

# FINAL NOTICE:

**AN ANALYSIS OF EVICTIONS AND HOUSING INSTABILITY IN SYRACUSE, NY**

**A REPORT BY THE MAXWELL COMMUNITY BENCHMARKS PROGRAM**

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# INTRODUCTION



# Introduction

For 21 years, the Community Benchmarks Program (CBP) of the Maxwell School of Citizenship and Public Affairs has produced research reports and accompanying policy recommendations that address societal problems plaguing Syracuse, New York and other Rust Belt cities. CBP reports have been produced for and in partnership with local organizations that are dogged in their efforts to create a more equitable city and society. CBP is proud to produce a new report in partnership with the Syracuse Department of Neighborhood and Business Development and the Volunteer Lawyer's Project of Onondaga County, Inc. that addresses evictions and residential instability in Syracuse.

The 2017 Pulitzer Prize Winner in General Non-Fiction was the book *Evicted: Poverty and Profit in an American City* by sociologist Matthew Desmond (2016). The key insight promulgated by Desmond's magnum opus is that evictions are not just products but *catalysts* of poverty, especially for single African American mothers. In Syracuse—the city with the highest concentration of racialized poverty in the nation—this finding requires serious attention. CBP and our partnering organizations have adopted *Evicted* as a call to action.

This report starts by outlining the magnitude of the problem of eviction and residential instability among renters in Syracuse's private rental housing market. It then continues to delineate the causes and acute consequences of eviction and residential instability according to previous social science scholarship. The report then turns to a delineation of our methodology and our quantitative findings, which describe relationships between eviction, residential instability, and various demographic and housing characteristics. It concludes with policy recommendations for lowering eviction and residential instability and buffering their pernicious effects. The goal of this report is to help reduce poverty in Syracuse by informing policy and programmatic solutions to housing instability and inadequacy.

Jennifer Senior of the *New York Times* proclaims that since the publishing of *Eviction*, it is “no longer possible to have a serious discussion about poverty without having a serious discussion about housing.” We hope that our work fuels this serious discussion in Syracuse.

# **PROBLEM STATEMENT**



# **Problem Statement**

Research has shown that the urban poor experience severe residential instability. One cause of this instability is forced eviction from rental property. Desmond found that around 16,000 adults and children are evicted from 6,000 rental housing units in Milwaukee, Wisconsin each year. That is 16 evictions per day (Desmond, 2014a).

There is a lack of a centralized data source capturing eviction data in Syracuse and Central New York. While it was beyond the scope of this study to undertake the difficult task of calculating the annual average eviction rate in Syracuse, staff at the Volunteer Lawyers Project of Onondaga County (OnVLP) estimate that there are between 7,000-8,000 eviction cases brought to the Syracuse City Housing Court every year (D. O'Shea, personal communication, April 17, 2017).

OnVLP has defended an average of 812 cases annually over the past four years. Within the past year (2016), OnVLP estimated that they represented cases that resulted in more than 1,331 children being evicted from their homes (D. O'Shea, personal communication, April 18, 2017).

In an article published in the *American Journal of Sociology*, Desmond (2012) reported that 79.7% of all eviction cases brought to court resulted in eviction during the six-week period during which he conducted a court survey. If 79.7% of Syracuse's estimated 7,000-8,000 cases brought annually to the Syracuse City Landlord Tenant Court resulted in an eviction, 5,577-6,374 households in the city would be evicted each year. The average number of persons in rental-occupied housing units in the city is 2.3 (U.S. Census, 2015), so we can estimate that about 12,827-14,660 Syracuse residents experience eviction each year. In total, about 16.6%-18.9% of Syracuse's 33,654 families in renter-occupied housing units (U.S. Census, 2015) experience eviction annually. These estimates do not account for multiple of these cases being against the same tenants.

This alarming prediction of the magnitude of evictions in Syracuse is supplemented by an equally alarming rate of residential mobility among Syracuse renters. Syracuse is severely residentially unstable: about 28.3% of Syracuse renters—close to one third—had moved at least once during 2015 (U.S. Census, 2015). Many of these moves are likely involuntarily.

## Risk Factors for Eviction and Residential Instability

Currently, no existing reports describe the risk factors for eviction among individuals, neighborhoods, and families in Syracuse. This report will begin to uncover potential local risk factors, particularly by exploring the demographic risk factors located by Desmond in the context of Syracuse.

### *Individual Factors*

Black women are more likely to get evicted than black men and white women. Black women (n=147) comprised most of Desmond's sample of evicted adult residents (N=375). He found that women in general were more likely to be evicted than men; about 60% of his sample was comprised of women. However, it was only women living in primarily black and Hispanic neighborhoods, not white neighborhoods that were evicted more frequently than men. In fact, women living in majority black neighborhoods were twice as likely to get evicted as men in these neighborhoods and three times more likely to get evicted than women living in majority white neighborhoods (Desmond, 2012). Ultimately, over one in five black female renters in Milwaukee reported being evicted at least once in their lifetime (Desmond, 2016). Desmond hypothesized that black women in particular have higher rates of eviction because women's wages in majority black neighborhoods are lower than those of men, even if women are less likely to be unemployed. Gender dynamics between primarily male landlords and female tenants of all races also contribute to the gender gap in eviction rates: women are less likely to confront landlords about eviction notices and try to work out an agreement with them. Single women are also more likely to live with children than are single men, and

having children is a risk factor for eviction (Desmond, 2014a).

Families with children are at a higher risk of eviction. This is likely because children "cause added stress on property, disturb neighbors, and attract unwanted state scrutiny by child welfare agents or law enforcement officers" (Desmond and Gershenson, 2017, p. 372). Of households with children in Desmond's study, one third were led by a single woman with no other adults present in the household. The average age of an evicted child was seven. About 77% of evicted children lived in black households (Desmond, 2012).

Unsurprisingly, most evicted families are very poor. This is because poor individuals have a harder time making rental payments. In Desmond's study, the median monthly household income of evicted tenants was \$935, or \$11,220 per year. An overwhelming 94% were not collecting any form of government housing assistance. Renters become cost-burdened, meaning it will be difficult for them to afford basic necessities such as food and transportation after paying for rent and utilities, when they have to devote 30% of their monthly income to housing costs. Yet, most adults in the study were paying at least 50% of their monthly income on rent. One third of respondents gave at least 80% of their monthly check to rent (Desmond, 2012).

Given these demographic and family compositional risk factors, black, unmarried women with children living in poverty are most likely to experience eviction. Desmond proclaims that the epidemic of mass incarceration among poor black men is akin to the scourge of eviction among poor black women. "Poor black men are locked up while poor black women are locked out" (Desmond, 2014b). This exemplifies the importance of an intersectional approach to understanding eviction risk factors.

Lastly, the “life shock” of losing a job also increases one’s chances of being evicted. This is true even when missing rental payments are controlled for, likely because unemployment represents both a loss of present and future income (Desmond and Gershenson, 2017).

Instead, tenants may purposely withhold rent and force an eviction so they can use their saved rents to put toward the up-front payments for a new apartment (Desmond and Gershenson, 2017).

### *Housing Factors*

Poor rental housing conditions also increase residential instability. Low-income families living in substandard rental housing conditions—those with peeling paint, exposed wires, a non-functioning heater or stove, dark and thus less safe interior and exterior conditions, etc.—moved more frequently (Kull et al., 2016). This may be because some housing units are in such poor condition that the city’s Division of Code Enforcement force tenants to move because the unit is unfit for human habitation. Desmond speculated that families with children living in inadequate housing conditions are at a higher risk of eviction because landlords fear scrutiny by the Environmental Protection Agency (in case of lead poisoning) or child protective services (if the unit is unsafe or unsanitary) (Desmond, 2014a).

### *Neighborhood Factors*

Evictions are more likely to occur in disadvantaged neighborhoods. Desmond found that about 40% of evictions took place in high-poverty neighborhoods. Additionally, nearly 53% of evictions occurred in hyper-segregated neighborhoods (Desmond, 2012). Eviction rates are also higher among individuals and families living in neighborhoods with higher crime and aggregate eviction rates, net of individual-level disadvantage. This may be because individuals are less likely to try to prevent an eviction if their neighborhood is a dangerous or otherwise undesirable place to live.

## **The Negative Effects of Eviction and Residential Instability**

Evictions and residential instability have severe negative effects on the social, economic, health, and academic outcomes of children, parents, families, and neighborhoods.

### *Children's Academic Outcomes*

Children who are evicted or residentially unstable have poorer academic and social outcomes. These youth frequently transfer schools and become disembedded from valuable social networks of teachers, counselors, and peers (Desmond, 2016). One study found that frequent residential mobility lowered children's academic success in the first grade, which in turn helped reduce their academic achievement in subsequent grades (Cotton and Schwartz-Barcott, 2016). Experiencing three or more moves in earlier childhood and adolescence reduces the probability of graduating high school by 14% and 10%, respectively (Haveman et al., 1991). In terms of social consequences, frequently mobile children are more likely to feel victimized in school, have difficulties with self-regulation, and, for males in particular, express aggressive behaviors (Cotton and Schwartz-Barcott, 2016).

### *Socioeconomic Outcomes*

200% higher than their non-evicted counterparts. Mothers are more likely to report that their own health and the health of their children is poor the year after being evicted (Desmond, 2016). Eviction increases parental stress (Robin et al., 2007) and has even been marked as a risk factor for suicide (Serby et al., 2006). Persons with HIV experience increased progression of the illness as a result of eviction (Kennedy et al., 2016).

Individuals experiencing (chronic) housing instability also fare poorly in terms of socioeconomic outcomes and future housing conditions. Those recently evicted are 15% more likely to be fired from their job due to psychological stresses. Families' material hardship is 20% higher within the year after an eviction. Once evicted, individuals and families are less likely to obtain public housing because evaluators mark down public housing applicants with a record of eviction or unpaid rental debt (Desmond, 2016; Desmond et al., 2013). As a result, evicted families often experience homelessness and further residential instability. Half of homeless persons report eviction or other rental problems as the cause of their homelessness (Greenberg et al., 2016 from Lindblom, 1996). Renters who are evicted or otherwise move involuntarily have a 25% greater likelihood of experiencing chronic housing problems than those who move by choice. Further, families who have been evicted are likely to relocate to neighborhoods with higher poverty and crime rates (Desmond, 2016). As such, poverty not only causes evictions, but is reproduced and exacerbated due to evictions.

### *Health Outcomes*

Eviction also negatively impacts mental and physical health. Evicted mothers report symptoms of clinical depression at a rate 200% higher than their non-evicted counterparts. Mothers are more likely to report that their own health and the health of their children is poor the year after being evicted (Desmond, 2016). Eviction has even been marked as a risk factor for suicide (Serby et al., 2006). Persons with HIV experience increased progression of the illness as a result of eviction (Kennedy et al., 2016).

## *Effects on Neighborhoods*

Neighborhoods with high rates of residential instability also suffer. Individuals who do not feel permanently rooted in a neighborhood are less likely to become civically, politically, and socially engaged in that neighborhood. Residential instability lowers trust of one's neighbors and community cohesion, which ultimately diminishes neighbors' collective ability to regulate youth activity and prevent crime through social control (Sampson and Groves, 1989). Youth in residentially unstable neighborhoods are more at risk for dropping out of school, participating in illicit activity, and engaging in risky sexual activity (see Harding and Hepburn, 2014 for a discussion of this). Even after a variety of controls including historic crime patterns, Milwaukee neighborhoods with higher eviction rates experience higher violent crime rates within the year that follows (Desmond, 2016). Additionally, much local tax revenue is spent on court personnel, sheriffs who carry out evictions, and homeless services that could instead be diverted to other productive avenues at the local level (Greenberg et al., 2016).

## **Existing Local Policy Addressing Residential Instability and Eviction**

The city of Syracuse uses a variety of existing public and private resources to prevent evictions and mitigate the critical effects of residential instability on children, parents, families, and neighborhoods. Some examples of services provided to tenants who cannot pay their month's rent or who have already been evicted and/or are homeless are provided:

- ◆ Through a program called "Temporary Assistance," Onondaga County Social Services provides emergency loans for rental assistance.
- ◆ Catholic Charities provides emergency shelter for persons rendered homeless by eviction and provides relocation services and sometimes even grants that can be used for a down payment on a new rental unit and the first month's rent.
- ◆ HALE Homeless Prevention provides financial assistance for rent or energy bills as well as budgeting and job trainings.
- ◆ OnVLP and Hiscock Legal Aid Society provide free legal aid to tenants served with an eviction notice. If the tenant is evicted, volunteer lawyers provide them information about community agencies that can assist them

# METHODS



# **Methods**

The data in this report were used to better understand patterns of eviction, residential instability, and rental housing disinvestment in Syracuse. All data analysis was conducted by one member of the research team and then redone by the team's lead data analyst. This process of double checking helped ensure the accuracy of our results. The data analyzed were compiled from multiple sources.

## **Data Sources**

### *Syracuse City Parcel Files*

Parcel files for 2012, 2015, and 2017 were supplied by the Syracuse Department of Neighborhood and Business Development. A total of around 40,000 properties were recorded in this dataset. Several variables were recorded for each property, including but not limited to its address, assessed value, water status, year built, land use, owner, etc. Only rental properties with residential land uses (single-, two-, three-family, apartment, and multiple residence) were ultimately analyzed for this report. Some variables for specific years were not disaggregated by tenure, which made it impossible to examine the conditions of renters specifically.

Representativeness: This dataset contains information for every property in the city and is thus representative.

### *American Community Survey (ACS)*

Demographic and housing data were mined from the 2009-2015 American Community Survey (ACS) on the Census Bureau website ([www.census.gov](http://www.census.gov)). ACS data is collected by employees of the United States Census Bureau through mailed surveys and follow-up telephone or in-person interviews. Five-year estimates were used because they are more reliable than one- or three-year estimates.

Representativeness: Unlike the Decennial Census, the ACS does not obtain responses from the entire American population. Instead, it takes a sample. Each ACS variable is accompanied by its margin of error at the 90% confidence level. Values obtained from the sample are thus within .1% of the values that would be obtained from a sample of the entire American population. Values that have lower margins of error are thus more likely to be representative values.

### *IPS Dataset*

The inspections and public service (IPS) dataset contains all of the complaints called into the city by tenants and neighbors regarding poor property conditions. The dataset includes 2,523 complaints made by Syracuse residents in 2016.

Representativeness: This dataset contains all IPS complaints made in 2016 and is thus representative.

## *Onondaga Volunteer Lawyers Project Eviction Data*

Eviction case data were collected by OnVLP, a not-for-profit organization that recruits volunteer lawyers to provide free legal services to low-income residents. OnVLP posts a daily lawyer at the Syracuse City Landlord Tenant Court to defend low-income tenants in the private rental housing market whose landlords have filed eviction cases against them. Each eviction case that an OnVLP lawyer defended between 2013-2016 was recorded in an Excel spreadsheet for a total of 3,246 cases. OnVLP provided the address of the rental unit and date of intake for each eviction case, while the Department of Neighborhood and Business Development added additional variables by matching the property address to Syracuse City Parcel Files data. The characteristics of the rental units that were available for analysis included:

- address, census tract, neighborhood, and ward
- type of land use (single-, two-, or three-family; apartment; multiple residence; or commercial)
- year built
- water status at the time of eviction (on or off)
- number of code violations
- name and address of landlord

It is important to note that not all cases in the dataset resulted in eviction: some cases were ultimately ruled in favor of the tenant.

Representativeness: This report did not analyze all eviction cases between 2013-2016 in Syracuse. Rather, it examined a sample of eviction cases brought to the Syracuse City Landlord Tenant Court and handled by OnVLP, one of multiple agencies that provide legal assistance to Syracuse tenants facing eviction. About 20% of eviction cases are brought by the Syracuse Housing Authority, and OnVLP does not take these cases. Additionally, Hiscock Legal Aid Society, another organization providing legal assistance, only defends cases involving individuals on public assistance and who meet with them before the date of their court hearing (D. O'Shea, personal communication, April 17, 2017). As a result, this sample underrepresents eviction cases involving public housing and individuals with public assistance in particular. Further, many (or even most) tenants implicated in eviction cases do not show up to court and are automatically evicted (Desmond, 2012). These automatic evictions are not represented in this data.

Gathering a representative sample of all eviction cases would be difficult. Evictions also occur informally outside of court, rendering them nearly impossible to document. These illegal evictions occur when landlords pay tenants to leave (saving themselves the time and expenses of eviction court) or push tenants to “voluntarily” leave by locking them out or turning off their water, lights, or other essentials. Tenants may not have the cultural and legal knowledge to know that they can call the police if landlords use these strategies to push them out without a court ordered eviction. Desmond interviewed one landlord who outright proclaimed that “[f]or every eviction I do that goes through the courts, there are at least 10 that don’t” (2012, p. 9). Additionally, some eviction court cases result in “pay to stay” agreements which some tenants ultimately do not follow through on. These tenants are evicted, but their evictions are unknown to lawyers and ultimately not documented (D. O'Shea, personal communication, April 17, 2017). This data is thus a sample of eviction cases, and there is no way of knowing if it is representative of all evictions in the city that occurred over that four-year period.

## Index

An index was used to determine the twelve census tracts in Syracuse most in need of targeted investment to lower eviction and residential instability rates and improve substandard private rental housing conditions. Data for the index was compiled from the IPS dataset, the ACS, and the OnVLP eviction data. A composite score indicating the need of each census tract was determined by eight indicators: number of IPS complaints per 100 properties, average home value, evictions per 100 properties, percent of residents cost burdened, percent of homes built before 1940, median year current occupants moved into their homes, percent of residential units that are renter occupied, and the percent of households with children under the age of five. Each indicator was given a weight of 0.5, 1, or 1.5, with evictions per 100 units and percent of residents cost burdened receiving the highest weightings. For a given indicator, a census tract's score was determined by subtracting the minimum value among all 55 census tracts by the value of the given census tract, then dividing that number by the difference between the maximum and minimum. The formula is as follows:

$$\text{Score} = (\text{Value of given census tract} - \text{minimum value from all census tracts}) / (\text{maximum} - \text{minimum})$$

Each score was then multiplied by the weight for that indicator. The composite score for each census tract was determined by adding its weighted scores for each of the eight indicators and then dividing that sum by eight. The individual and composite scores for the top twelve census tracts are below:

Census Tract	Weight	0.5	Weight	1	Weight	1.5	Weight	1.5	Weight	0.5	Weight	1	Weight	1	Weight	1	INDEX SCORE
	# IPS Complaints /100 Residential Parcels	SCORE	Average Value	SCORE	Evictions /100 Residential Parcels	SCORE	% Cost Burdened	SCORE	% Before 1940	SCORE	Median year moved in	SCORE	% Renter Occupied	SCORE	Households w/ Children <=5	SCORE	
5.01	8.7	30.4%	\$42,397	89.1%	24.0	84.0%	65.8%	74.8%	84.9%	88.1%	2010	84.6%	88.7%	87.6%	37.3%	60.7%	77.4%
23	4.8	16.8%	\$53,224	79.9%	24.1	84.4%	60.6%	64.6%	87.1%	90.4%	2009	76.9%	92.2%	91.7%	51.2%	83.4%	76.1%
39	13.3	46.4%	\$38,318	92.6%	17.8	62.3%	72.8%	88.5%	78.8%	81.8%	2009	76.9%	71.7%	68.3%	14.5%	23.6%	69.0%
30	4.0	14.1%	\$29,622	100.0%	17.9	62.4%	54.4%	52.4%	86.9%	90.2%	2011	92.3%	86.3%	84.9%	29.7%	48.4%	68.8%
40	10.4	36.5%	\$35,438	95.1%	17.4	61.0%	60.3%	64.0%	82.5%	85.6%	2009	76.9%	74.2%	71.1%	25.5%	41.5%	66.6%
61.01	5.0	17.3%	\$54,341	79.0%	24.9	87.0%	68.8%	80.6%	55.0%	57.1%	2007	61.5%	71.4%	67.9%	16.4%	26.7%	65.5%
24	4.9	17.3%	\$50,528	82.2%	12.0	42.1%	71.5%	85.9%	79.9%	82.9%	2011	92.3%	81.8%	79.8%	11.8%	19.2%	64.5%
21.01	9.8	34.3%	\$47,283	85.0%	13.2	46.3%	68.8%	80.6%	82.5%	85.6%	2010	84.6%	75.9%	73.1%	10.5%	17.1%	63.8%
35	5.4	18.8%	\$69,572	66.0%	9.0	31.4%	72.3%	87.5%	68.1%	70.7%	2010	84.6%	75.5%	72.5%	34.3%	55.9%	62.8%
54	13.0	45.3%	\$37,553	93.3%	15.4	53.8%	59.1%	61.6%	95.8%	99.4%	2008	69.2%	70.1%	66.4%	15.8%	25.7%	62.5%
14	7.5	26.2%	\$46,954	85.3%	11.1	38.9%	61.6%	66.5%	83.2%	86.4%	2011	92.3%	74.3%	71.2%	21.3%	34.7%	62.2%
42	0.8	2.8%	\$40,148	91.1%	18.8	65.9%	56.9%	57.3%	36.2%	37.5%	2009	76.9%	97.3%	97.4%	16.8%	27.4%	62.2%

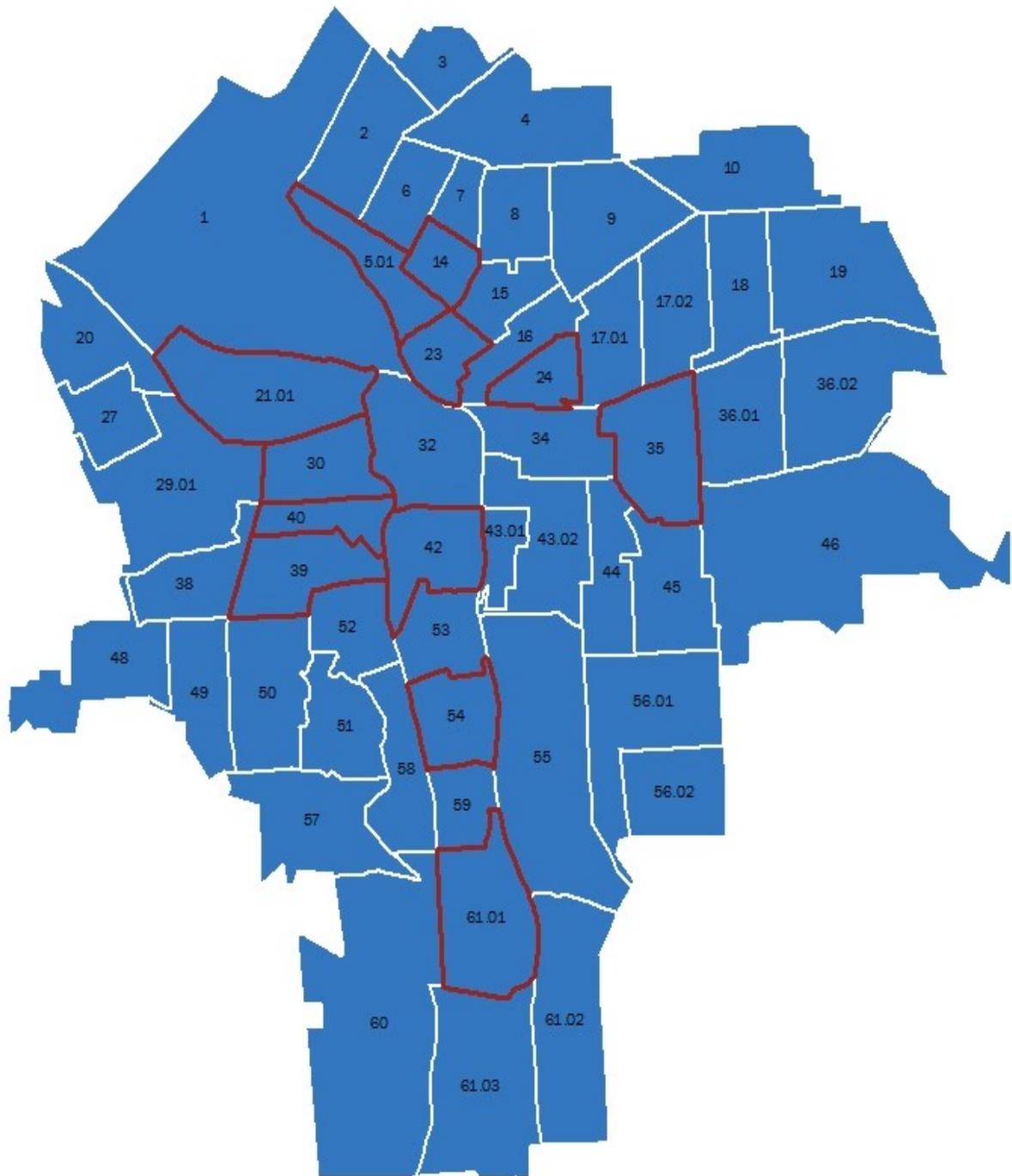
## Sister Cities

Throughout this report, Syracuse will be compared to the following cities to contextualize results:

- ◆ Milwaukee city, Wisconsin
- ◆ Albany city, New York
- ◆ Rochester, New York
- ◆ Buffalo, New York

Milwaukee was chosen as a comparison because it was the city in which Desmond's research took place. Other cities were selected based on their demographic similarity to Syracuse and their status as Rust Belt cities.

# Target Census Tracts Syracuse, NY 2017



 Target Census Tracts  
 Census Tracts

0 0.5 1 2 3 4 Miles



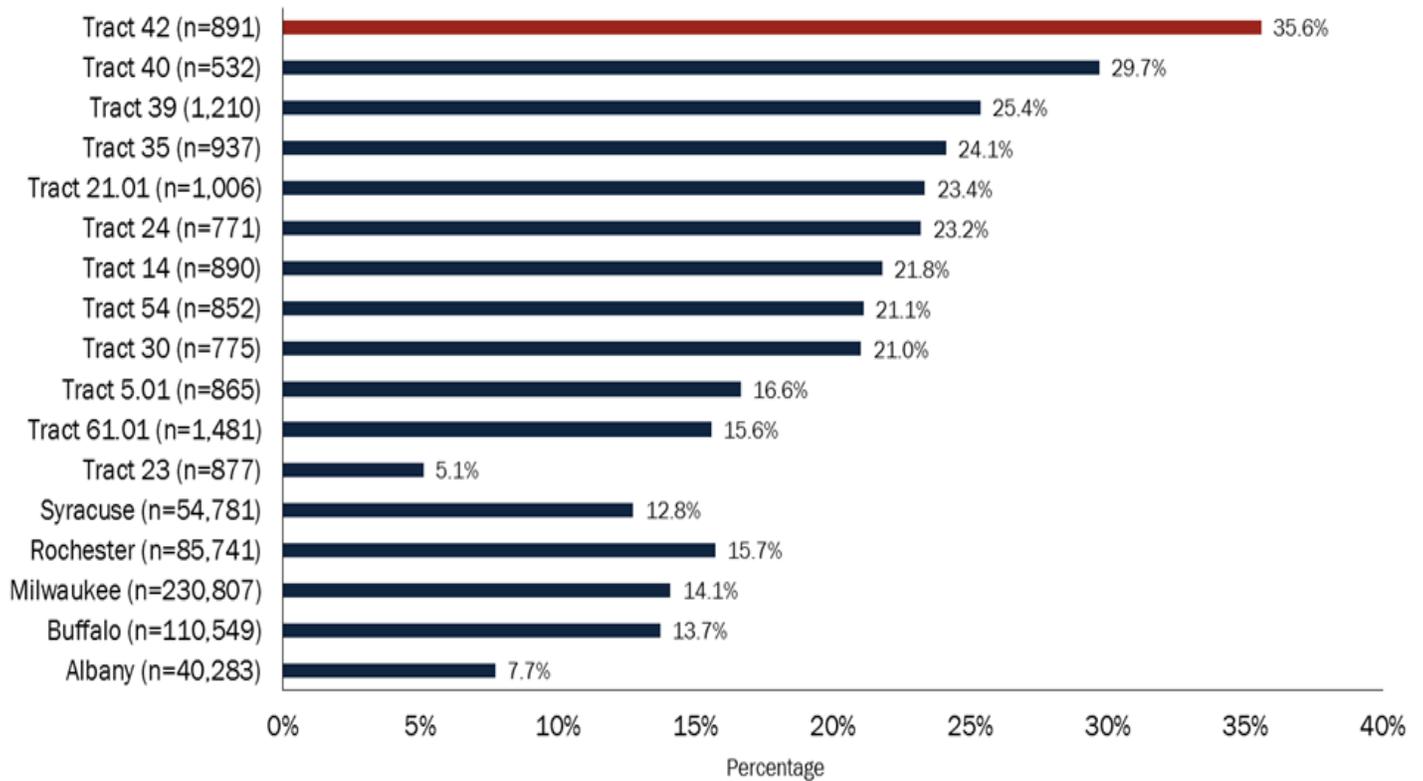
Created By: Community Benchmarking Spring 2017  
Comment: Created on 4/17/17

# FINDINGS



1. Finding: The census tract with the highest percentage of single black mothers was Census Tract 42 (35.6%, or more than one in three).

