

# Durham County

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By: Sarah Ulrich, Community Research Intern



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## Introduction

Durham County's population increased by more than 50,000 people over the last decade. Population growth is largely concentrated in the City of Durham. While the city is racially and ethnically diverse, this growth has only exacerbated existing disparities in income, poverty rates, education, and the affordability of housing. Gentrification as a result of an influx of white, middle-class, skilled workers significantly impacts lower-income BIPOC communities by increasing the cost of housing throughout the county. Neighborhoods in East Durham and southeast Durham County have a greater concentration of BIPOC households. These neighborhoods have higher rates of poverty, unemployment, crime, and food insecurity compared to county, national, and state averages. The economic benefits associated with Durham's population growth have not reached these communities, and are isolated within higher-income, predominantly white areas. Growth in the medical and tech industries-particularly the impending construction of Apple's Research Triangle Park campus-is widely anticipated to exacerbate socio-economic issues in Durham County. The majority of future jobs in Durham will require technical training and higher education. Without access to higher education, many members of BIPOC communities will experience more barriers to employment as Durham continues to grow.

<b>Overview of Barriers Durham County, NC</b>	<b>Black Households</b>	<b>Hispanic/LatinX Households</b>	<b>White Households</b>
2019 Median Household Income	<b>\$44,000</b>	<b>\$47,000</b>	<b>\$75,000</b>
2019 Poverty Rate	<b>19%</b>	<b>27.9%</b>	<b>11%</b>
% of Population With Bachelor's Degree	<b>32.7%</b>	<b>13.7%</b>	<b>56.8%</b>
% of Households that Own Their Home	<b>41%</b>	<b>32.7%</b>	<b>67%</b>

## Summary of Barriers

### Housing & Gentrification

- High demand and relatively low housing supply has caused housing prices to increase rapidly across Durham. Increased demand for housing, particularly in proximity to Durham's rejuvenated downtown, actively contributes to the displacement of households in lower-income neighborhoods.
- Durham County's overall median gross rent increased 12.55% from 2014 to 2019. For census tracts in downtown Durham, rent increased 20-40% (see *Housing & Built Environment: Figure 11*).
  - Increases in the cost of rent disproportionately affect BIPOC households. In 2017, 67% of white households lived in homes they owned compared to 41% of Black households and 32.7% of Hispanic households.
- As the cost of housing increases, households in low-income and high-poverty census tracts have to spend a larger portion of their income on housing, and therefore have less income to spend on food, healthcare, and other necessities.
  - Over 50% of renters spend more than 30% of their income on housing. 22% of renters (over 12,000 households) pay more than 50% of their income towards rent and utilities.
- Approximately 1,200 people used shelter and transitional housing services in Durham in 2017. About 300 people went without housing entirely at some point. With the growth of the city, the problem of homelessness is expected to grow, too.

### Income & Poverty

- Census tracts to the north and southeast of Downtown Durham have the lowest median incomes, highest poverty rates, and highest unemployment rates in the county. These tracts also have the highest percent of Black and Hispanic/Latinx households.
- Median income for white Durham County's households is consistently \$20,000 to \$30,000 higher than for African-American and Latinx households (see *Racial & Ethnic Barriers: Figure 1*).
- All Census Bureau measurements since 2010 show that the poverty rate in Durham County is consistently 8-10% higher for Black households and 20% higher for Hispanic households compared to white households (see *Racial & Ethnic Barriers: Figure 2*).

### Education

- More than 60% of future jobs created in Durham will require technical training and education exceeding that typically acquired in high school.
- 56.8% of white residents in Durham have a bachelor's degree, compared to 32.7% of Black residents and 13.7% of Hispanic/Latinx residents (see *Barriers by Race & Ethnicity: Figure 3*).
  - Without the resources to access higher education, members of these communities will have a harder time finding employment as Durham continues to grow.

## Other

- Durham County is getting older (see *Social & Community Context: Figure 8*). As the percentage of the population above the age of 65 increases, there will be an increased demand for senior mobility services and specialized health care.

## Barriers by Race & Ethnicity

### Overview

Figure 1: Median Income by Race

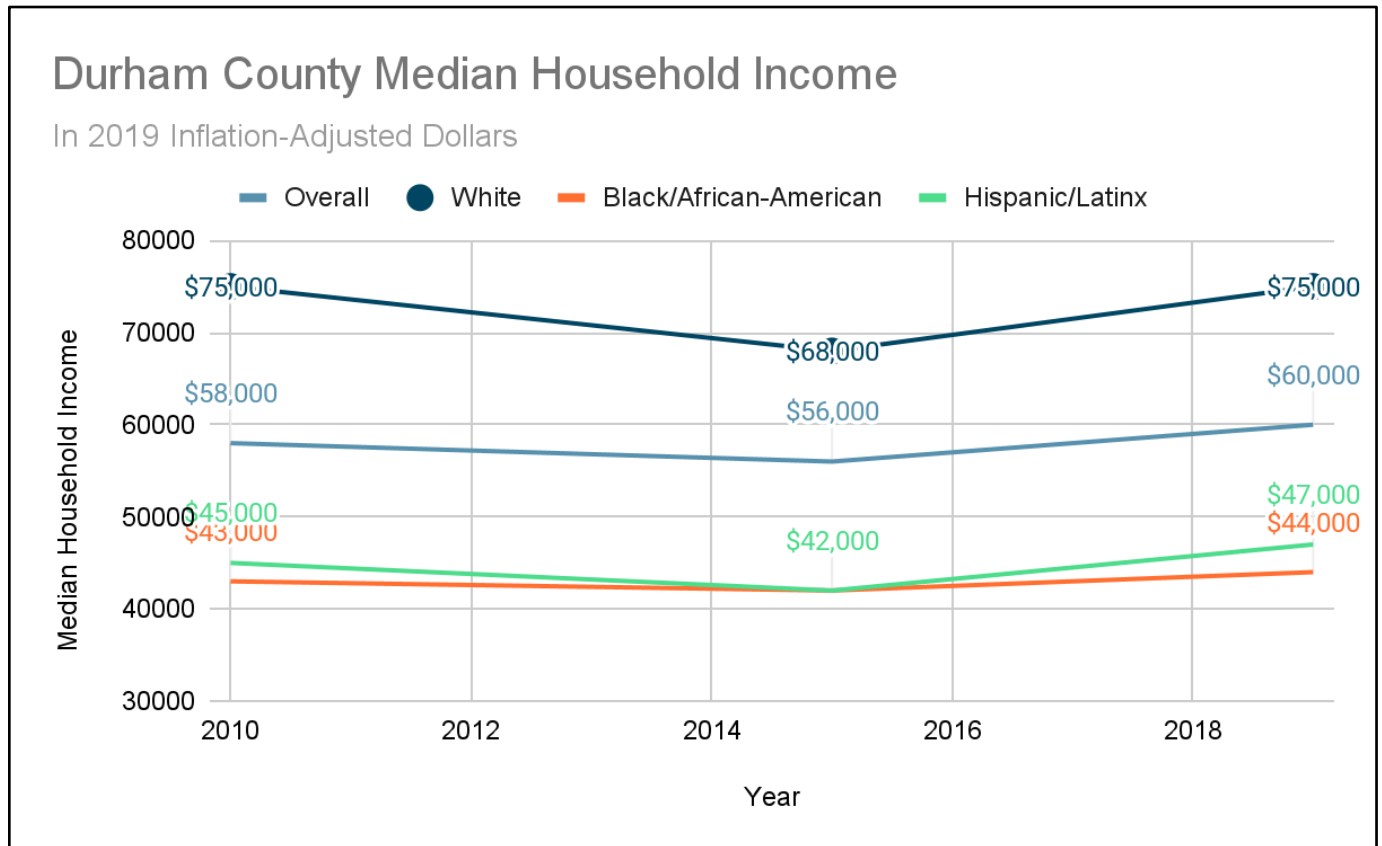
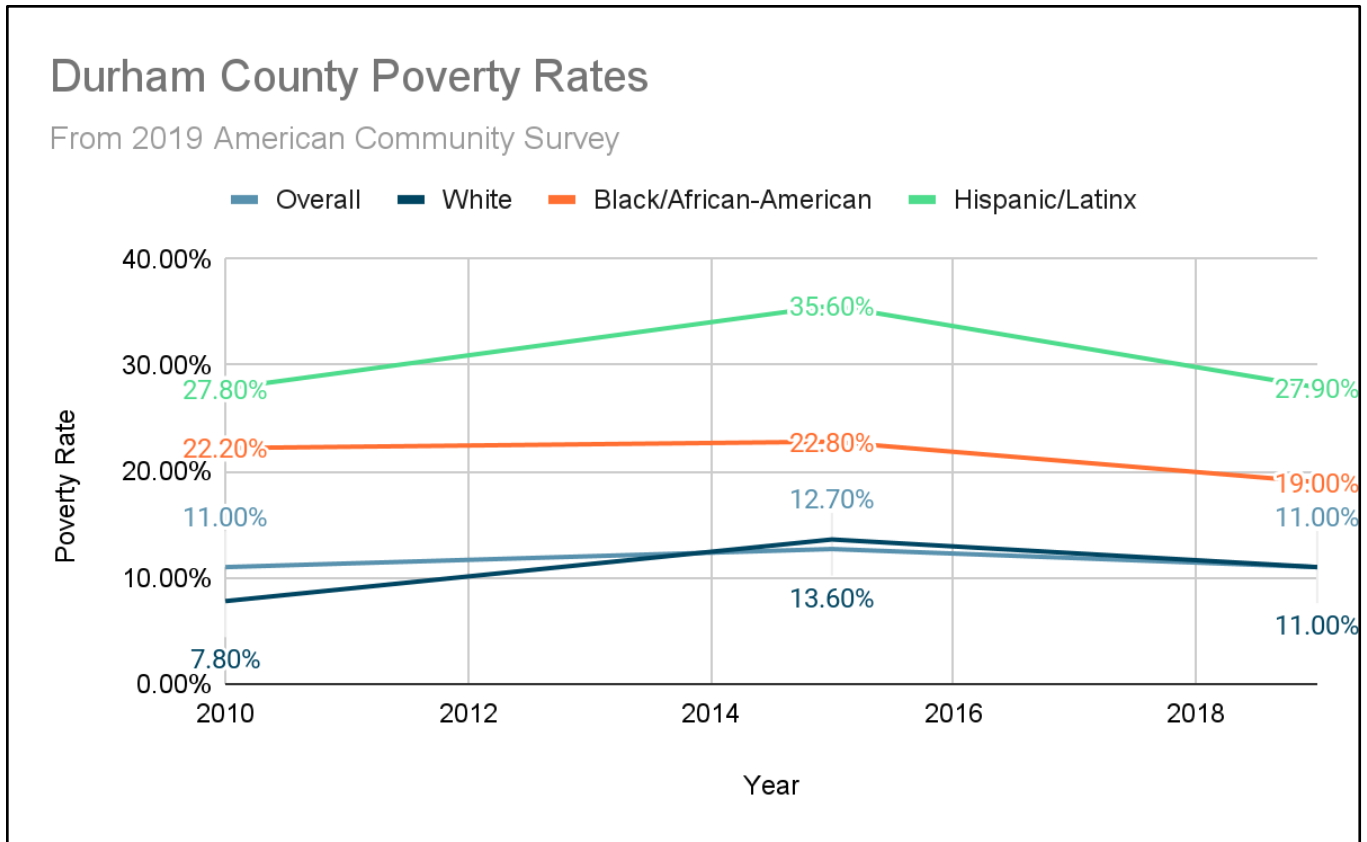
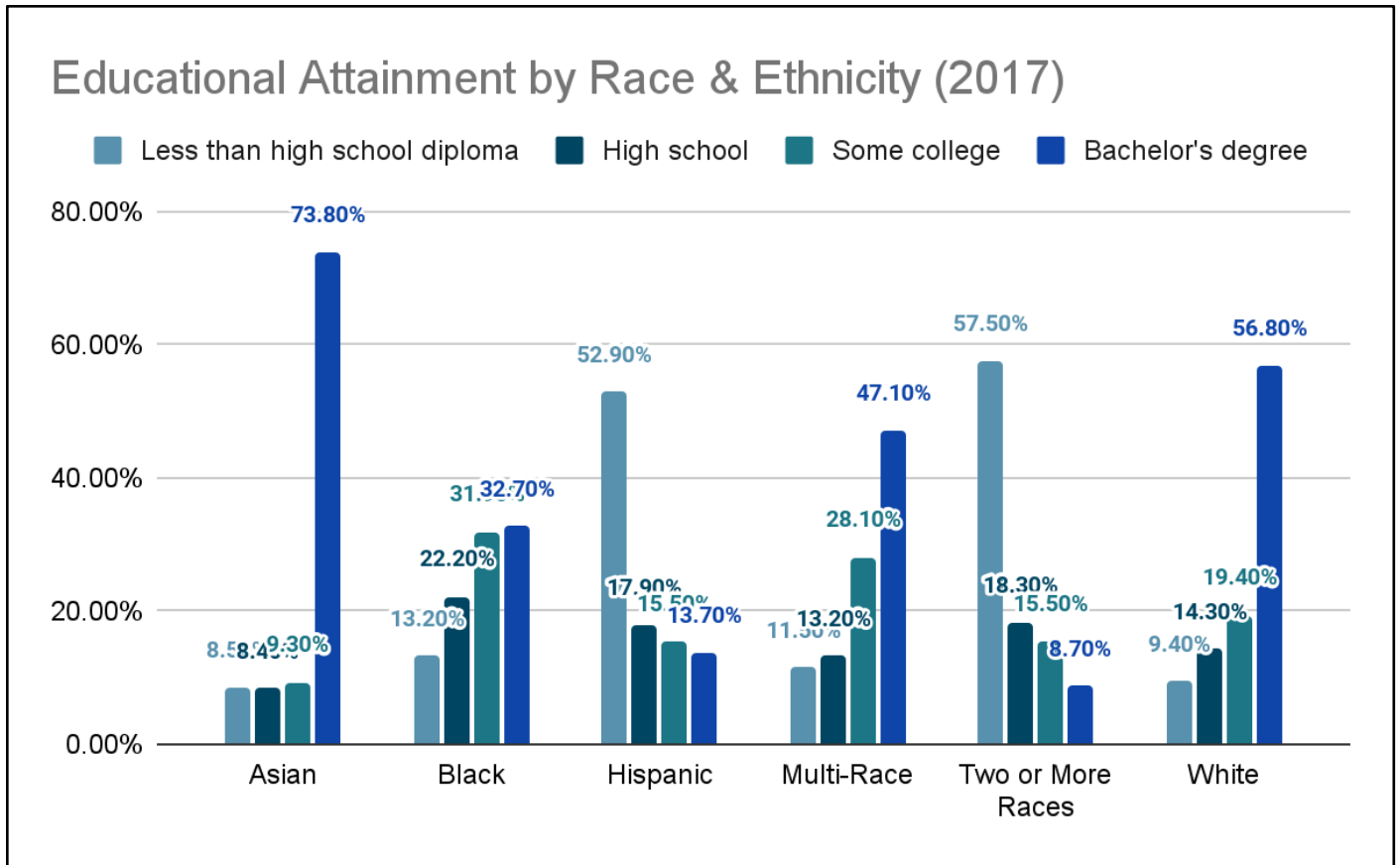


Figure 2: Poverty by Race



- The ~\$30k difference in median income between white and minority households is closely related to the higher rates of poverty experienced by minorities in Durham County.
- The persistence of the gaps in median income and poverty rate measurements indicate that economic growth in Durham is isolated in primarily white communities, and does not significantly benefit communities of color.

