

WHERE WE STAND

Where We Stand tracks the health of the St. Louis region among the 50 most populous MSAs.¹ These metro areas, known as the peer regions, are our domestic competition and provide a consistent yardstick to gauge “Where We Stand.”

This update adds comparative data to the OneSTL performance measures to show how St. Louis ranks among the 50 largest metropolitan areas on racial disparity.

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Addressing Racial Equity for a Sustainable Region

The 2017 OneSTL Report to the Region summarized the performance of the St. Louis region on more than 50 indicators related to the St. Louis regional plan for sustainable development. These indicators are grouped under nine theme areas as defined in the plan. The information for each metric is updated on the website at OneSTL.org/indicators when new data become available.

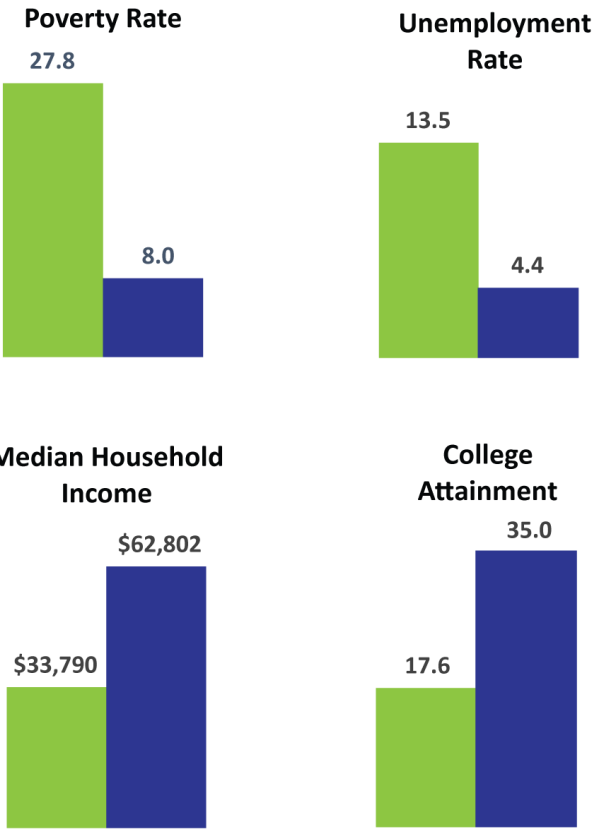
The region is moving in a positive direction on most OneSTL performance measures. However, the report showed that the region continues to struggle with the challenge of addressing disparities that exist between black and white residents.² Many of the working groups engaged in planning the 2017 Sustainability Summit expressed a need for additional information with which to apply a racial equity lens to issues of sustainability.

To this end, this report adds comparative data to the OneSTL performance measures to show how St. Louis ranks among the 50 largest metropolitan areas (the peer regions) on racial disparity.³ Data are not available to review the differences between whites and blacks for all of the OneSTL performance measures, but the measures included in this report cover important aspects of life—housing, transportation, education, and economic well-being.

Racial Disparity

St. Louis MSA, 2015

Black White



ONESTL is a plan for sustainable development that includes a vision, goals, and objectives for the future of the region as well as strategies, tools, and resources for achieving the OneSTL vision. The OneSTL performance indicators measure the St. Louis region’s progress toward sustainability.

More information on the OneSTL plan and the performance indicators, including why they are important and how the region is doing, is available at OneSTL.org.

¹ MSAs (Metropolitan Statistical Areas) are geographic entities delineated by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB). MSAs are areas with “at least one urbanized area of 50,000 or more population, plus adjacent territory that has a high degree of social and economic integration with the core as measured by commuting ties.”
² Whites and blacks comprise 92.6 percent of the St. Louis population. Therefore, this report focuses solely on the disparity between these two groups.
³ Data is not available for Salt Lake City and San Jose for most data points included in the report due to small black sample sizes.

Concentrated Poverty

Among the data included in this report, the largest disparity between blacks and whites for the St. Louis Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) is on the measure of concentrated poverty. In recent years, the region has seen an increase in the percent of poor people living in high poverty neighborhoods.⁴ Black residents are disproportionately represented in areas of concentrated poverty.

Residents of high poverty communities are faced with a number of factors that tend to perpetuate poverty and place additional hardships on poor families. Residents of these areas face low access to amenities, jobs, and affordable goods and services. These areas often have high crime rates. They also are found to have poorer health outcomes (Erikson, 2008) and lower academic achievement (Jargowsky, 2009). Further, concentrated poverty is associated with high costs for local governments, reduced trust in government, and a lack of civic engagement, which reduce the ability to address the causes of poverty (Erikson, 2008).

Low-income black residents are 12 times more likely to live in a high poverty neighborhood than a low-income white resident in the St. Louis region. That is, 29.8 percent of low-income black residents live in communities where 40 percent or more of the residents are in poverty. Only 2.4 percent of low-income white residents live in such communities. Among the peer regions, St. Louis has the 2nd largest gap between black and white residents on this measure. The disparity of the United States is much smaller, 3.25.

In the St. Louis region, black individuals comprise 18.1 percent of the population but 85.9 percent of the people living in concentrated poverty. Comparatively, black individuals comprise 12.4 percent of the U.S. population and about 37.5 percent of the population living in concentrated poverty.

In the St. Louis eight-county region, the percent of poor residents living in a concentrated area of poverty increased from 13.8 percent in the OneSTL baseline time period of 2006-2010 to 15.5 percent in 2011-2015. The rate of concentrated poverty increased for both black residents and white residents but an estimated 83.5 percent of the increase was due to the increase of poor black residents living in high poverty communities. This is a continued trend of an increase in the concentration of poverty. In 2000, 12.4 percent of poor residents lived in a concentrated area of poverty.⁵

