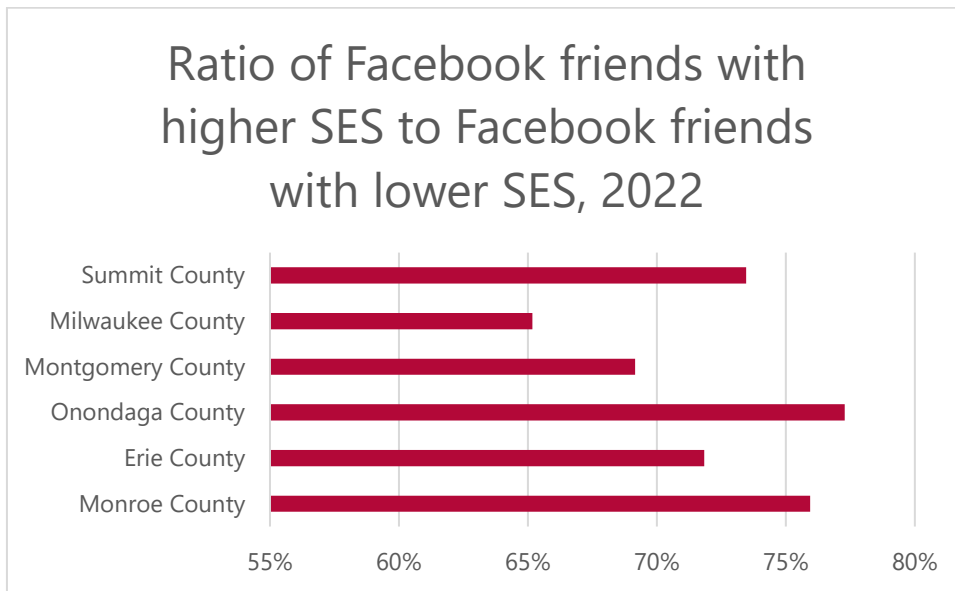

Story behind the curve

Neighborhood exposure rates were lowest among White residents than residents of other races or ethnicities. Next lowest were rates among Black residents. Rates changed little between 2018 and 2021 in counties (not shown in chart).

Factors contributing to progress: Increasing incomes and housing wealth among all racial and ethnic groups.

Factors hindering progress: Lack of enforcement of anti-discrimination housing and lending laws, long-lived legacy of redlining and segregation.

Social networks

This is a measure of "economic connectedness," or the extent to which low- and high-socioeconomic status individuals are friends with each other. A value of 100% would reflect a community perfectly integrated across socioeconomic status, with half of all low-socioeconomic status individuals' friends being of high socioeconomic status.

Ratio of Facebook friends with higher SES to Facebook friends with lower SES, 2022

County	Value
Summit County	~73%
Milwaukee County	~65%
Montgomery County	~69%
Onondaga County	~77%
Erie County	~72%
Monroe County	~76%

Ratio of Facebook friends with higher SES to Facebook friends with lower SES, 2020

City	Value
Milwaukee	~67%
Dayton	~59%
Akron	~64%
Syracuse	~61%
Rochester	~64%
Buffalo	~69%