Figure 3: Educational Attainment by Race<sup>1</sup>



- Rates of higher education are lower among Black and Hispanic residents when compared to Asian and white residents. Providing members of the BIPOC community with opportunities to gain high-value work-related skills is critical to shaping an inclusive economic future in Durham.

## Black & African-American

- The lowest median incomes, highest poverty rates, and highest unemployment rates in Durham County are concentrated in census tracts with the highest percentages of Black and Hispanic households.
- Median income for Black households is consistently ~\$30k lower than the median income for white residents (see *Figure 1*).
- The poverty rate for Black households is consistently ~10% higher than the poverty rate for white households (see *Figure 2*).<sup>2 3 4</sup>

<sup>1</sup>ENGAGEDurham. (2021). *Durham Today: A Demographic Profile of Durham*.  
<https://www.arcgis.com/apps/Cascade/index.html?appid=697165f5e7164463b01764bc68ba8131>

<sup>2</sup>SE:A13001B. Poverty Status in the Past 12 Months (Black or African American Alone). (ACS 2010). In SocialExplorer.com. Retrieved June 18, 2021 from [https://www.socialexplorer.com/tables/ACS2010\\_5yr/R12849426](https://www.socialexplorer.com/tables/ACS2010_5yr/R12849426)

<sup>3</sup>SE:A13001B. Poverty Status in 2015 (Black or African American Alone). (ACS 2015). In SocialExplorer.com. Retrieved June 18, 2021 from [https://www.socialexplorer.com/tables/ACS2015\\_5yr/R12849434](https://www.socialexplorer.com/tables/ACS2015_5yr/R12849434).

<sup>4</sup>SE:A13001B. Poverty Status in the Past 12 Months (Black or African American Alone). (ACS 2019). In SocialExplorer.com. Retrieved June 18, 2021, from [https://www.socialexplorer.com/tables/ACS2019\\_5yr/R12849419](https://www.socialexplorer.com/tables/ACS2019_5yr/R12849419)

- 32.7% of Black residents have a bachelor's degree, compared to 56.8% of white residents.
- The 2019 Durham County Community Health Assessment Report found that 14.9% of Black or African American residents were likely to have skipped meals frequently in 2019, compared to 6.6% of white residents and 10.2% of residents overall.
- African Americans made up 54% of reported COVID-19 cases in Durham County as of June 2021. Durham's white population only made up 20% of cases, despite being over half of Durham County's population.

## Hispanic & Latinx

- The Hispanic population tripled in size from 2000 to 2015, making up much of Durham County's overall population growth. Since 2015, the Hispanic population has grown by 3% each year.
- Hispanics make up the largest immigrant group in Durham County. In 2018, there were 20,000 undocumented immigrants in Durham. 79% are from Mexico and Central America. 80% speak Spanish as their primary household language.
- The median income for Hispanic or Latinx households is consistently \$25-30k lower than the median income for white residents (see *Figure 1*).
- Hispanic or Latinx households experience the highest poverty rates in Durham County. The poverty rate for Hispanic or Latinx households is consistently over 20% higher than the county average (see *Figure 2*).
- 13.7% of Hispanic residents have a bachelor's degree, compared to 56.8% of white residents.
- In 2016, 26.8% of surveyed Hispanic residents reported that they had cut down the size of their meals due to limited money or food (compared to 15.8% of total residents).
  - 34.9% of Hispanic or Latinx residents indicated cost as the primary barrier to healthy eating (compared to 27.1% of all Durham County residents).
- The 2019 Durham County Community Health Assessment Report found that 12.6% of Hispanic or Latinx residents were likely to have skipped meals frequently in 2019, compared to 6.6% of white residents and 10.2% of residents overall.
- In the 2019 Durham County Community Health Assessment Report, 11% of Hispanic or Latinx residents said they had experienced poor mental health for 15 or more days out of the last 30.

## Social & Community Context

### Key Points

- Census tracts in the east and southeast of Durham County have a higher percentage of minority residents. Census tracts in these areas average between 35 and 50% Black or African American, and average between 25 and 50% Hispanic or Latinx.
- 54% of Durham County residents are white, 37% are Black or African American, 14% identify as Hispanic, and 5% are Asian.
- Durham’s Hispanic population grew from 12.7k in 2000 to 40.5k in 2017.
- There are an estimated 20,000 undocumented immigrants living in Durham County. 46% (approximately 9,000) are from Mexico and 17% (approximately 3,000) are from Honduras.
- Durham County is getting older. The share of the population above the age of 40 increased nearly 6% since 2000.
- In 2019, 40.6% of children under age 18 in Durham County lived with a single parent. This amounts to 23,773 children in total. 9.4% of households are headed by a single mother.
- 1,630 infants and toddlers in Durham County were enrolled in child care centers in April 2021, compared to the 2,895 enrolled in centers prior to the COVID-19 pandemic (Child Care Services Association, 2021).

### Demographics

#### Population

311,848 people resided in Durham County in 2019. The county covers an area of 286 sq. miles, with an average population density of 1,088 people per sq. mile.<sup>5</sup>

The population is 94.4% urban and 5.6% rural.<sup>6</sup>

The City of Durham, located in the central area of Durham County, contains census tracts with higher population densities than the outer edges of the county. Tracts in the center of Durham County have population densities upwards of 6,000 people per sq. mile, while tracts located further from the center have densities closer to 500 people per sq. mile.

There are 14,662 veterans living in Durham County as of 2019. 40% of veterans (5,946) are 65 years or older. 29.7% of veterans (4,349) served in the Vietnam War Era only, and make up the largest subgroup of veterans in Durham County.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>5</sup>SE:A00002. Population Density (Per Sq. Mile) (ACS 2019). In SocialExplorer.com. Retrieved June 18, 2021, from [https://www.socialexplorer.com/tables/ACS2019\\_5yr/R12849419](https://www.socialexplorer.com/tables/ACS2019_5yr/R12849419)

<sup>6</sup>AccessNC. (2020). *County Profile Durham County (NC)* [Fact sheet]. North Carolina Department of Commerce, Labor & Economic Analysis Division. <https://accessnc.nccommerce.com/DemoGraphicsReports/pdfs/countyProfile/NC/37063.pdf>

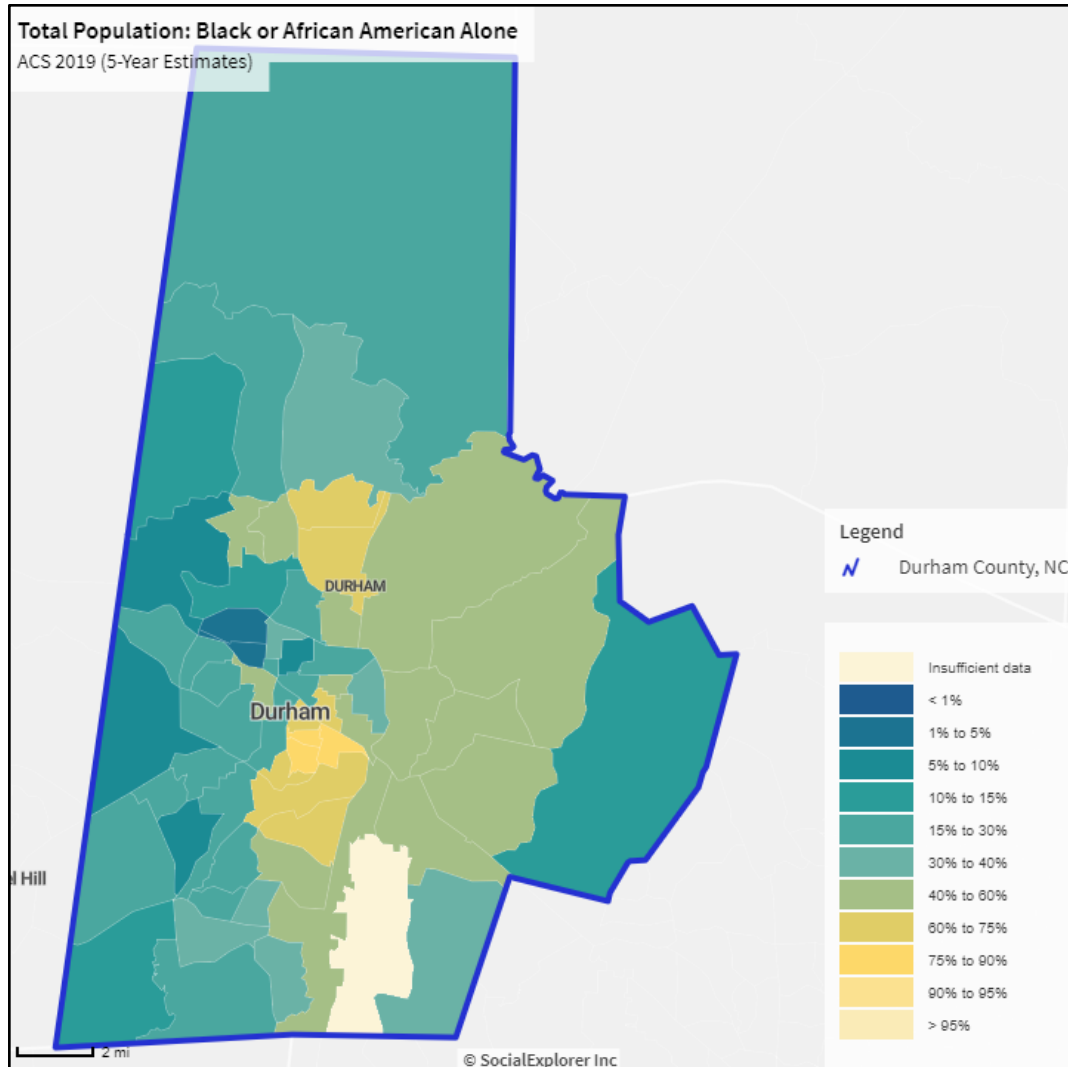
<sup>7</sup>SE:A16002. Veteran Status for the Civilian Population. (ACS 2019). In SocialExplorer.com. Retrieved June 21, 2021, from [https://www.socialexplorer.com/tables/ACS2019\\_5yr/R12850279](https://www.socialexplorer.com/tables/ACS2019_5yr/R12850279)



## Race

54% of Durham County residents are white, 37% are Black or African American, 14% identify as Hispanic,<sup>8</sup> and 5% are Asian.<sup>9</sup>

Figure 4: Distribution of Black Households<sup>10</sup>



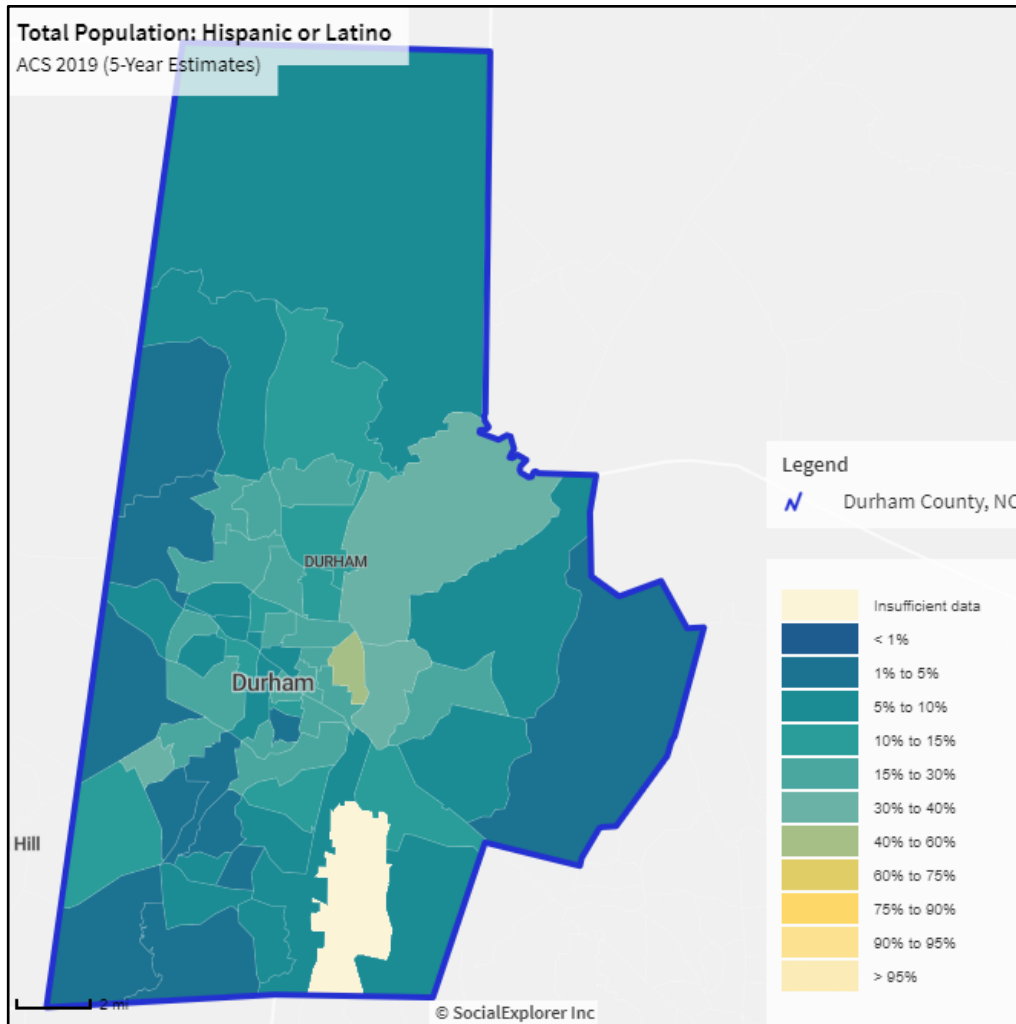
- Census tracts towards the southeast and northeast of downtown Durham have a larger percentage of minority populations. African Americans make up 65-90% of the population of these tracts. Census tracts in East Durham also have larger African American and Black populations, averaging between 35 and 50%.

<sup>8</sup>SE:A04001. Hispanic or Latino by Race (ACS 2019). In SocialExplorer.com. Retrieved June 18, 2021, from [https://www.socialexplorer.com/tables/ACS2019\\_5yr/R12849419](https://www.socialexplorer.com/tables/ACS2019_5yr/R12849419)

<sup>9</sup>SE:A03001. Race. (ACS 2019). In SocialExplorer.com. Retrieved June 18, 2021, from [https://www.socialexplorer.com/tables/ACS2019\\_5yr/R12849419](https://www.socialexplorer.com/tables/ACS2019_5yr/R12849419)

<sup>10</sup>Total Population: Black or African American Alone [Map]. In SocialExplorer.com. ACS 2019 (5-Year Estimates). Retrieved June 23, 2021 from <https://www.socialexplorer.com/f0868d74f4/view>.