Disparity in Concentrated Poverty

Percent of poor residents living in an area of concentrated poverty, 2011-2015

	Ratio of black to white residents	Percent of poor black residents	Percent of poor white residents
1 Nashville	14.21	26.1	1.8
2 St. Louis	12.46	29.8	2.4
3 Chicago	10.42	31.2	3.0
4 Washington, D.C.	8.86	12.5	1.4
5 Baltimore	8.69	16.8	1.9
6 Jacksonville	7.81	21.4	2.7
7 Birmingham	7.75	29.2	3.8
8 Miami	7.74	21.9	2.8
9 Tampa	6.33	30.9	4.9
10 New Orleans	6.13	22.3	3.6
11 Virginia Beach	6.00	16.1	2.7
12 Atlanta	5.81	14.7	2.5
13 Hartford	5.74	28.2	4.9
14 Denver	5.50	12.2	2.2
15 Charlotte	5.45	15.8	2.9
16 Pittsburgh	5.41	27.4	5.1
17 Houston	5.31	16.2	3.1
18 Buffalo	5.11	47.4	9.3
19 Kansas City	5.02	28.5	5.7
20 Los Angeles	4.54	17.1	3.8
21 Dallas	4.52	21.3	4.7
22 Memphis	4.33	34.3	7.9
23 Richmond	4.18	20.1	4.8
24 Louisville	3.99	32.9	8.2
25 Orlando	3.99	8.0	2.0
26 San Jose	3.91	1.4	0.4
27 Milwaukee	3.85	43.0	11.2
28 Philadelphia	3.81	30.6	8.1
29 Sacramento	3.63	19.2	5.3
30 Cleveland	3.52	44.7	12.7
31 Providence	3.51	22.1	6.3
32 Portland	3.46	8.3	2.4
33 Minneapolis	3.35	24.7	7.4
34 Detroit	3.31	50.5	15.3
United States	3.25	24.5	7.5
35 Las Vegas	3.17	17.3	5.5
36 Boston	3.16	13.1	4.1
37 Cincinnati	3.15	36.8	11.7
38 Raleigh	3.06	9.8	3.2
39 Phoenix	2.86	26.6	9.3
40 San Antonio	2.85	13.4	4.7
41 Salt Lake City	2.79	10.2	3.7
42 San Diego	2.71	11.2	4.1
43 Riverside	2.56	17.8	6.9
44 Oklahoma City	2.46	16.6	6.8
45 Indianapolis	2.44	29.4	12.0
46 Seattle	2.06	6.3	3.1
47 San Francisco	2.03	7.1	3.5
48 Columbus	1.80	27.5	15.2
49 New York	1.72	23.4	13.6
50 Austin	0.85	12.1	14.2

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

Note: Data is for White, Not Hispanic or Latino and for Black or African American alone (due to data availability, Hispanics are included)

⁴ In 2015, the poverty threshold for a family of four was \$24,257 (U.S. Census, 2017).

⁵ The data for the eight-county St. Louis region includes Hispanics and Latinos for both whites and blacks.

Poverty

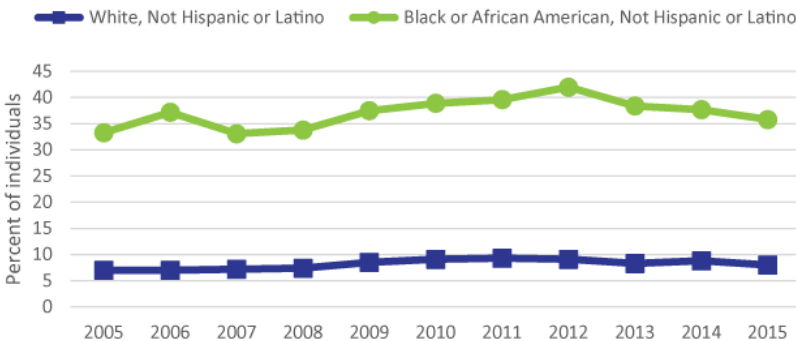
Black individuals in the St. Louis MSA are more than three times as likely to be in poverty as white individuals. In 2015, almost one-third (27.8 percent) of black individuals in St. Louis were in poverty compared to 8.4 percent of white individuals. St. Louis has the 11th largest gap among the peers. In all of the peer regions, blacks are at least 1.8 times more likely to be in poverty than white residents.

In 2015, the poverty threshold for a family of four was \$24,257 (U.S. Census, 2017). This level of income is not enough to live on without government assistance and does not provide an individual or family the opportunity to accumulate wealth.

Figure 1 shows that over the past 10 years the poverty rate of the black population in the St. Louis region has fluctuated some but has been consistently three to four times higher than the rate of white individuals. From 2005 to 2015, the rate for whites was lowest in 2005 and 2006, at 7.0 percent, and highest in 2011, at 9.3 percent. For blacks, the rate ranged from a low of 25.9 percent in 2007 to 32.9 percent in 2012.

“In 2015, almost one-third (27.8 percent) of black individuals in St. Louis were in poverty compared to 8.4 percent of white individuals.”

Figure 1: Poverty Rate
St. Louis MSA, 2005 to 2015



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates

Disparity in Poverty

Percent of individuals, 2015

	Ratio of black to white individuals	Percent of black individuals	Percent of white individuals
1 Minneapolis	5.28	30.1	5.7
2 Milwaukee	4.52	33.0	7.3
3 Buffalo	3.93	38.1	9.7
4 Cleveland	3.88	33.4	8.6
5 Chicago	3.84	26.9	7.0
6 Philadelphia	3.63	24.7	6.8
7 Kansas City	3.45	26.6	7.7
8 San Francisco	3.37	22.9	6.8
9 Pittsburgh	3.34	32.7	9.8
10 Denver	3.32	20.6	6.2
11 St. Louis	3.31	27.8	8.4
12 Virginia Beach	3.16	22.1	7.0
13 Portland	3.08	29.6	9.6
14 Louisville	3.06	30.3	9.9
15 Boston	3.03	20.6	6.8
16 Detroit	3.03	31.5	10.4
17 Richmond	2.97	20.2	6.8
18 Dallas	2.96	20.1	6.8
19 Baltimore	2.94	18.8	6.4
20 Seattle	2.92	23.1	7.9
21 Cincinnati	2.92	29.2	10.0
22 Columbus	2.90	29.3	10.1
23 Houston	2.90	19.4	6.7
24 Memphis	2.86	26.0	9.1
25 Hartford	2.81	14.9	5.3
26 Miami	2.81	24.7	8.8
27 Birmingham	2.76	26.8	9.7
28 New Orleans	2.72	28.6	10.5
29 Washington, D.C.	2.63	12.9	4.9
30 Raleigh	2.61	16.7	6.4
31 Indianapolis	2.57	26.0	10.1
32 Austin	2.57	19.0	7.4
33 Sacramento	2.52	26.2	10.4
34 New York	2.51	19.6	7.8
35 Las Vegas	2.47	25.2	10.2
United States	2.44	25.4	10.4
36 Atlanta	2.43	19.2	7.9
37 Oklahoma City	2.42	25.4	10.5
38 Tampa	2.25	25.4	11.3
39 Phoenix	2.23	22.7	10.2
40 Jacksonville	2.22	24.0	10.8
41 Los Angeles	2.22	21.3	9.6
42 Nashville	2.21	21.7	9.8
43 Charlotte	2.21	21.2	9.6
44 Riverside	2.13	23.8	11.2
45 San Antonio	2.12	17.8	8.4
46 Providence	2.09	19.6	9.4
47 San Diego	1.82	18.2	10.0
48 Orlando	1.75	18.6	10.6