Story behind the curve

Rochester was in the middle of comparable cities while Monroe County was second highest among comparison counties in this statistic.
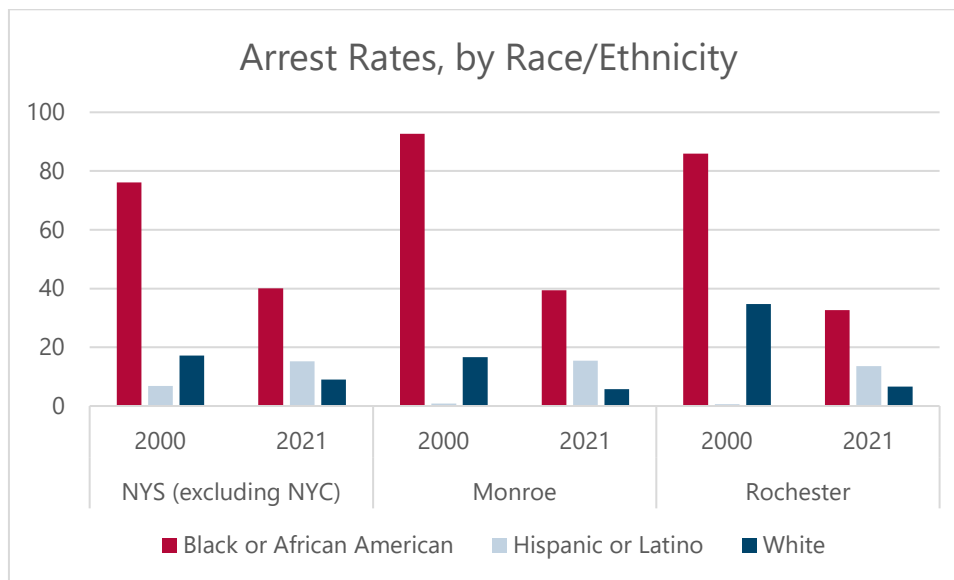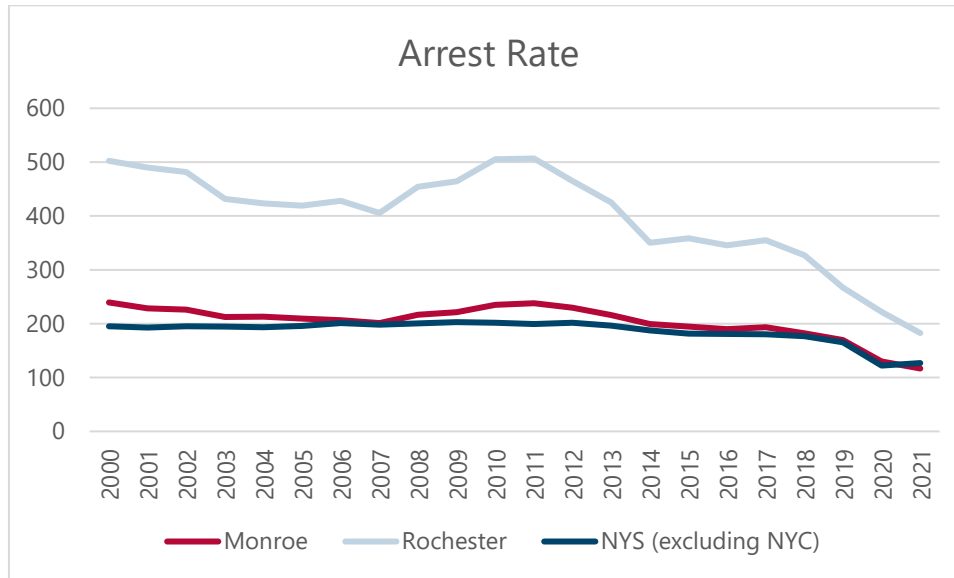
Factors contributing to progress: Settings that encourage contact among people in different socioeconomic classes.

Factors hindering progress: Socioeconomic segregation of neighborhoods, municipalities, workplaces, schools and other institutions.

Equitable Government

Arrest rates

The number of people arrested, expressed as a rate per 10,000 residents.

Arrest Rate

Legend: Monroe — Rochester — NYS (excluding NYC)