**Single Black Female Headed Households with Own Children Under 18 by Census Tract for the City of Syracuse (2015)**

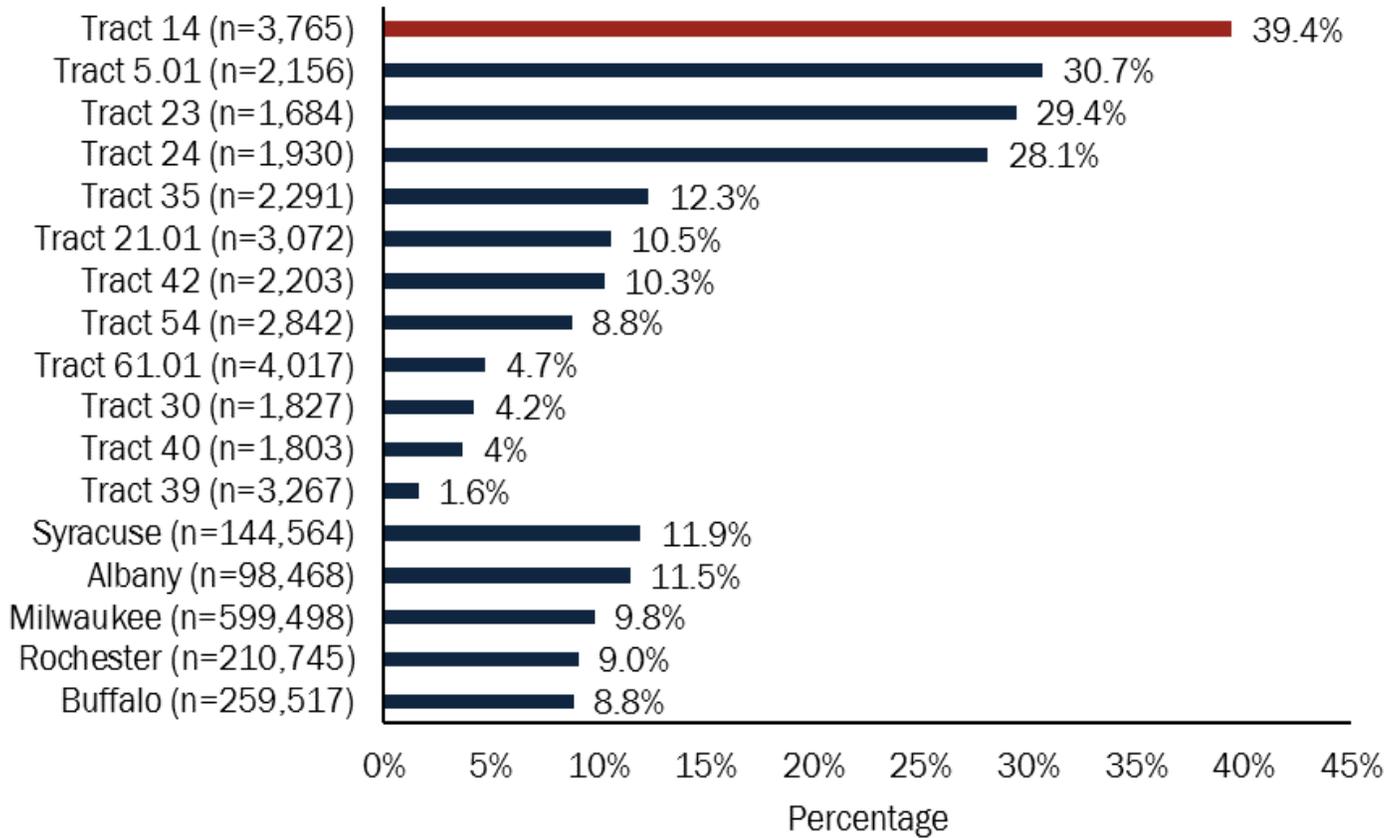


**Source:** American Community Survey, 2015, Table S1101

**Comment:** The n values represent the total number of black female headed households with children under the age of 18.

2. Census Tract 14 has the highest percentage of foreign born residents (39.4%).

### Percent of the Population that is Foreign Born by Census Tract, City of Syracuse 2015

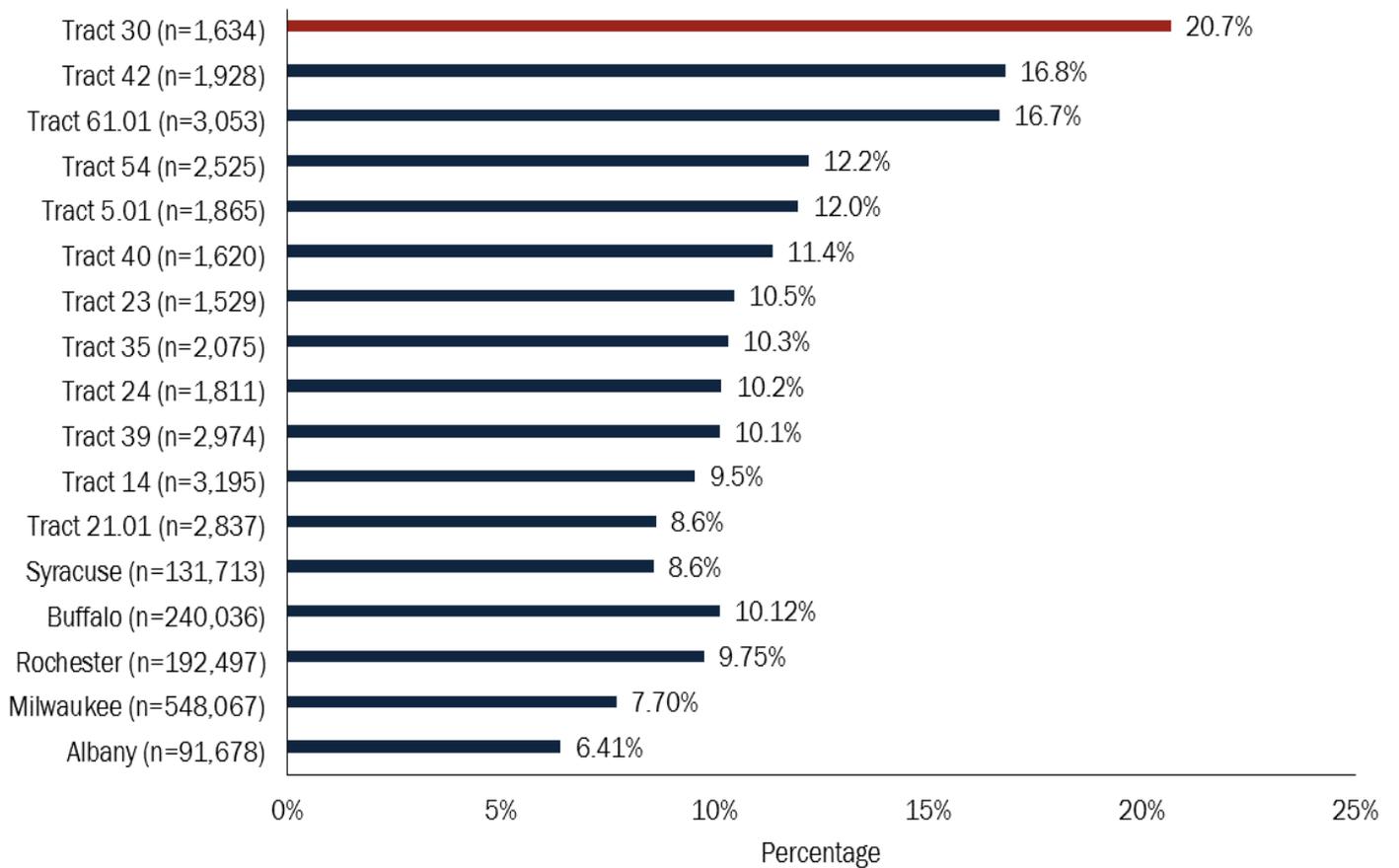


**Source:** American Community Survey 2011-2015 5-Year Estimates, Table B05012

**Comment:** The n value represents the total population within each census tract.

3. Census Tract 30 had the highest percentage of non-institutionalized residents age five and older with an ambulatory difficulty (20.7%, or more than one in five).

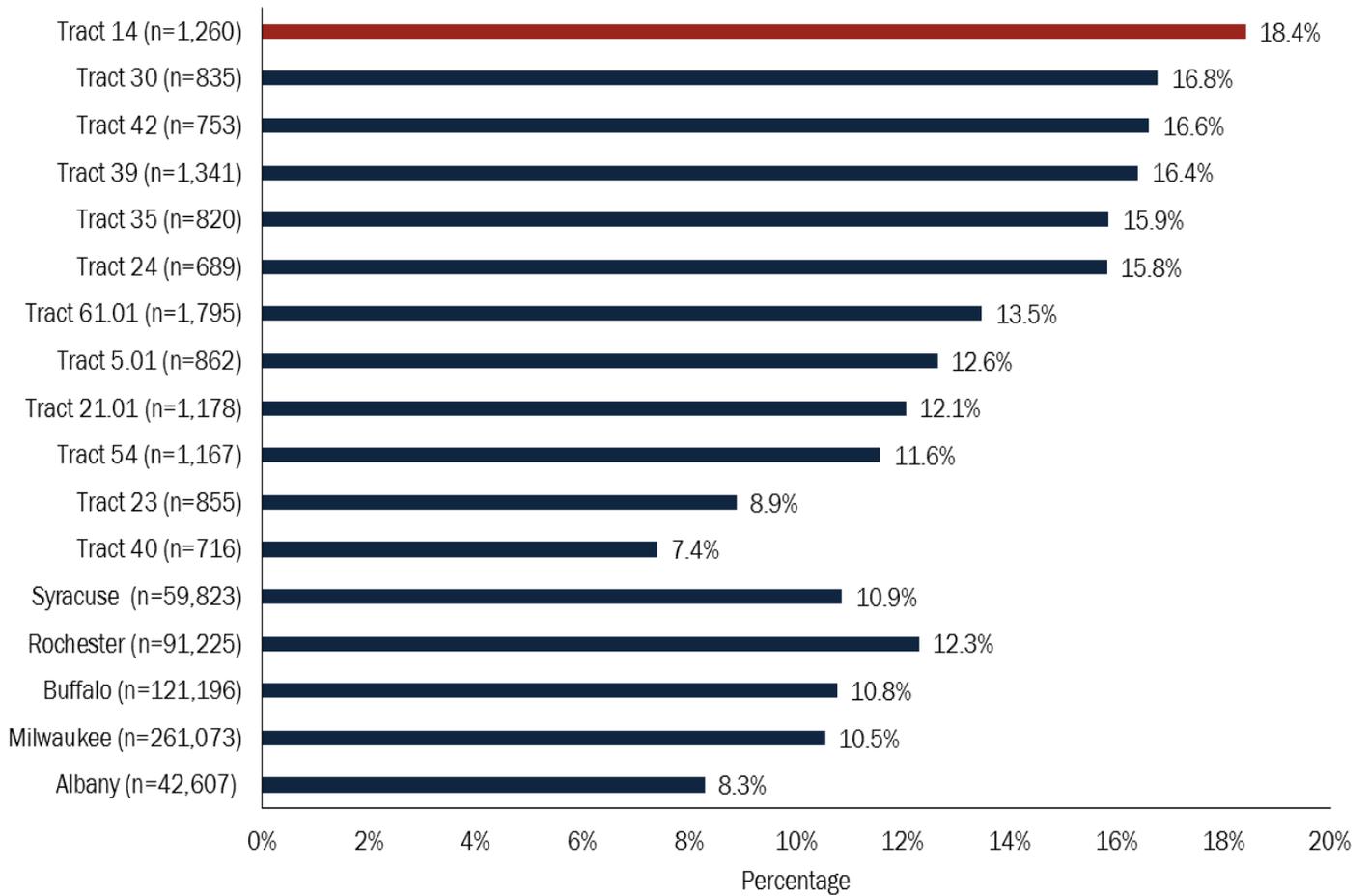
**Percent of Civilian Noninstitutionalized Population 5 Years and Over with an Ambulatory Difficulty by Census Tract, Syracuse, NY (2015)**



**Source:** American Community Survey 2011-2015 5-Year Estimates, Table B18105

4. Ten of our 12 target census tracts have a higher percentage of individuals at least 34 years old who have an independent living difficulty than the city of Syracuse overall (10.9%).

**Percent of Individuals Ages 34+ Living with an Independent Living Difficulty, 2015**

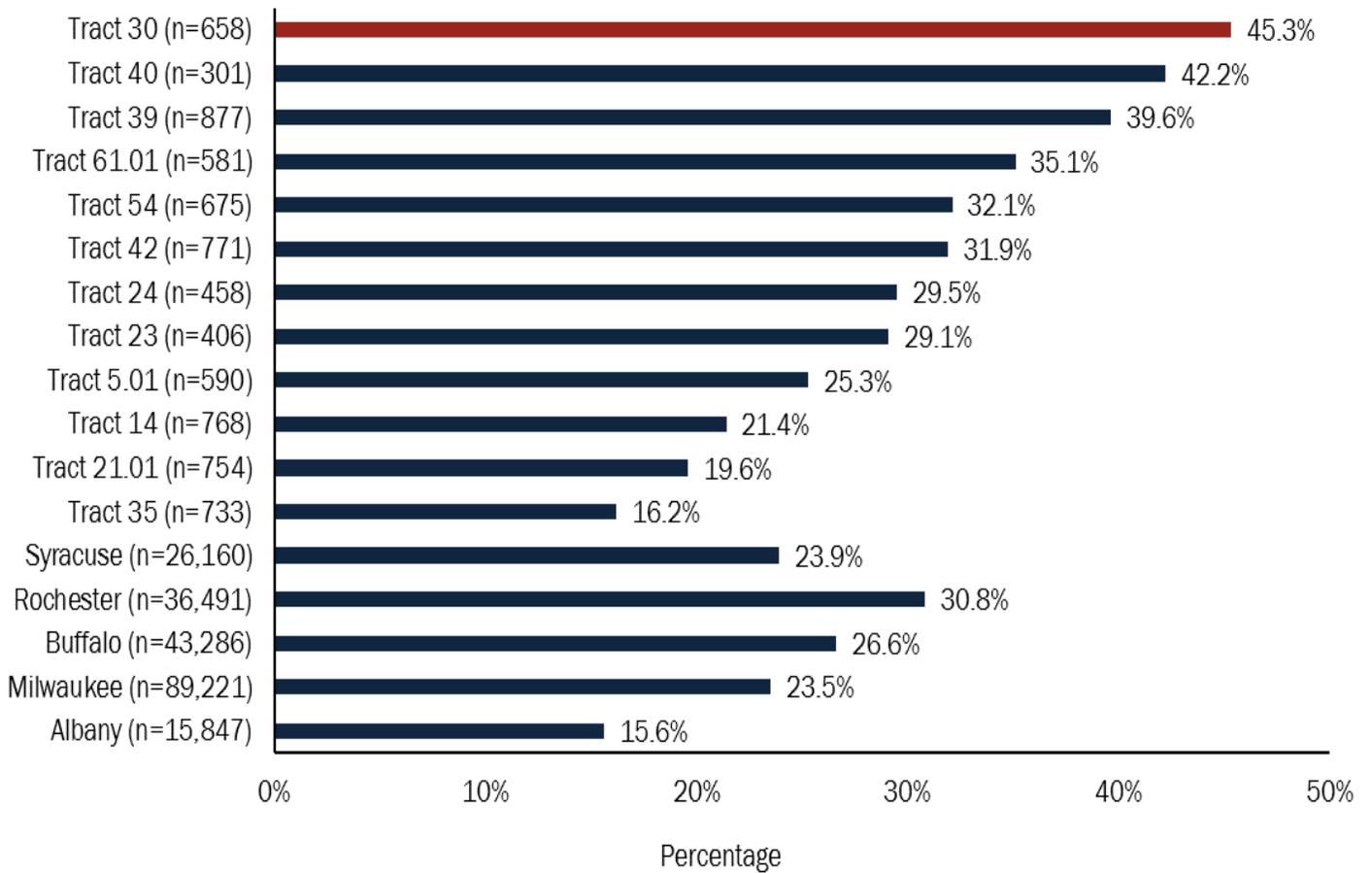


**Source:** American Community Survey, 2015, Table B18107

**Comment:** The n-values represent the number of individuals ages 34 and up living within each census tract.

5. Among target census tracts, Census Tract 30 had the highest percentage (45.3%) of its households in poverty that have an individual with a disability.

**Percent of Households in Poverty with an Individual with a Disability by Census Tract for the City of Syracuse (2015)**

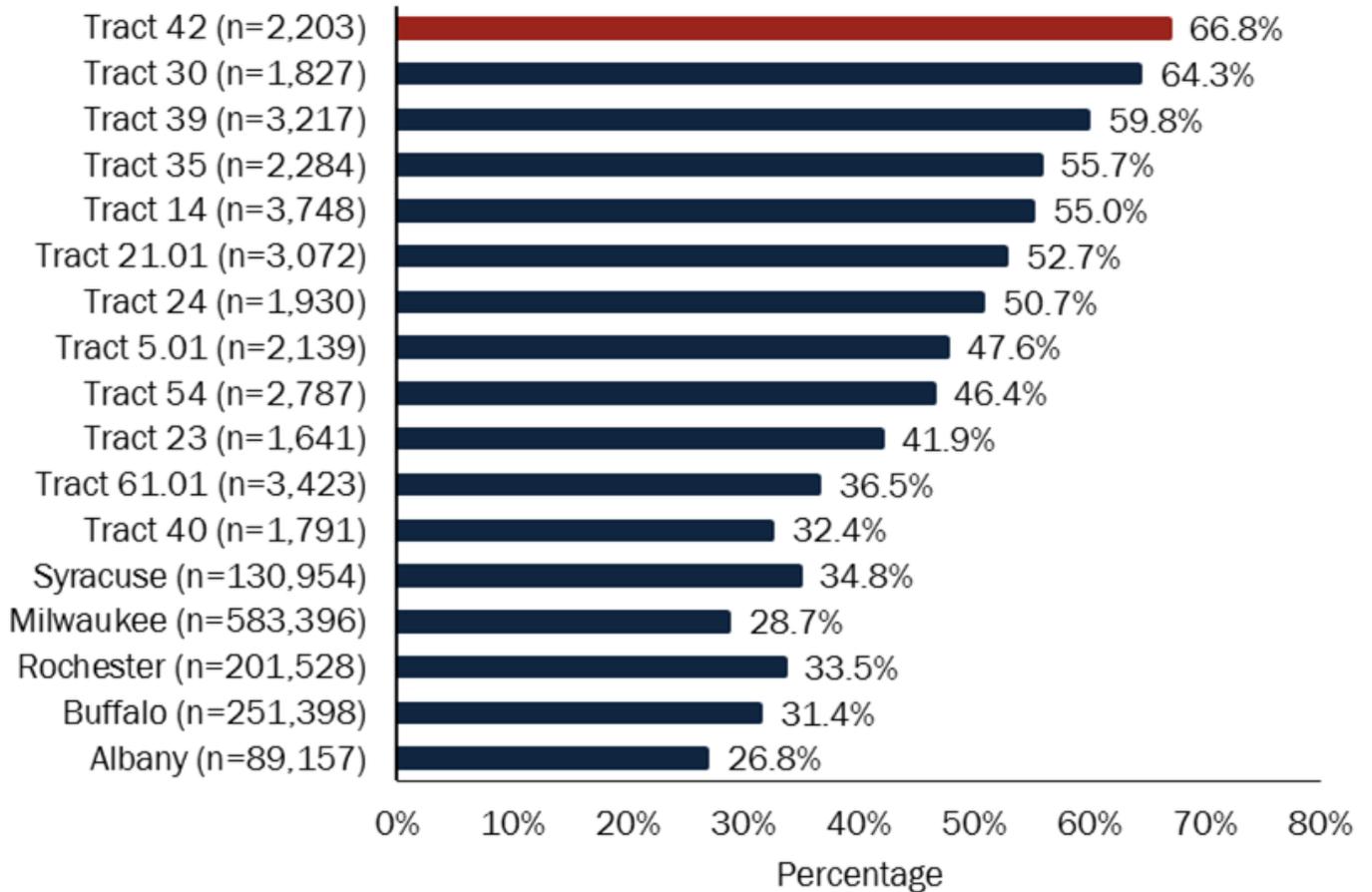


**Source:** American Community Survey, 2015, Table B23024

**Comments:** This chart depicts the percent of all households in poverty with at least one individual with a disability. The n-values represent the total number of households in poverty within each census tract.

6. About two-thirds of the population in Census Tracts 42 (66.8%) and 30 (64.3%) live below the poverty level.

### Percent of the Population Below the Poverty Level by Census Tract for the City of Syracuse (2015)

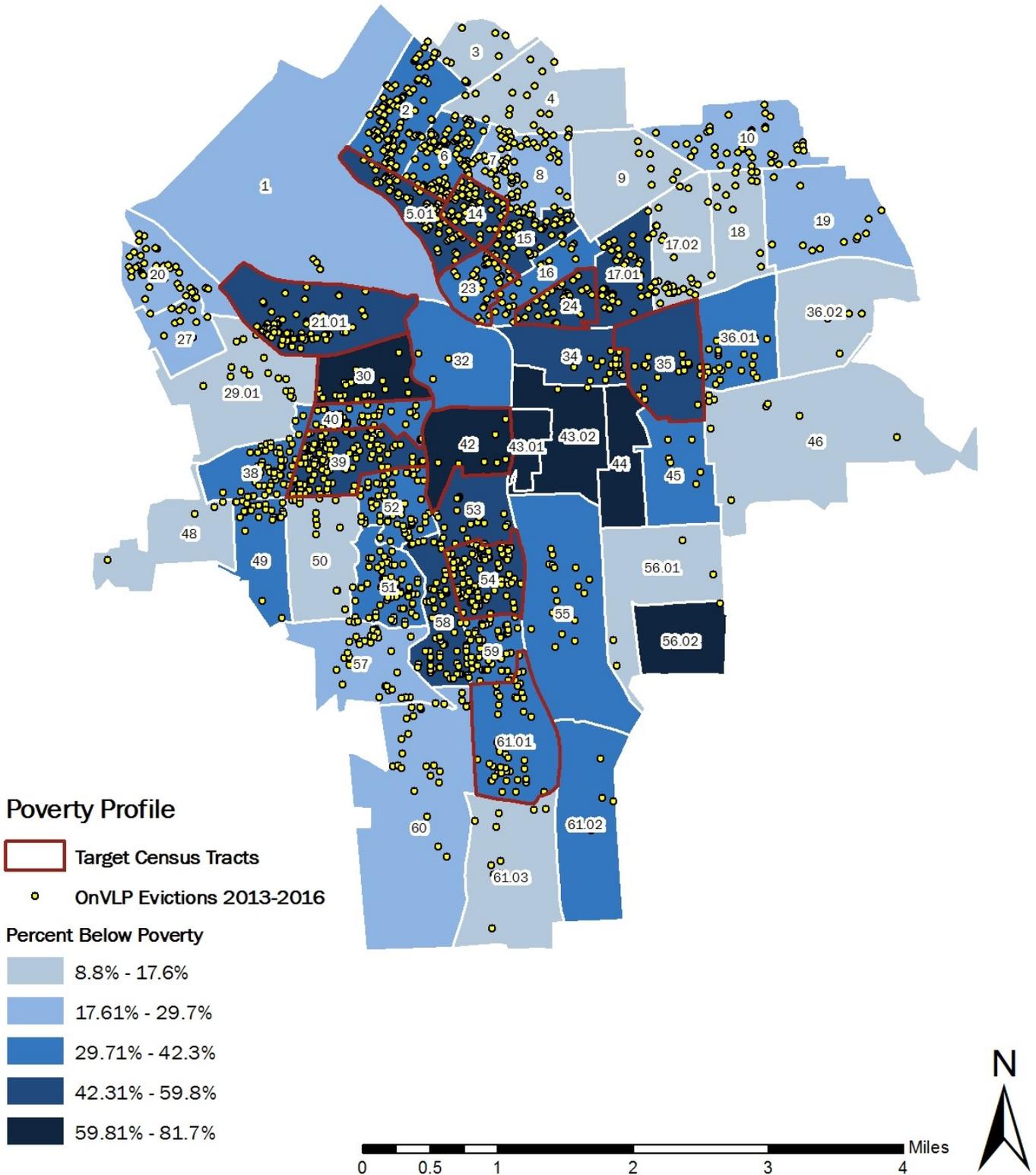


**Source:** American Community Survey 2011-2015 5-Year Estimates, Table S1701

**Comment:** The n-values represent the total population within each census tract.

7. OnVLP eviction cases are concentrated in census tracts with high poverty rates.

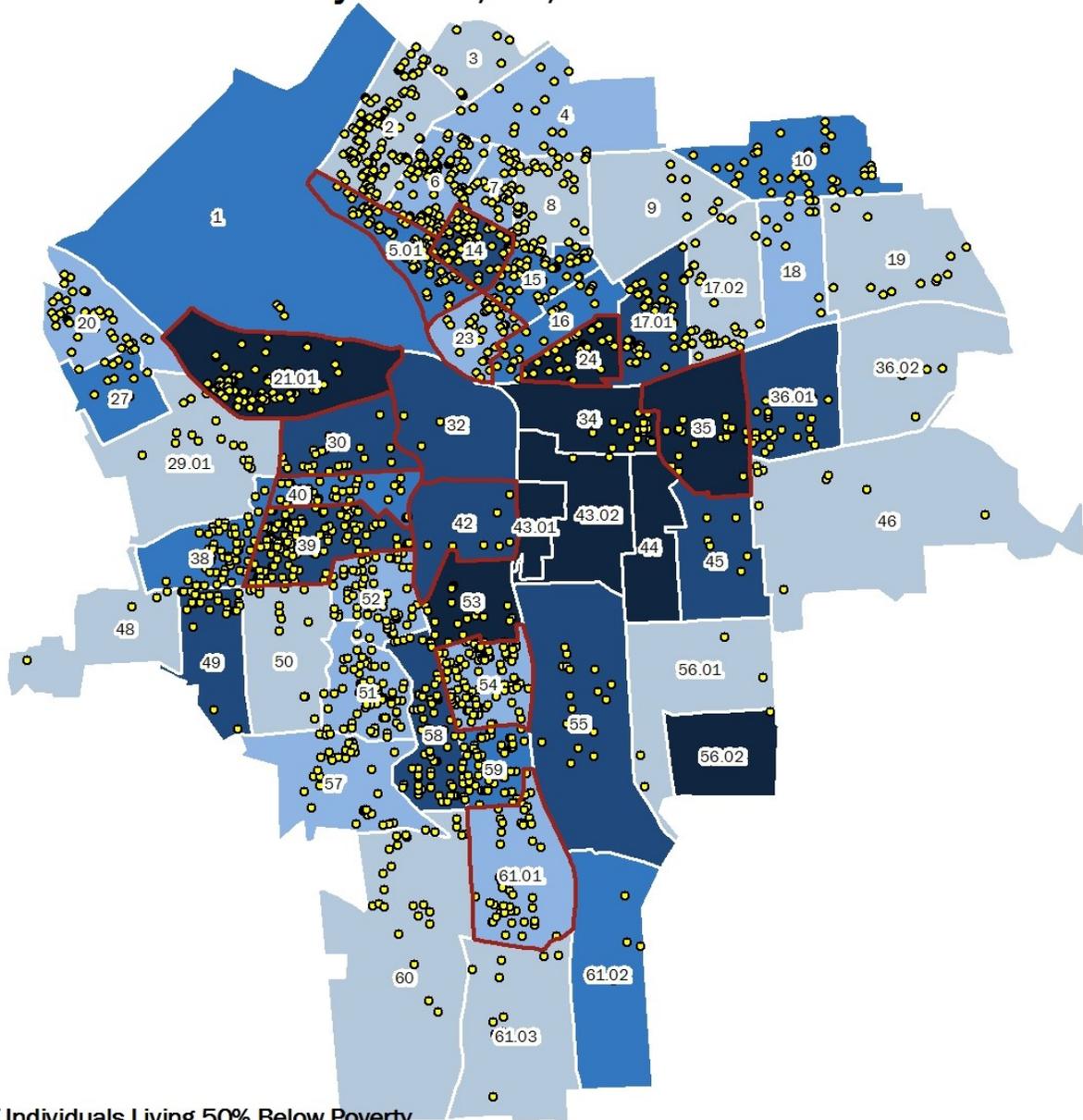
## Percent of Population Below Poverty with OVLP Eviction Cases, Syracuse, NY, 2013-2016



Created By: Community Benchmarking Spring 2017  
Source: ACS 2015, Eviction Cases - MPD Data by Year  
Comment: Created on 4/13/17

8. Census Tracts 54 and 61.01 have a high percentage of people living 50% below the poverty line and a high number of OnVLP eviction cases.