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates

Note: Data is for White, Not Hispanic or Latino and Black or African American, Not Hispanic or Latino

Housing Cost-Burdened Low-Income Households⁶

Spending less than 30 percent of one's income on housing is considered to be "affordable." This measure specifically looks at the percent of households earning less than 80 percent of the HUD area median family income (HAMFI) that pay over 30 percent of their income on housing. The HAMFI varies by metro area and by family size. For example, the HAMFI for a family of four in St. Louis was \$56,866 for the 2011-2015 time period.

Despite St. Louis being considered an affordable region, many (66.8 percent) low-income households in the region pay more than 30 percent of their income on housing. This is also true in most of the peer regions, with a peer region average of 74.2 percent of low-income households being cost-burdened.

“Three quarters of low-income black households are cost-burdened, compared with 62.4 percent of low-income white households, a difference of 13 percentage points.”

In almost all of the peer regions, a larger proportion of low-income black households pay more than 30 percent of income on housing than white households. St. Louis ranks fourth on the difference between the percentage of low-income white households and the percentage of low-income black households that are cost-burdened. Three quarters of low-income black households are cost-burdened, compared with 62.4 percent of low-income white households, a difference of 13 percentage points.

St. Louis ranks higher than the peer region average on this measure with most of the peers having a lower disparity between blacks and whites than St. Louis. However, the region has a smaller percentage of both cost-burdened white households and cost-burdened black households than many of the peers.

Disparity in Housing Affordability

Percent of low-income households that are cost-burdened*, 2011-2015

	Ratio of black to white low-income households	Black	White	
1	Birmingham	1.30	74.2	56.9
2	Oklahoma City	1.24	77.7	62.7
3	Tampa	1.22	84.5	69.2
4	St. Louis	1.21	75.4	62.4
5	Charlotte	1.21	75.3	62.4
6	Atlanta	1.21	80.7	66.9
7	Riverside	1.19	87.4	73.3
8	Nashville	1.19	73.9	62.0
9	Phoenix	1.19	83.8	70.7
10	Indianapolis	1.18	82.4	69.9
11	Orlando	1.16	85.9	74.1
12	New Orleans	1.14	76.6	67.0
13	Minneapolis	1.14	74.2	65.3
14	San Jose	1.14	76.2	67.1
15	Memphis	1.13	79.5	70.3
16	Cincinnati	1.13	75.2	66.6
17	Raleigh	1.13	71.6	63.4
18	Louisville	1.13	69.7	61.8
19	Pittsburgh	1.13	68.1	60.5
20	Buffalo	1.12	75.0	66.7
21	Las Vegas	1.12	87.6	78.4
22	Denver	1.11	78.8	70.9
23	Sacramento	1.11	83.9	75.6
24	Houston	1.10	75.0	68.0
25	San Diego	1.10	85.1	77.1
26	Kansas City	1.10	72.2	65.6
27	Seattle	1.10	79.0	72.0
28	Dallas	1.10	76.4	69.6
29	Miami	1.10	85.2	77.7
30	Hartford	1.09	78.6	72.0
31	Jacksonville	1.09	79.3	72.8
32	Detroit	1.09	75.6	69.4
33	Portland	1.09	81.5	75.0
34	Baltimore	1.08	73.3	67.6
	Peer Average	1.08	77.1	71.3
35	San Antonio	1.08	73.8	68.3
36	Richmond	1.08	73.2	68.1
37	Columbus	1.07	76.0	71.2
38	Los Angeles	1.07	85.2	79.8
39	Virginia Beach	1.07	79.3	74.3
40	Washington, D.C.	1.07	71.4	67.0
41	Providence	1.06	76.9	72.2
42	Milwaukee	1.06	80.5	75.8
43	San Francisco	1.06	75.8	71.8
44	Cleveland	1.05	73.5	70.2
45	Chicago	1.05	77.4	74.0
46	Austin	1.03	78.1	75.5
47	Boston	1.01	72.5	71.8
48	Philadelphia	0.98	71.1	72.8
49	New York	0.97	78.4	80.8

*Source: Integrated Public Use Microdata Series

*Cost burdened households pay 30 over percent of their monthly income on housing.

Note: Data is for White, Not Hispanic or Latino and Black or African American, Not Hispanic or Latino.

6 The OneSTL Housing Affordability performance measure was previously defined as "percent of renter units and owner units affordable and available to households earning 80% of HUD area median family income" but was revised to the definition discussed here to reflect the current housing costs of residents in the region.

Unemployment

The unemployment rate for black adults in St. Louis (13.5 percent) was three times what it was for white adults (4.4 percent) in 2015. The region ranks 5th with a disparity that is higher than the United States but similar to many of the Midwest peer regions.

Comparing the lowest black unemployment rates among the peer regions to the highest white unemployment rates highlights the wide disparity throughout the country. Among the peer regions, Austin and San Antonio have the lowest unemployment rate for black adults, 6.4 percent. The white unemployment rate is lower than this in 44 of the peer regions.

Figure 2 shows the unemployment rate for white adults and black adults in the St. Louis MSA from 2005 to 2015. The green line shows the black unemployment rate being two to three times higher than the white rate over the entire 10-year period.

During the recession the rate for both population groups reached its height in 2010. For white adults the rate hit 8.6 percent while for blacks the rate was 2.4 times higher, at 20.7 percent. In 2015, white unemployment dipped to 4.4 percent, below its previous 10-year low of 4.9 percent in 2008. In 2015, the rate for black adults was three times higher than the rate for whites and was still slightly higher (13.5 percent) than it was in 2008 (13.0 percent).