Arrest Rates, by Race/Ethnicity

Legend: Black or African American — Hispanic or Latino — White

Source: NY Division of Criminal Justice Services
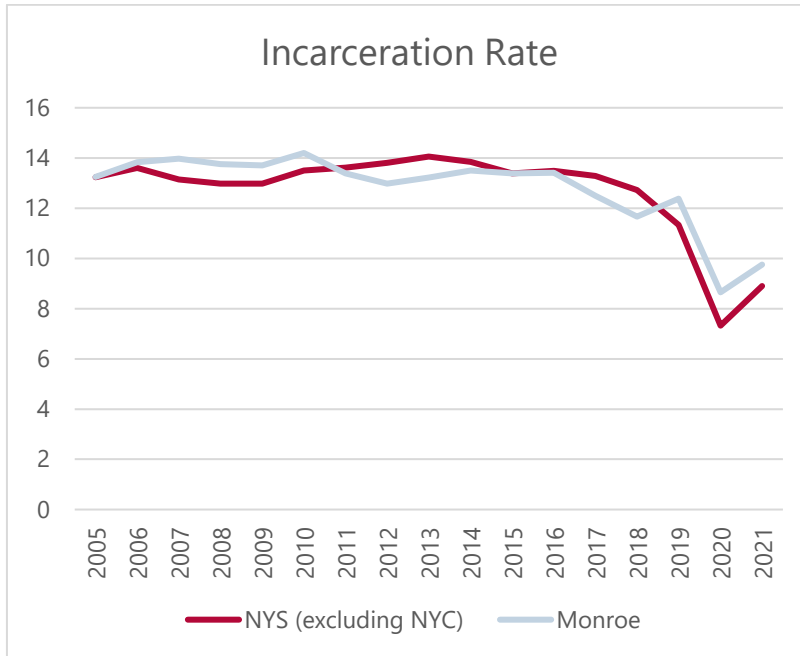
Story behind the curve

Black people have been arrested at far higher rates than other racial groups. Arrest rates are declining overall and for all groups except Hispanic/Latino, which may not have been captured accurately in the 2000 data.

Factors contributing to progress: Declining crime, diversion programs. Police behavior and the availability of police and law enforcement resources can also be factors.
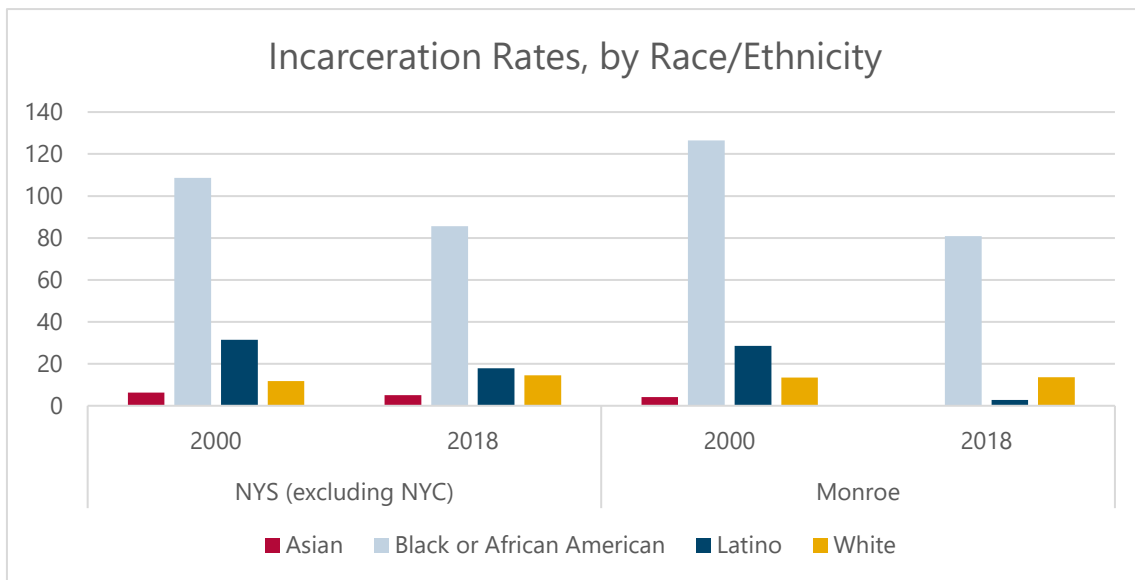
Factors hindering progress: Systemic racism in the criminal legal system.

Incarceration rates

The number of people incarcerated in local jails, expressed as a rate per 10,000 residents.

Source: New York State Department of Corrections and Community Supervision

Source: Vera Institute of Justice

Story behind the curve

Black people have been incarcerated at rates far exceeding those of other racial groups. Rates have declined for all groups except Whites. Incarceration rates overall dropped quickly during the Covid pandemic and then rebounded somewhat.

Factors contributing to progress: Declining crime, diversion programs.

Factors hindering progress: Systemic racism in the criminal legal system.