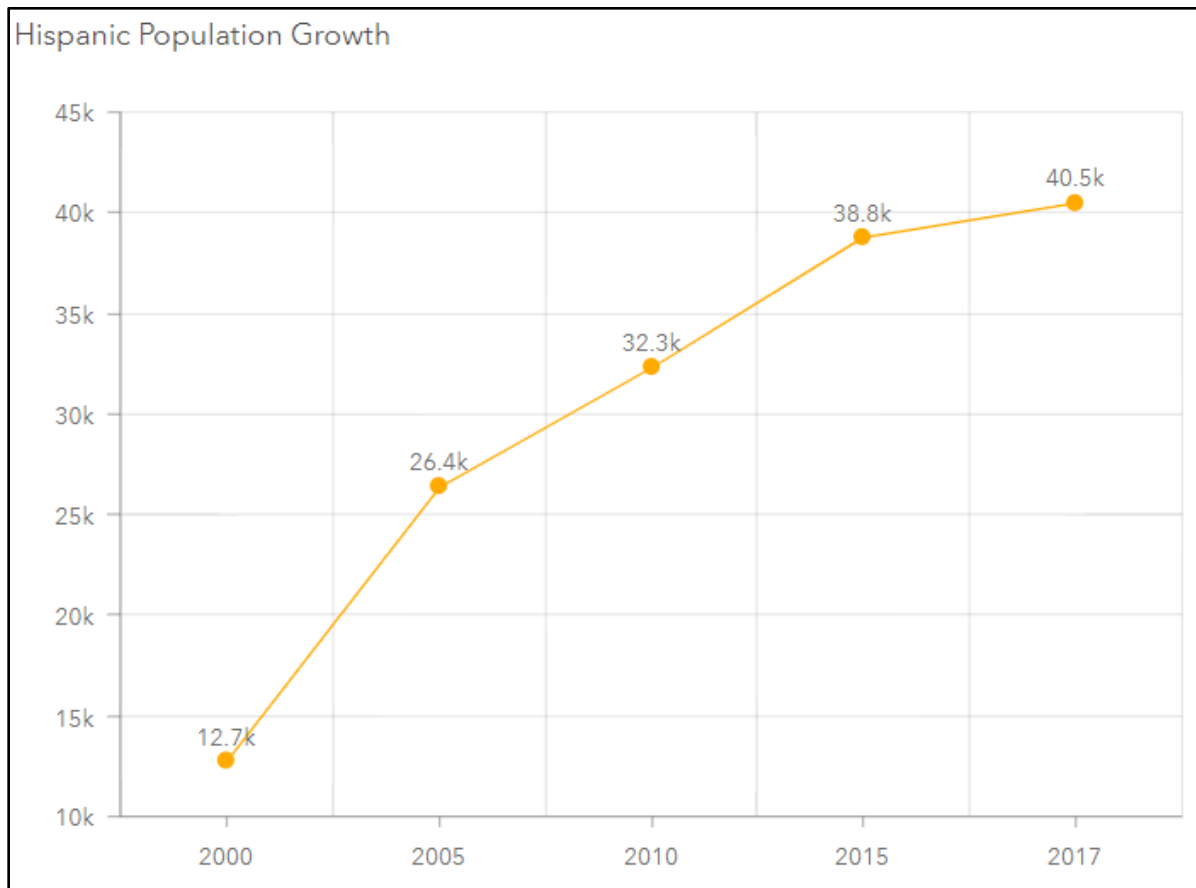
Figure 5: Distribution of Hispanic/Latinx Households<sup>11</sup>



- Tracts in the southeast and northwest of downtown Durham have populations that are 25 to 50% Hispanic or Latinx. In the areas surrounding Durham with lower population densities, census tracts have populations that are 15-20% Hispanic or Latinx.

<sup>11</sup>Total Population: Hispanic or Latino [Map]. In SocialExplorer.com. ACS 2019 (5-Year Estimates). Retrieved June 23, 2021 from <https://www.socialexplorer.com/3be7f96153/view>

Figure 6: Hispanic Population Growth in Durham County<sup>12</sup>



- During the first two decades of the 21st century, Durham County's population grew from approximately 223,000 to 301,000. The Hispanic population drove much of that growth. From 2000 to 2015, the Hispanic population tripled in size. However, that expansion has slowed in recent years. From 2015 on, the Hispanic population grew by only 3 percent.

### Immigration<sup>13</sup>

There are an estimated 20,000 undocumented immigrants living in Durham County. 46% (approximately 9,000) are from Mexico and 17% (approximately 3,000) are from Honduras.

- 15% are ages 16 to 24; 31% are ages 25 to 34; and 35% are ages 35 to 44.
- 73% do not have insurance.
- 71% have been in the United States for more than 5 years.
- 37% reside with at least one U.S.-citizen child under 18.
- 38% of employed undocumented immigrants work in the construction industry.
- 15% of undocumented households have an income below 50% of the federal poverty level.

<sup>12</sup>ENGAGEDurham. (2021). *Durham Today: A Demographic Profile of Durham*. <https://www.arcgis.com/apps/Cascade/index.html?appid=697165f5e7164463b01764bc68ba8131>

<sup>13</sup>Migration Policy Institute. (2018). *Profile of the Unauthorized Population: Durham County, NC*. <https://www.migrationpolicy.org/data/unauthorized-immigrant-population/county/37063>

Age<sup>14</sup>

Figure 7: Age Distribution

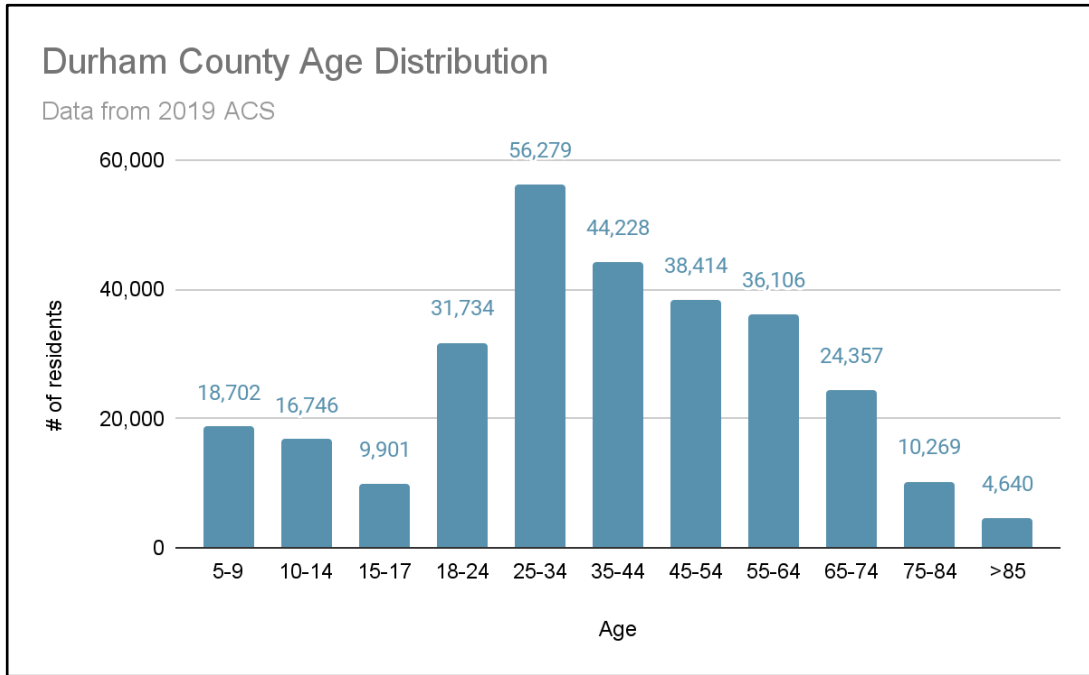


Figure 8: Age Group Change Over Time



<sup>14</sup>SE:A0100. Age. (ACS 2019). In SocialExplorer.com. Retrieved June 23, 2021 from [https://www.socialexplorer.com/tables/ACS2019\\_5yr/R12851676](https://www.socialexplorer.com/tables/ACS2019_5yr/R12851676).

## Single-Parent Households

In 2019, 40.6% of children under age 18 in Durham County lived with a single parent. This amounts to 23,773 children in total. 9.4% of households are headed by a single mother.<sup>15</sup>

Census tracts with a higher percentage of single-parent households are concentrated in the eastern area of downtown Durham, and in the eastern area of the county as a whole.

## Child Care

Data from Durham's Partnership for Young Children and the Child Care Services Association shows that as of April 2021:

- There are nearly 23,000 children under age 5 living in Durham County.
- Approximately 8,306 infants and toddlers in Durham County live in families where their sole or both parents work.<sup>16</sup>
- 29% of children under age 5 are enrolled in licensed, regulated child care programs.
  - 79% of infants and toddlers in Durham County are enrolled in child care facilities with a 4- or 5-star rating.<sup>17</sup>
  - 64% of child care centers are 4- or 5-star facilities.
  - The market rate for a child care slot for a 2-year-old in a 4-star center is \$994/month.
- 1,630 infants and toddlers in Durham County were enrolled in child care centers, compared to the 2,895 enrolled in centers prior to the COVID-19 pandemic.<sup>18</sup>

## Neighborhood & Built Environment

### Key Points

- Median gross rent increased by 13% from 2011 to 2016, and median home prices rose 15.7% from 2017 to 2018.
  - For most census tracts in downtown Durham, median gross rent increased by 20-40% from 2014 to 2019.
- Of households that own their home and have a mortgage, 20% (approximately 8,000 households) spend over 30% of their income on housing.
- Over 50% of renters spend more than 30% of their income on housing. 22% of renters, or over 12,000 households, pay more than 50% of their income towards rent and utilities.
- Median gross rent in Durham County was \$1,067 in 2019. The cost of housing is largely consistent across the county, despite vast differences in median income at the census tract level.
- There are only 34 affordable housing units per 100 extremely low-income households in Durham County.

<sup>15</sup>SE:A10008. Households by Household Type (ACS 2019). In SocialExplorer.com. Retrieved June 18, 2021, from [https://www.socialexplorer.com/tables/ACS2019\\_5yr/R12849419](https://www.socialexplorer.com/tables/ACS2019_5yr/R12849419)

<sup>16</sup>Child Care Services Association. (2021). *Young Children and their Families in Durham County* [Fact sheet]. [https://www.childcareservices.org/research/nc-ece-data-repo/search/?repoSearch=&section\\_id%5B%5D=4&rep\\_month=4&rep\\_year=2021&rep\\_month\\_end=&rep\\_year\\_end=&county\\_id%5B%5D=32](https://www.childcareservices.org/research/nc-ece-data-repo/search/?repoSearch=&section_id%5B%5D=4&rep_month=4&rep_year=2021&rep_month_end=&rep_year_end=&county_id%5B%5D=32)

<sup>17</sup>Child Care Services Association. (2021). *Early Care & Education Use in Durham County* [Fact sheet]. [https://www.childcareservices.org/research/nc-ece-data-repo/search/?repoSearch=&section\\_id%5B%5D=3&rep\\_month=4&rep\\_year=2021&rep\\_month\\_end=&rep\\_year\\_end=&county\\_id%5B%5D=32](https://www.childcareservices.org/research/nc-ece-data-repo/search/?repoSearch=&section_id%5B%5D=3&rep_month=4&rep_year=2021&rep_month_end=&rep_year_end=&county_id%5B%5D=32)

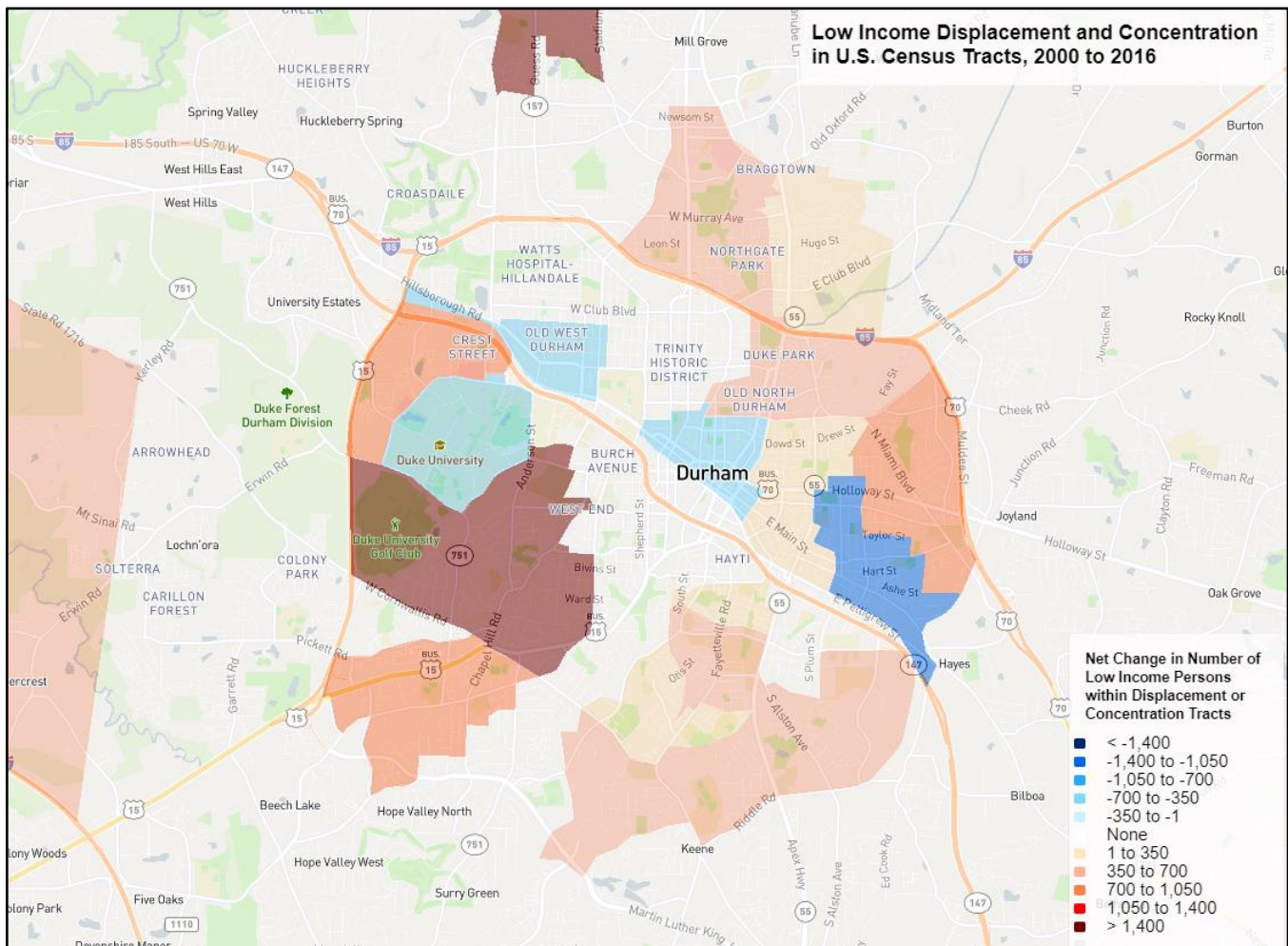
<sup>18</sup>Child Care Services Association. (2021). *Infant and Toddler Care in Durham County* [Fact sheet]. [https://www.childcareservices.org/research/nc-ece-data-repo/search/?repoSearch=&section\\_id%5B%5D=7&rep\\_month=4&rep\\_year=2021&rep\\_month\\_end=&rep\\_year\\_end=&county\\_id%5B%5D=32](https://www.childcareservices.org/research/nc-ece-data-repo/search/?repoSearch=&section_id%5B%5D=7&rep_month=4&rep_year=2021&rep_month_end=&rep_year_end=&county_id%5B%5D=32)

- 55.8% of households in Durham County are located within a ¼-mile radius of a bus stop. This amounts to nearly 80,000 households (GoTriangle & Durham City Council, 2018).
- Home values increased 14.8% from 2020 to 2021. The average sale price of a new single-family home increased 59% from 2011 to 2017 (see *Neighborhood & Built Environment: Figure 9*).
- From 2011 to 2015, Durham County added 8,300 new housing units. By 2015, 95% of available units were occupied.
- Only 35% of housing units are considered affordable for households earning 80% of the county's 2019 median income. This is a 15% decrease from 2000.
- In every income bracket up to \$75,000, households are more likely to spend 30% or more of their income on housing today than they were in 2000.