Disparity in Unemployment

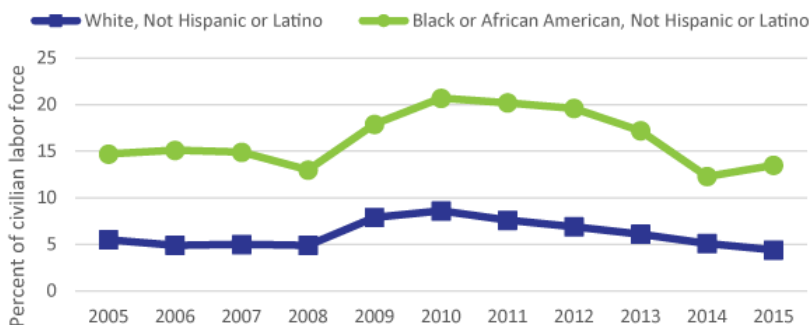
Percent of labor force unemployed, 2015

	Ratio of black to white adults	Percent of black adults	Percent of white adults
1 Milwaukee	5.11	13.8	2.7
2 Cleveland	3.74	17.6	4.7
3 Chicago	3.45	16.2	4.7
4 Detroit	3.15	17.0	5.4
5 St. Louis	3.07	13.5	4.4
6 Indianapolis	3.04	13.7	4.5
7 Hartford	3.02	13.6	4.5
8 Pittsburgh	2.88	14.4	5.0
9 Memphis	2.73	12.0	4.4
10 Buffalo	2.67	11.2	4.2
11 Minneapolis	2.63	9.2	3.5
12 San Francisco	2.63	11.3	4.3
13 Cincinnati	2.60	11.7	4.5
14 Virginia Beach	2.53	11.4	4.5
15 Louisville	2.53	11.9	4.7
16 Miami	2.48	12.9	5.2
17 Raleigh	2.46	9.6	3.9
18 Richmond	2.41	9.4	3.9
19 Denver	2.36	9.2	3.9
20 Portland	2.33	13.5	5.8
21 Columbus	2.33	10.7	4.6
22 Boston	2.30	10.1	4.4
United States	2.28	11.4	5.0
23 Philadelphia	2.26	12.0	5.3
24 Nashville	2.23	8.9	4.0
25 Charlotte	2.21	11.5	5.2
26 Baltimore	2.21	9.5	4.3
27 New York	2.21	10.6	4.8
28 Seattle	2.20	11.0	5.0
29 Birmingham	2.20	11.2	5.1
30 Washington, D.C.	2.17	7.8	3.6
31 Atlanta	2.10	10.1	4.8
32 San Diego	2.10	12.6	6.0
33 Oklahoma City	2.05	8.4	4.1
34 New Orleans	2.04	10.4	5.1
35 Tampa	2.04	11.2	5.5
36 Kansas City	1.92	7.3	3.8
37 Los Angeles	1.90	11.2	5.9
38 Phoenix	1.88	9.8	5.2
39 Houston	1.87	8.6	4.6
40 Sacramento	1.86	13.0	7.0
41 Dallas	1.79	7.5	4.2
42 Austin	1.78	6.4	3.6
43 Providence	1.58	9.0	5.7
44 Orlando	1.53	8.4	5.5
45 Jacksonville	1.47	9.4	6.4
46 Las Vegas	1.47	11.6	7.9
47 Riverside	1.45	12.8	8.8
48 San Antonio	1.42	6.4	4.5

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, America Community Survey 1-Year Estimates

Note: Data is for White, Not Hispanic or Latino and Black or African American, Not Hispanic or Latino

Figure 2: Unemployment Rate
St. Louis MSA, 2005 to 2015



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates

Transportation

The OneSTL performance measures on transportation primarily focus on public transportation along with walking and biking. Generally, they indicate that the region is taking steps to expand transportation options, but residents are continuing to choose to drive alone as their main mode of transportation. Further, driving continues to be the quickest way to reach the most destinations in the region. Data is not available by race for most of the OneSTL transportation metrics but this section looks at racial disparity for travel time to work and no-vehicle households.

Travel Time

The St. Louis region provides an expansive road network that facilitates low-congestion and reasonable commute times for most residents who drive a car, but the public transportation system is not as robust. The typical St. Louis resident with access to transit can reach 13 times more jobs by a 45 minute driving commute than by a 45 minute transit commute (EWG, 2015).

The OneSTL performance indicator, access to jobs, measures the percent of residents living within a reasonable travel time to work. A “reasonable” time is considered to be 45 minutes or less by auto and 60 minutes or less by public transportation. Most residents in the St. Louis region (87.5 percent) have a reasonable travel time to work in 2011-2015. Although, the percent of workers who have a reasonable travel time and commute by car, 88.3 percent, is substantially more than those who ride transit, 63.0 percent.

Looking at the average commute times for black and white workers, for the most part, there is not much disparity in any of the regions. In St. Louis, the average commute time for whites, 25.6 minutes, is about the same as the average time for blacks, 25.9 minutes. The peer regions that do have a disparity tend to be those that are densely populated. A handful of regions have shorter average commute times for blacks than for whites.

Disparity in Travel Time

Mean travel time to work (minutes),
workers 16 years and older, 2015

	Ratio of time for black to white adults	Time for black adults	Time for white adults
1 Philadelphia	1.21	34.3	28.4
2 New York	1.20	41.2	34.2
3 Las Vegas	1.15	27.9	24.2
4 Chicago	1.15	36.0	31.3
5 Miami	1.14	30.1	26.4
6 Denver	1.14	31.3	27.5
7 Los Angeles	1.14	33.1	29.1
8 Boston	1.13	35.1	31.1
United States	1.12	28.5	25.5
9 Pittsburgh	1.11	29.5	26.5
10 Washington, D.C.	1.10	36.9	33.6
11 Riverside	1.10	35.1	32.0
12 Seattle	1.09	32.9	30.1
13 Phoenix	1.09	28.6	26.3
14 Portland	1.09	28.9	26.6
15 Cleveland	1.09	26.6	24.5
16 Orlando	1.09	29.3	27.0
17 Sacramento	1.08	29.1	27.0
18 Baltimore	1.08	32.5	30.2
19 New Orleans	1.08	26.9	25.0
20 Dallas	1.05	29.7	28.2
21 Atlanta	1.05	32.4	30.8
22 Providence	1.05	27.6	26.3
23 San Diego	1.04	26.9	25.8
24 Buffalo	1.04	22.8	22.0
25 Milwaukee	1.03	23.9	23.3
26 Raleigh	1.02	26.1	25.5
27 Austin	1.02	26.8	26.4
28 St. Louis	1.01	25.9	25.6
29 Jacksonville	1.01	26.6	26.4
30 Houston	1.01	30.9	30.7
31 Charlotte	1.00	26.7	26.7
32 Minneapolis	1.00	25.5	25.5
33 Richmond	1.00	24.6	24.6
34 San Francisco	1.00	33.3	33.3
35 Cincinnati	0.99	24.7	24.9
36 Detroit	0.98	26.3	26.8
37 Columbus	0.98	23.3	23.8
38 Tampa	0.97	26.2	27.0
39 Louisville	0.96	23.6	24.6
40 Hartford	0.96	23.4	24.4
41 Virginia Beach	0.95	24.3	25.5
42 Nashville	0.95	26.3	27.6
43 San Antonio	0.94	25.5	27.1
44 Kansas City	0.94	21.9	23.3
45 Memphis	0.94	23.0	24.5
46 Indianapolis	0.93	23.2	25.0
47 Birmingham	0.92	24.7	26.8
48 Oklahoma City	0.86	19.7	22.9