## Percentage of Individuals Living 50% Below the Poverty Level and OnVLP Eviction Cases, Syracuse, NY, 2015

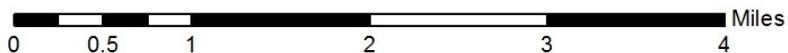


**Percent of Individuals Living 50% Below Poverty  
and OnVLP Eviction Cases**

- Target Census Tracts
- OnVLP Evictions 2013-2016

**Percentage of Individuals 50% Below the Poverty Line**

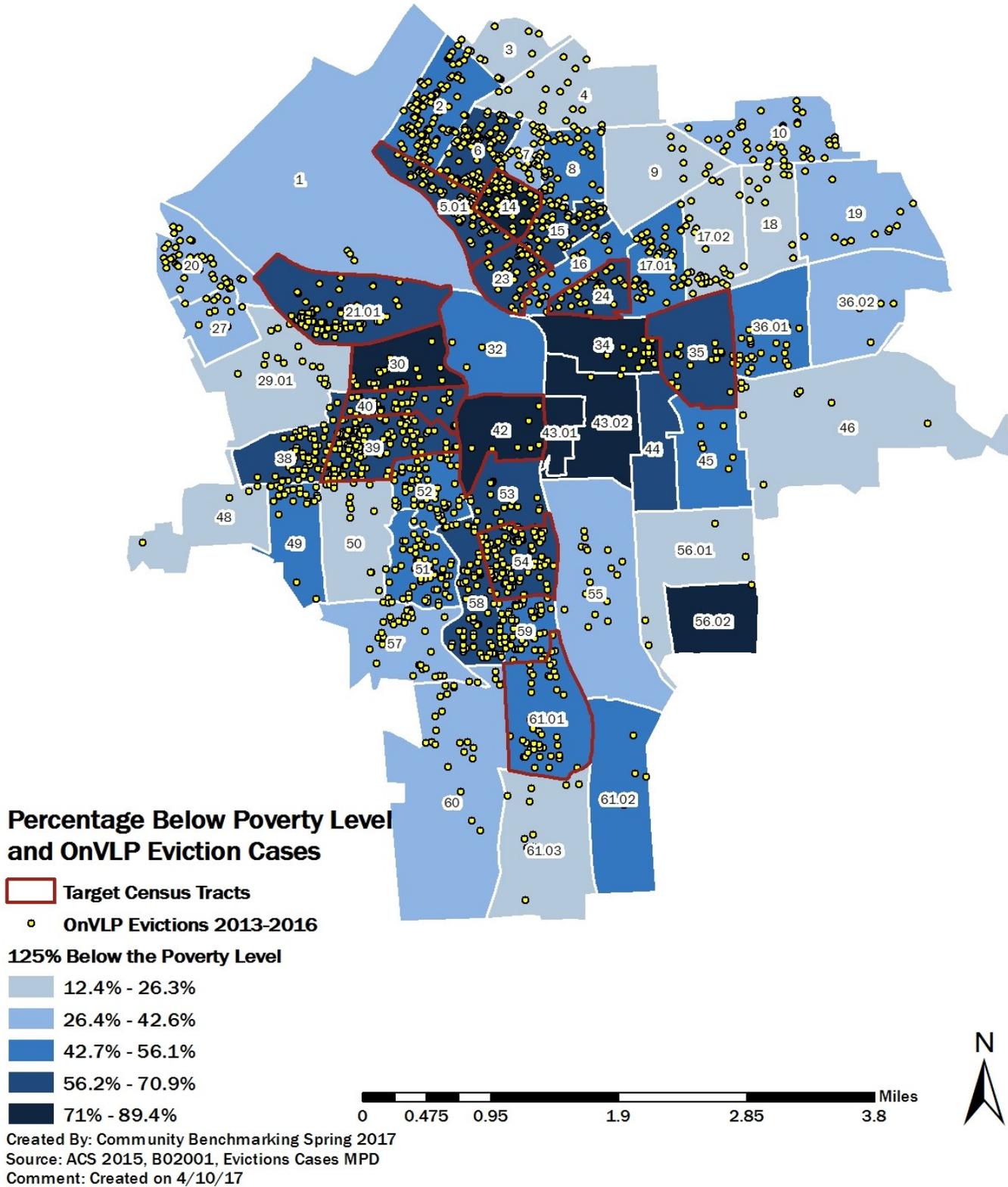
- 1% - 8%
- 8.1% - 13.5%
- 13.6% - 21%
- 21.1% - 34.8%
- 34.9% - 56.6%



Created By: Community Benchmarking Spring 2017  
 Source: ACS 2015 S1701  
 Comment: Created on 4/19/17

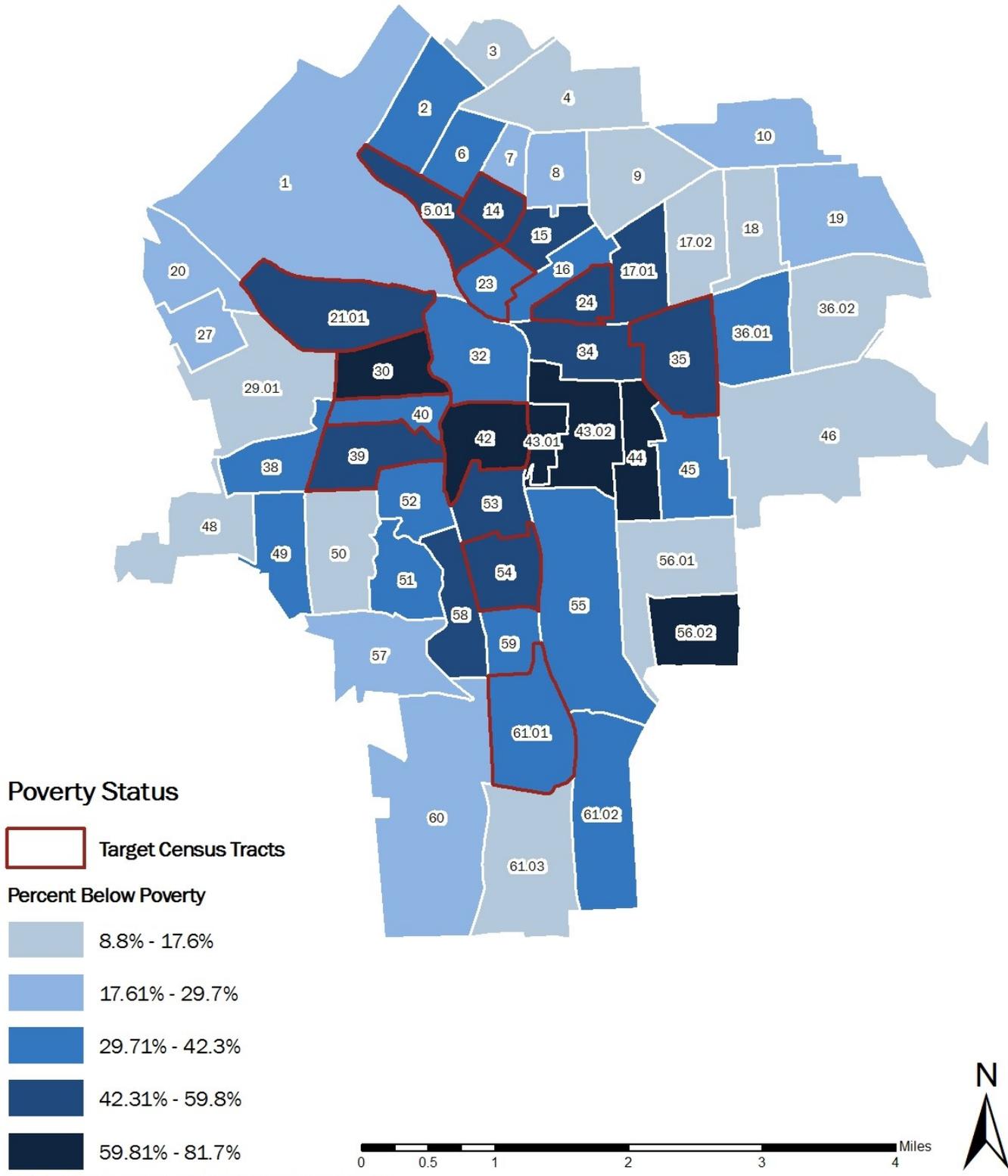
9. Census tracts with high percentages of individuals living below 125% of the poverty line also have high numbers of OnVLP eviction cases.

## Percentage of Individuals Living 125% Below the Poverty Level with OnVLP Eviction Cases Syracuse, NY, 2015



10. Census Tracts 30, 42, and 54 have high percentages of residents living in poverty.

## Poverty Levels by Census Tract in Syracuse, NY., in 2015



Created By: Community Benchmarking Spring 2017  
Source: ACS 2015, Eviction Cases - MPD Data by Year  
Comment: Created on 4/13/17

11. Census Tract 14 experienced the highest percent increase in families living below the poverty line (159.1%) between 2009-2015 among target census tracts.

<b>Percent of Families Below the Poverty Level by Census Tract for the City of Syracuse (2009-15)</b>				
<b>Census Tract</b>	<b>2009</b>	<b>2012</b>	<b>2015</b>	<b>Percent Change in Poverty</b>
Tract 14	21.5	39	55.7	159.10%
Tract 21.01	22.7	49.2	51.3	126.00%
Tract 61.01	17.2	19.3	30.4	76.70%
Tract 23	20.9	30.9	36.2	73.20%
Tract 54	28.7	44.4	37.9	32.10%
Tract 35	40.4	43	52.6	30.20%
Tract 5.01	36.1	56.8	42.6	18.00%
Tract 24	39.2	40.5	43.3	10.50%
Tract 39	49.4	55	54.2	9.70%
Tract 30	65.8	74.3	58.6	-10.90%
Tract 42	74.3	68.9	61.3	-17.50%
Tract 40	52.7	51.5	38.4	-27.10%
<b>Syracuse</b>	<b>25.1</b>	<b>27.4</b>	<b>27.1</b>	<b>8.00%</b>
Rochester	24.4	27.9	30.7	25.80%
Milwaukee	19.9	23.8	24.7	24.10%
Albany	16.6	17	18	8.40%
Buffalo	24.2	26.4	26.2	8.30%

**Sources:** American Community Survey, 2009, 2012, 2015, Table S1702 (Poverty Status).

**Comment:** The n-values represent the total number of families in each census tract in 2015.

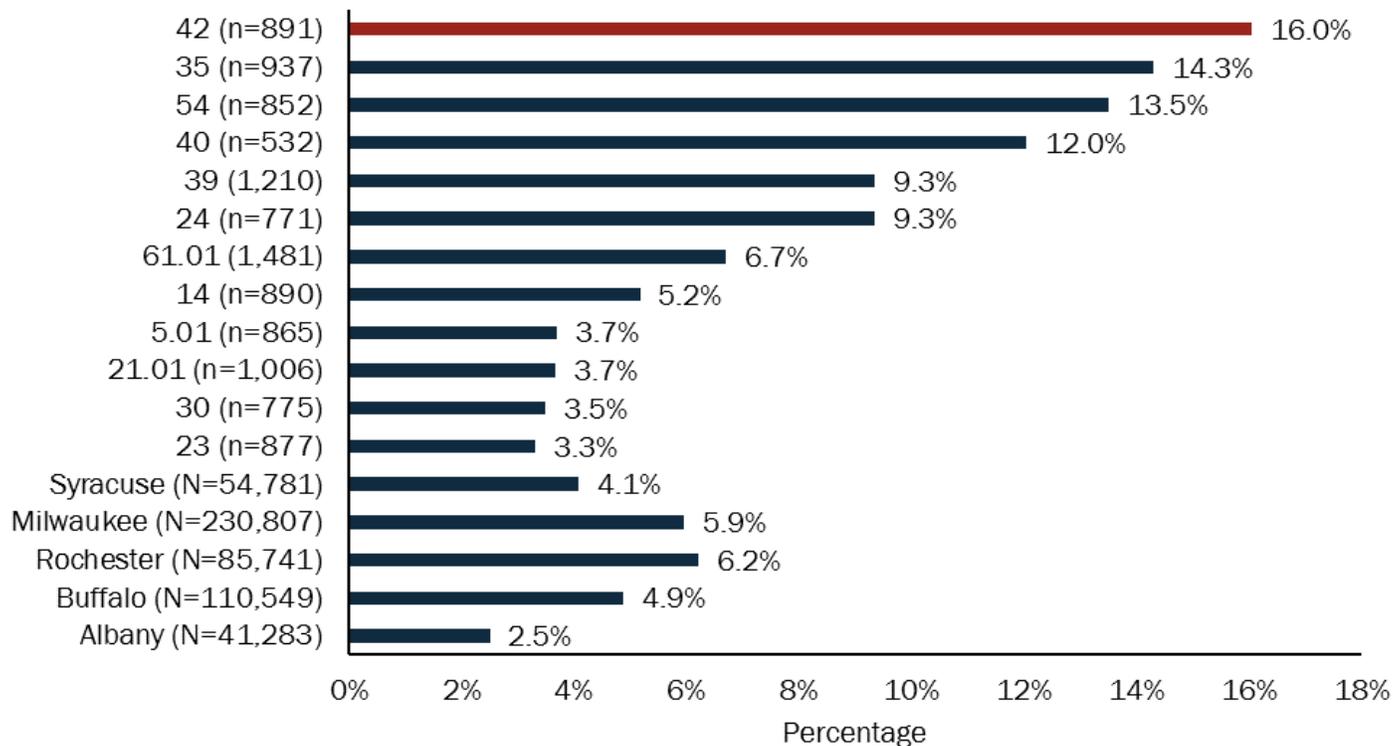
12. Census Tract 30 has the highest percentage (80.5%) of families with children under the age of 18 below the poverty line.

<b>Percent of Families Under the Poverty Line with Children Under 18 Years Old</b>	
<b>Census Tract</b>	<b>Percent of Families</b>
Tract 30 (n=246)	80.5%
Tract 35 (n=283)	70.0%
Tract 21.01 (n=406)	69.7%
Tract 39 (n=507)	65.9%
Tract 24 (n=281)	61.9%
Tract 42 (n=404)	60.9%
Tract 14 (n=495)	60.6%
Tract 54 (n=357)	49.9%
Tract 40 (n=262)	47.7%
Tract 5.01 (n=330)	47.3%
Tract 23 (n=176)	47.2%
Tract 61.01 (n=510)	41.8%
<b>Syracuse (n=14,900)</b>	<b>41.8%</b>
Rochester n=24,020)	45.9%
Buffalo	40.9%
Milwaukee (n=75,142)	35.6%
Albany (n=7,399)	31.2%

**Source:** American Community Survey, 2015, Table S1702

13. Census Tract 42 has the highest percentage of families headed by single black females with children under the age of 18 living in poverty (16.0%).

**Percent of Single Black Females as Head of Household With Children Under the Age of 18 in Poverty by Census Tract for the City of Syracuse (2015)**



**Source:** American Community Survey 2011-2015 5-Year Estimates Table B17010B, American Community Survey 2011-2015 5-Year Estimates Table S1101

**Comment:** The n-values represent the total number of black female-headed households within each census tract.

14. Census Tract 42 has the highest percentage of its population below the poverty line (66.8%) and the highest percentage of black and African Americans below the poverty line (65.3%) among target census tracts.

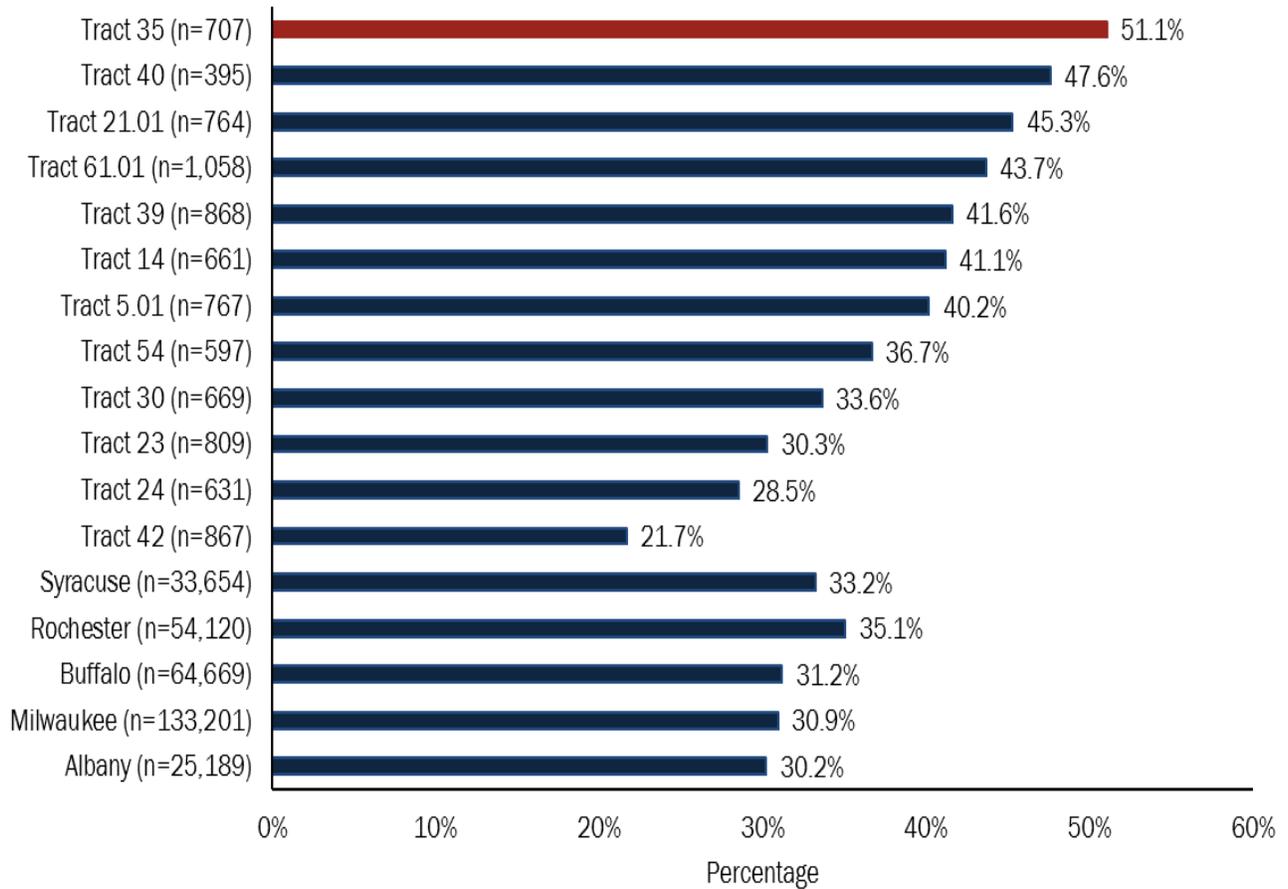
<b>Percent of Black or African American Individuals Below the Poverty Line by Census Tract, City of Syracuse (2015)</b>		
<b>Census Tract</b>	<b>% of Population in Poverty</b>	<b>Percent Black/African American in Poverty</b>
Tract 42 (n=1,633)	66.8%	65.3%
Tract 35 (n=1,004)	55.7%	64.3%
Tract 24 (n=602)	50.7%	63.5%
Tract 30 (n=599)	64.3%	62.4%
Tract 39 (n=1,257)	59.8%	59.6%
Tract 14 (n=843)	55.0%	59.0%
Tract 21.01 (n=737)	52.7%	55.4%
Tract 23 (n=496)	41.9%	57.9%
Tract 54 (n=2,118)	46.4%	46.4%
Tract 5.01 (417)	47.6%	45.8%
Tract 40 (n=941)	32.4%	43.3%
Tract 61.01 (1,916)	36.5%	34.7%
<b>Syracuse (n=40,585)</b>	<b>34.8%</b>	<b>41.5%</b>
Rochester (n=85,026)	33.5%	40.9%
Buffalo (n=94,856)	31.4%	39.7%
Albany (n=28,191)	26.8%	32.0%
Milwaukee (n=231,472)	28.7%	39.2%

**Source:** American Community Survey, 2015, Table S1701

**Comments:** Eight of the twelve census tracts had more than 50% of all Black or African American individuals in poverty. The City of Syracuse had a lower percentage than most of the census tracts, but still had a higher percentage than all of the sister cities. The n-values represent the total number of black or African American individuals for which poverty status could be determined.

15. Over half (51.5%) of renter-occupied households in Census Tract 35 spend more than 50% of their income on rent.

**Percent of Renter Occupied Households Spending More than 50% of Income on Rent by Census Tract, Syracuse city (2015)**

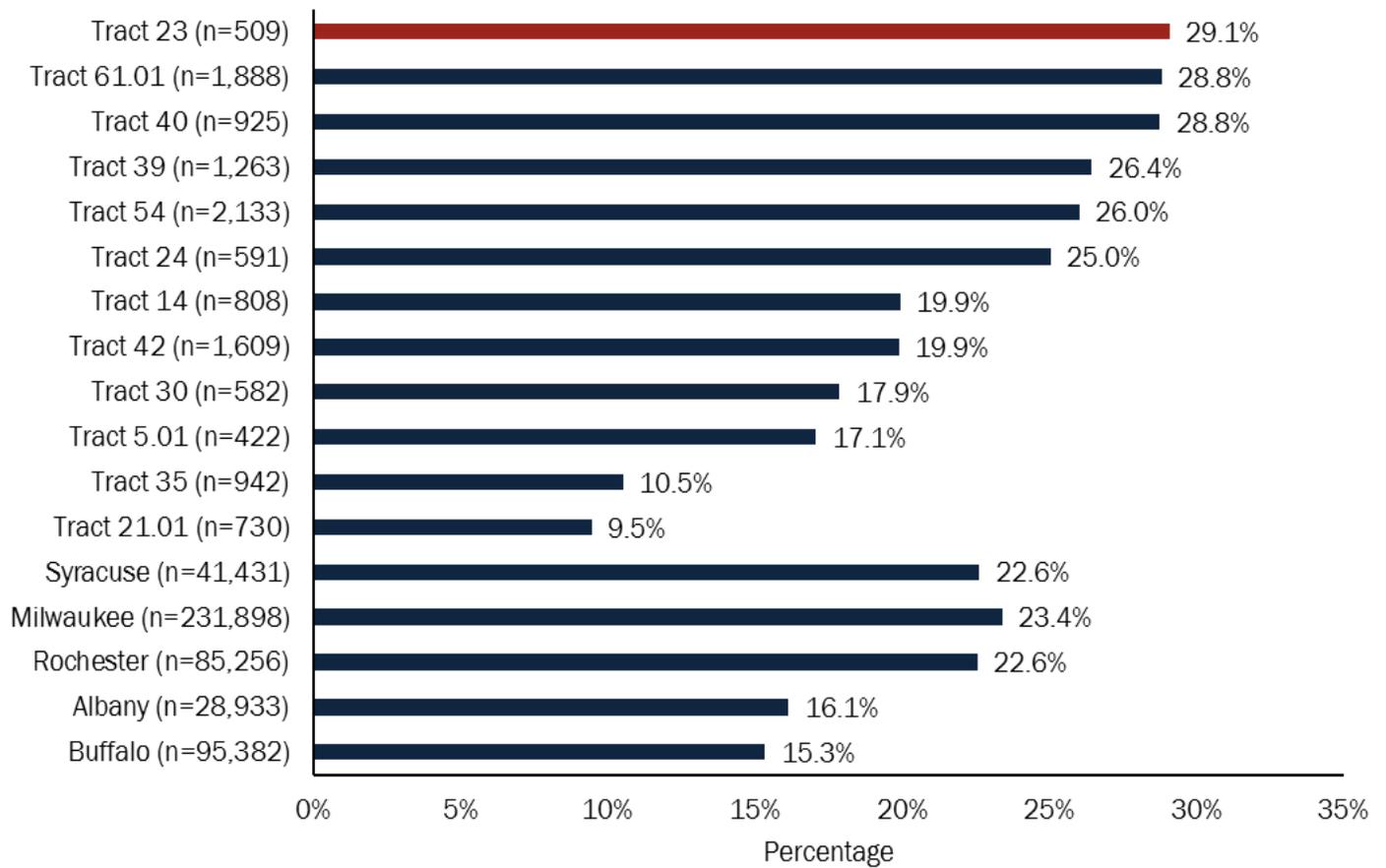


**Sources:** American Community Survey 2015, Table B25074

**Comment:** Spending more than 50% of income on rent is the measure for being extremely cost-burdened according to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). The n-values represent the total number of renter occupied households within each census tract.