## Housing

### Gentrification

Gentrification and increases in the cost of housing has disproportionately affected communities of color in Durham. Despite a recent housing shortage that has made homes in Durham more valuable, the median home value for Black or African-American and Latinx residents is substantially lower compared to white and Asian households. The recent influx of tech and medical jobs into the area has caused housing prices to increase exponentially, pushing lower-income residents out of their neighborhoods. The early 2020 announcement that Apple is building a new campus in the Research Triangle Park area is expected to further impact the housing market and accelerate gentrification in Durham.



Full map available from: <https://www.arcgis.com/apps/Cascade/index.html?appid=697165f5e7164463b01764bc68ba8131>

Increased demand for housing, particularly in proximity to Durham's rejuvenated downtown, is contributing to displacement of lower income households in some neighborhoods.

Neighborhoods in or near Durham's Urban Tier which feature older, structurally sound single-family housing, are an increasingly attractive option for younger households seeking affordable options within walking distance of their places of employment. Such neighborhoods may be particularly susceptible to displacement in the near future.

Most new housing is constructed in the Suburban Tier. Nearly 15,000 new housing units have been constructed in the Suburban Tier since 2010, making up approximately 70% of all housing built in Durham County.

### Cost of Housing

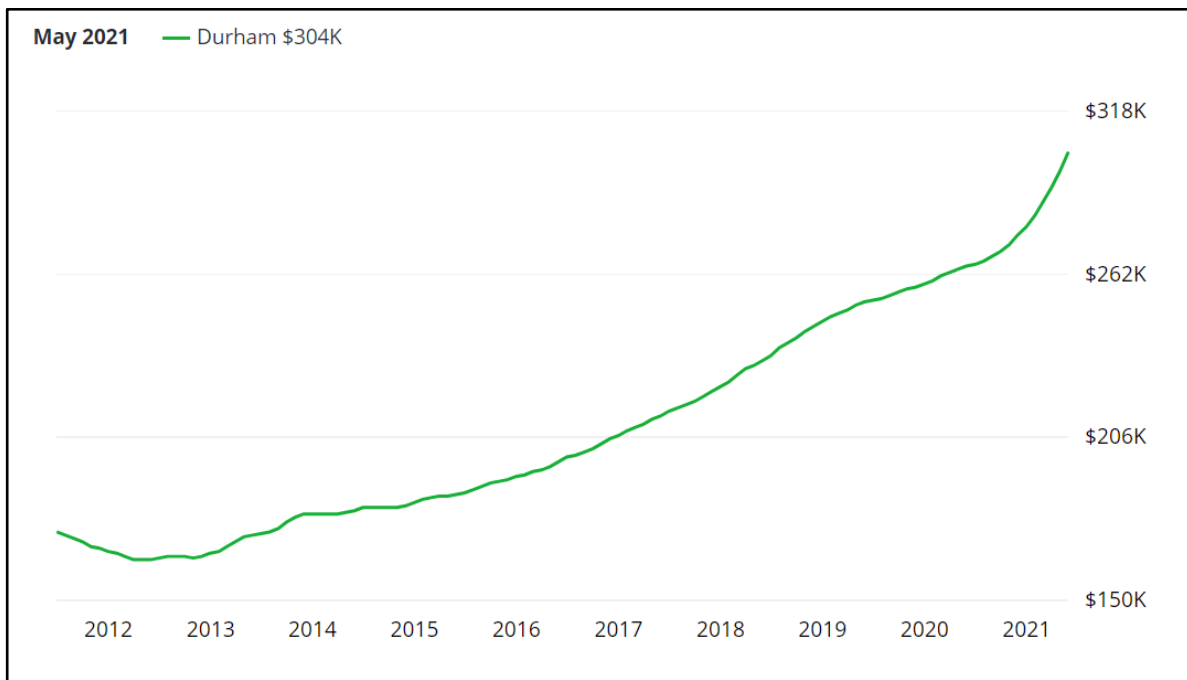
Of households that own their home and have a mortgage, 26.1% (17,831 households) spend over 30% of their income on housing.<sup>19</sup> Households that spend more than 30% of their income on housing are less able to pay for other essential expenses, such as food and healthcare.

<sup>19</sup> SE:B10040. Residents Paying More Than 30% or at least 50% of Income on Selected Home Ownership Expenses. (ACS 2019). In SocialExplorer.com. Retrieved June 23, 2021, from [https://www.socialexplorer.com/tables/ACS2019\\_5yr/R1285168](https://www.socialexplorer.com/tables/ACS2019_5yr/R1285168).

Low-income renters are the most affected by increases in housing costs. Renter households make around \$35,000 annually, which is \$46,000 less than households who own their home (\$81,000).

Over 50% of renters are burdened by their rent, meaning that they spend more than 30% of their income on housing. 24.5% of renters spend 30-49% of their income on rent. 21.8% of renters spend more than 50% of their income on rent.<sup>20</sup>

*Figure 9: Median Home Value Durham County*



The typical home value of homes in Durham is \$304,217. This value is seasonally adjusted and only includes the middle price tier of homes. Durham home values have gone up 14.8% over the past year.<sup>21</sup>

Home ownership rates declined to 41% in 2018 from a high of 43.8% in 2010 as a result of increased sale prices.

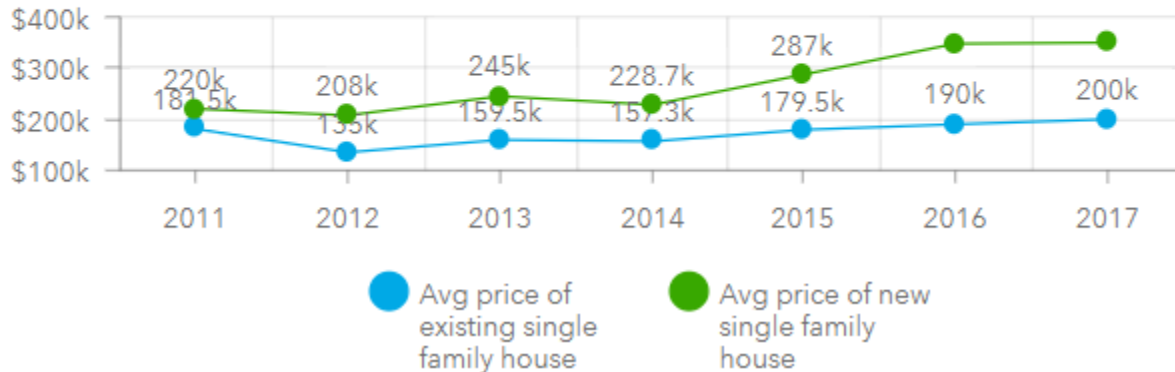
<sup>20</sup> SE:B18002. Residents Paying More Than 30% or at least 50% of Income on Rent. (ACS 2019). In SocialExplorer.com. Retrieved June 23, 2021, from [https://www.socialexplorer.com/tables/ACS2019\\_5yr/R1285168](https://www.socialexplorer.com/tables/ACS2019_5yr/R1285168).

<sup>21</sup> Zillow. (2021). *Durham County Home Values*. <https://www.zillow.com/durham-county-nc/home-values/>



## The Price of New Single Family Homes Has Grown Far More Rapidly than Existing Single Family Homes.

*Average sale price of single family homes, 2011 to 2017.*

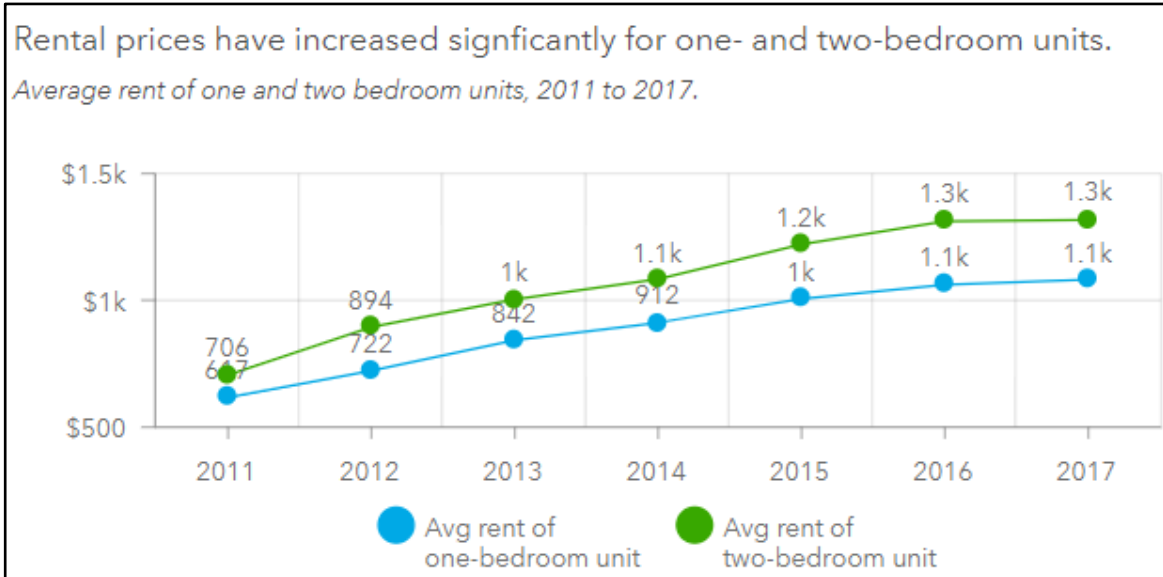
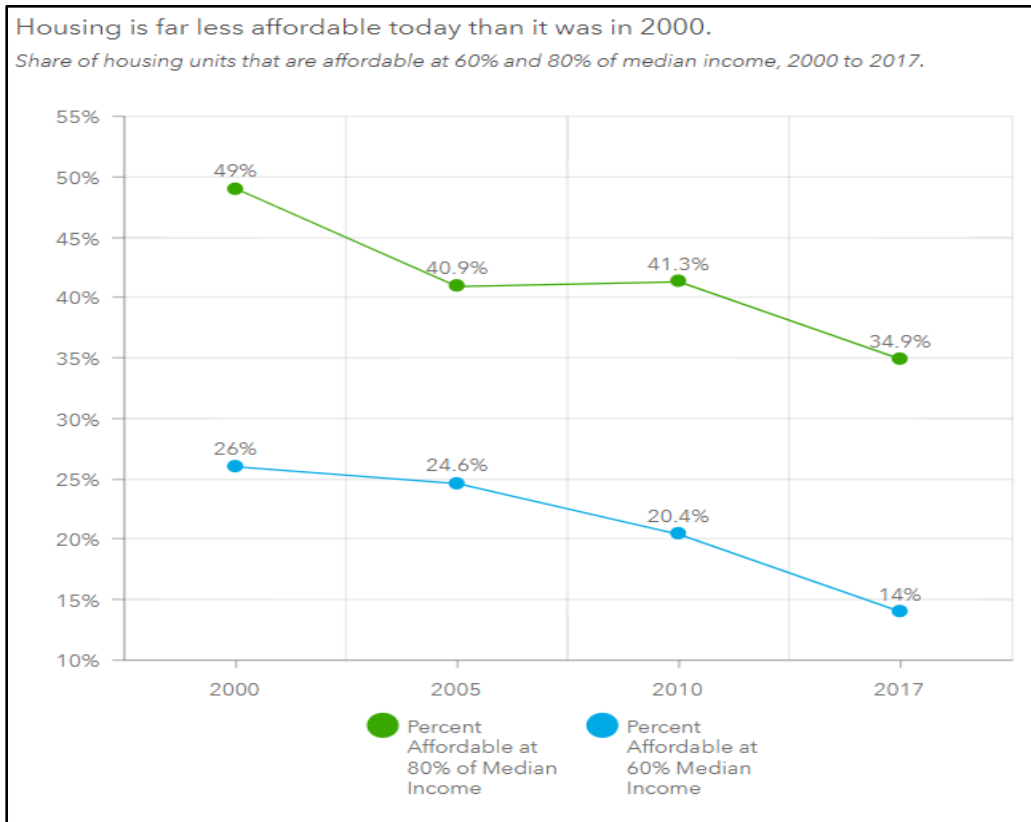


Between 2011 and 2017, the average sale price of a new single-family home increased by 59%. This is partly a result of high housing demand and relatively low housing supply in Durham.

From 2011 to 2015, Durham County added 8,300 new housing units and 12,500 new households. By 2015, 95% of all available housing units were occupied.

In 2017, 67% of white households lived in homes they owned compared to 41% of Black households and 32.7% of Hispanic households.