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, America Community Survey 1-Year Estimates

Note: Data is for White, Not Hispanic or Latino and Black or African American, Not Hispanic or Latino

Zero-Vehicle Households

Zero-vehicle households is not a OneSTL performance measure but is important to understanding the needs of the transportation system.

“About one out five black households in the region do not have access to a car compared to just one out of 20 white households.”

Nearly 80,000 households in the region do not have access to a car. Black households are much more likely to lack access to a vehicle than white households. About one out of five black households in the region do not have access to a car compared to just one out of 20 white households. This disparity ranks the region 2nd among the peers.

Black households are less likely to have access to a car than white households in all 48 of the peer regions. Black households are even twice as likely to not own a car in regions that are known for high-quality transit systems such as New York and San Francisco, where people are more likely to choose to not own a car.

Disparity in Zero-Vehicle Households

Percent of households, 2015

	Ratio of black to white households	Percent of black households	Percent of white households
1 Raleigh	4.55	10.0	2.2
2 St. Louis	4.54	20.9	4.6
3 Pittsburgh	4.39	35.1	8.0
4 Minneapolis	4.24	23.3	5.5
5 Virginia Beach	4.09	13.5	3.3
6 Milwaukee	4.08	26.9	6.6
7 Louisville	4.07	22.4	5.5
8 Philadelphia	4.04	30.3	7.5
9 Denver	4.02	17.3	4.3
10 Baltimore	4.02	24.5	6.1
11 Cincinnati	3.91	21.9	5.6
12 Charlotte	3.91	12.5	3.2
13 Cleveland	3.77	24.9	6.6
14 Buffalo	3.75	34.9	9.3
15 Detroit	3.74	21.3	5.7
16 Memphis	3.68	14.0	3.8
17 Nashville	3.62	14.1	3.9
18 Richmond	3.62	14.1	3.9
19 Indianapolis	3.60	16.9	4.7
20 Kansas City	3.54	17.0	4.8
21 New Orleans	3.50	18.2	5.2
22 Las Vegas	3.41	21.5	6.3
23 Hartford	3.36	19.5	5.8
24 Dallas	3.35	11.4	3.4
25 Sacramento	3.32	18.6	5.6
26 Jacksonville	3.29	13.8	4.2
27 Birmingham	3.24	13.6	4.2
28 Houston	3.15	10.7	3.4
29 Chicago	3.09	26.3	8.5
30 Atlanta	3.06	10.1	3.3
United States	3.02	19.3	6.4
31 Phoenix	3.00	15.9	5.3
32 Providence	2.90	23.8	8.2
33 San Antonio	2.89	11.0	3.8
34 Orlando	2.84	10.8	3.8
35 Tampa	2.81	16.3	5.8
36 Boston	2.80	27.2	9.7
37 Columbus	2.75	14.6	5.3
38 Los Angeles	2.70	17.3	6.4
39 Portland	2.64	21.4	8.1
40 Austin	2.51	9.8	3.9
41 Seattle	2.38	16.2	6.8
42 Washington, D.C.	2.36	16.5	7.0
43 San Diego	2.34	11.7	5.0
44 Riverside	2.24	10.3	4.6
45 San Francisco	2.13	22.4	10.5
46 New York	2.13	44.0	20.7
47 Oklahoma City	2.09	9.8	4.7
48 Miami	1.94	13.0	6.7

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, America Community Survey 1-Year Estimates

Note: Data is for White, Not Hispanic or Latino and Black or African American, Not Hispanic or Latino

Access to Healthy Food Choices

This indicator looks at the percent of the population that resides far from a grocery store, defined by the U.S. Department of Agriculture as farther than 1 mile in urban areas and 10 miles in rural areas, and in a low-income census tract.⁷ Research finds that there tend to be fewer supermarkets in low-income areas. This absence of easily accessible grocery stores can be particularly problematic for low-income people who are less able to afford transportation. Low access to supermarkets is linked to spending more time traveling to grocery stores, paying higher prices for groceries, and less nutritional diets, which can lead to higher rates of disease (U.S Department of Agriculture, 2009).

In 2015, more than 1.15 million St. Louis residents lived far from a grocery store. Of this total, 235,000 residents also lived in a low-income census tract. This constitutes 8.4 percent of the region’s population, which is an increase of 1.2 percentage points (50,000 additional people) since 2010. Of the 235,000 people living in low-income tracts with low access to grocery stores, 56,000 (24.1 percent) reside within St. Louis County, 19.1 percent reside in Jefferson County, and 17.5 percent reside in Madison County.

White individuals comprise a larger proportion of this population (64 percent) compared to black individuals (31 percent). However, black individuals are twice as likely to be among this population. Throughout the region, 14.4 percent of black residents live in a low-income census tract and reside far from a grocery store compared with 7.1 percent of white residents in the region. This disparity of 2.0 ranks the region as having the 11th largest gap between whites and blacks. The more densely populated regions tend to have lower disparity rates along with low rates for both whites and blacks, including Washington, D.C. and New York. All of the peer Midwest regions are among the regions with the largest disparities on this measure.

Another consideration is a household’s access to a vehicle. Living one mile from a grocery store is not far for someone who is driving but one mile can be a considerable distance to travel with a load of groceries for someone riding transit or walking. More than 22,000 households (2.1 percent of households) in the St. Louis region do not have access to a vehicle and reside far from a grocery store. This is similar to the percentage nationwide, 1.9 percent of households. As discussed on page 7, black households are much more likely to not have access to a vehicle than white households.