16. In six of the twelve census tracts 25% or more of black residents moved in within the last year.

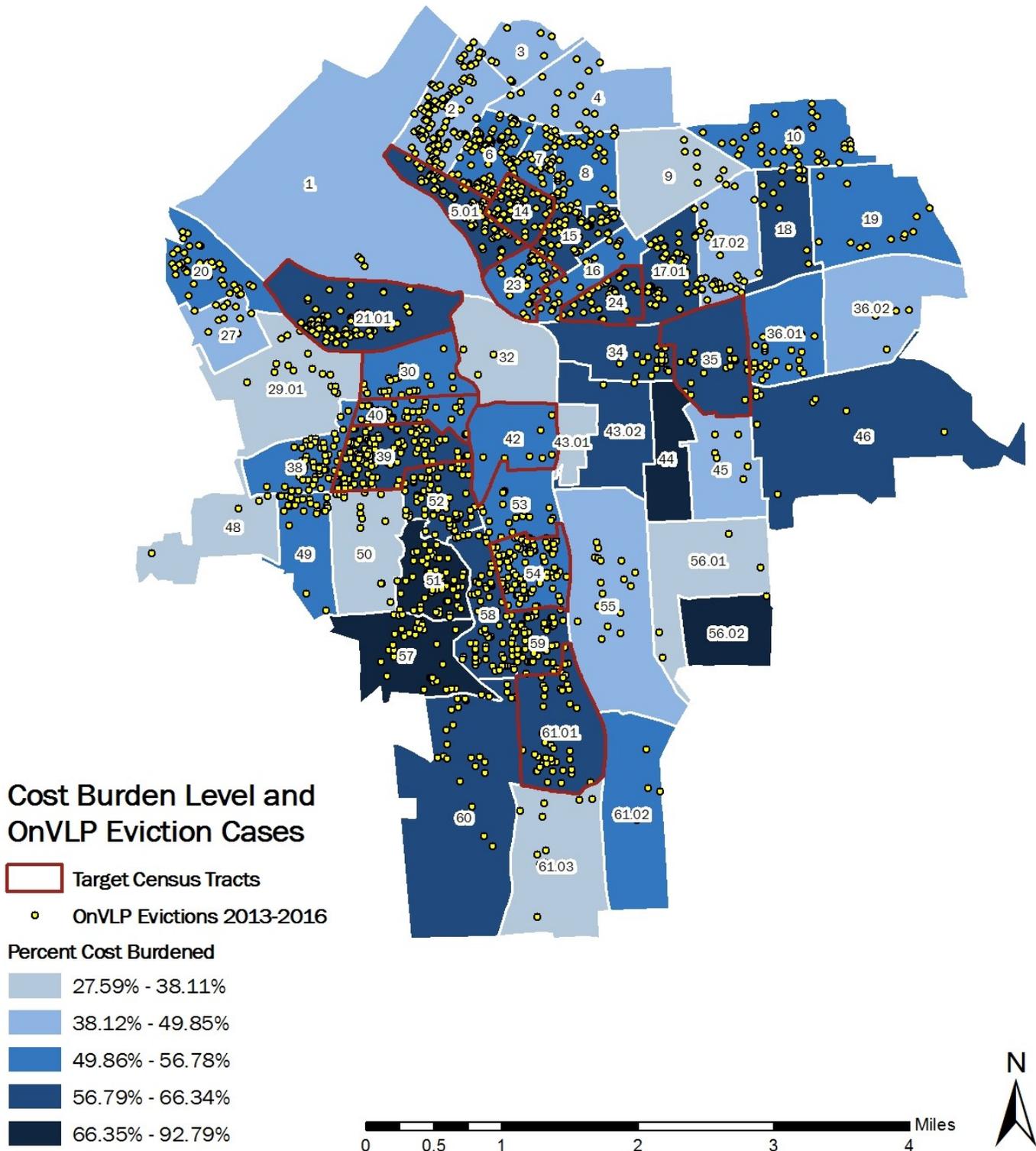
**Percent of Black Residents Who Did Not Live in Their House a Year Ago by Census Tract, City of Syracuse (2015)**



Source: American Community Survey, 2015, Table B07004B

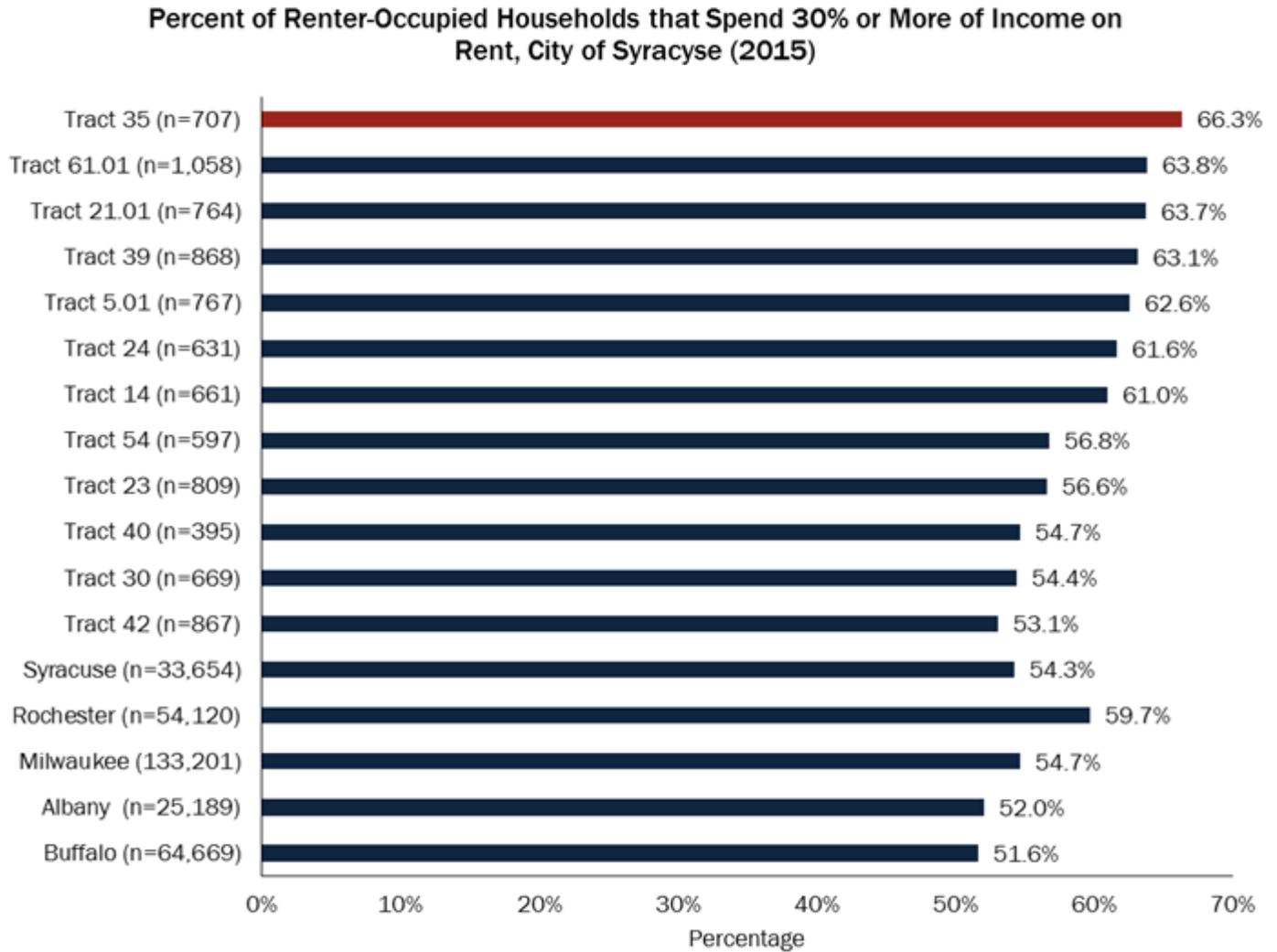
17. Census tracts with high percentages of cost-burdened residents have high numbers of OnVLP evictions.

## Percentage of Individuals Cost Burdened with OnVLP Eviction Cases in Syracuse, NY., 2013



Created By: Community Benchmarking Spring 2017  
 Source: ACS 2015, B02001, Evictions Cases MPD  
 Comment: Created on 4/10/17

18. Over half (54.3%) of renter-occupied households in Syracuse spend at least 50% of their monthly income on rent.

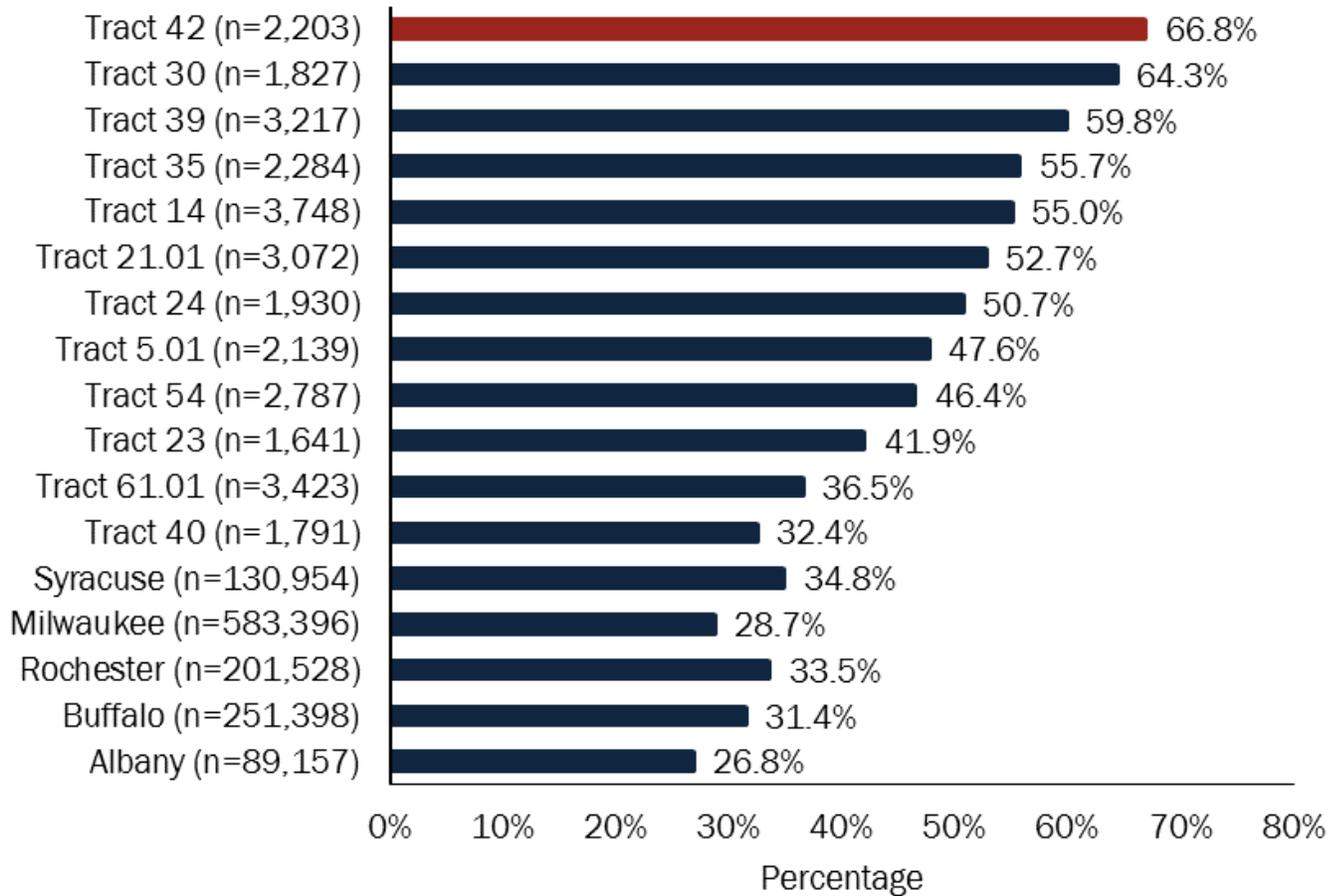


**Source:** American Community Survey, 2015, Table B25074

**Comment:** Households that spend over 50% of their monthly income on rent are considered extremely cost-burdened by HUD.

19. About two-thirds of the population in Census Tracts 42 (66.8%) and 30 (64.3%) live below the poverty level.

### Percent of the Population Below the Poverty Level by Census Tract for the City of Syracuse (2015)

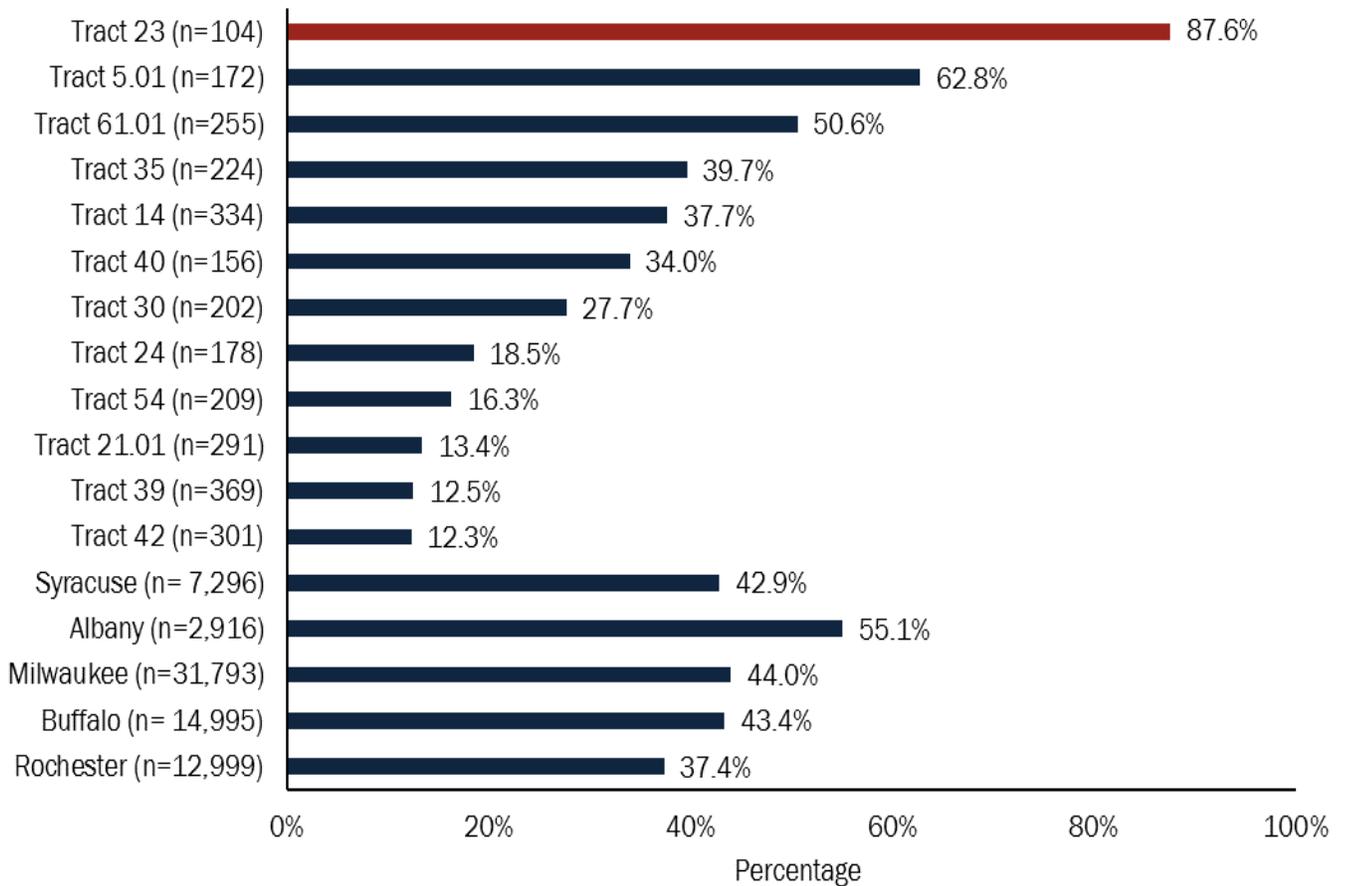


**Source:** American Community Survey 2011-2015 5-Year Estimates, Table S1701

**Comment:** The n-values represent the total population within each census tract.

20. About 87.6% of families below the poverty line in Census Tract 23 have children under 5 years old.

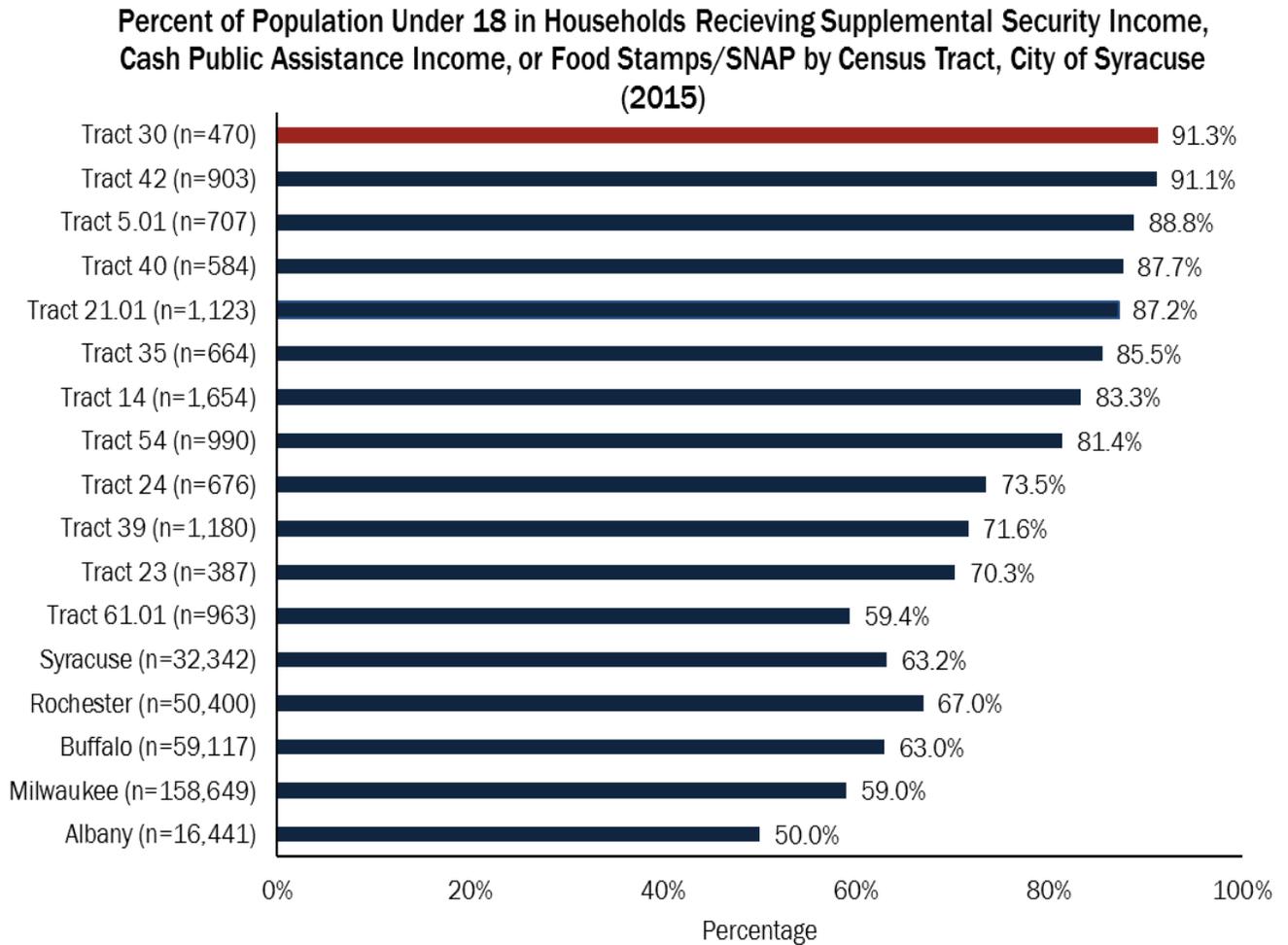
### Percent of Families Below the Poverty Line with Children Under 5 Years Old by Census Tract, City of Syracuse (2015)



**Source:** American Community Survey, 2015, Table S1702

**Comments:** The n-values represent the total number of families in poverty within each census tract.

21. Finding Statement: 91.3% of the population under the age of 18 in census tract 30 are in households receiving supplemental security income, cash public assistance income, or food stamps/SNAP (n=470).

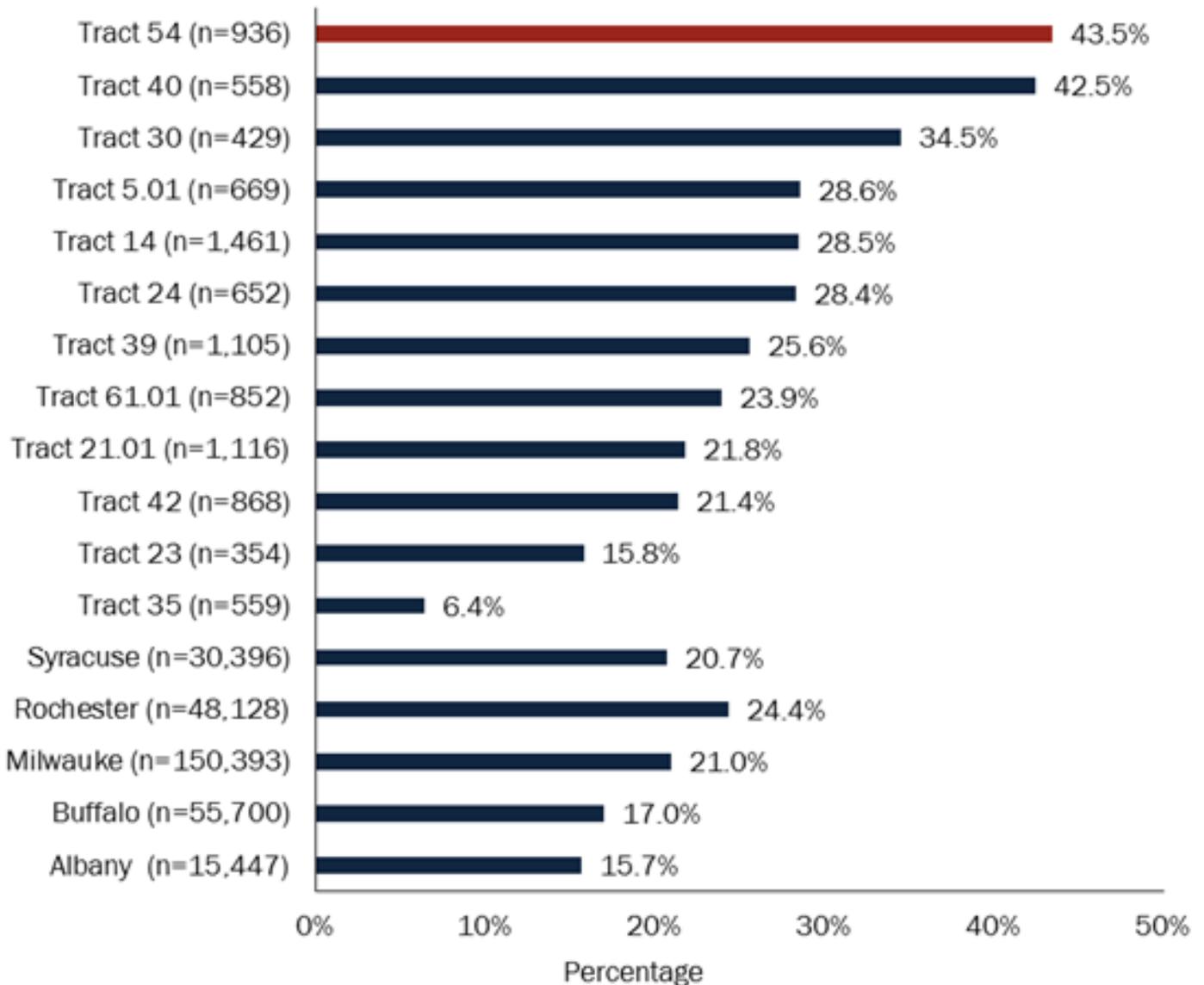


**Source:** ACS 2015 B09010

**Comment:** The n values represent the total number of households with individuals under the age of 18.

22. In Census Tract 54, 43% of children under the age of 17 moved within the last year (n=936).

### Percent of Children Under 17 Living in a Different House Less Than A Year Ago by Census Tract, City of Syracuse (2015)

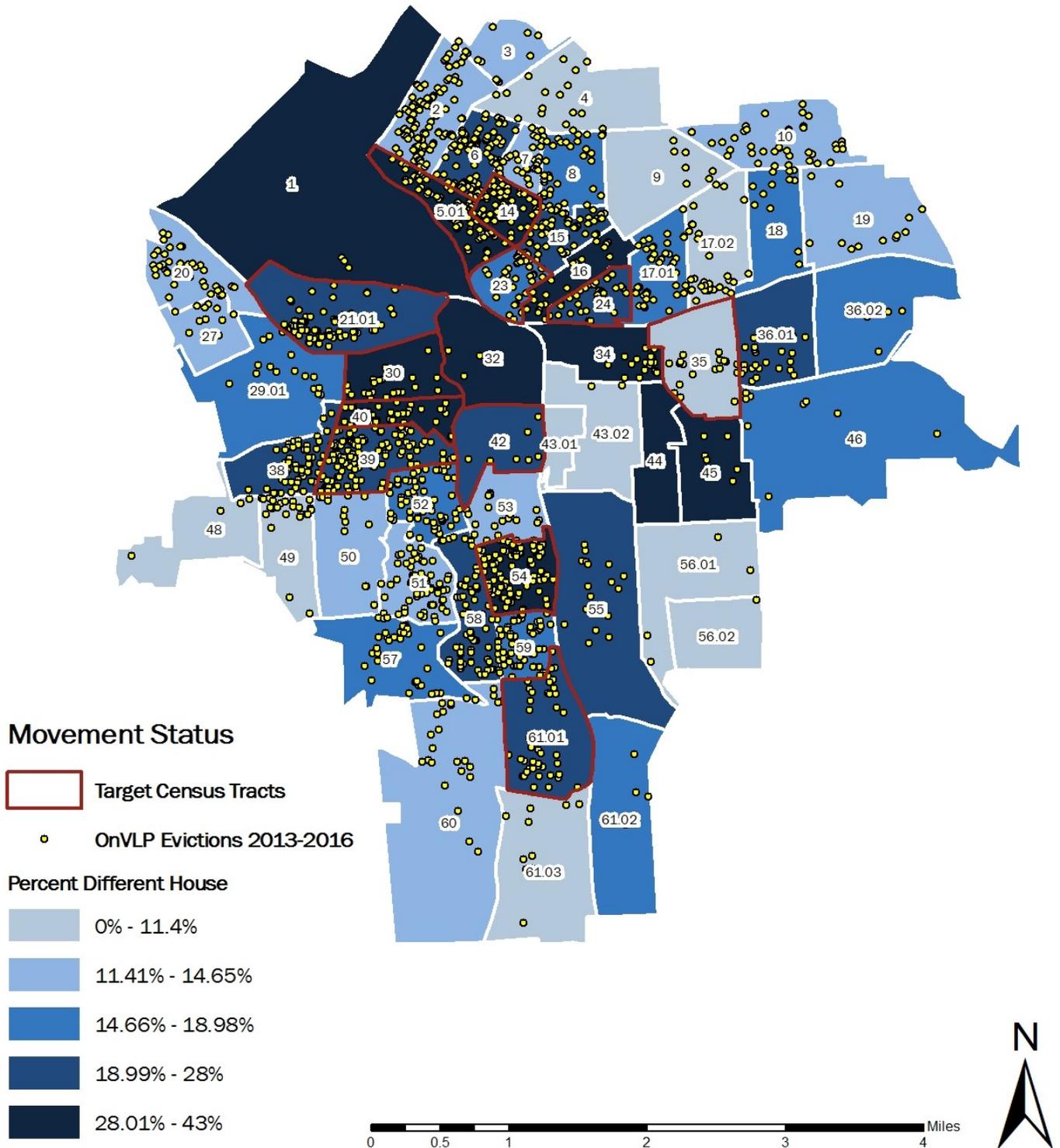


**Sources:** American Community Survey, 2015, Table B07001.

**Comments:** This graph depicts the percentage of individuals under the age of 17 living in a different house less than a year ago within each census tract. It provides no indication of where those individuals moved from, only where they currently reside. The n values in this graph represent total number of children under the age of 17 within each census tract.

23. OnVLP eviction cases are concentrated in census tracts with high rates of residential mobility among children under the age of 17.

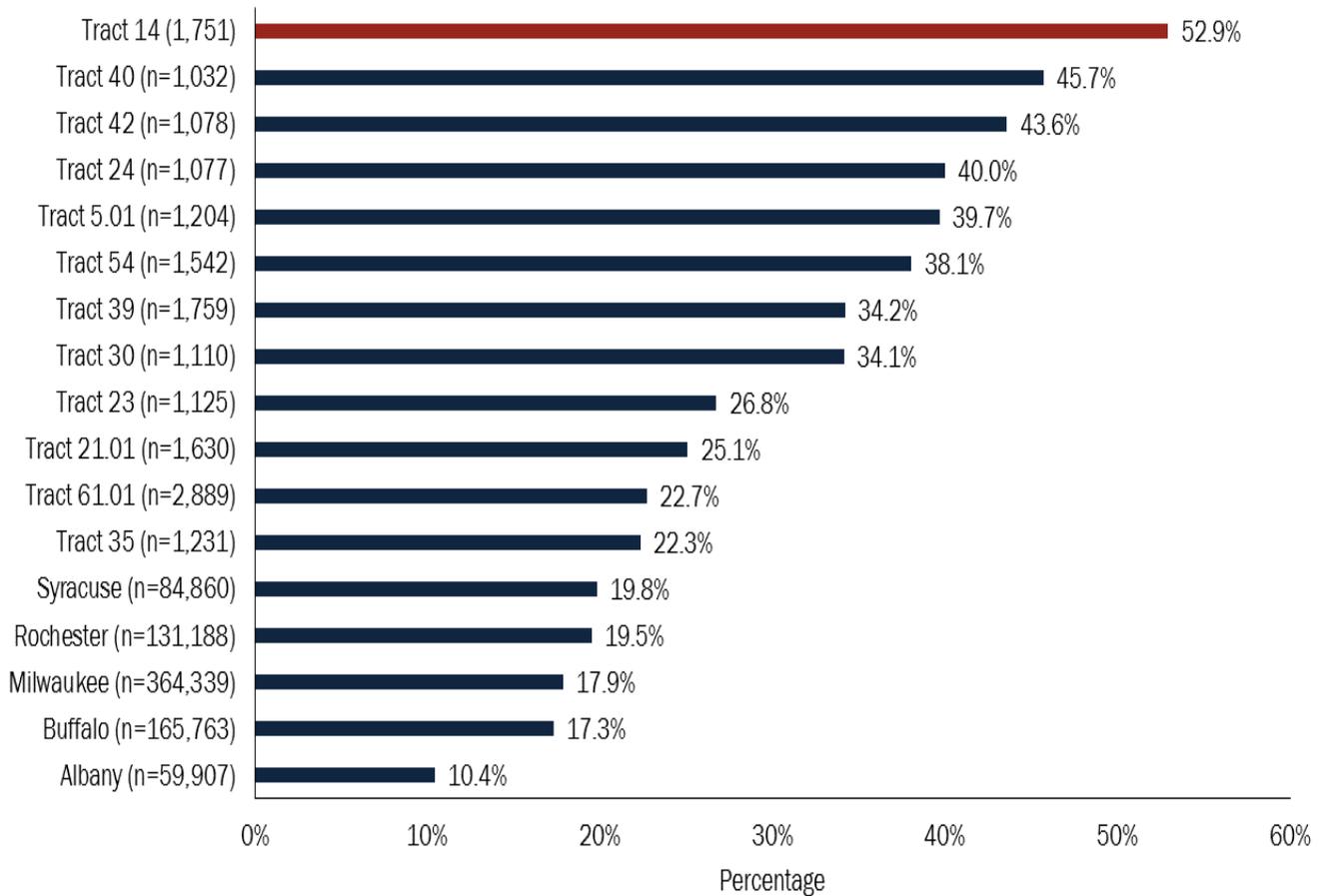
## Percent of Children Under 17 Living in a Different House Less Than a Year Ago with OnVLP Eviction Cases, Syracuse NY., 2015



Created By: Community Benchmarking Spring 2017  
Source: ACS 2015 S1701  
Comment: Created on 4/19/17

24. Over half of the population (52.9%) in Census Tract 14 did not have a high school degree.

**Percent of Population Over 25 Years of Age with Less Than a High School Degree Within Each Census Tract for the City of Syracuse (2015)**



**Source:** American Community Survey, 2015, Table S1501

**Comment:** This graph depicts the percentage of residents over the age of 25 within each census tract that had less than a high school degree or the equivalent of a high school degree. The n-values represent the total number of residents over the age of 25 within each census tract.