Figure 10: Change in Affordability of Housing



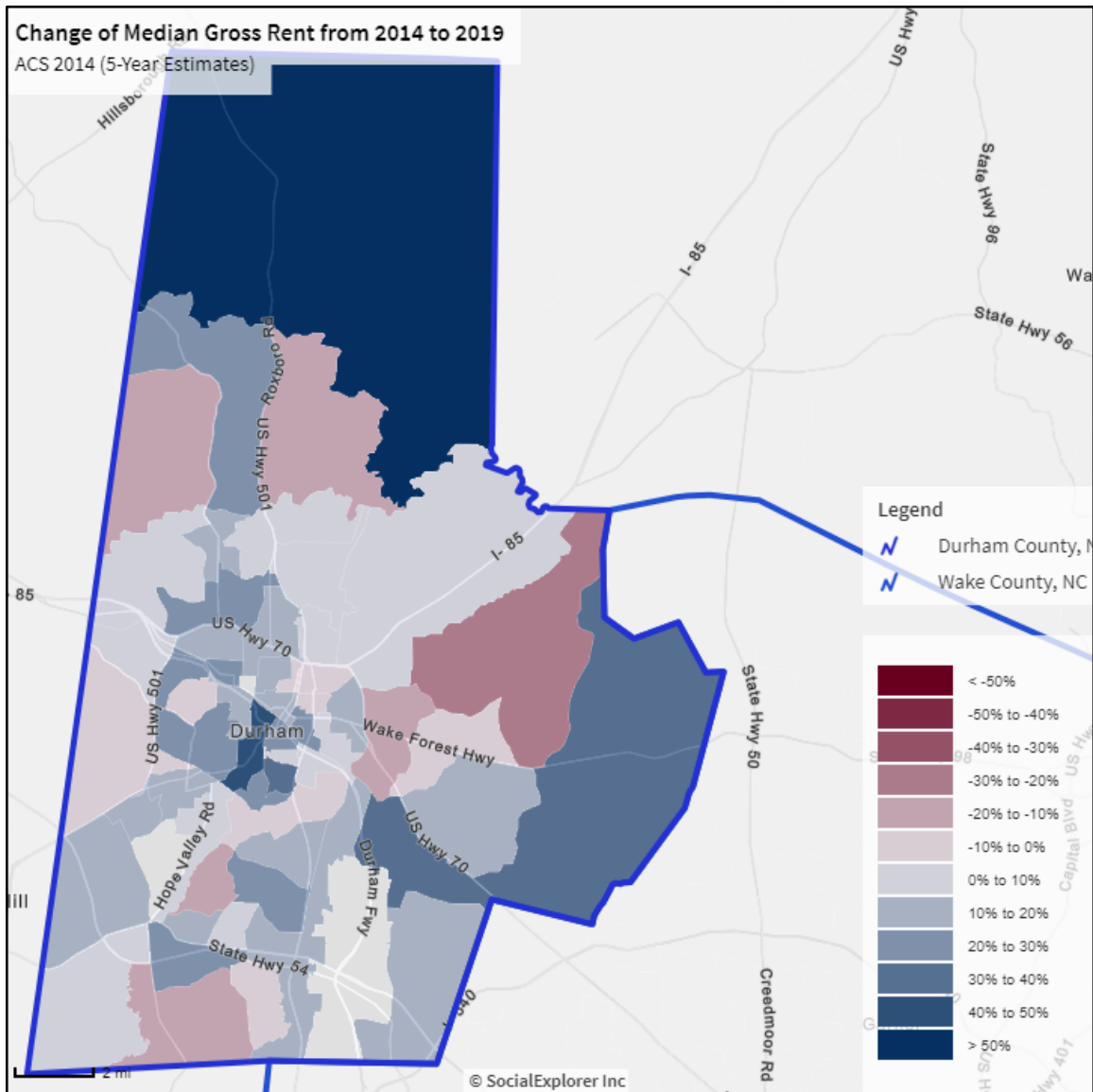
Increases in sale and rental prices have negatively impacted housing affordability in Durham County. Middle- and low-income renters are particularly impacted by increasing home prices.

Only 35% of housing units are considered affordable for households earning 80% of the county’s 2019 median income. This is a 15% decrease since 2000.

In every income bracket up to \$75,000, households are more likely to spend 30% or more of their income on housing today than they were in 2000.

## Median Gross Rent<sup>22</sup>

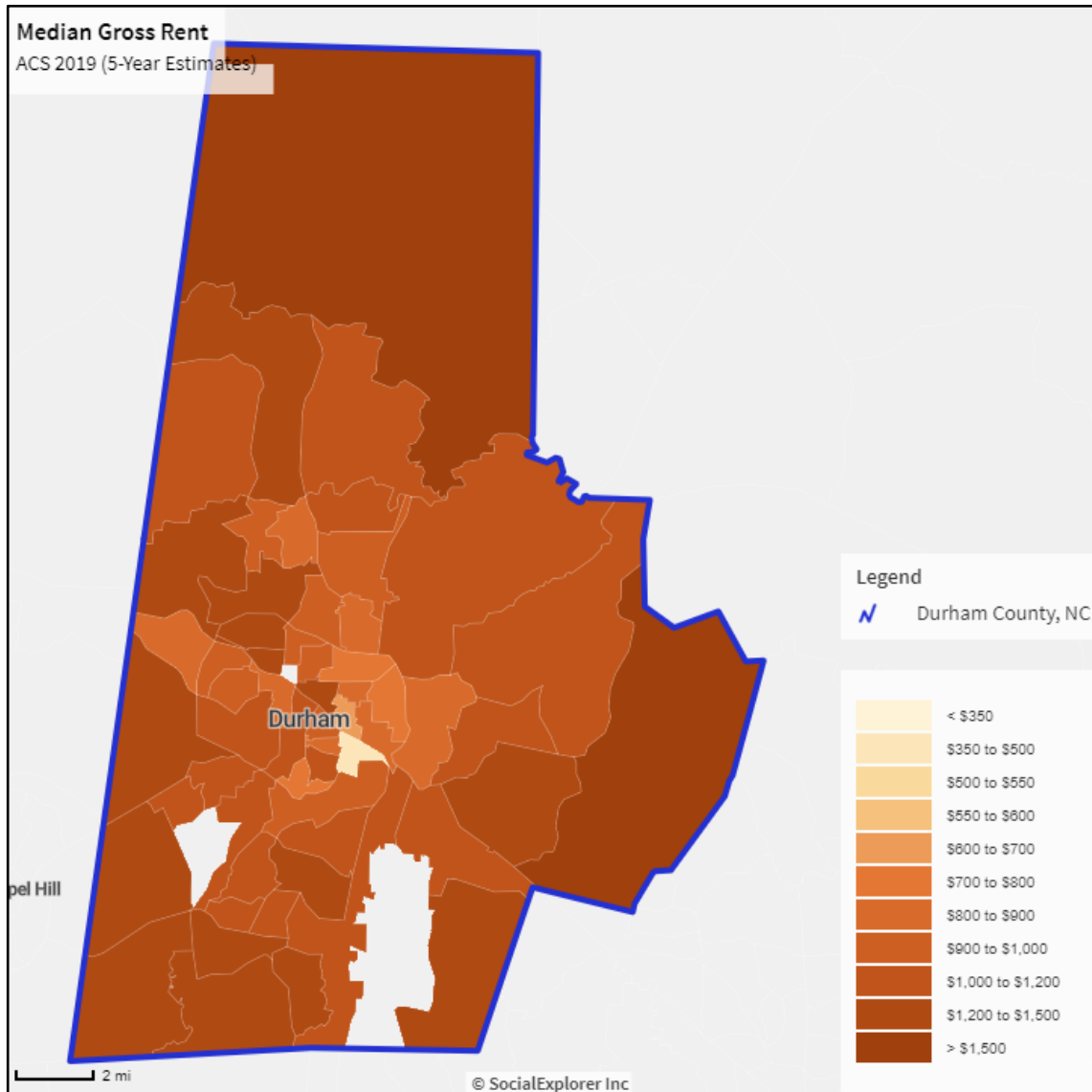
Figure 11: Change in Median Gross Rent



- Median gross rent increased 12.55% from 2014 to 2019 (from \$948 to \$1,067).
- The Census Bureau estimated that in Durham County, median gross rent increased by 13% from 2011 to 2016, and median home prices rose 15.7% from 2017 to 2018.
- For most census tracts in downtown Durham, median gross rent increased by 20-40% from 2014 to 2019.

<sup>22</sup>Change of Median Gross Rent from 2014 to 2019 [Map]. In SocialExplorer.com. ACS 2019 (5-Year Estimates). Retrieved June 23, 2021 <https://www.socialexplorer.com/8629a30553/view>.

Figure 12: Median Gross Rent<sup>23</sup>



- The median gross rent for Durham County in 2019 was \$1,067.<sup>24</sup>
- The consistency in median gross rent across the county (despite large variances in income at the census tract level) shows that all of Durham is getting more expensive to live in and affordable housing is becoming increasingly scarce.
- There are only 34 affordable housing units per 100 extremely low-income households in Durham County.

<sup>23</sup>Median Gross Rent [Map]. In SocialExplorer.com. ACS 2019 (5-Year Estimates). Retrieved June 23, 2021 from <https://www.socialexplorer.com/b15ae6ed39/view>

<sup>24</sup>SE:A18009. Median Gross Rent. (ACS 2019). In SocialExplorer.com. Retrieved June 18, 2021, from [https://www.socialexplorer.com/tables/ACS2019\\_5yr/R12849419](https://www.socialexplorer.com/tables/ACS2019_5yr/R12849419)

## Homelessness

- During the 2019-2020 school year, Durham County Public Schools identified 1,056 students as eligible for homelessness assistance under the criteria of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act.<sup>25</sup>
- On any given night in Durham, approximately 590 people experience homelessness, whether they are staying in a shelter, a car, or on the street.<sup>26</sup>
- Approximately 1,200 people used shelter and transitional housing services in Durham in 2017. About 300 people went without housing entirely at some point. With the growth of the city, the problem of homelessness is expected to grow, too.<sup>27</sup>

## Transportation

- 55.8% of households (~80,000) are located within ¼-mile radius of a bus stop.<sup>28</sup> Most of these households are concentrated in the center of Durham, where there is a greater population density.
- 4.29% of households (approximately 7,000) do not have access to a car. Most households have access to one car (28.7%) or two cars (41.5%).<sup>29</sup>

Households that do not have access to a car or public transit have more difficulty traveling to jobs, grocery stores, healthcare providers, and other essential services.

The influx of jobs into downtown Durham has increased congestion in the area. Increases in housing prices as a result of growth in the job market force low-income residents to find more affordable housing further away from the downtown area, and thus further away from jobs. As distance from available work increases, financially stressed households have to factor in the cost of owning and maintaining a vehicle, and purchasing gas. Sidewalks and bike lanes are only available in downtown Durham, where low-income residents cannot afford housing.

## Internet Access<sup>30</sup>

- 22.7% of households in the Durham County School District did not have access to high-speed internet in 2020.
  - 5.7% of students did not have access to a computer.

The COVID-19 pandemic and a corresponding increase in remote working and learning has only exacerbated inequalities of internet access in Durham County. Lack of internet and computer access during the age of remote learning makes it more difficult for lower-income students to remain academically proficient and on-par with state education performance standards. To combat this inequality, Durham Public Schools purchased 20,000 computers

<sup>25</sup>Durham Public Schools. (2020). *Student and Family Assistance*. <https://www.dpsnc.net/Page/335>

<sup>26</sup>Abrams, L. (2019, April 17). Why Are People Staying Three Times Longer Than They Used To at Urban Ministries of Durham's Homeless Shelter? *Indy Week*. <https://indyweek.com/news/durham/urban-ministries-durham-shelter-affordable-housing/>

<sup>27</sup>CASA. (2018, Sep 8). *How CASA Helps With Homelessness in Durham, NC*. <https://www.casanc.org/homelessness-in-durham-and-what-casa-is-doing-to-help>

<sup>28</sup>GoTriangle & Durham City-Council GIS. (2018). *Homes Near Bus Stops, 2018* [Map]. Retrieved from <https://compass.durhamnc.gov/en/compass/PROXBUS/blockgroup>

<sup>29</sup>Data USA. (2021). *Durham County, NC*. Datawheel. <https://datausa.io/profile/geo/durham-county-nc#about>

<sup>30</sup>Public Schools First NC. (2021). *Digital Divide: An Overview* [Fact sheet]. <https://www.publicschoolsfirstnc.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/Digital-Divide-Overview-October-2020.pdf>

for students with funding from the federal CARES Act for the 2020-2020 school year. Organizations like Digital Durham work to close this gap in technology access for Durham County students.<sup>31</sup>

## Crime<sup>32</sup>

- The rate of violent crime increased 21% from 2007 to 2016 in Durham County. This increase is mainly attributed to increased gang activity.
- Downtown Durham has one of the highest crime rates in North Carolina, with 47 crimes per 1,000 people per year, compared to the state average of 3.7 crimes per 1,000 people.
- Crime statistics are the highest in east and southeast Durham City, where median income is the lowest. These census tracts also have higher percentages of minority residents, meaning that communities of color are more likely to be victims of violent crimes.

## Economic Stability

### Key Points

- The median household income for Durham County in 2019 (adjusted for inflation) was \$60k per year.<sup>33</sup>
  - Median income was \$75k for white households, \$44k for Black households, and \$47k for Hispanic/Latinx households in 2019.
- All median household income measurements since 2010 show that the median income for Durham County's white population is consistently \$20,000 to \$30,000 higher than the median income for the Black or African-American population.
- In Durham County, 11% of families lived below the poverty line in 2019. 13.8% of residents between ages 18 and 64 and 23.5% of children lived in poverty in 2019.<sup>34</sup>
- 27.9% of Hispanic/Latinx households,<sup>35</sup> 19% of the Black households,<sup>36</sup> and 11% of white households lived in poverty in 2019.<sup>37</sup>

<sup>31</sup> Chang, K. (2020, January 27). *In Durham, a Collaborative Effort Rises to Address Digital Equity Gap*. NC State Institute for Emerging Issues; North Carolina State University. <https://iei.ncsu.edu/2020/in-durham-a-collaborative-effort-rises-to-address-digital-equity-gap/>

<sup>32</sup> Neighborhood Scout. (2021). *Durham, NC: Real Estate and Demographic Data*. Location Inc. <https://www.neighborhoodscout.com/nc/durham>

<sup>33</sup> SE:A14007. Median Household Income by Race (In 2019 Inflation-Adjusted Dollars) (ACS 2019). In SocialExplorer.com. Retrieved June 18, 2021, from [https://www.socialexplorer.com/tables/ACS2019\\_5yr/R12849419](https://www.socialexplorer.com/tables/ACS2019_5yr/R12849419)

<sup>34</sup> SE:A13002. Poverty Status of Families by Family Type by Presence of Children Under 18 Years. (ACS 2019). In SocialExplorer.com. Retrieved June 18, 2021, from [https://www.socialexplorer.com/tables/ACS2019\\_5yr/R12849419](https://www.socialexplorer.com/tables/ACS2019_5yr/R12849419)

<sup>35</sup> SE:A13001H. Poverty Status in the Past 12 Months (Hispanic or Latino). (ACS 2019). In SocialExplorer.com. Retrieved June 18, 2021, from [https://www.socialexplorer.com/tables/ACS2019\\_5yr/R12849419](https://www.socialexplorer.com/tables/ACS2019_5yr/R12849419)