Disparity in Access to Healthy Food Choices

Percent of population living in a low-income census tract and resides far from a supermarket/large grocery store*, 2015

	Ratio of black to white residents	Percent of black residents	Percent of white residents
1 Oklahoma City	3.1	22.5	7.3
2 New Orleans	3.0	21.7	7.2
3 Indianapolis	3.0	16.6	5.6
4 Milwaukee	2.8	5.2	1.9
5 Salt Lake City	2.7	9.5	3.5
6 Buffalo	2.6	9.2	3.5
7 Chicago	2.6	6.0	2.3
8 Denver	2.2	10.7	4.8
9 Richmond	2.2	19.8	9.1
10 Cleveland	2.1	6.8	3.3
11 St. Louis	2.0	14.4	7.1
12 Memphis	2.0	23.2	11.8
13 Cincinnati	1.9	17.1	9.0
14 Kansas City	1.9	14.2	7.5
15 Detroit	1.8	6.3	3.5
16 Virginia Beach	1.8	12.9	7.2
17 Sacramento	1.8	6.5	3.7
18 Dallas	1.8	17.2	9.8
19 Baltimore	1.7	3.6	2.0
20 Minneapolis	1.7	8.3	4.9
21 Columbus	1.7	18.9	11.3
22 Jacksonville	1.6	16.6	10.5
23 Atlanta	1.5	20.9	13.5
24 Las Vegas	1.5	5.9	3.9
25 Raleigh	1.5	24.5	16.6
26 Seattle	1.5	6.7	4.6
27 Hartford	1.4	5.9	4.1
28 Pittsburgh	1.4	12.4	9.1
29 Louisville	1.4	7.6	5.6
30 Austin	1.3	22.2	16.6
31 Phoenix	1.3	11.4	8.6
32 Birmingham	1.3	26.1	20.2
33 Nashville	1.2	14.6	11.8
34 Miami	1.2	4.7	3.9
35 Portland	1.2	4.1	3.4
United States	1.2	16.7	14.1
36 San Francisco	1.2	2.0	1.7
37 Houston	1.1	13.7	12.0
38 Philadelphia	1.1	3.8	3.3
39 Orlando	1.1	12.9	12.0
40 Charlotte	1.1	18.7	17.8
41 Los Angeles	1.0	2.0	2.0
42 San Jose	1.0	1.6	1.6
43 Tampa	1.0	9.7	10.1
44 San Diego	0.9	3.8	4.1
45 Providence	0.9	2.6	3.0
46 Boston	0.7	2.3	3.5
47 San Antonio	0.6	17.7	27.9
48 Riverside	0.6	13.1	21.9
49 Washington, D.C.	0.6	4.1	7.3
50 New York	0.4	0.7	1.9

Source: U.S. Department of Agriculture, Food Access Research Atlas

*More than one mile in urban census tracts and more than 10 miles in rural census tracts. Population data is from 2010.

Note: Data is not available to distinguish Hispanic origin. Data is for Whites, including Hispanics and Latinos, and Blacks, including Hispanics and Latinos.

7 Census tracts are considered low-income if they meet the criteria from the Department of Treasury’s New Market Tax Credit (NMTC) program, which includes all tracts with over 20 percent poverty and tracts that have low median family income relative to the state or metropolitan area median family income.

Median Household Income

As of 2015, the median white household in St. Louis earned \$62,802. This is almost twice as much as the median black household income of \$33,790. The income disparity in the region increased during and after the Great Recession up to a high of 2.09 in 2012 (See Figure 3). It declined over the past few years to 1.86 in 2015 but is not as low as it was in 2000 (1.79).

“Among the 50 most populous metropolitan regions for which there is complete data, St. Louis ranks as having the 17th highest disparity in household income between whites and blacks.”

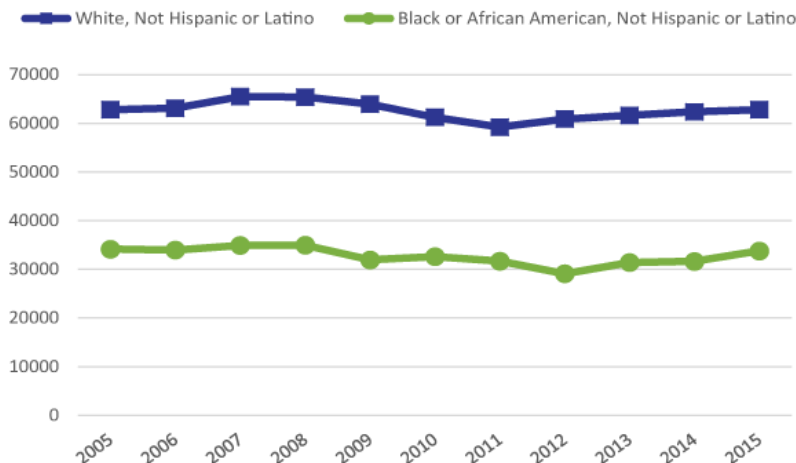
The gap in median income between black and white households is larger in St. Louis than for the United States as a whole. In 2015, the St. Louis region’s ratio of 1.86 was 11 percent higher than the ratio of 1.68 for the United States. Among the 50 most populous metropolitan regions for which there is complete data, St. Louis ranks as having the 17th highest disparity in household income between whites and blacks. This is an improvement from 2014, when the region ranked 12th. Many of the peer Midwest regions have similar or higher disparities.