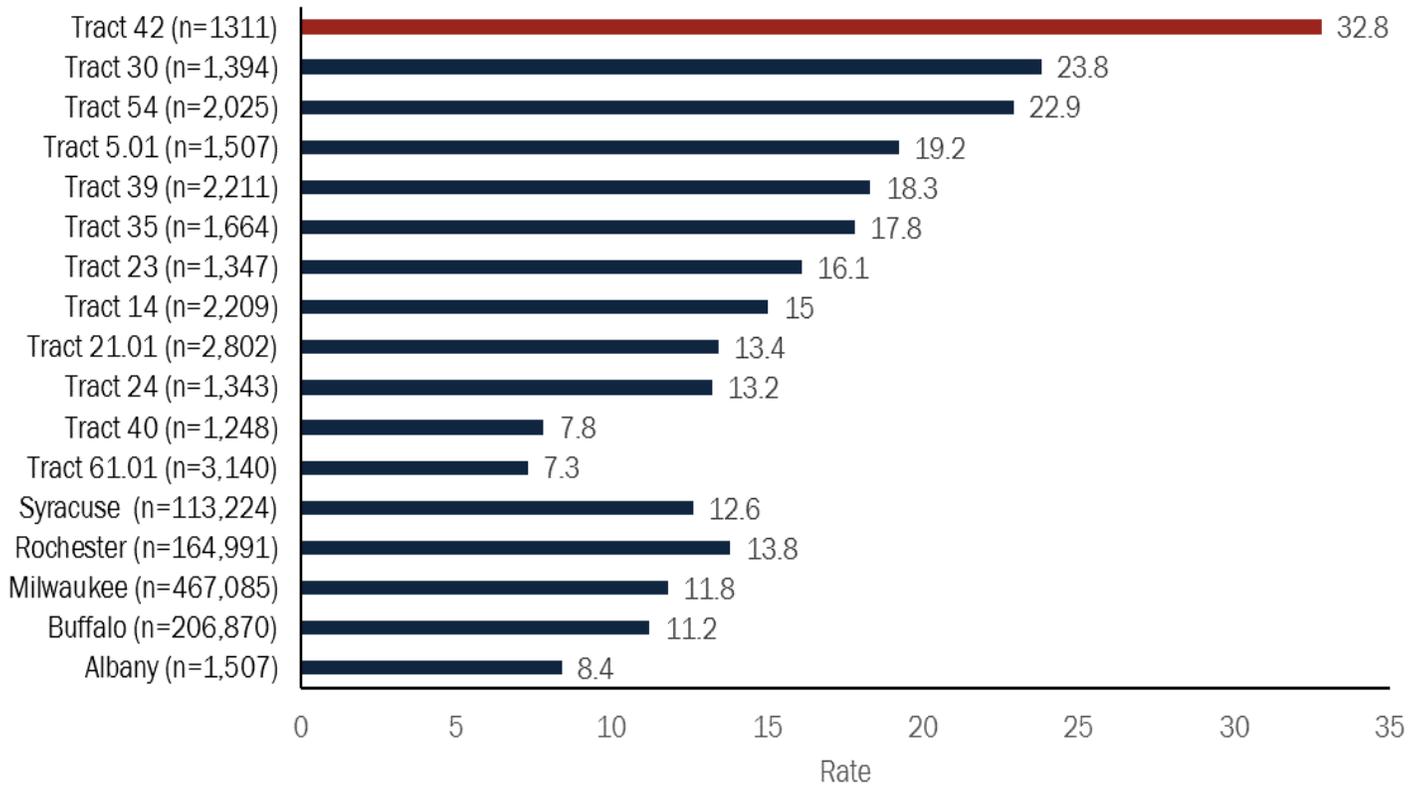
25. Census Tract 14 had the highest median year moved in (2012).

<b>Median Year Moved into Residential Rental Units by Census Tract, City of Syracuse (2015)</b>	
<b>Census Tract</b>	<b>Median Year Moved In</b>
Tract 14	2012
Tract 5.01	2011
Tract 21.01	2011
Tract 24	2011
Tract 30	2011
Tract 35	2011
Tract 39	2011
Tract 40	2011
Tract 54	2011
Tract 23	2010
Tract 61.01	2010
Tract 42	2009
<b>Syracuse</b>	<b>2011</b>
Albany	2011
Buffalo	2011
Milwaukee	2011
Rochester	2011

**Source:** American Community Survey, 2015, Table B25039

26. Census Tract 42 had the highest unemployment rate among individuals who are at least 16 (32.8%).

### Unemployment Rate for Individuals Ages 16 and Up by Census Tract for the City of Syracuse (2015)

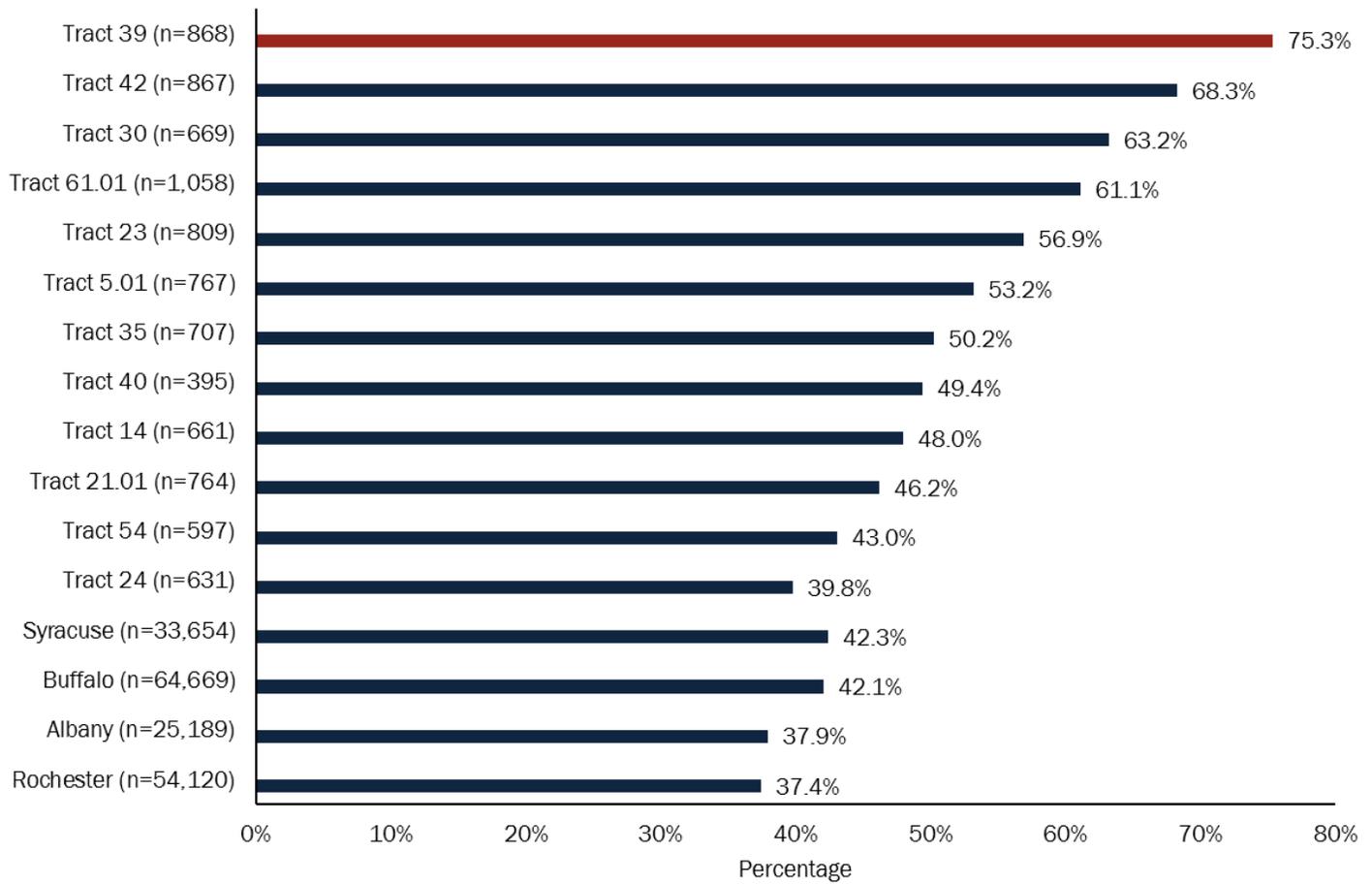


**Source:** American Community Survey, 2015, table S2031

**Comment:** The n values represent the total number of individuals ages 16 and up within each census tract.

27. In Census Tract 39, 75.3% of renter-occupied households do not have access to a vehicle.

**Percent of Renter-Occupied Housing Units Without Access to a Vehicle by Census Tract, Syracuse, NY (2015)**

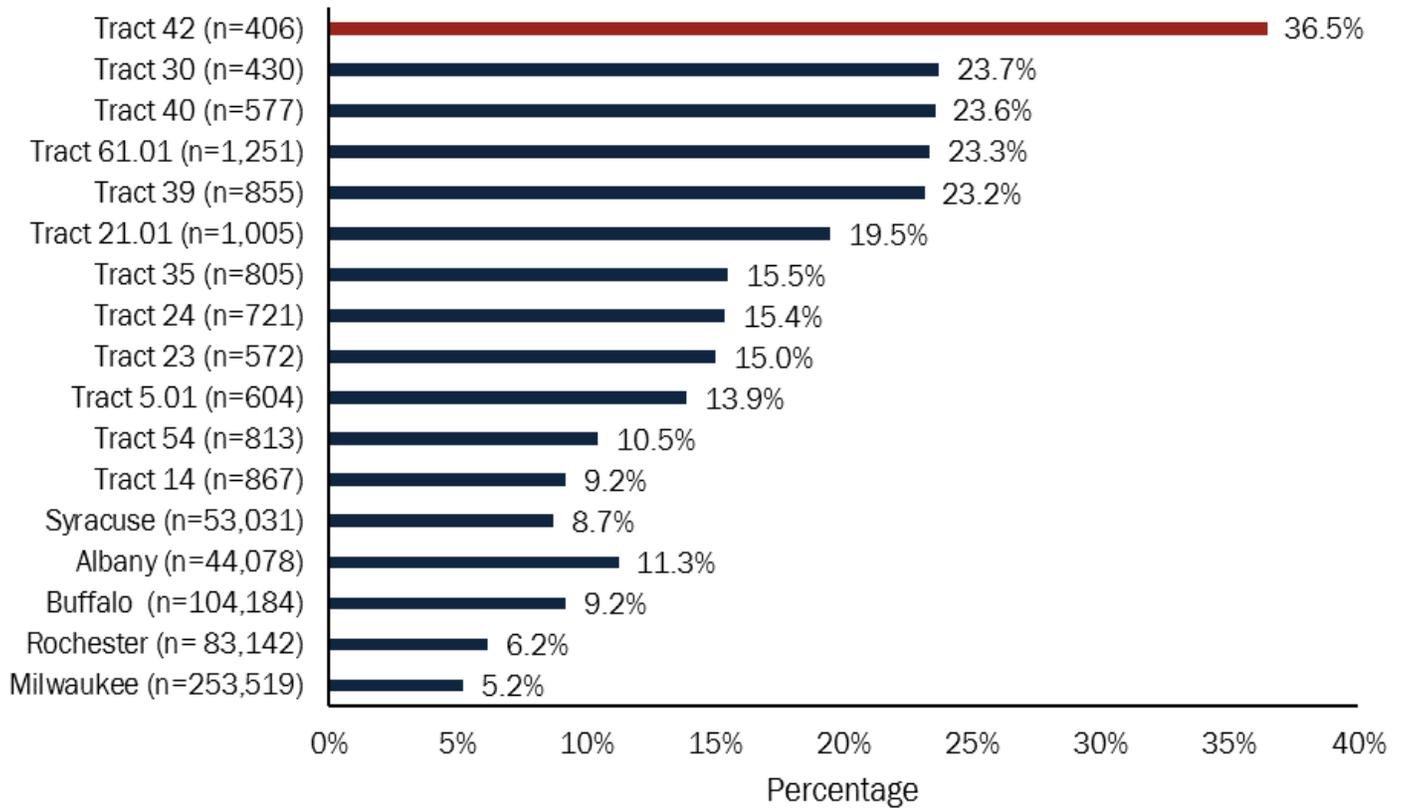


**Source:** American Community Survey, 2015, Table B25044

**Comment:** The n-values represent the total number of renter-occupied households within each census tract.

28. More than one in three workers in Census Tract 42 (36.5%) took public transportation or walked to work because no vehicle was available.

### Percent of Workers 16 and Over Who Took Public Transportation or Walked to Work Because No Vehicle Was Available by Census Tract, City of Syracuse (2015)

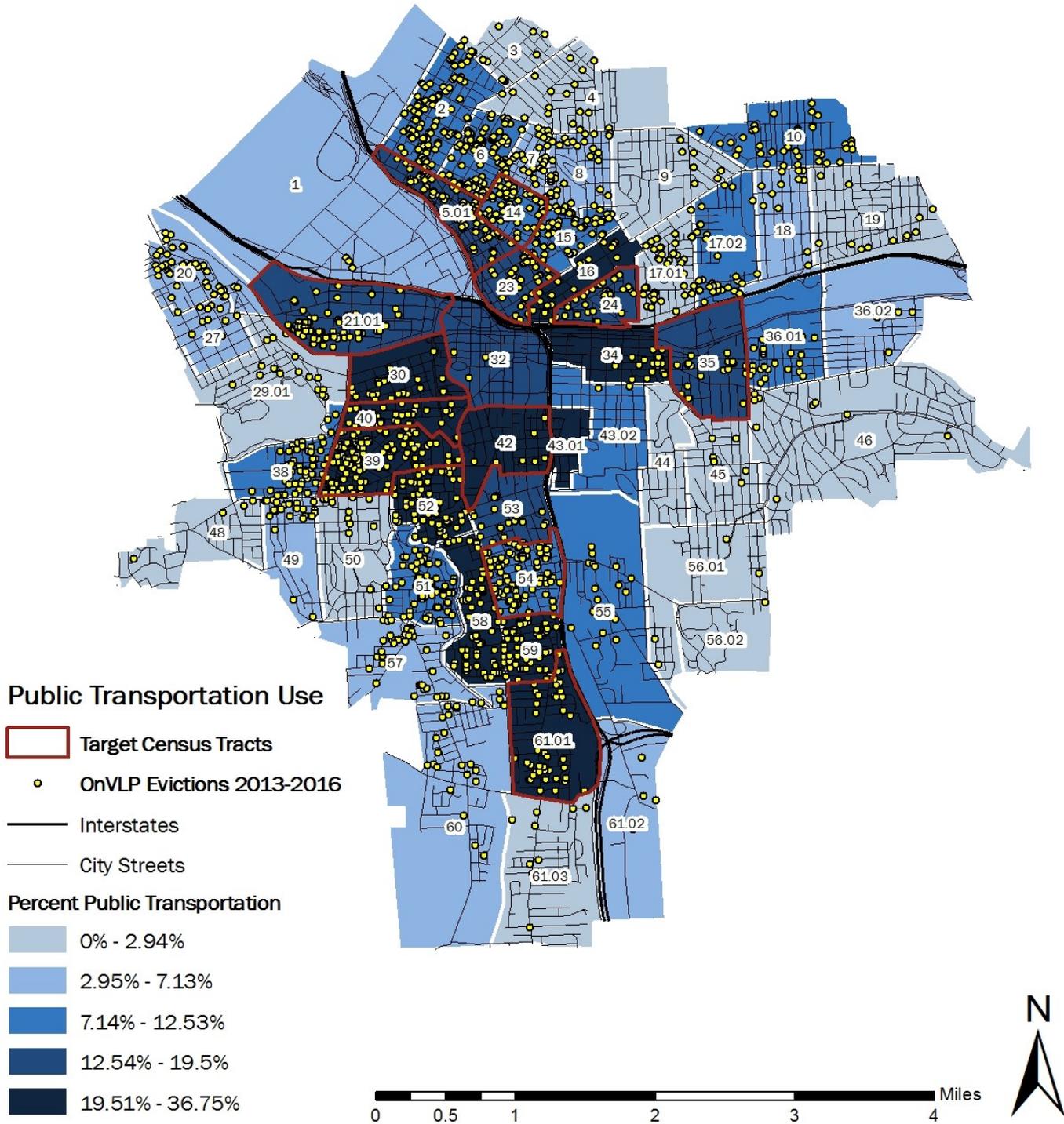


**Source:** American Community Survey, 2015, Table B08141

**Comment:** Comment: The n-value represents the number of workers ages 16 and over living within each census tract.

29. OnVLP eviction cases are concentrated in census tracts with high percentages of residents depend-ent on public transportation.

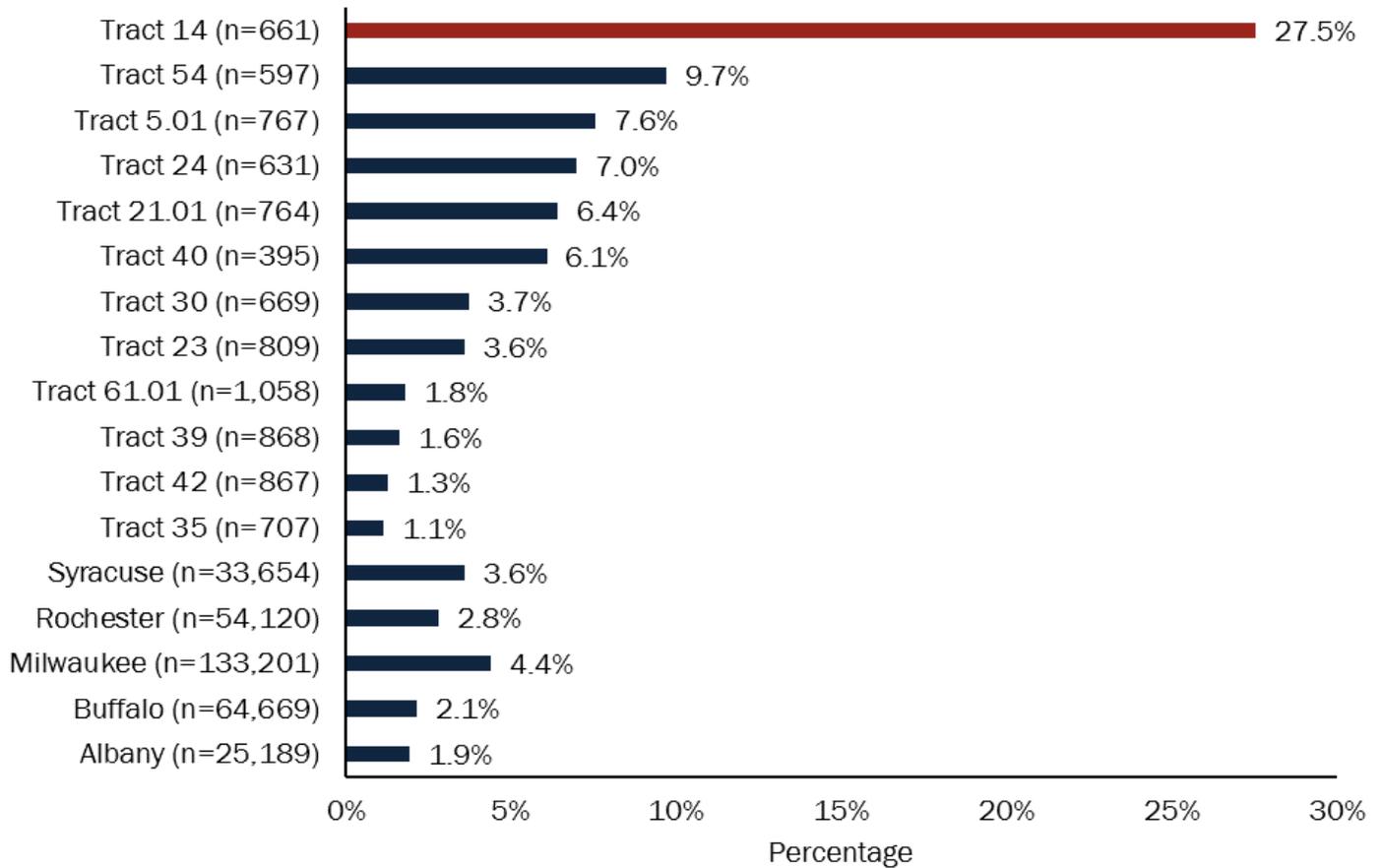
## Percent of Population Using Public Transportation or Walking w/o Access to Vehicle with OnVLP Evictions in Syracuse, NY., 2015



Created By: Community Benchmarking Spring 2017  
 Source: ACS 2015, Eviction Cases - MPD Data by Year  
 Comment: Created on 4/13/17

30. Census Tract 14 had a significantly higher percentage of renter-occupied households experiencing overcrowding (27.53%) than any of the other target census tracts or cities.

**Percent of Rental Occupied Households Experiencing Overcrowding Within Each Census Tract, City of Syracuse (2015)**

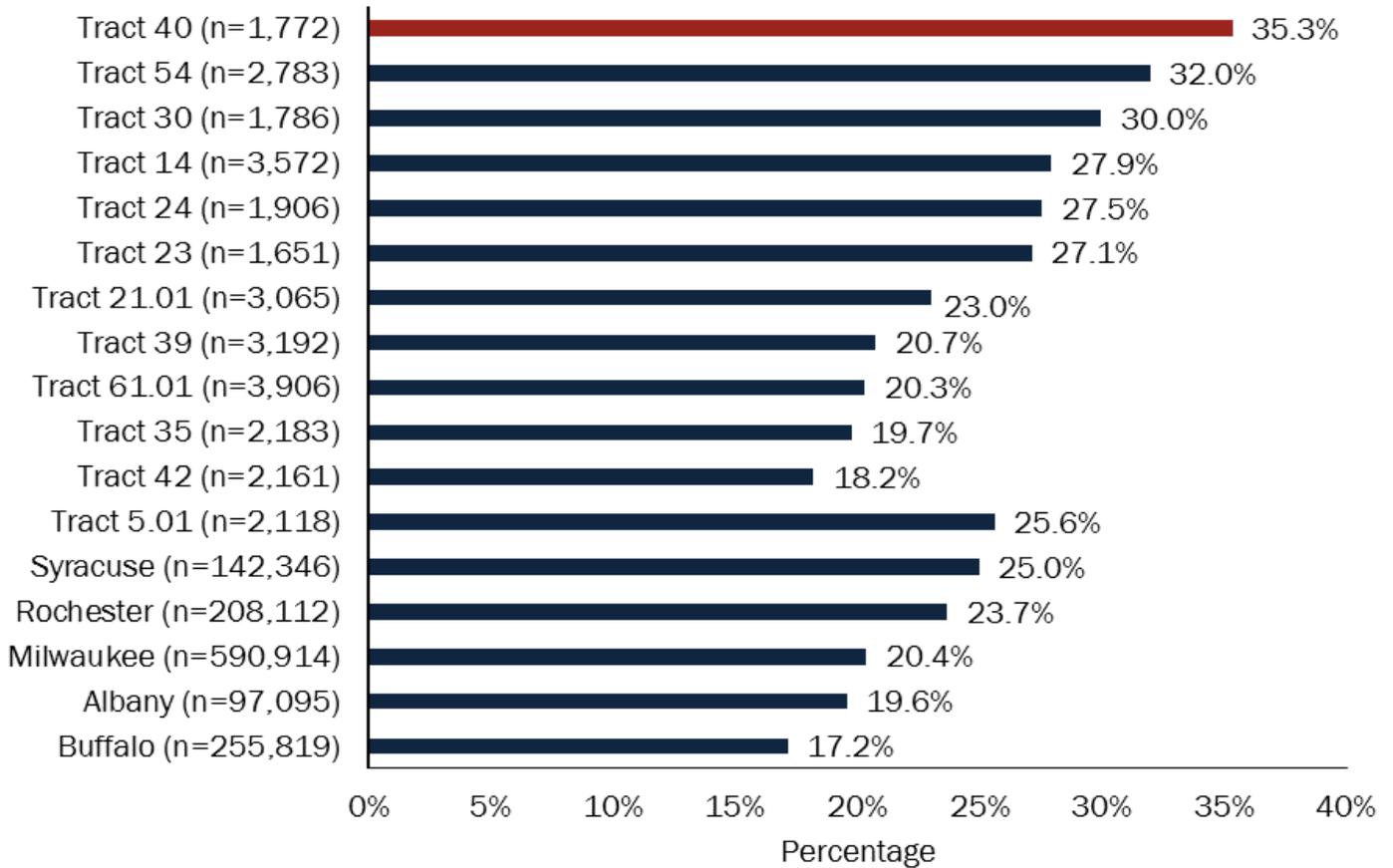


**Source:** American Community Survey, 2015, Table B25014

**Comment:** Overcrowding was defined as more than 1 person per room. The n-values represent the number of renter-occupied units within each census tract.

31. About one in three individuals living in Census Tracts 40 (35.3%) and 54 (32.0%) have moved within the last year.

### Percent of the Population That Lived in A Different House A Year Ago by Census Tract in the City of Syracuse (2015)

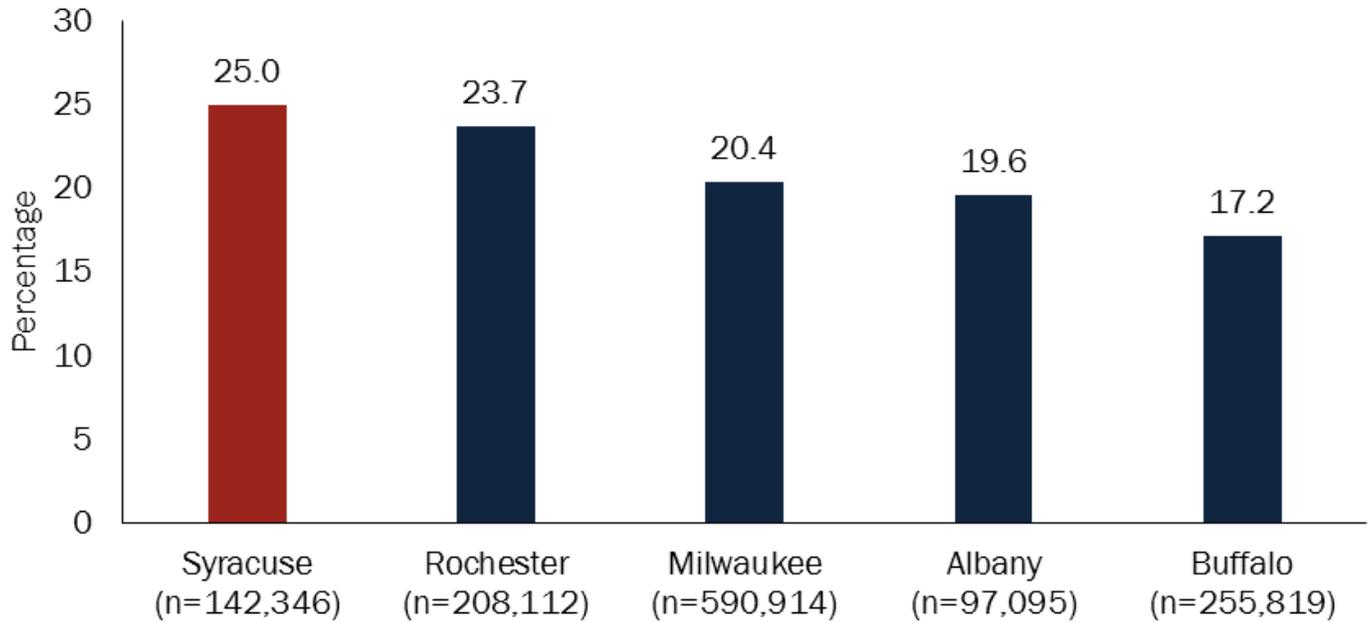


**Source:** American Community Survey 2011-2015 5-Year Estimates, Table B07001

**Comment:** This graph depicts the percentage of individuals who have moved within the past year and are now currently living within each census tract. It gives no indication of where those individuals moved from. The n-values represent the total number of individuals living within each census tract.