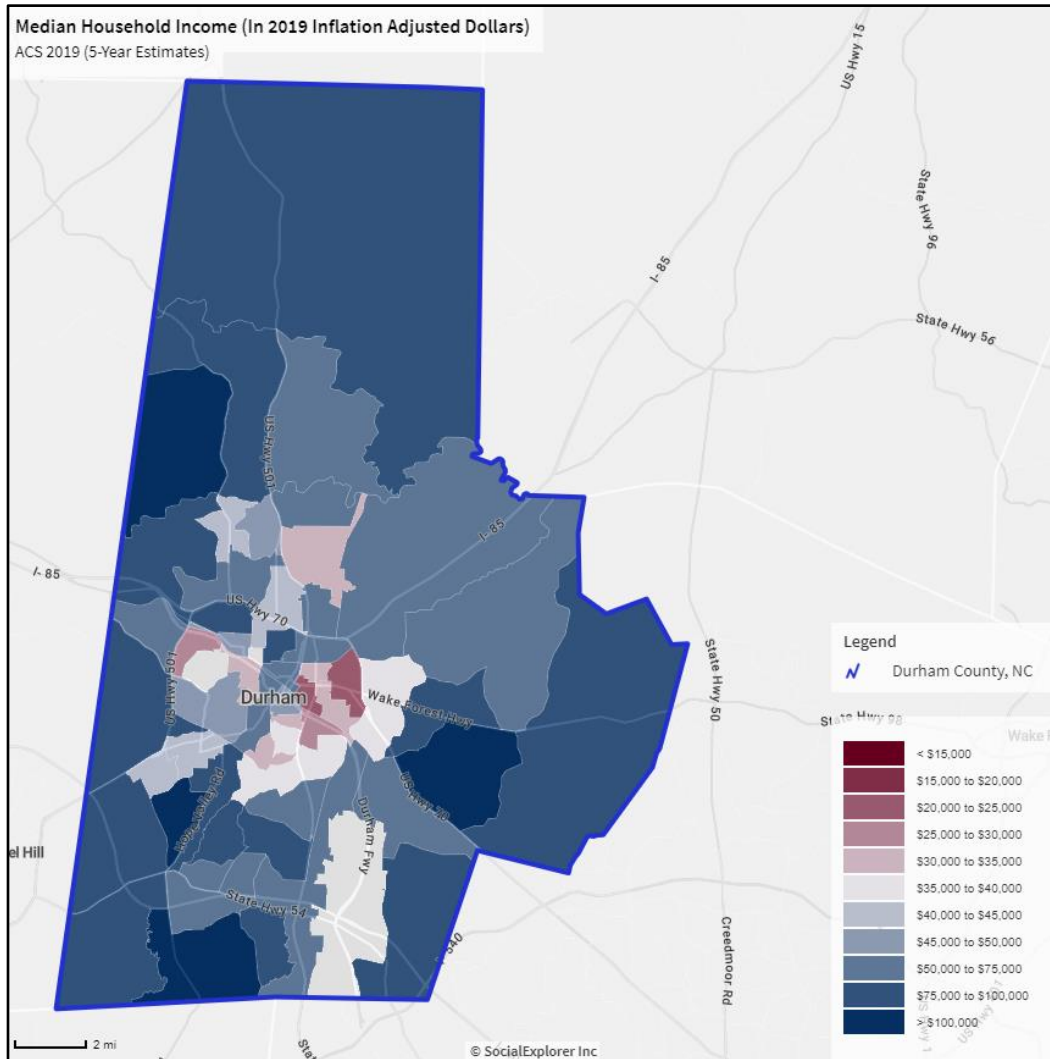
<sup>36</sup> SE:A13001B. Poverty Status in the Past 12 Months (Black or African American Alone). (ACS 2019). In SocialExplorer.com. Retrieved June 18, 2021, from [https://www.socialexplorer.com/tables/ACS2019\\_5yr/R12849419](https://www.socialexplorer.com/tables/ACS2019_5yr/R12849419).

<sup>37</sup> SE:A13001A. Poverty Status in the Past 12 Months (White Alone). (ACS 2019). In SocialExplorer.com. Retrieved June 18, 2021, from [https://www.socialexplorer.com/tables/ACS2019\\_5yr/R12849419](https://www.socialexplorer.com/tables/ACS2019_5yr/R12849419)

- Only 13.9% of households in Durham County are located within a ¼-mile radius of a grocery store, which amounts to nearly 20,000 total households. 29.9% of households in Durham County are located within a ¼ mile radius of a convenience store or fast food restaurant, which is approximately 43,000 households.
- The unemployment rate was 3.7% in April of 2021.

## Income

Figure 13: Median Household Income<sup>38</sup>



- The median household income for Durham County in 2019 (adjusted for inflation) was \$60k per year.<sup>39</sup>
- The lowest median incomes in Durham County are concentrated in census tracts to the north and southeast of Downtown Durham. Median incomes in these census tracts ranged from \$20k to \$30k per year in 2019.<sup>40</sup>

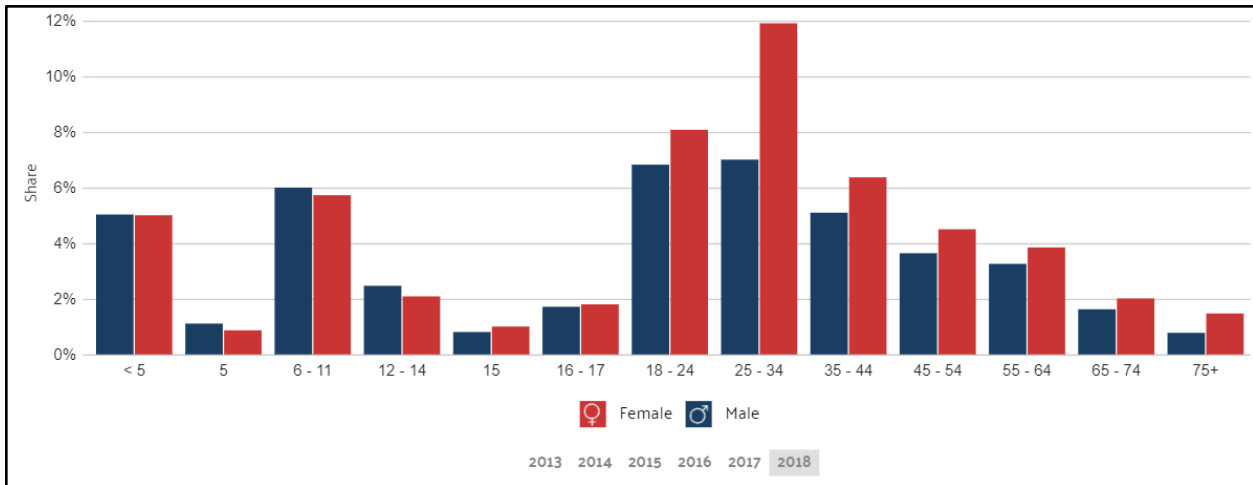
<sup>38</sup>Median Household Income (In 2019 Inflation Adjusted Dollars) [Map]. In SocialExplorer.com. ACS 2019 (with 5-Year Estimates). Retrieved June 23, 2021 from <https://www.socialexplorer.com/897018484f/view>.

<sup>39</sup>SE:A14007. Median Household Income by Race (In 2019 Inflation-Adjusted Dollars) (ACS 2019). In SocialExplorer.com. Retrieved June 18, 2021, from [https://www.socialexplorer.com/tables/ACS2019\\_5yr/R12849419](https://www.socialexplorer.com/tables/ACS2019_5yr/R12849419)

<sup>40</sup>SE:A14007. Median Household Income by Race (In 2019 Inflation-Adjusted Dollars) (ACS 2019). In SocialExplorer.com. Retrieved June 18, 2021, from [https://www.socialexplorer.com/tables/ACS2019\\_5yr/R12849419](https://www.socialexplorer.com/tables/ACS2019_5yr/R12849419)

## Poverty

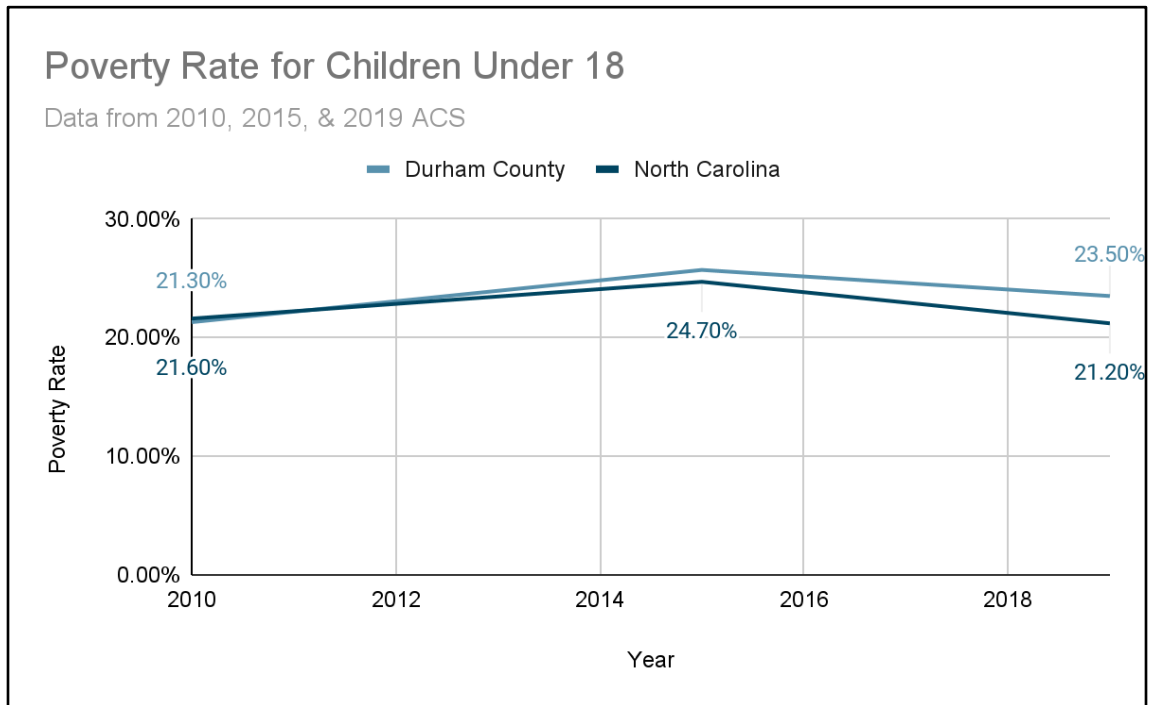
Figure 14: Poverty by Age and Gender<sup>41</sup>



- Women ages 25 to 34 make up the largest demographic living in poverty, followed by women ages 18 to 24 and then men ages 25 to 34 (Data USA, 2021).
- 5,572 women ages 25 to 34; 3,780 women ages 18 to 24; and 3,278 men ages 25 to 34 lived in poverty in 2019.

## Child Poverty

Figure 15: Child Poverty



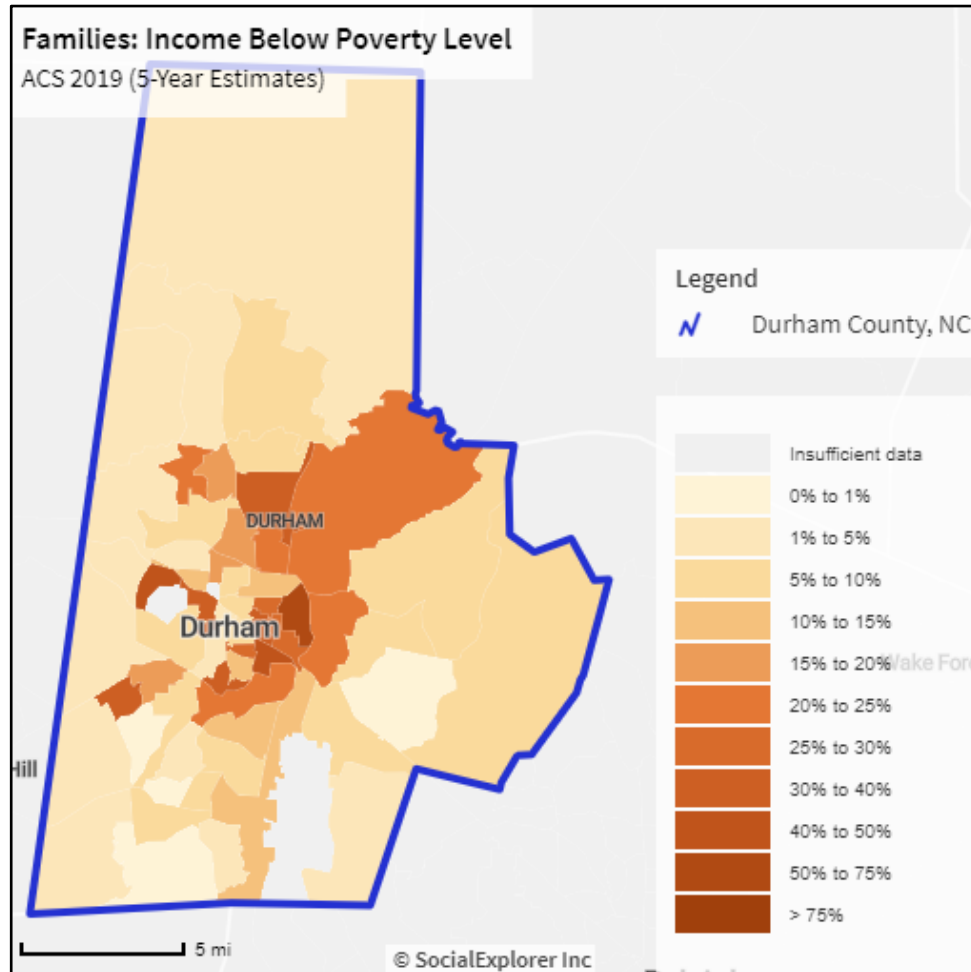
<sup>41</sup>Data USA. (2021). *Durham County, NC*. Datawheel. <https://datausa.io/profile/geo/durham-county-nc#about>



- In 2019, 23.5% of children lived in poverty in Durham County. This is slightly higher than the state average of 21.2% in 2019.<sup>42</sup>
- In 2015, 25.7% of children lived in poverty in Durham County. The state average in 2015 was 24.7%.<sup>43</sup> In 2010, 21.3% of children lived in poverty in Durham County. This was nearly equivalent to the state average of 21.6% in 2010.<sup>44</sup>

## Family Poverty

Figure 16: Family Poverty<sup>45</sup>



- 11% of families lived below the poverty line in 2019.<sup>46</sup> High rates of poverty are concentrated in the southeast and eastern regions of downtown Durham, where there is a greater percentage of minorities.

<sup>42</sup>SE:A13003A. Poverty Status in 2019 for Children Under 18. (ACS 2019). In SocialExplorer.com. Retrieved June 18, 2021, from [https://www.socialexplorer.com/tables/ACS2019\\_5yr/R12849419](https://www.socialexplorer.com/tables/ACS2019_5yr/R12849419)

<sup>43</sup>SE:A13003A. Poverty Status in 2015 for Children Under 18 (ACS 2015). In SocialExplorer.com. Retrieved June 18, 2021 from [https://www.socialexplorer.com/tables/ACS2015\\_5yr/R12849434](https://www.socialexplorer.com/tables/ACS2015_5yr/R12849434).