Disparity in Income

Median household Income, 2015

	Ratio of white to black median income	Black median income	White median income
1 Minneapolis	2.42	31,672	76,581
2 San Francisco	2.30	45,678	105,128
3 Milwaukee	2.28	28,947	65,862
4 Chicago	2.20	34,937	76,869
5 Buffalo	2.19	26,936	58,998
6 Pittsburgh	2.18	26,292	57,204
7 Cincinnati	2.07	29,989	62,217
8 Cleveland	2.05	29,238	59,889
9 Houston	2.03	41,929	85,272
10 Portland	2.01	33,130	66,537
11 Philadelphia	2.00	39,123	78,388
12 New Orleans	1.98	31,102	61,655
13 Boston	1.98	44,154	87,302
14 Detroit	1.92	32,210	61,835
15 Memphis	1.92	34,562	66,225
16 Indianapolis	1.88	32,458	60,913
17 St. Louis	1.86	33,790	62,802
18 Denver	1.86	42,222	78,368
19 New York	1.85	47,173	87,186
20 Louisville	1.85	31,088	57,432
21 Los Angeles	1.81	44,892	81,289
22 Oklahoma City	1.80	32,286	58,253
23 Kansas City	1.80	36,954	66,344
24 Richmond	1.79	40,477	72,513
25 Dallas	1.79	42,363	75,724
26 Hartford	1.78	46,370	82,765
27 Columbus	1.78	36,005	64,118
28 Birmingham	1.75	34,384	60,334
29 Sacramento	1.74	40,485	70,465
30 Charlotte	1.74	36,431	63,251
31 Seattle	1.72	46,370	79,700
32 Nashville	1.72	36,825	63,212
33 Raleigh	1.69	44,756	75,710
34 Baltimore	1.69	50,523	85,169
35 Jacksonville	1.68	35,807	60,206
United States	1.68	36,515	61,394
36 Virginia Beach	1.68	41,582	69,728
37 Washington, D.C.	1.65	68,054	112,177
38 Miami	1.62	39,354	63,731
39 Las Vegas	1.60	36,662	58,754
40 Austin	1.58	49,397	78,294
41 Atlanta	1.58	45,799	72,392
42 Providence	1.56	41,111	64,147
43 Phoenix	1.52	40,496	61,551
44 Orlando	1.49	40,299	60,183
45 Tampa	1.47	35,256	51,989
46 San Diego	1.45	52,616	76,347
47 San Antonio	1.40	49,163	68,665
48 Riverside	1.38	44,989	62,249

Figure 3: Median Household Income (2015 dollars)
St. Louis MSA, 2005 to 2015



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates

Note: Data is for White, Not Hispanic or Latino and Black or African American, Not Hispanic or Latino

College Attainment

There are stark differences in college attainment levels among adults of different racial groups. In St. Louis, the disparity in college attainment is high relative to many of the other peer regions.

Among the 48 peer regions, St. Louis ranks 15th in terms of disparity between the proportion of white and black adults with a bachelor's degree or higher. The percentage of white adults with a college degree is about twice that of black adults; 34.9 and 17.6 percent, respectively. Asian adults in the region have a much higher rate, 63.3 percent.

Figure 4 shows college attainment rates by race for the St. Louis MSA from 2005 to 2015. The attainment rate for blacks increased at a lower rate, 2.2 percentage points, over the 10-year period than that of white adults (5.0 percentage points). Although the rate increased for both groups, the racial disparity gap widened.

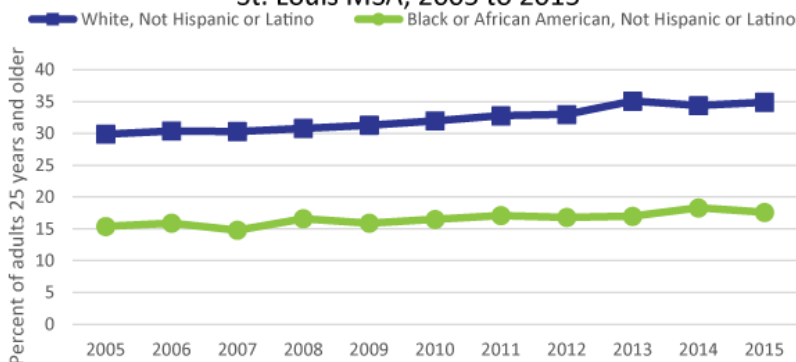
Even if the education gap is closed, research indicates minorities do not realize the same degree of benefits from a college education as whites. A black or Hispanic family has only a fraction of the income and net worth as a white family with the same level of education (Emmons, 2017). Nationally, on average, a black family with a college degree as the highest level of education has a family income that is about 20 percent lower than that of a similarly educated white family. The family net worth (wealth) of that black family is estimated to be 10 percent of the net worth of the white family.

Disparity in College Attainment

Adults aged 25 or older, with a bachelor's degree or higher, 2015

	Ratio of white to black adults	Percent of black adults	Percent of white adults
1 Milwaukee	2.96	13.3	39.4
2 Cleveland	2.26	14.6	33.0
3 San Francisco	2.21	26.8	59.2
4 Minneapolis	2.20	19.5	42.9
5 New Orleans	2.19	16.7	36.6
6 Miami	2.18	19.1	41.7
7 Philadelphia	2.15	19.2	41.2
8 Chicago	2.12	20.8	44.0
9 Boston	2.11	23.5	49.7
10 Sacramento	2.06	17.9	36.9
11 Denver	2.04	24.4	49.8
12 Austin	2.04	25.7	52.4
13 Buffalo	2.03	15.8	32.0
14 Memphis	1.99	17.5	34.9
15 St. Louis	1.98	17.6	34.9
16 New York	1.96	24.5	48.1
17 Hartford	1.96	21.6	42.4
18 Kansas City	1.96	20.0	39.2
19 Richmond	1.93	21.5	41.4
20 Jacksonville	1.88	17.3	32.6
21 Seattle	1.85	23.4	43.2
22 Washington, D.C.	1.85	33.1	61.1
23 Detroit	1.84	17.3	31.9
24 San Diego	1.84	25.2	46.4
25 Orlando	1.81	19.5	35.3
26 Baltimore	1.81	24.0	43.4
27 Indianapolis	1.80	19.6	35.3
28 Raleigh	1.80	28.0	50.4
29 Los Angeles	1.80	26.5	47.6
30 Columbus	1.80	20.5	36.8
31 Louisville	1.75	17.1	30.0
32 Pittsburgh	1.73	19.1	33.0
33 Cincinnati	1.72	19.4	33.3
34 Las Vegas	1.71	16.8	28.8
United States	1.69	20.2	34.2
35 Virginia Beach	1.69	20.6	34.8
36 Houston	1.69	25.4	42.9
37 Oklahoma City	1.68	19.3	32.4
38 Providence	1.67	19.6	32.7
39 Birmingham	1.66	19.6	32.5
40 Dallas	1.64	25.3	41.4
41 Phoenix	1.56	22.7	35.3
42 Charlotte	1.51	24.6	37.2
43 Nashville	1.48	24.5	36.2
44 Atlanta	1.46	29.3	42.7
45 San Antonio	1.45	27.1	39.3
46 Tampa	1.43	21.4	30.7
47 Portland	1.34	29.6	39.7
48 Riverside	1.22	22.0	26.8

Figure 4: College Attainment
Adults with a bachelor's degree or higher
St. Louis MSA, 2005 to 2015



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates

Note: Data is for White, Not Hispanic or Latino and Black or African American, Not Hispanic or Latino

High School Education

The OneSTL performance measure for high school education uses local data to measure the percent of public high school students who graduate within four years (four-year adjusted-cohort graduation rate.) Based on data from the states of Illinois and Missouri, the graduation rate in the St. Louis region increased from 79.3 percent in the baseline year 2011 to 87.4 percent in 2016.