32. About one in three individuals living in Census Tracts 40 (35.3%) and 54 (32.0%) have moved within the last year.

### Percent of the Population Living in a Different House than 1 Year Ago For Syracuse, Rochester, Milwaukee, Albany and Buffalo (2015)



**Source:** American Community Survey 2011-2015 5-Year Estimates, Table B07001

**Comment:** This graph depicts the percentage of individuals who have moved within the past year and are now currently living within each census tract. The n-values represent the total number of individuals living within each census tract.

33. Census Tract 54 has the highest median gross rent (\$877) among target census tracts.

<b>Median Gross Rent by Census Tract for the City of Syracuse(2015)</b>	
<b>Census Tract</b>	<b>Median Gross Rent</b>
Tract 54	\$877
Tract 21.01	\$832
Tract 14	\$764
Tract 35	\$737
Tract 40	\$726
Tract 24	\$711
Tract 39	\$691
Tract 61.01	\$668
Tract 5.01	\$650
Tract 23	\$595
Tract 30	\$420
Tract 42	\$297
<b>Syracuse</b>	<b>\$730</b>
Albany	\$857
Milwaukee	\$786
Rochester	\$770

Source: American Community Survey, 2015, Table B25064

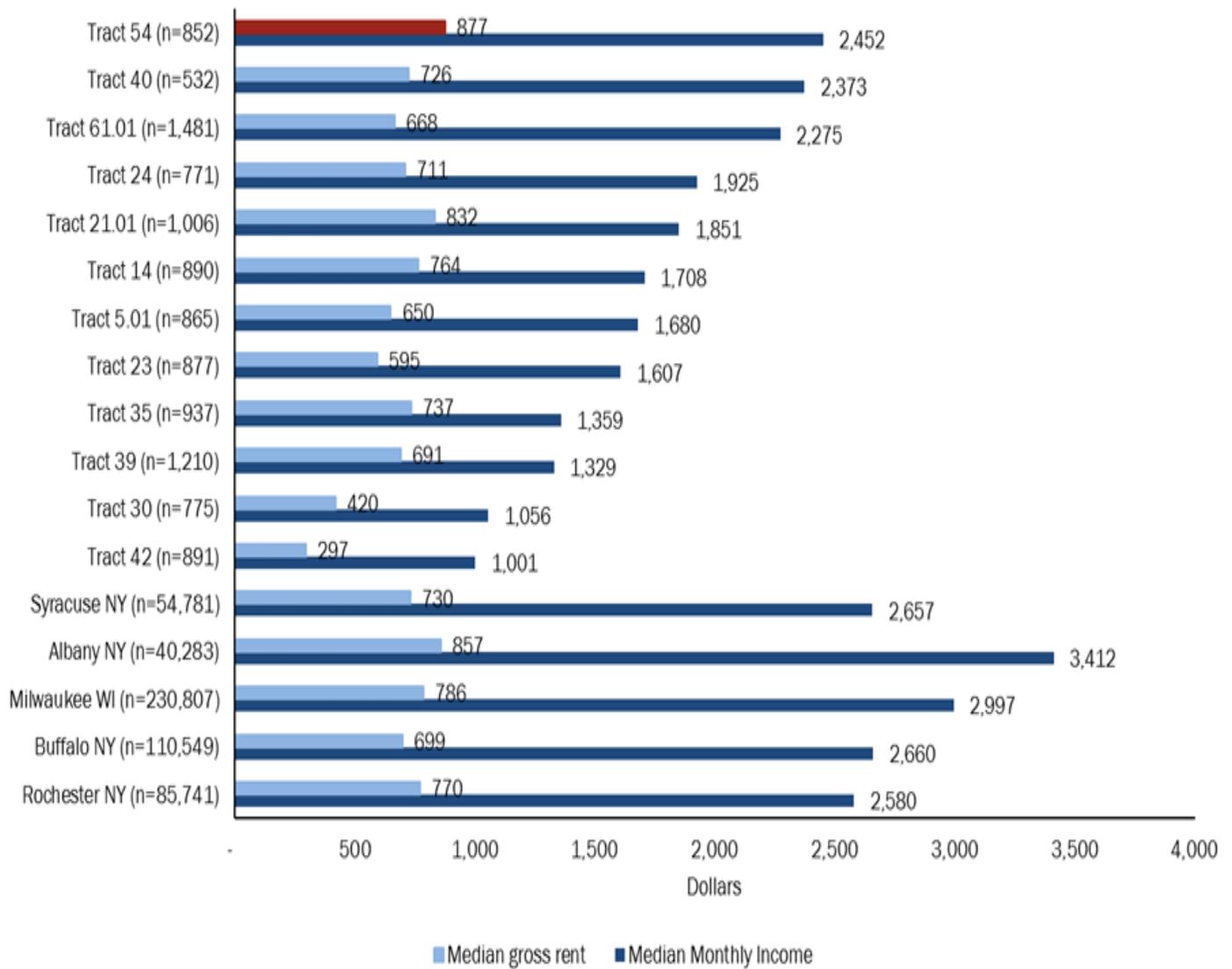
34. Census Tract 40 experienced the highest percent increase in median gross rent (63.88%) between 2009-2015.

Median Gross Rent Over Time by Census Tract			
	Median Gross Rent		
Census Tract	2009	2012	2015
54	\$639	\$839	\$877
21.01	\$659	\$703	\$832
14	\$759	\$782	\$764
35	\$590	\$595	\$737
40	\$443	\$674	\$726
24	\$642	\$799	\$711
39	\$708	\$726	\$691
61.01	\$613	\$641	\$668
5.01	\$728	\$681	\$650
23	\$503	\$590	\$595
30	\$341	\$332	\$420
42	\$345	\$337	\$297
<b>Syracuse</b>	<b>\$662</b>	<b>\$700</b>	<b>\$730</b>
Albany	\$791	\$834	\$857
Milwaukee	\$721	\$768	\$786
Rochester	\$706	\$738	\$770
Buffalo	\$638	\$672	\$699

Source: American Community Survey, 2009, 2012, 2015, Table B2564

35. The median monthly income in Syracuse is \$2,657 and the median gross rent is \$730.

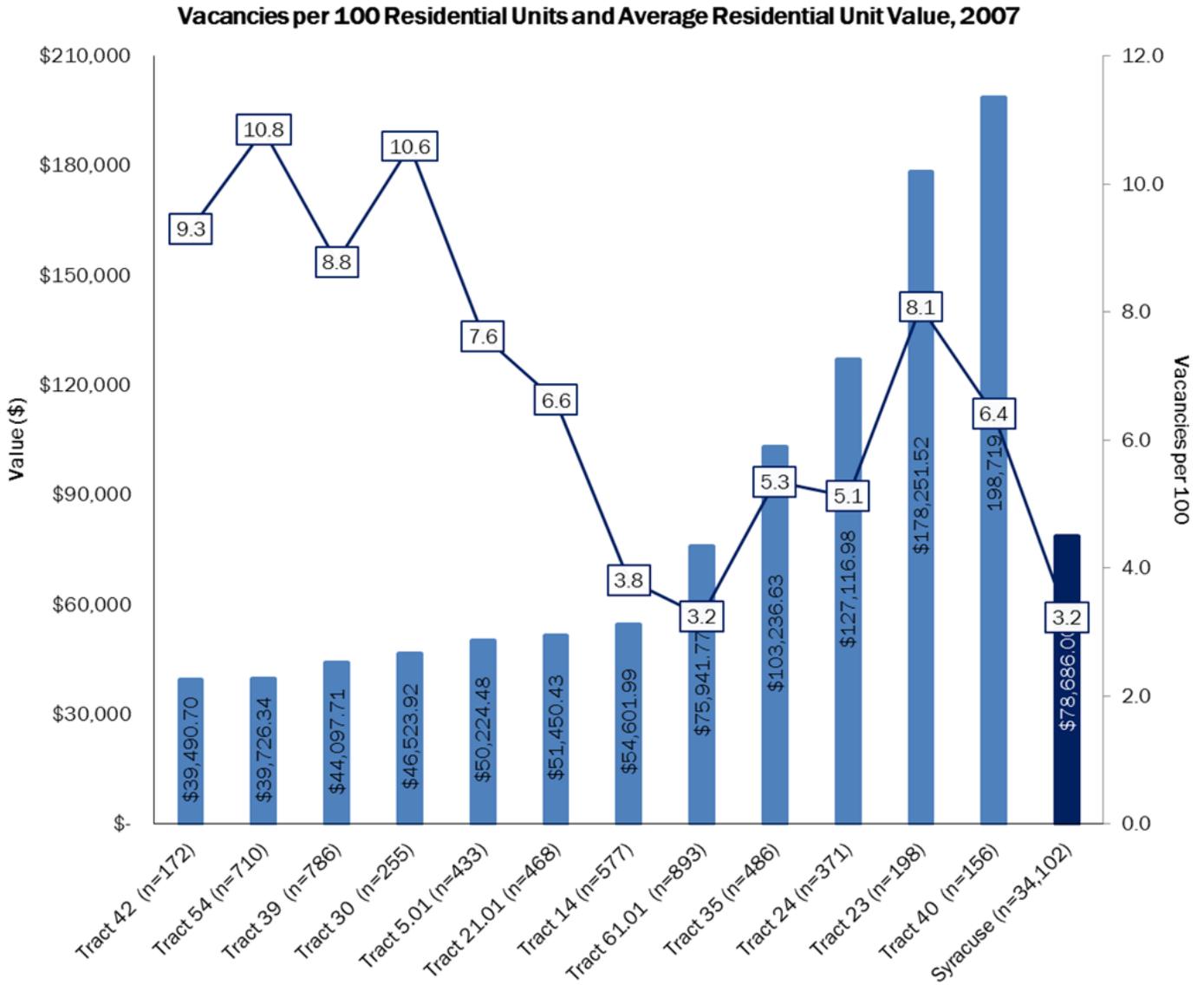
Median Monthly Income & Median Gross Rent for Given Census Tracts, Syracuse, NY (2015)



Source: American Community Survey, 2015, Tables S1903 and B25064

Comment: The n-values represent the total number of households within each census tract.

36. As the average value of a residential unit increases, the average rate of vacancies per 100 residential units generally trends downward.

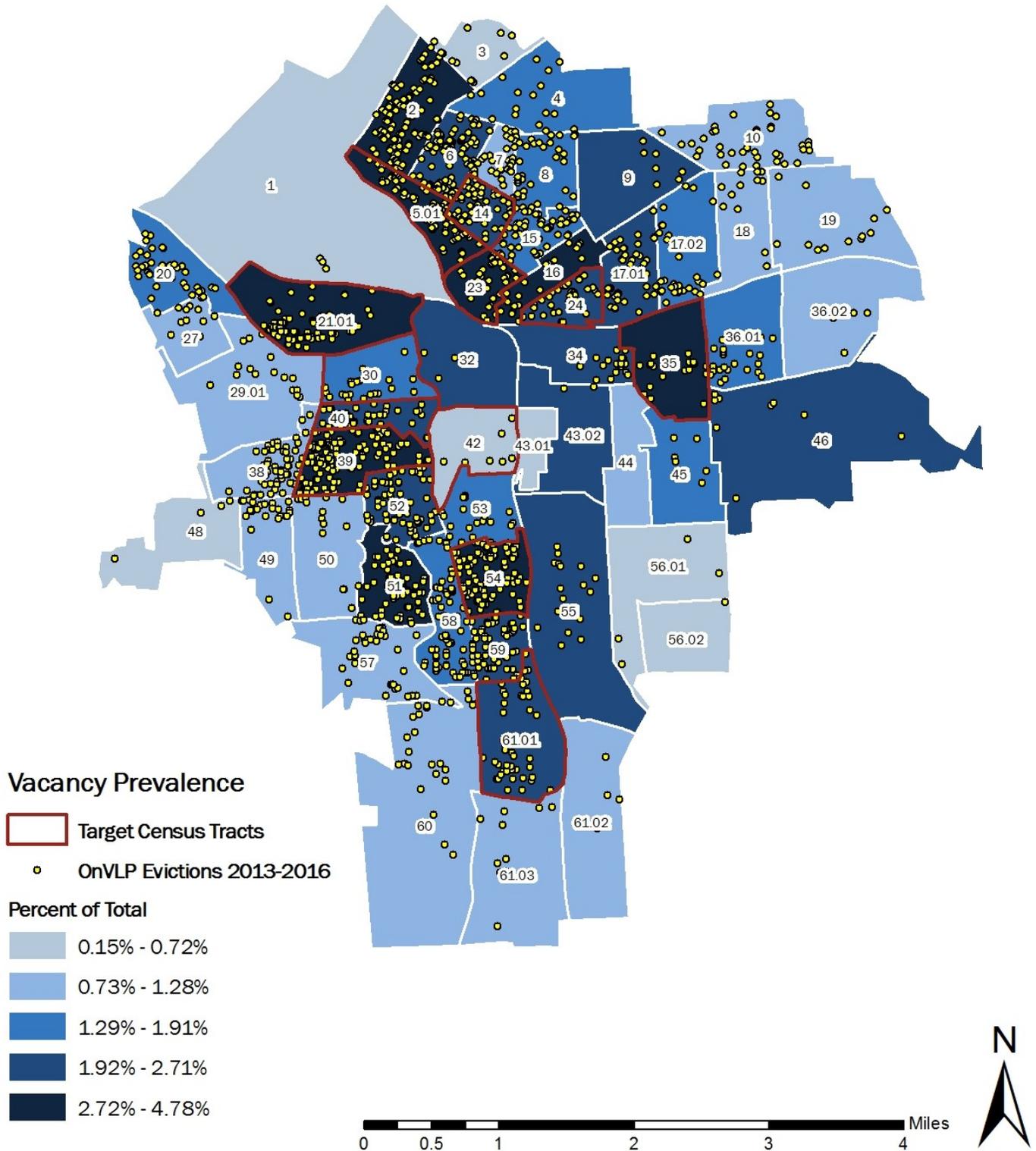


**Source:** 2007 Joined Parcel File.

**Comments:** The n= values are total residential units, not total population, in the geography. As Residential Unit Value increases, the average Vacancies per 100 Residential Units loosely trends downward.

37. OnVLP eviction cases are concentrated in census tracts with high rates of vacancy.

## Percent of Vacant Structures with OnVLP Evictions by Census Tract in Syracuse, NY., 2015



Created By: Community Benchmarking Spring 2017  
Source: ACS 2015, Eviction Cases - MPD Data by Year  
Comment: Created on 4/13/17

38. Census Tract 42 had the worst vacant property condition (2.5).

<b>Average Vacant Property Condition by Census Tract for the City of Syracuse (2017)</b>	
<b>Census Tract</b>	<b>Average Condition</b>
61.01	3.3
24	3.2
23	3.1
5.01	3
21.01	3
14	2.9
30	2.9
35	2.9
40	2.9
54	2.9
39	2.8
42	2.5
<b>Syracuse City</b>	<b>3.1</b>

**Source:** City of Syracuse MPF 2017

**Comments:** The scale for the condition of vacant properties is 1-5, with 1 being the worst and 5 being the best. The types of vacant properties depicted in this chart are apartment, multiple residence, single family, two family and three family. The occupancy status is vacant residential. Census Tract 42 has the lowest average vacant property condition with 2.5, signaling that it is rated as one of the worse off and shows that it is in more need. The Syracuse average is 3.1, and only three out of the 12 census tracts are equal to or above that average (Census Tracts 23, 24 and 61.01).

39. Census Tract 14 has experienced a 165.8% increase in its rate of vacancies per 100 properties since 2007.

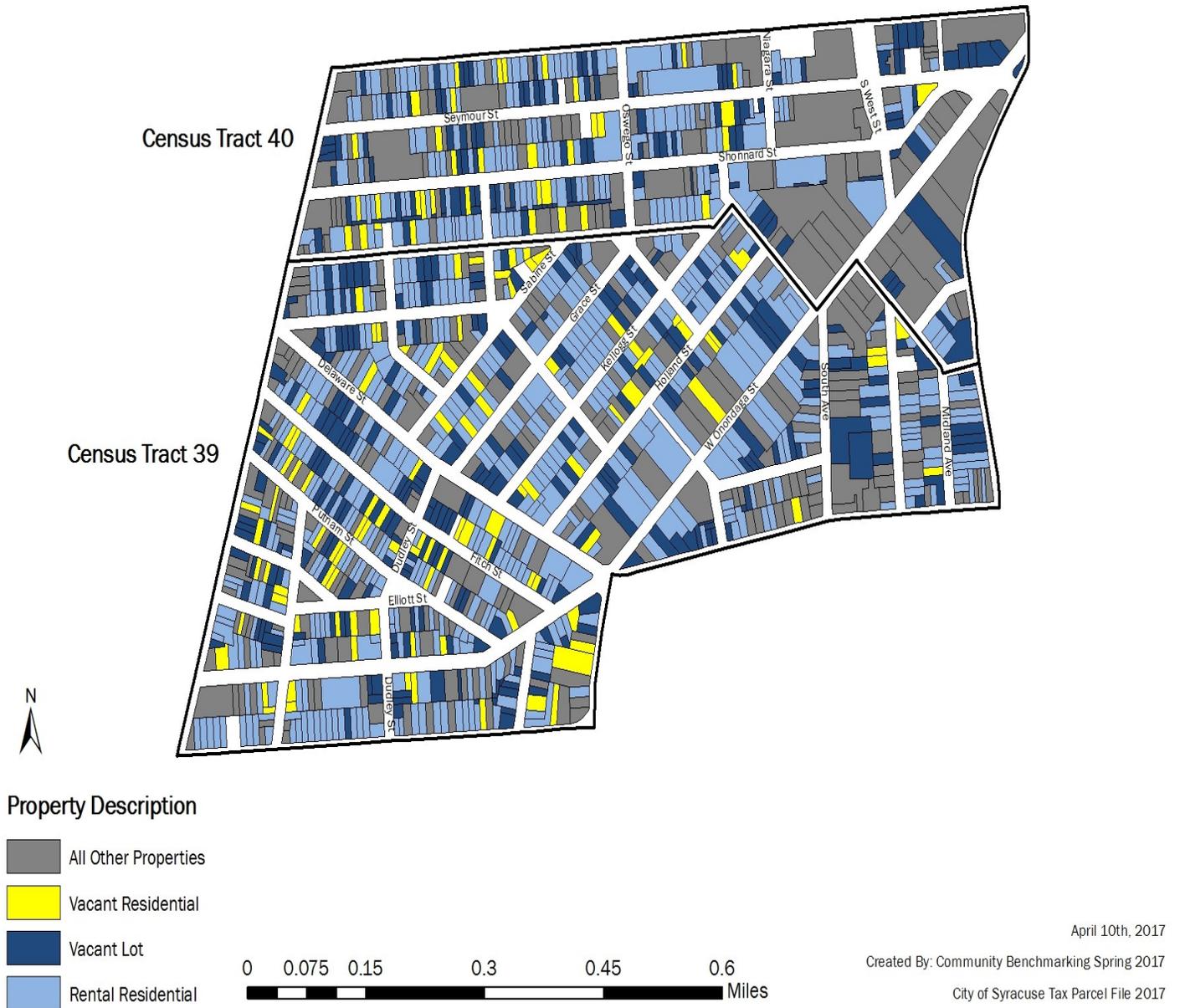
<b>Change in Rate of Vacancies per 100 Properties Over Time by Census Tract for the City of Syracuse (2007-17)</b>				
<b>Census Tract</b>	<b>2007</b>	<b>2012</b>	<b>2017</b>	<b>Percent Change in Rate of Vacancies</b>
Tract 14	3.8	9.7	10.1	165.8%
Tract 40	6.4	15.0	14.1	120.2%
Tract 61.01	3.2	6.3	5.8	77.7%
Tract 23	8.1	11.3	13.7	69.6%
Tract 21.01	6.6	9.7	11.2	68.6%
Tract 54	10.8	13.7	17.6	62.1%
Tract 39	8.8	13.9	13.9	58.3%
Tract 24	5.1	8.5	6.9	35.6%
Tract 5.01	7.6	12.0	10.0	30.6%
Tract 35	5.3	5.6	3.5	-35.0%
Tract 30	10.6	11.8	6.3	-41.0%
Tract 42	9.3	4.0	4.9	-47.1%
<b>Syracuse</b>	<b>3.2</b>	<b>4.9</b>	<b>5.0</b>	<b>56.0%</b>

**Source:** City of Syracuse Monthly Parcel Files, 2007, 2012, 2017

**Comment:** The above graph depicts the percent change in vacancies per 100 properties in the City of Syracuse from 2007 to 2017. The majority of the census tracts as well as the City of Syracuse showed an increase in the number of vacancies, with Census Tract 14 increasing by 165.8%.

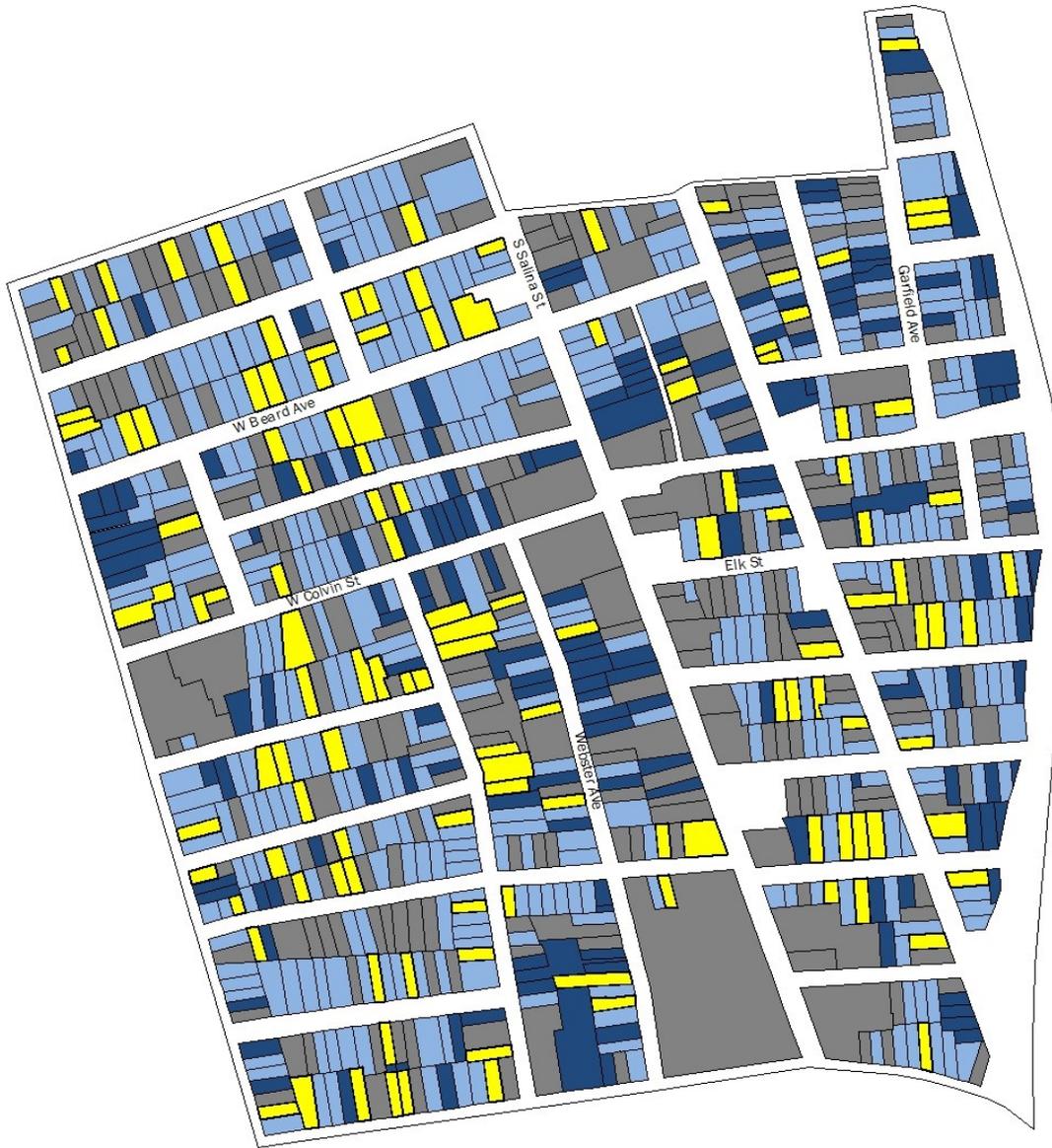
40. Census Tracts 39 and 40 have a high number of rental units and a high number of vacant residential properties and lots.

### Vacant Residential Properties in Census Tracts 39 & 40, Syracuse, NY, 2017



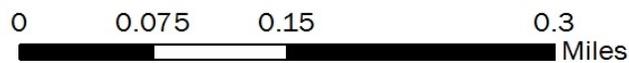
41. Census Tract 54 has a high number of rental units and a high number of vacant residential properties and lots.

### Vacant Residential Properties in Census Tract 54, Syracuse, NY, 2017



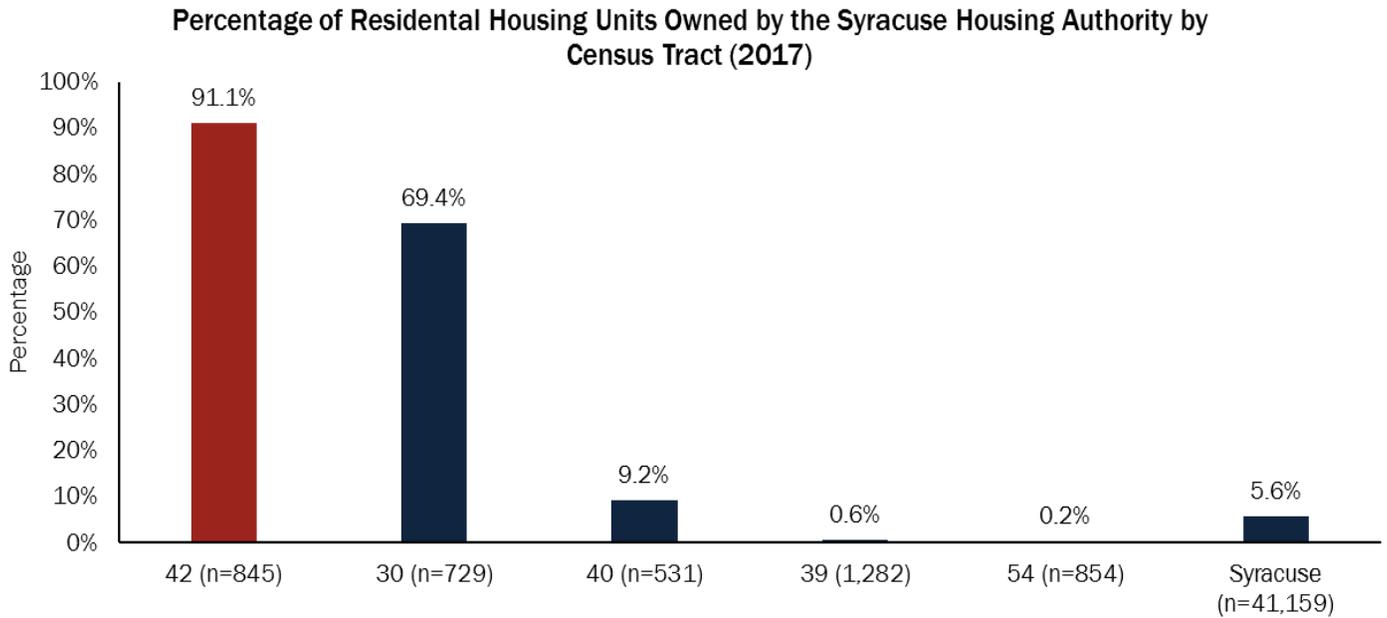
#### Property Description

-  All Other Properties
-  Vacant Residential
-  Vacant Lot
-  Rental Residential



April 10th, 2017  
Created By:  
Community Benchmarking  
Spring 2017  
Source:  
City of Syracuse  
Tax Parcel File 2017

42. About 91.1% of the residential renter-occupied units in Census Tract 42 and 69.8% in Census Tract 30 are owned by the Syracuse Housing Authority.