<sup>44</sup>SE:A13003A. Poverty Status in 2010 for Children Under 18. (ACS 2010). In SocialExplorer.com. Retrieved June 18, 2021 from [https://www.socialexplorer.com/tables/ACS2010\\_5yr/R12849426](https://www.socialexplorer.com/tables/ACS2010_5yr/R12849426)

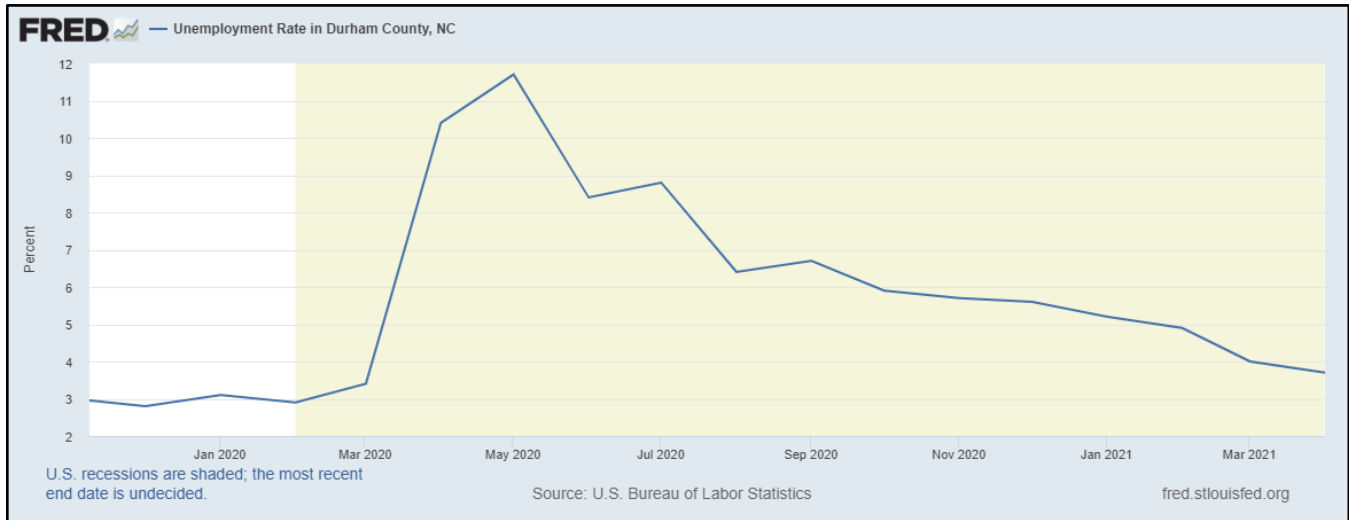
<sup>45</sup>Families: Income Below Poverty Level [Map]. In SocialExplorer.com. ACS 2019 (5-Year Estimates). Retrieved June 23, 2021 from <https://www.socialexplorer.com/81ae3bdf85/view>

<sup>46</sup>SE:A13002. Poverty Status of Families by Family Type by Presence of Children Under 18 Years (ACS 2019). In SocialExplorer.com. Retrieved June 18, 2021, from [https://www.socialexplorer.com/tables/ACS2019\\_5yr/R12849419](https://www.socialexplorer.com/tables/ACS2019_5yr/R12849419)

- Census tracts with high levels of family poverty also have high levels of child poverty. Child poverty rates are, on average, higher than the family poverty rate for each census tract. Rates of high child poverty are clustered in the center of Durham County.

## Employment

Figure 17: Unemployment Rate<sup>47</sup>



- The Bureau of Labor Statistics reported that the unemployment rate for Durham County in April 2021 was 3.7%.
- Unemployment in Durham County is trending downwards since the height of the COVID-19 pandemic. In May 2020, unemployment peaked in Durham County at 11.7% (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2021).
- Before the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, the unemployment rate in Durham County averaged between 3 and 5% each month since 2016 (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2021).

## Food Access

- 13.9% of households in Durham County are located near (within ¼-mile radius of) a grocery store. This amounts to nearly 20,000 households.<sup>48</sup>
- 29.9% of households are located within a ¼ mile radius of a convenience store or fast food restaurant, which amounts to approximately 43,000 households.<sup>49</sup>

Households located within a ¼ mile radius of grocery stores have more reliable access to basic, healthy foods. Neighborhoods that are further away from full-service grocery stores have to rely on transportation. In areas where residents have low car ownership and fewer bus stops, this makes it more difficult to consistently access healthy

<sup>47</sup>U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Unemployment Rate in Durham County, NC [NCDURH8URN], retrieved from FRED, Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis; <https://fred.stlouisfed.org/series/NCDURH8URN>, June 15, 2021.

<sup>48</sup>City of Durham Transportation & DataWorks NC. (2018). *Homes Near Grocery Stores, 2018* [Map]. Retrieved from <https://compass.durhamnc.gov/en/compass/PROXGR/blockgroup>.

<sup>49</sup>City of Durham Transportation & DataWorks NC. (2018). *Homes Near Fast Food & Convenience Stores, 2018* [Map]. Retrieved from <https://compass.durhamnc.gov/en/compass/PROXCF/blockgroup>.

food. In areas with fewer grocery stores, residents may rely on convenience food sources or fast food restaurants as closer and less expensive sources of food.

Households that are in close proximity to grocery stores and households in close proximity to convenience or fast food stores are more concentrated in the central and southern part of Durham, where there is a higher population density. Rural and suburban census tracts in Durham County have less access to both grocery stores and fast food or convenience stores, meaning that access to food in general in these areas is more of a challenge.

## Education

### Key Points

- 61.78% of students in Durham Public Schools were identified as economically disadvantaged based on enrollment in free and reduced lunch programs during the 2019-2020 school year.
- 16 Durham County schools identified more than 90% of their students as economically disadvantaged. 10 schools identified between 75 and 90% of their students as economically disadvantaged.
- 48% of Durham County Public Schools received a ‘C’ ranking on the NCDPI School Report Card. 28% of schools received a ‘D’ ranking.

### Durham County Public Schools

#### Enrollment<sup>50 51</sup>

During the 2020-21 school year, 31,577 students were enrolled across 53 total schools in the Durham County Public Schools system. 41% of students were African-American, 33.2% were Hispanic or Latinx, and 19.3% were white.

During the 2018-2019 school year, per-student funding from the federal, state, and local governments amounted to nearly \$12,000. This is approximately \$2,000 higher than the state average for funding per student.

#### School Performance<sup>52</sup>

In 2020, 18% of public schools in Durham County had not met their academic growth targets. The 2019 4-year graduation rate was 83.5%, slightly lower than the state average of 87.6%.

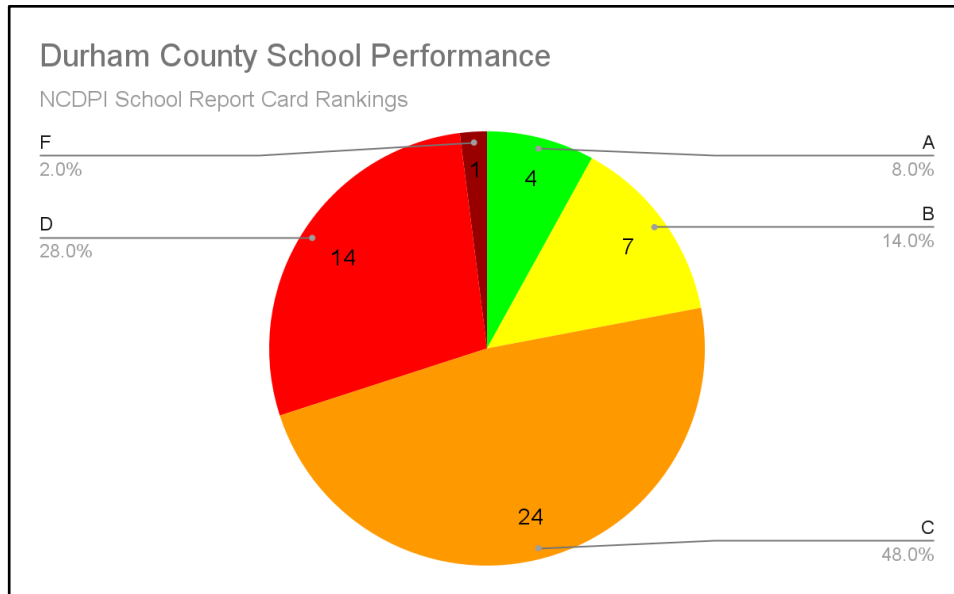
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<sup>50</sup>Durham Public Schools. (2021). *Facts & Figures About Durham Public Schools*. <https://www.dpsnc.net/domain/78>

<sup>51</sup>EducationNC. (2021). *Durham Public Schools*. <https://www.ednc.org/district/durham/>

<sup>52</sup>Carolina Demography & MyFuture NC. (2020). *Durham County 2020 Attainment Profile* [Fact sheet]. [https://dashboard.myfuturenc.org/wp-content/uploads/county-profiles/Durham\\_County.pdf](https://dashboard.myfuturenc.org/wp-content/uploads/county-profiles/Durham_County.pdf)

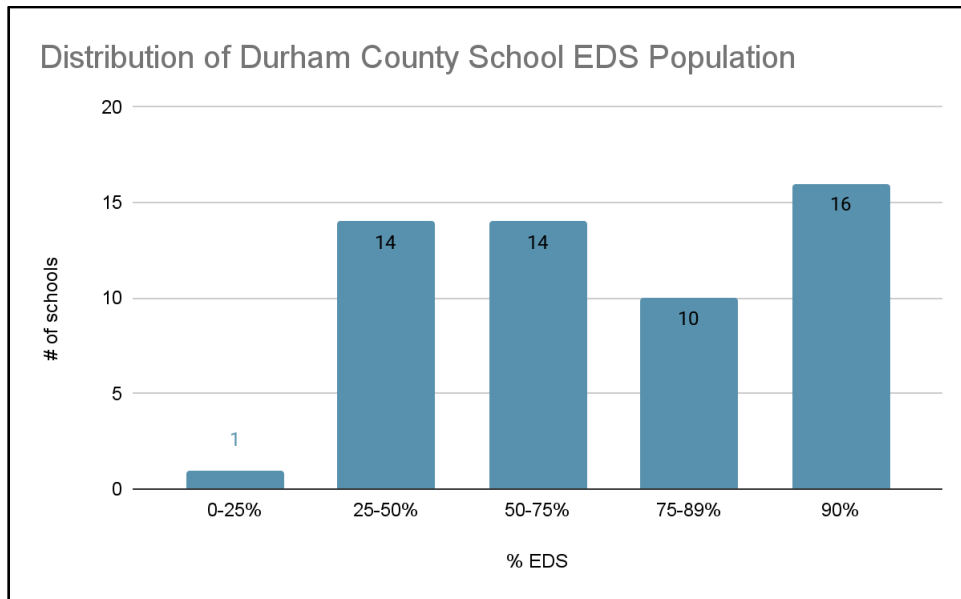
Figure 18: School Performance



Each academic year, the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction (NCDPI) releases school report cards, which assign each public school a letter grade based on school performance and academic growth metrics. During the 2018-2019 school year, 4 schools in Durham County received an ‘A’ ranking, 7 received a ‘B’, 24 received a ‘C’, 14 received a ‘D’, and one school received an ‘F’.

### Economically Disadvantaged Students

Figure 19: Economically Disadvantaged Students



‘Economically disadvantaged students’ are those who rely on free or reduced lunch programs. In Durham County, 19,687 students relied on free lunch services and 1,141 students relied on reduced lunch services during the 2019-2020 school year. A total of 61.78% of students in Durham Public Schools were identified as economically disadvantaged.

Schools with an EDS population of 90% and over are concentrated in the central area of Durham County. A similar trend is observed among schools with an EDS population between 75-89%. Schools with an EDS population under 50% tend to be located on the outer edge of Durham, and towards the western part of the county.

## Community Health

### Key Points

- In 2018, 10.8% of residents did not have health insurance, compared to 13.5% in 2015. In 2019, 40,573 residents (12.8% of Durham County’s population) were uninsured.
- In the 2020 Durham County Community Health Assessment Report:
  - 17% of respondents reported that they had experienced poor mental health for 15 days out of the last 30. In 2019, Durham County had one mental health provider for every 180 residents.
  - 10.2% of respondents skipped meals due to lack of money. 14.9% of Black residents and 12.6% of Hispanic or Latinx residents were likely to have skipped meals frequently in 2019, compared to only 6.6% of white residents.
  - 12.9% of adults had diabetes. Diabetes is more prevalent among residents living in census tracts in central and northeast Durham.
- African Americans made up 54% of reported COVID-19 cases in Durham County as of June 2021. Durham’s white population only made up 20% of cases, despite being over half of the population.

### Healthcare Access

87.5% of the population has health coverage, with 48.9% on employee plans, 16.4% on Medicaid, 9.43% on Medicare, 11.9% on non-group plans, and 0.944% on military or VA plans. (Data USA, 2021).

Primary care physicians in Durham County, NC see an average of 802 patients per year. This represents a 1.23% decrease from the previous year (812 patients). (Data USA, 2021).

Barriers to healthcare access in Durham County include: unreliable transportation, language differences, distrust of the healthcare system, lack of insurance, and cost.

Hispanics make up the largest immigrant group in Durham County. Immigrant and refugee households face greater difficulties in accessing healthcare. Undocumented migrants are excluded from Medicaid and private healthcare providers. Free and affordable (“safety net”) clinics do not provide specialized healthcare.

### Community Health Assessment (2020)<sup>53</sup>

Nearly all health outcomes in Durham County contain racial and ethnic disparities. Health disparities are caused by structural racism and historical policies like redlining, immigration laws, and segregation. Health and social issues are linked; for example, housing issues coincide with access to care and food insecurity issues.

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<sup>53</sup>Durham County Public Health. (March 2021). *Durham County Community Health Assessment 2020*. <https://healthydurham.org/cms/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/2020-CHA-FINAL.pdf>

### *Health Insurance*

- In 2019, 40,573 residents (12.8% of Durham County’s population) were uninsured. Residents identified cost as the primary barrier to getting insurance. Other significant barriers included immigration status, lack of employer-based plans, and unemployment status.
- 16.1% of residents reported that they faced difficulties in accessing healthcare. Most of these residents stated that dental, primary care, and pharmaceuticals were the most difficult services to access.

### *Mental Health*

- In 2019, Durham County had one mental health provider for every 180 residents.
- 17% of survey respondents reported that they had experienced poor mental health for 15 days out of the last 30.
  - 11% of Hispanic or Latinx residents reported that they had experienced prolonged periods of poor mental health.

### *Diabetes*

- In 2017, 12.9% of adults in Durham County had diabetes. Diabetes is a leading cause of death in Durham.
- Diabetes is more prevalent among residents living in census tracts in central and northeast Durham. In these tracts, the percentage of adults with diabetes is well over the county average and as high as 20% in some areas.
  - Diabetes is also more prevalent among the Hispanic population. Census tracts with large Hispanic populations also have a higher rate of diabetes.

### **Impact of COVID-19<sup>54</sup>**

- As of June 2021, there were 25,000 total cases of COVID-19 reported in Durham County since the start of the pandemic.
  - The average age of those who got COVID-19 is 37.
  - African-Americans made up 54% of reported COVID-19 cases.
  - Durham’s white population made up 20% of cases, despite being over half of Durham County’s population.
- There were 225 total deaths attributed to COVID-19 in Durham County as of June 2021.
- Zip codes with higher rates of COVID-19 cases have more people who cannot work from home, or live in congregate settings. These areas are located in the eastern part of Durham, where minorities make up more of the population.
- As of June 2021, 40% of Durham County residents were fully vaccinated. Of these, 77,000 were white and 38,000 were Black or African American.