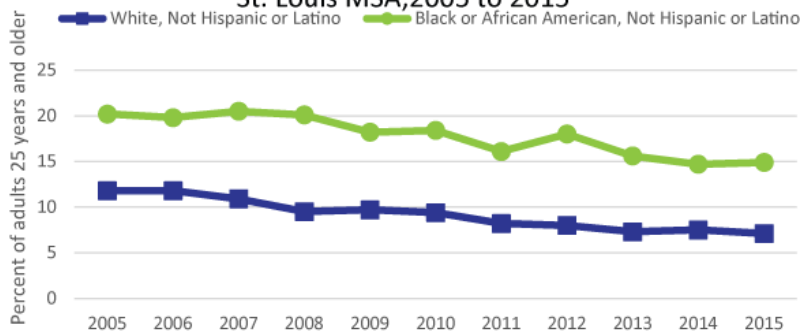
Among public school districts in the St. Louis eight-county region, the graduation rate ranges from 71 percent for the Cahokia School District to 100 percent for the Brentwood and Hancock Place districts. The graduation rate varies greatly based on race, ethnicity, and income. In 2016, there was a large gap (9 percentage points) between the graduation rate of black students (81.2 percent) and that of white students (90.3 percent).

Data from the U.S. Census Bureau is used to compare high school graduation attainment by race for the peer regions. This data is for the larger 15-county St. Louis MSA and includes all 25 year olds who have a high school diploma or equivalent. Therefore, the universe is larger than for the OneSTL performance measure.

Based on this larger population group, the gap between blacks and whites was 7.8 percentage points in 2015. St. Louis ranks 23rd among the peer regions with black adults being 2.1 times as likely as white adults to not have a high school diploma. In regions with the largest disparities, such as Minneapolis and Milwaukee, nearly all white adults have a high school diploma while about one-fifth of black adults do not have a degree.

Figure 5 shows that although the percent of black adults without a degree declined over the past 10 years, the gap between whites and blacks has widened some. From 2005 to 2015, the percentage of black adults without a degree declined 5.3 percentage points from 20.2 percent to 14.9 percent. Over the same time period, the percent of white adults without a degree declined 4.7 percentage points from 11.8 percent to 7.1 percent.

Figure 5: High School Attainment
Adults with less than a high school diploma
St. Louis MSA, 2005 to 2015



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates

Disparity in High School Education

Adults aged 25 or older, with less than a high school diploma, 2015

	Ratio of black to white adults	Percent of black adults	Percent of white adults
1 Minneapolis	5.26	18.4	3.5
2 Milwaukee	3.89	18.3	4.7
3 Miami	3.65	20.1	5.5
4 San Francisco	3.27	10.8	3.3
5 Denver	3.24	10.7	3.3
6 Boston	3.04	15.2	5.0
7 Austin	2.91	9.6	3.3
8 Washington, D.C.	2.88	9.5	3.3
9 Raleigh	2.70	11.9	4.4
10 Orlando	2.54	15.0	5.9
11 Virginia Beach	2.50	15.0	6.0
12 Hartford	2.49	14.7	5.9
13 Richmond	2.45	16.2	6.6
14 Chicago	2.40	12.5	5.2
15 Buffalo	2.40	16.8	7.0
16 New York	2.37	14.7	6.2
17 New Orleans	2.31	19.4	8.4
18 Sacramento	2.31	12.0	5.2
19 Portland	2.30	13.1	5.7
20 Memphis	2.19	17.1	7.8
21 Philadelphia	2.14	13.7	6.4
22 Cleveland	2.10	16.4	7.8
23 St. Louis	2.10	14.9	7.1
24 Phoenix	2.09	11.7	5.6
25 Jacksonville	2.08	15.6	7.5
26 Tampa	2.05	15.4	7.5
27 Seattle	2.04	9.4	4.6
28 Los Angeles	2.04	9.8	4.8
29 Kansas City	2.03	11.8	5.8
30 San Diego	1.98	8.1	4.1
United States	1.97	15.2	7.7
31 Pittsburgh	1.94	12.4	6.4
32 Dallas	1.85	10.2	5.5
33 San Antonio	1.81	9.6	5.3
34 Detroit	1.78	15.1	8.5
35 Indianapolis	1.78	15.1	8.5
36 Columbus	1.76	13.2	7.5
37 Houston	1.74	10.1	5.8
38 Cincinnati	1.72	14.1	8.2
39 Nashville	1.70	14.1	8.3
40 Las Vegas	1.68	11.6	6.9
41 Baltimore	1.64	12.1	7.4
42 Louisville	1.62	14.7	9.1
43 Riverside	1.53	11.2	7.3
44 Oklahoma City	1.53	12.1	7.9
45 Charlotte	1.47	12.5	8.5
46 Providence	1.42	15.8	11.1
47 Atlanta	1.39	10.6	7.6
48 Birmingham	1.34	13.4	10.0

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, America Community Survey 1-Year Estimates

Note: Data is for White, Not Hispanic or Latino and Black or African American, Not Hispanic or Latino

Conclusion

Although the St. Louis region is performing well on many of the metrics used to measure the performance of the OneSTL plan, applying a racial equity lens highlights that gains are not reaching everyone in the region. Black people in St. Louis are more likely to live in poverty, have less access to healthy foods, and live in areas with a high concentration of poor people. These factors make it challenging to access resources and amenities as well as build wealth. Consistently higher rates of unemployment, substantially lower incomes, and lower rates of education attainment show that blacks, on average, do not reach the same outcomes as whites.

Although these disparities are similar across the country, St. Louis often ranks among the regions with the largest gaps between blacks and whites. Hopefully these data points and

rankings encourage St. Louis residents and leaders to find the means to close these disparities, ensure gains reach all residents in the region, and build a sustainable region.

There are numerous reports and studies with recommendations of how to go about this. For St. Louis, the Ferguson Commission outlines calls to action that are geared specifically to the region. See <http://forwardthroughferguson.org/>. As part of a *State of Black America* series, the National Urban League also provides recommendations for the local level as well as for federal policy. See <http://soba.iamempowered.com/main-street-marshall-plan>. Additionally, the OneSTL Network is exploring ways to address these disparities at the Sustainability Lab @ T-Rex. For more information, see OneSTL.org/get-involved.

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