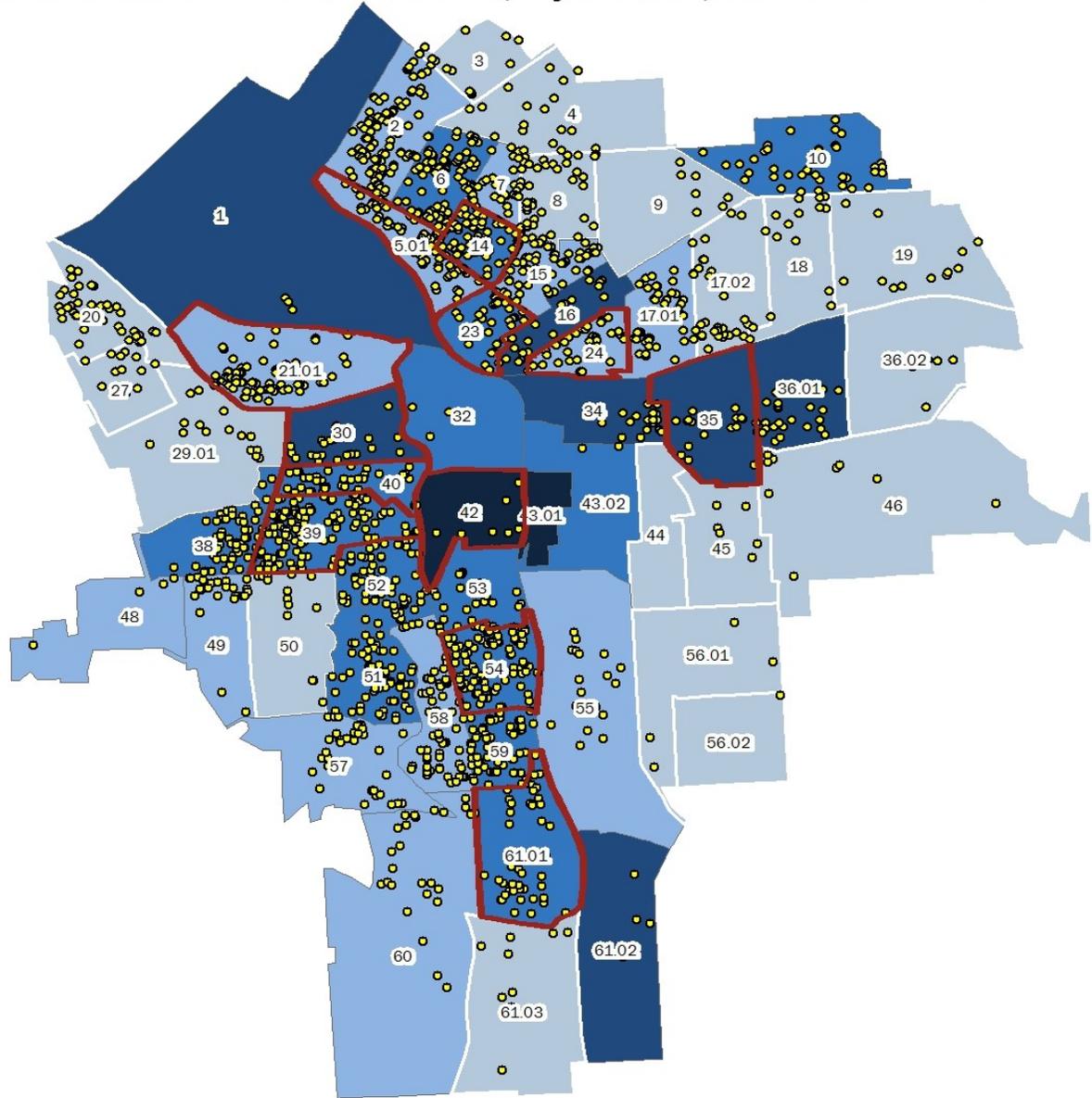


**Source:** 201 Monthly Parcel File

**Comment:** The n-values represent the total number of residential renter-occupied units within each census tract. All target census tracts that contain no residential units owned by the Syracuse Housing Authority were excluded.

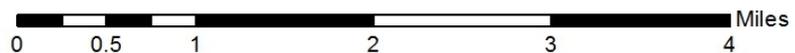
43. Census tracts with a moderate amount of subsidized housing units have a high number of OnVLP eviction cases. (Comment: This may be because OnVLP does not represent cases brought to court by the Syracuse Housing Authority.)

## Percent of Subsidised Housing Units with OnVLP Eviction Cases, Syracuse, NY 2013-2016



**Percentage of Subsidised Housing Units with OnVLP Eviction Units**

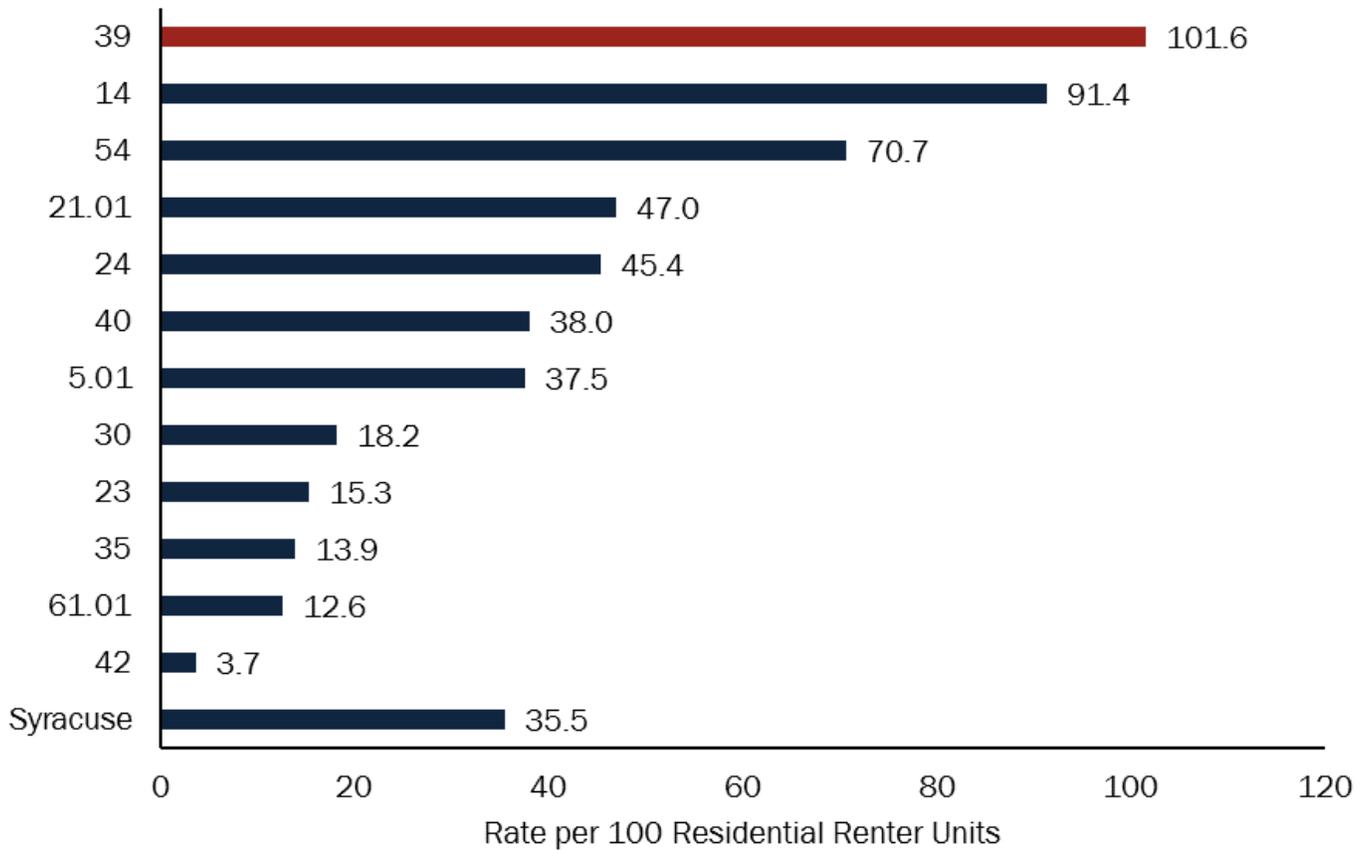
- OnVLP Eviction Cases
- ▭ Target Census Tracts
- 0% - 4%
- 5% - 11%
- 12% - 25%
- 26% - 60%
- 61% - 94%



Created By: Community Benchmarking Spring 2017  
 Source: ACS 2015, OnVLP MPD Data Set  
 Comment: Created on 4/10/17

44. Census Tract 39 had the highest rate of open interior code violations at 101.6 violations per 100 residential rental units.

### Rate of Open Interior Code Violations per 100 Residential Renter Units, City of Syracuse (2016)



**Source:** Merged IPS MPF 2016 Codes Data, Monthly Parcel Files: City of Syracuse Monthly file, 2017

**Comment:** The following complaint types were included as interior code violations: bed bugs, complaint request general, fire safety, infestation, over capacity/too many people, and property maintenance interior. The Merged IPS MPF 2016 Codes Data was used for the number of open interior code violations. The 2017 Monthly Parcel File data was used to find the total amount of residential units in each census tract. The data only included rental occupied and vacant residential units.

45. Finding: Endzone Properties Inc. had the highest number of IPS complaints(71) while landlord Mitchell Floyd had the highest rate of complaints (1.54 per 100 units). Out of the twenty landlords, one is a nonprofit organization.

IPS Complaints by Landlord for the City of Syracuse (2016)			
LandLord	IPS Complaints	Units	Rate
Endzone Properties Inc.*	71	73	0.97
Onondaga Hilltop Homes Inc.*	51	390	0.13
GSPDC*	50	918	0.05
Brian A. Murphy*	49	74	0.66
William D'Angelo*	46	111	0.41
A Clark and Daughters Inc.*	41	86	0.48
A&M Properties*	38	87	0.44
Briarcliff Estates LLC.	37	96	0.39
T1C1 LLC.	30	304	0.10
Owtram Holdings LLC.	24	36	0.67
JHS Realty XV LLC.	24	149	0.16
Residential Equity Holdings of NY LLC.*	21	138	0.15
Joda Properties LLC.	21	134	0.16
Mitchell Floyd	20	13	1.54
Castaldo Enterprises Inc.	16	57	0.28
Syracuse Quality Living Inc.	16	117	0.14
Sunnysky Property LLC.	15	543	0.03
Grant Village Apartments LLC.*	14	520	0.03
Mansop Enterprises Ltd.	14	16	0.88

**Source:** Merged IPS MPF 2016 Codes Data

**Comment:** IPS complaints represent calls made to the City of Syracuse Division of Code Enforcement regarding property condition. \* Indicates landlords that appear on both list.

46. The 20 landlords with the highest number of eviction cases represent 25.8% of all eviction cases defended by OnVLP

<b>VLP Eviction Cases by Landlord for the City of Syracuse (2013-16)</b>			
<b>Landlord</b>	<b>Eviction Cases</b>	<b>Units</b>	<b>Rate</b>
Residential Equity Holdings of NY LLC.*	142	138	1.0
Classic American LLC.	76	130	0.6
Endzone Properties Inc.*	68	73	0.9
GSPDC*	52	918	0.1
Onondaga Hilltop Homes Inc. *	48	390	0.1
Syracuse Model Neighborhood Corporation	45	187	0.2
Grant Village Apartments LLC.*	44	520	0.1
Revin Associates LLC.	40	245	0.2
Antimo J. Vigliotti	37	64	0.6
William D'Angelo*	31	111	0.3
Joda Properties LLC.	31	134	0.2
Brian A. Murphy*	30	21	1.4
Scott Sharp	28	10	2.8
A&M Properties*	26	87	0.3
A Clark and Daughters Inc.*	25	86	0.3
Joslyn Court Housing LLP.	24	786	0.0
Salina Square LLC.	24	350	0.1
Conifer Realty LLC.	22	246	0.1
Lisi Alessandro	21	76	0.3
Frank A. Canzano	21	62	0.3

**Source:** Eviction Case Files, Volunteer Lawyers Project, 2015

**Comment:** \* Indicates landlords that appear on both the highest IPS

47. Nearly 100% of residential units in Census Tracts 21.01 (99.6%) and 5.01 (99.5%) were built before 1980.

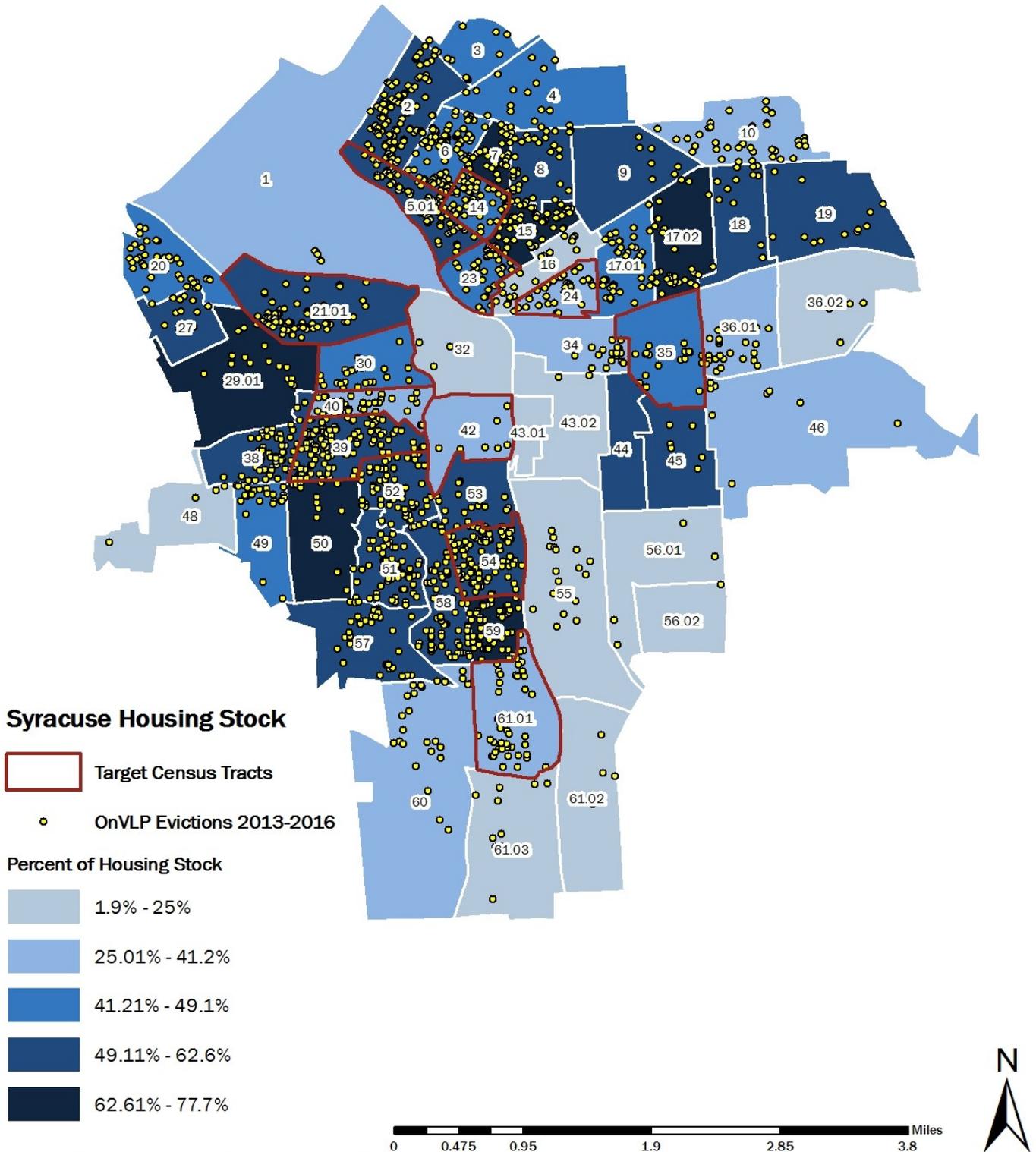
<b>Percent of Residential Units Built Before 1980 by Census Tract for the City of Syracuse (2017)</b>	
<b>Census Tract</b>	<b>Percent Built Before 1980</b>
Tract 21.01 (n=1,190)	99.6%
Tract 5.01 (n=824)	99.5%
Tract 61.01 (n=1,686)	97.6%
Tract 54 (n=741)	97.3%
Tract 30 (n=790)	94.4%
Tract 24 (n=815)	92.5%
Tract 35 (n=1,23)	90.7%
Tract 14 (n=1,121)	90.6%
Tract 39 (n=1,216)	89.1%
Tract 40 (n=554)	88.8%
Tract 42 (n=867)	87.4%
Tract 23 (n=918)	82.0%
<b>Syracuse (n=62,447)</b>	<b>93.4%</b>

**Source:** City of Syracuse Monthly File, 2017

**Comment:** Five of our target census tracts have a higher percentage of residential units built before 1940 than Syracuse overall (93.4%).

48. OnVLP eviction cases most often occur in census tracts with high percentages of properties built before 1939.

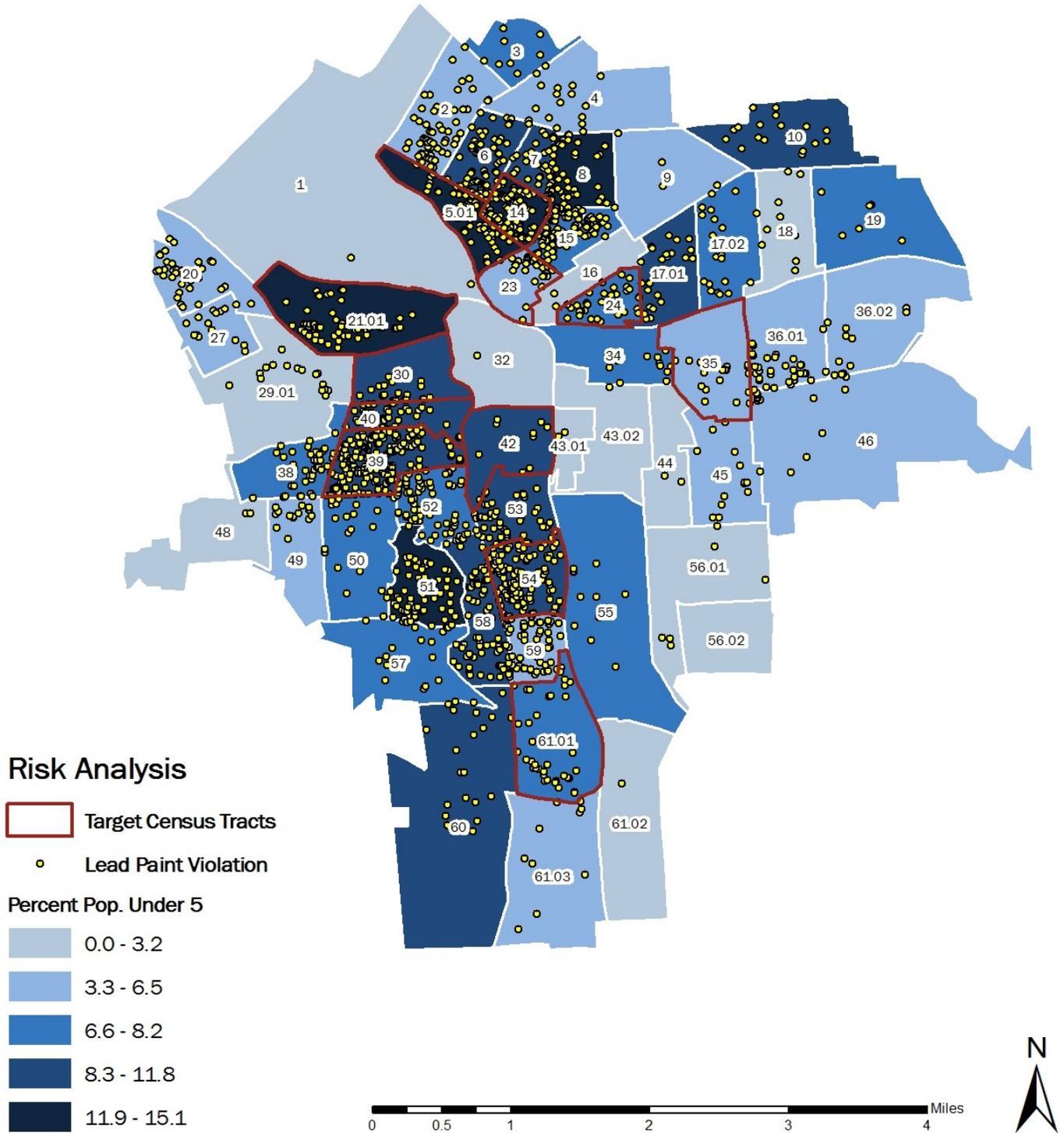
## Percent of Housing Units Built Before 1939, Syracuse, NY. 2013



Created By: Community Benchmarking Spring 2017  
Source: ACS 2015, Eviction Cases - MPD Data by Year  
Comment: Created on 4/13/17

49. Lead paint violations are concentrated in census tracts with high percentages of children under the age of five.

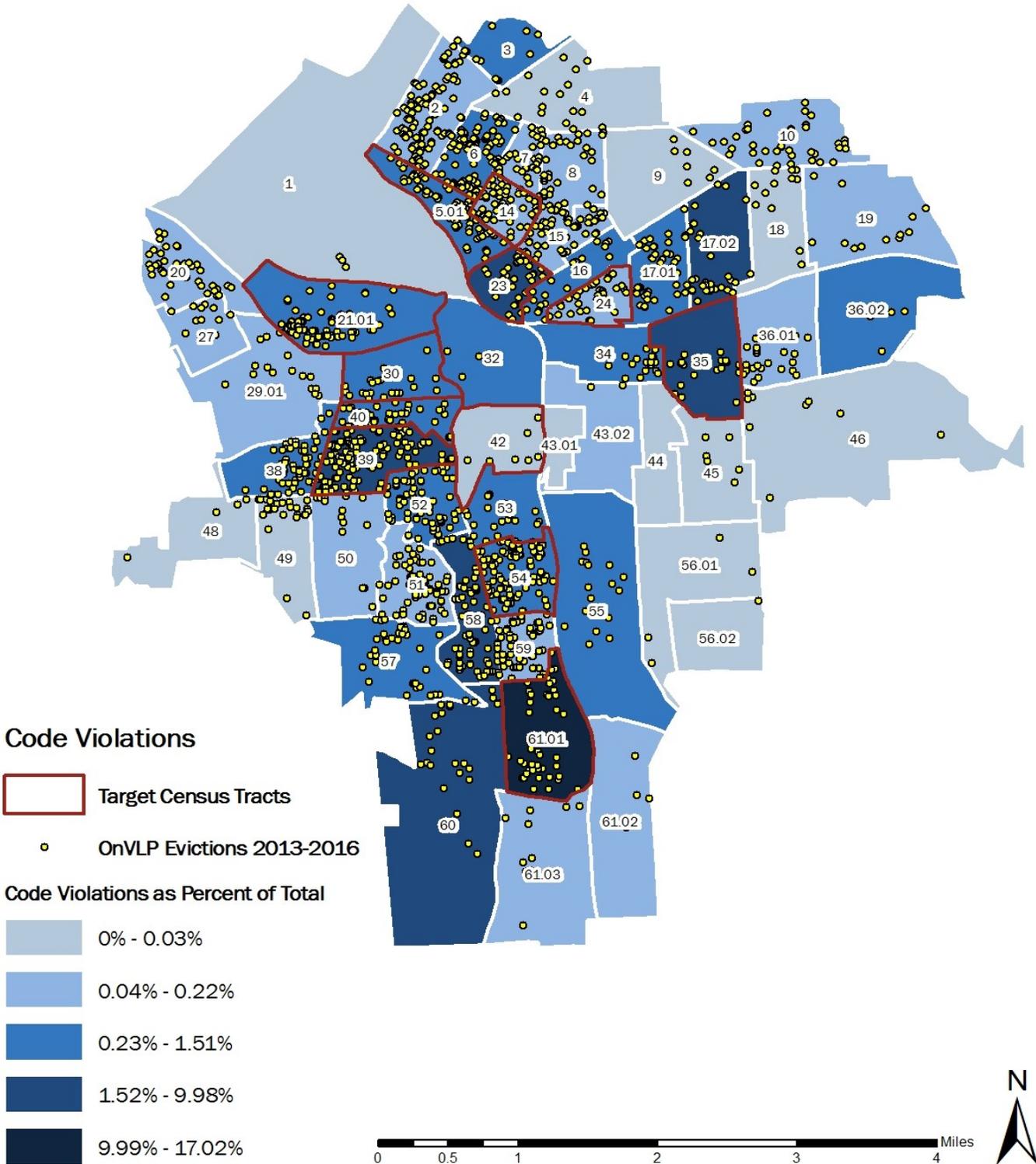
### Lead Paint Intensity and Percent of Population Under Five Years of Age in Syracuse, NY., from 2010 - 2015



Created By: Community Benchmarking Spring 2017  
 Source: Onondaga County Health  
 Department Lead Testing Data, 2016. American Community  
 Survey 5 Year Estimates (2010-2015)

50. Census Tracts 39 and 54 have a high percentage of code violations and a high number of OnVLP eviction cases.

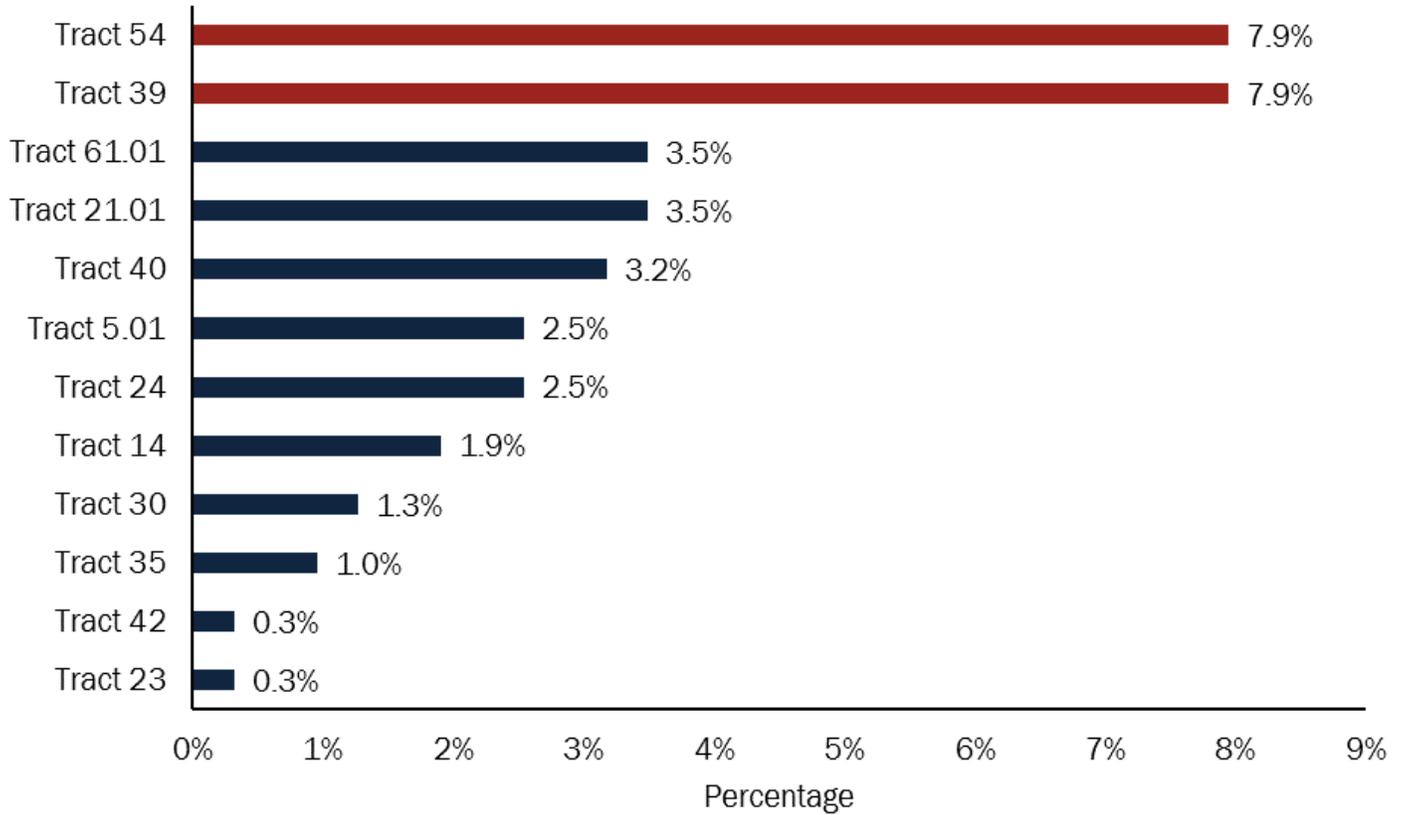
## Total Code Violations with OnVLP Evictions by Census Tract in Syracuse, NY., from 2013 - 2016