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<sup>54</sup>Durham County Public Health. (2021). *Durham County Coronavirus Data Hub*. <https://durhampublichealth-durhamnc.hub.arcgis.com/>

- African American and minority populations in Durham are more vulnerable to COVID-19 because of the higher rates of poverty and inequality in healthcare access in these communities. Lower-income populations are also more likely to have jobs that require them to work in-person

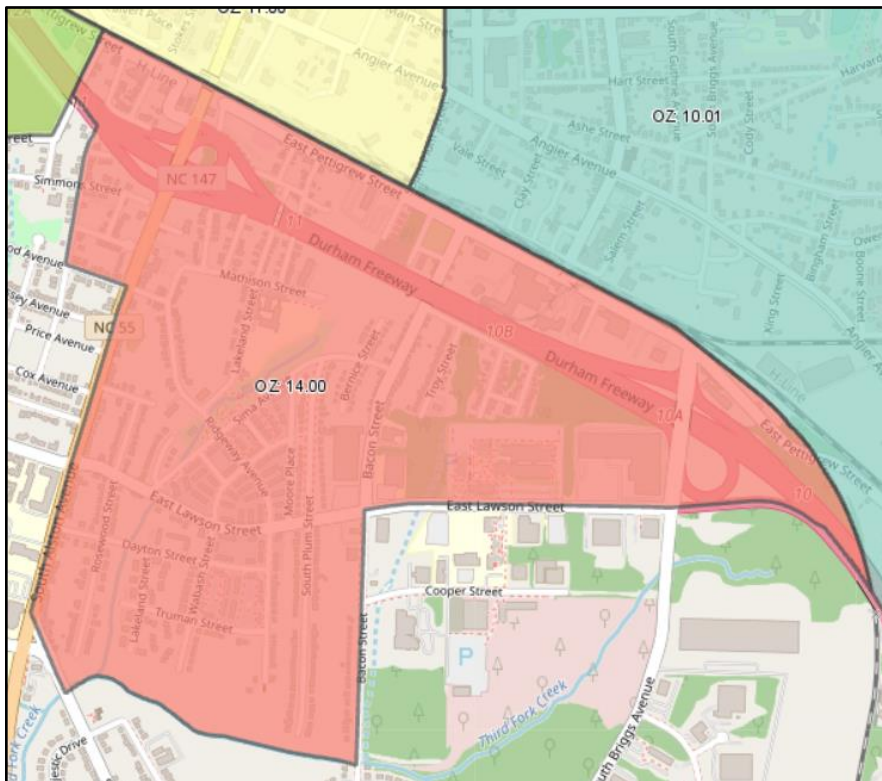
## High-Need Census Tracts

*Low-income communities and certain neighboring areas, defined by population census tracts, can qualify as Opportunity Zones. States nominate communities for the designation, and the U.S. Department of the Treasury certifies that nomination. Opportunity Zones are an economic development tool that allows people to invest in distressed areas in the United States. Their purpose is to spur economic growth and job creation in low-income communities while providing tax benefits to investors.<sup>55</sup>*

### Map of Census Tracts in Durham County

[https://www2.census.gov/geo/maps/dc10map/tract/st37\\_nc/c37063\\_durham/DC10CT\\_C37063\\_001.pdf](https://www2.census.gov/geo/maps/dc10map/tract/st37_nc/c37063_durham/DC10CT_C37063_001.pdf)

### Census Tract 14 (Opportunity Zone): NC 147 & Durham Freeway



- 82% of residents identified as Black or African-American in 2019.
- 89% of children live in a single-parent household.
- Median gross rent was \$463 in 2019, the lowest in Durham County.
- 44% of families lived in poverty in 2019.
- 79.84% of children lived in poverty in 2019.
- The unemployment rate was 7.5% in 2019.
- Median household income was \$27,628 in 2019.

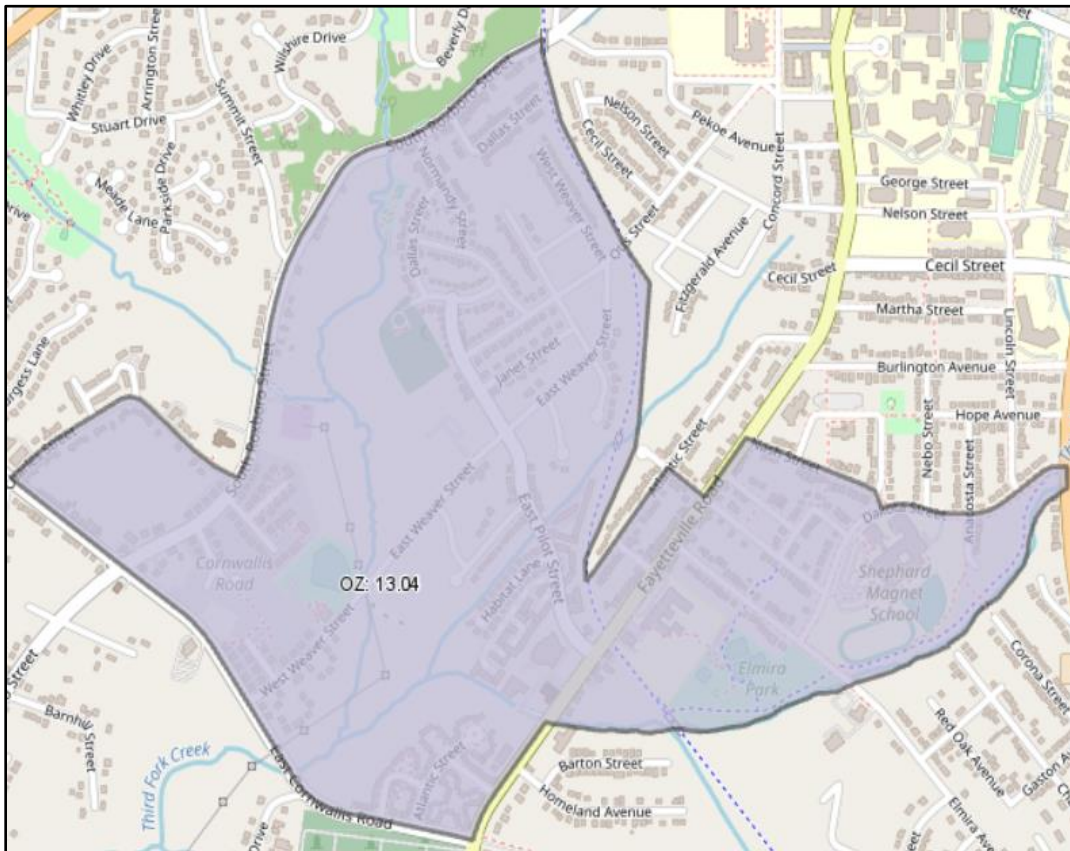
<sup>55</sup>Internal Revenue Service. (2021). *Opportunity Zones*. <https://www.irs.gov/credits-deductions/businesses/opportunity-zones>

**Census Tract 13.01: *Hillside Park***

- 82% of residents identified in Black or African-American in 2019.
- 27% of families lived in poverty in 2019.
- Unemployment was 13.11% in 2019.
- Median household income was \$31,683 in 2019.

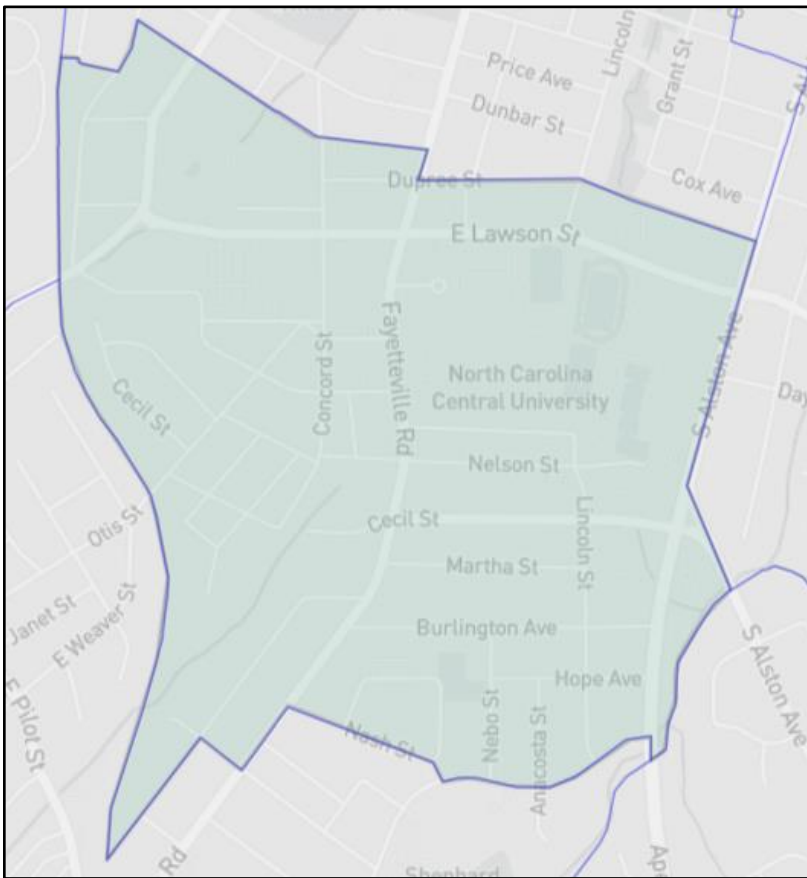
**Census Tract 13.04 (Opportunity Zone): *Fayetteville Rd & East Pilot St.***





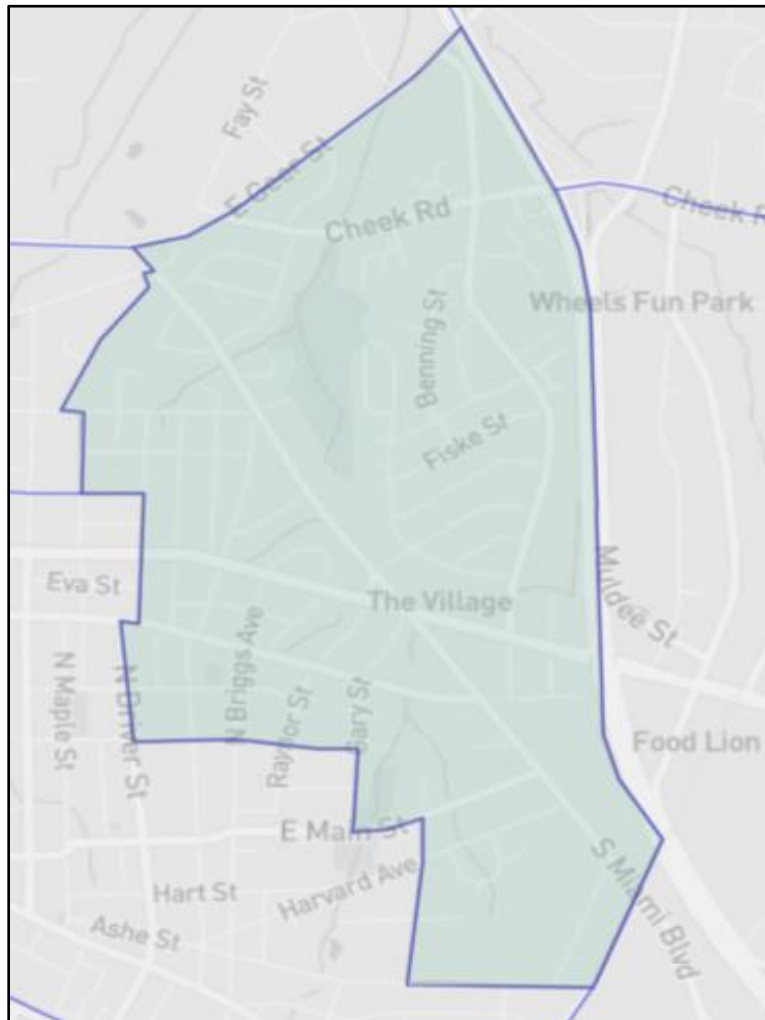
- 81% of children live in a single-parent household.
- 34% of families lived in poverty in 2019.
- Over 50% of children lived in poverty in 2019.
- Unemployment was 10% in 2019.
- Median household income was \$30,332 in 2019.

**Census Tract 13.03: NCCU & Fayetteville Rd.**



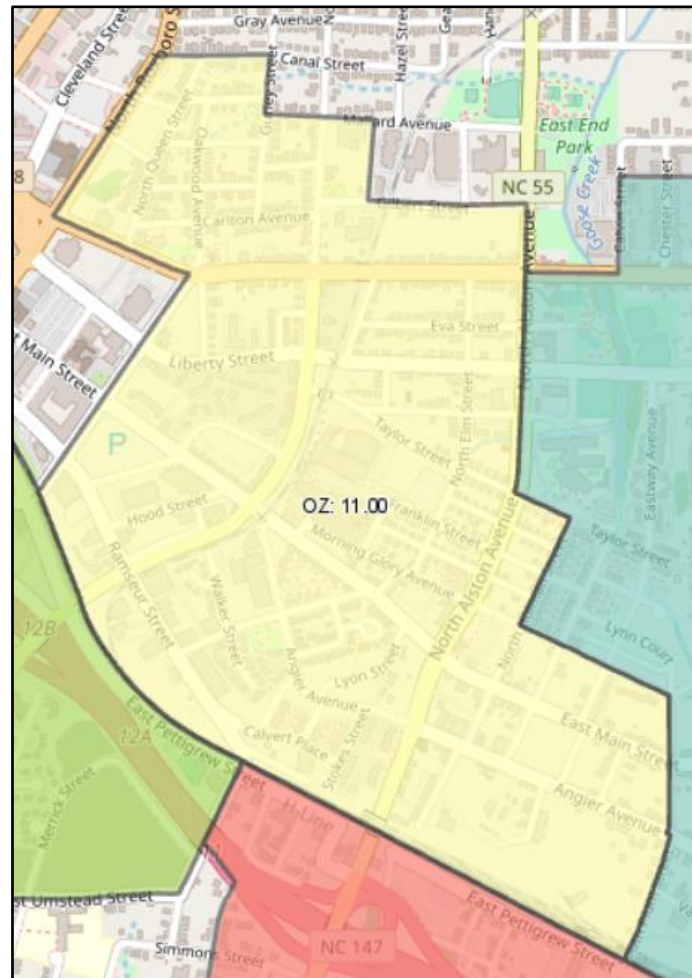
- 78% of residents identified as Black or African-American in 2019.
- 72.1% of children lived in a single-parent household in 2019.
- Unemployment was 10% in 2019.
- Median household income was 37,540 in 2019.

**Census Tract 10.02: S. Miami Blvd & The Village**



- 48.76% of residents in Census Tract 10.02 identified as Hispanic or Latinx in 2019, the highest percent out of all tracts in Durham County.
- 37% of residents in this tract identified as Black or African-American in 2019.
- Median household income in this tract was \$21,107 in 2019, the lowest in Durham County.
- 54.5% of families in this tract lived in poverty in 2019.
- 73.02% of children lived in poverty in 2019.
- 81% of children lived in a single-parent household in 2019.

**Census Tract 11 (Opportunity Zone):** *East Main St & North Alston Ave.*



- Median household income in this tract was \$24,209 in 2019 (nearly \$50k lower than the overall median income for Durham County).
- 63% of residents in this tract identified as Black or African American in 2019.
- 19% of residents in this tract identified as Hispanic or Latinx in 2019.
- 36% of families lived in poverty in 2019.
- Over 50% of children lived in poverty in 2019.
- 73.3% of children lived in a single-parent household in 2019.

## Further Resources

### Data Sources

AccessNC. (2020). *County Profile Durham County (NC)* [Fact sheet]. North Carolina Department of Commerce, Labor & Economic Analysis Division.  
<https://accessnc.nccommerce.com/DemoGraphicsReports/pdfs/countyProfile/NC/37063.pdf>

Carolina Demography & MyFuture NC. (2020). *Durham County 2020 Attainment Profile* [Fact sheet].  
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