Created By: Community Benchmarking Spring 2017  
Source: ACS 2015, Eviction Cases - MPD Data by Year  
Comment: Created on 4/13/17

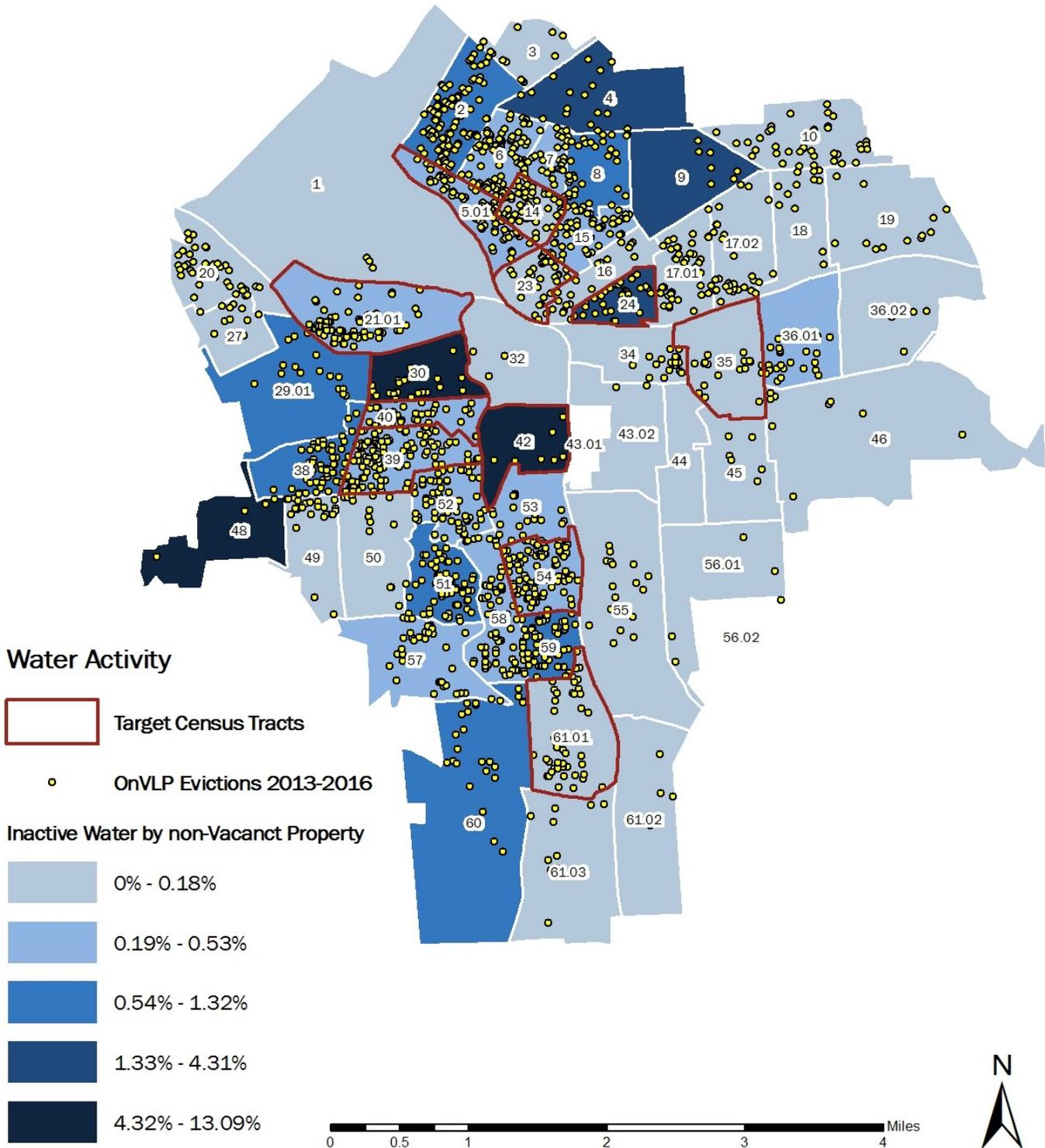
51. The 12 target tracts accounted for 35.9% of all cases of inactive water service in the city.

**Distribution of Units with Inactive Water Service by Census Tract for the City of Syracuse (2017)**  
n=315



52. Census tracts with high percentages of non-vacant properties with inactive water have relatively few OnVLP eviction cases.

## Percent Inactive Water by Census Tract with OnVLP Eviction Cases, Syracuse, NY, 2015



Created By: Community Benchmarking Spring 2017  
 Source: ACS 2015, Eviction Cases - MPD Data 2013  
 Comment: Created on 4/13/17

53. The twelve census tracts selected accounted for 38% of all eviction cases defended by the OnVLP between 2013-16.

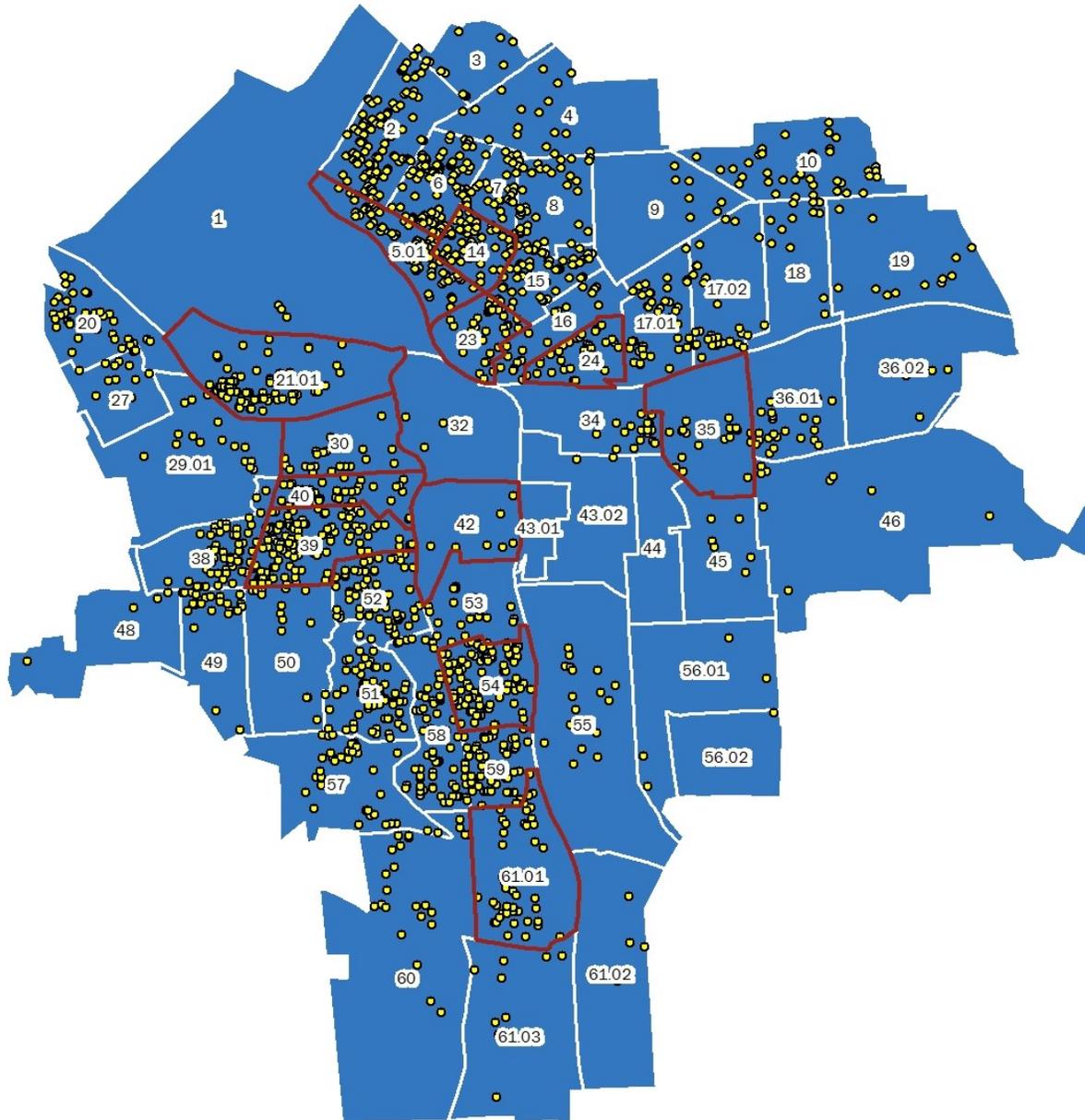
<b>Distribution of VLP Eviction Cases by Census Tract, City of Syracuse (2013-16) (n=2702)</b>				
<b>Census Tract</b>	<b>2014</b>	<b>2015</b>	<b>2016</b>	<b>Distribution of Cases</b>
Tract 61.01	65	72	66	7.5%
Tract 39	53	56	51	5.9%
Tract 54	43	42	47	4.9%
Tract 5.01	42	40	31	4.2%
Tract 21.01	30	48	20	3.6%
Tract 14	25	34	21	3.0%
Tract 35	18	19	15	1.9%
Tract 23	19	18	14	1.9%
Tract 24	9	29	12	1.9%
Tract 40	14	16	20	1.9%
Tract 30	23	12	1	1.3%
Tract 42	7	3	0	0.4%
<b>Total</b>	<b>348</b>	<b>389</b>	<b>298</b>	<b>38%</b>

**Source:** Eviction Case Files, Volunteer Lawyers Project, 2014-2016.

**Comments:** The n-values represent the total number of eviction cases defended by the Onondaga County Volunteer Lawyers Project for the years 2013, 2014, 2015 and 2016.

54. OnVLP eviction cases occur predominantly in the census tracts comprising the Washington Square, Near Northeast, Near Westside, and Brighton neighborhoods.

## Target Census Tracts with OnVLP Eviction Cases, Syracuse, NY 2017



 Target Census Tracts

 Evictions 2013-2016

 Census Tracts



Created By: Community Benchmarking Spring 2017  
Comment: Created on 4/17/17

55. Census Tract 40 experienced the highest percent increase (50%) in OnVLP eviction cases between 2014-2016.

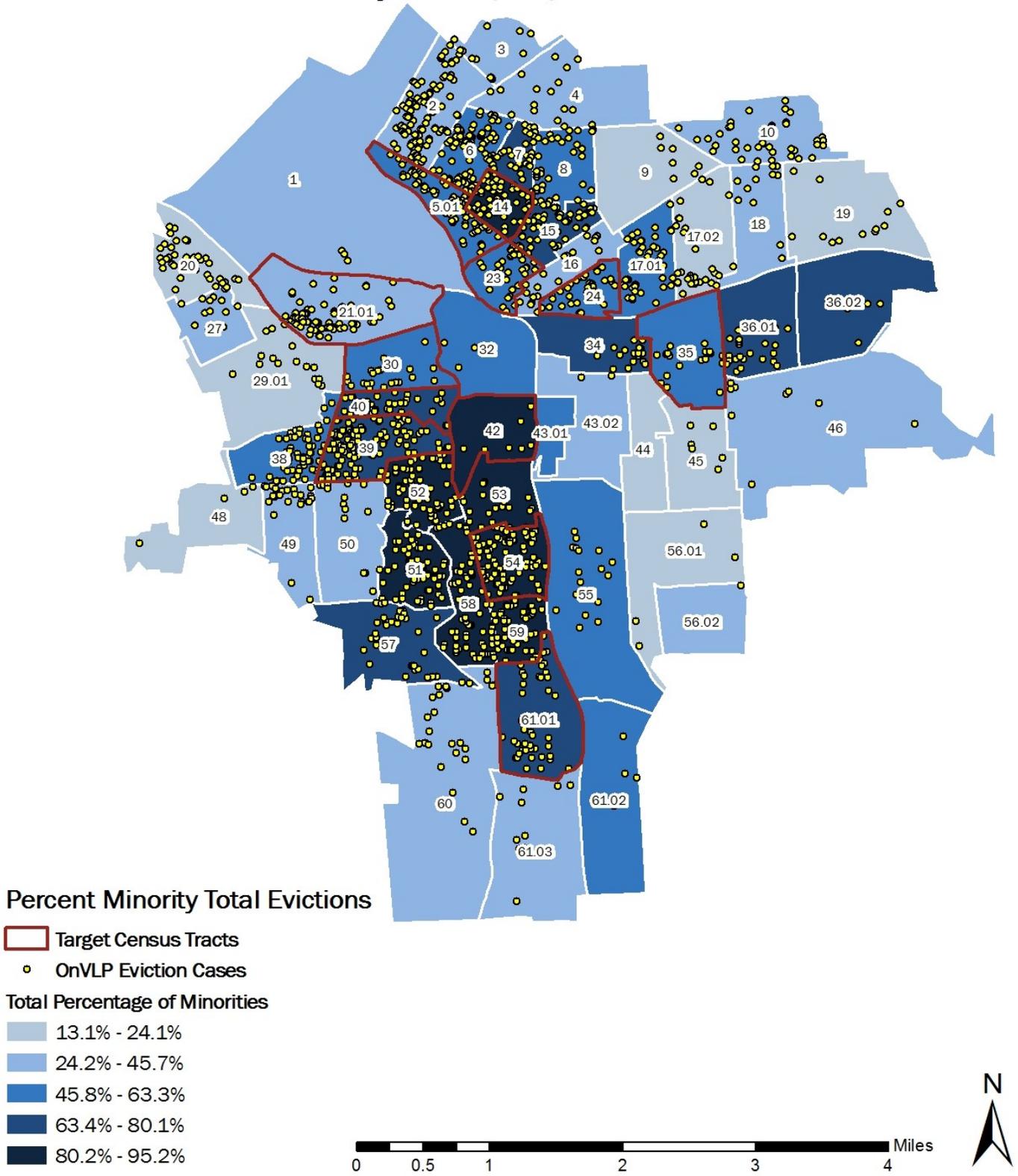
<b>Percent Change for Eviction Cases by Census Tract for the City of Syracuse (2014-2016)</b>				
<b>Census Tract</b>	<b>2014</b>	<b>2015</b>	<b>2016</b>	<b>Percent Change</b>
40	12	15	18	50
24	9	27	11	22.2
54	42	42	44	4.8
61.01	65	72	66	1.5
39	52	56	48	-7.7
14	24	33	20	-16.7
5.01	34	35	26	-23.5
23	17	17	13	-23.5
21.01	25	48	19	-24
35	18	13	12	-33.3
30	15	8	1	-93.3
42	6	2	0	-100
<b>Syracuse</b>	<b>842</b>	<b>946</b>	<b>767</b>	<b>-8.9</b>

**Source:** Eviction Case Files, Volunteer Lawyers Project, 2014-2016

**Comments:** Census Tract 42 had so few eviction cases because OnVLP does not defend cases brought by the Syracuse Housing Authority.

56. OnVLP eviction cases are concentrated in census tracts with high percentages of minority residents,.

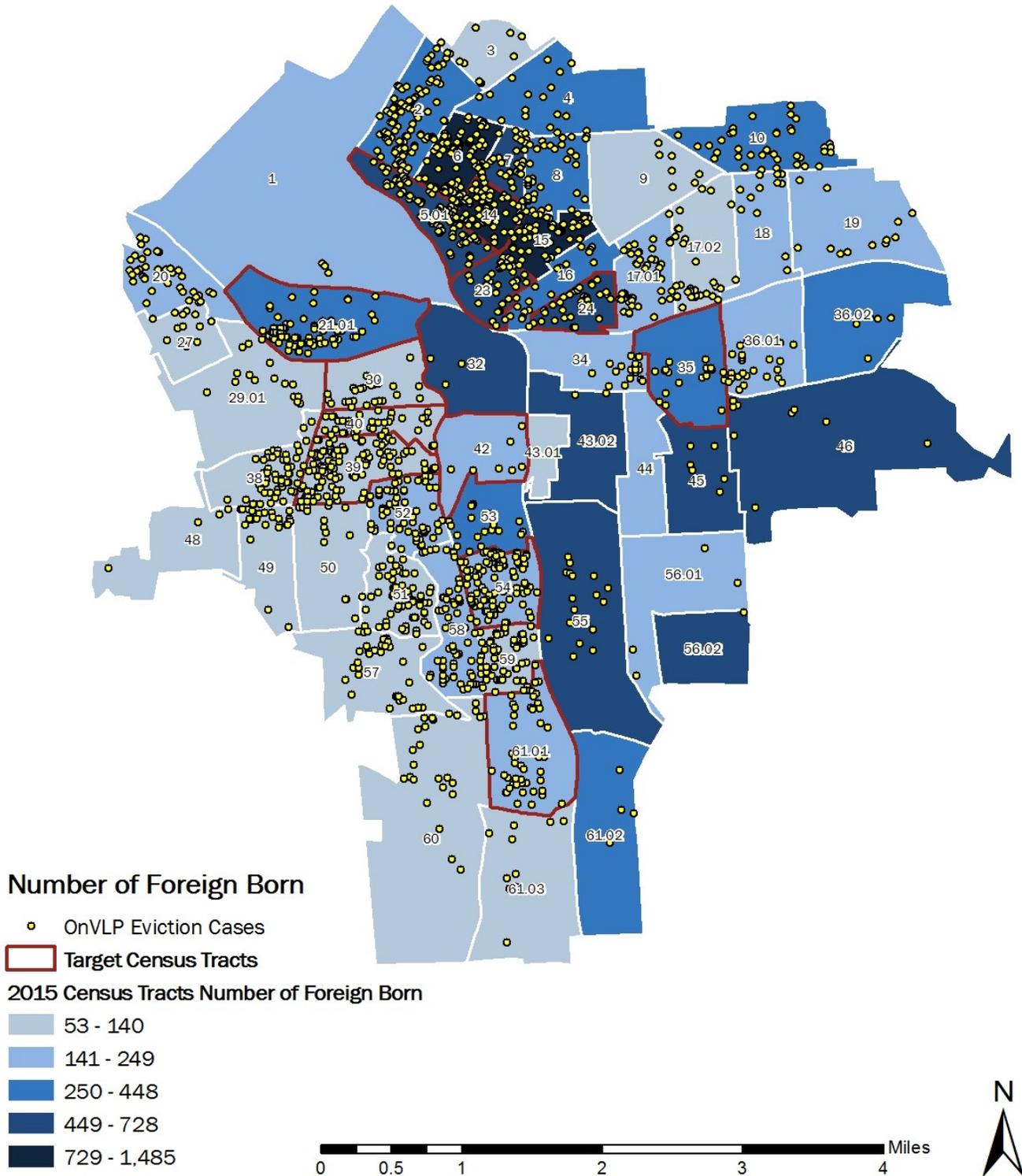
## Percentage of Minority Populations and OnVLP Eviction Cases, Syracuse, NY, 2015



Created By: Community Benchmarking Spring 2017  
Source: ACS 2015, B02001, Evictions Cases MPD  
Comment: Created on 4/10/17

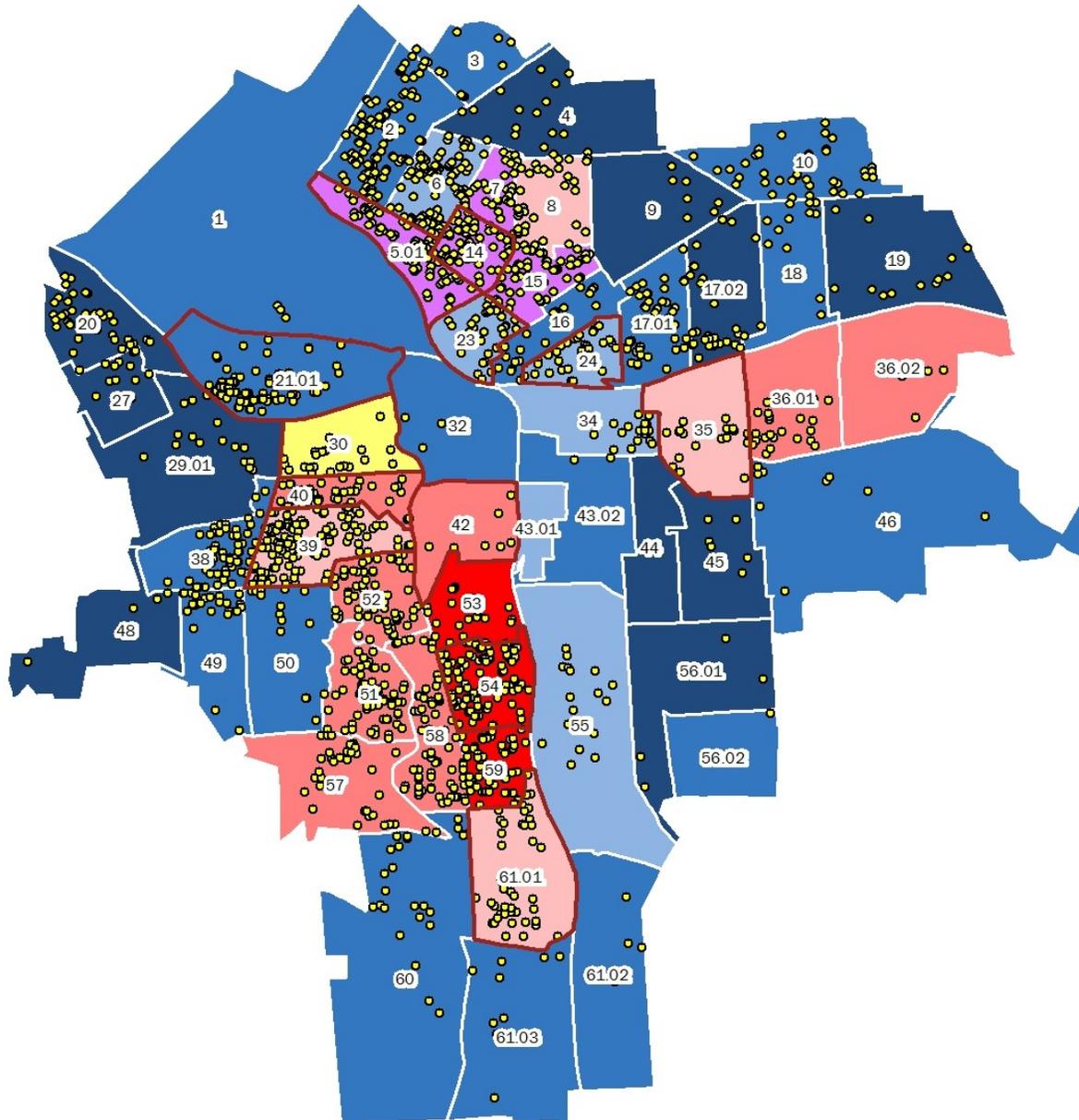
57. Census Tracts 14 and 5.01 have high percentages of foreign born residents and a high number of OnVLP evictions.

## Total Number of Foreign Born by Census Tract and OnVLP Eviction Cases

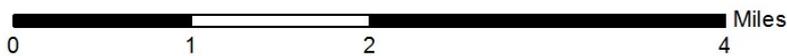


58. OnVLP eviction cases occur most often in census tracts where the predominant race is "black" or "other."

## Segregation by Predominant Race with OnVLP Eviction Cases, Syracuse, NY, 2015



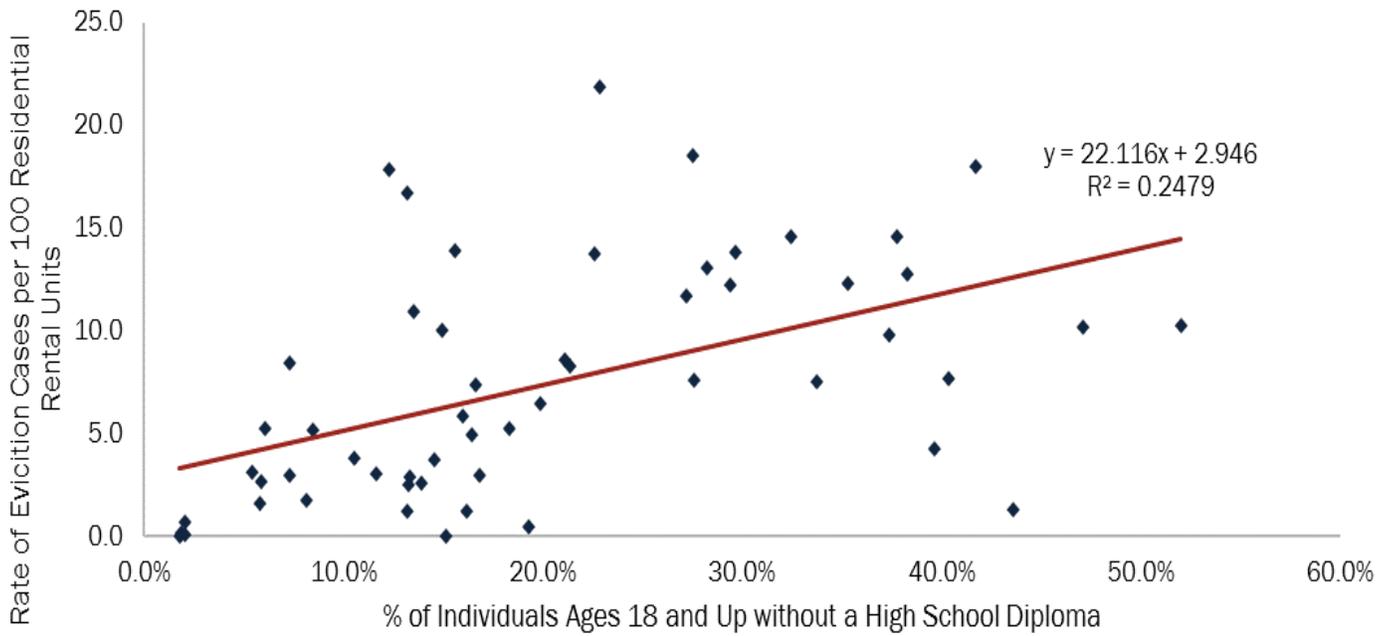
### Racial Distribution



Created By: Community Benchmarking Spring 2017  
 Source: ACS 2015, DP05  
 Comment: Created on 4/23/17

59. There is a significant correlation between educational attainment and eviction rates at the census tract level.

**Rate of Residential Eviction Cases from 2012-2017 per 100 Units and Percent of Individuals Ages 18 and Up without a High School Diploma in 2015 by Census Tract**



**Source:** VLP Eviction data; American Community Survey, 2015, Table S1501

**Comment:** The values on the y-axis represent the rate of OnVLP eviction

60. The seven out of town landlords accounted for 8.5% of all eviction

<b>Distribution of VLP Eviction Cases by Landlords Residing Outside the City of Syracuse (2013-16) (n-3246)</b>			
<b>Landord</b>	<b>Town/City</b>	<b>Number of Evictions</b>	<b>Percent of All Evictions</b>
Classic American LLC.	Lakewood, NJ	76	2.3%
Onondaga Hilltop Homes Inc.	New York, NY	48	1.5%
Grant Village Apartments LLC.	Albany, NY	44	1.4%
William D'Angelo	Liverpool, NY	31	1.0%
Scott Sharp	Liverpool, NY	28	0.9%
A&M Properties	Clay, NY	26	0.8%
Conifer Realty LLC.	Rochester, NY	22	0.7%
<b>Total</b>	<b>N/A</b>	<b>275</b>	<b>8.5%</b>

**Source:** Eviction Cases, Volunteer Lawyers Project, 2015

**Comment:** Out of town landlords were defined as landlords residing

61. Finding: The 13 landlords residing within the City of Syracuse accounted for 17.3% of all eviction cases defended by the OnVLP between 2013-16 .

<b>Distribution of VLP Eviction Cases by Landlords Residing within the City of Syracuse (2013-16) (n=3246)</b>		
<b>Landlord</b>	<b>Number of Eviction Cases</b>	<b>Percent of all Eviction Cases</b>
Residential Equity Holdings of NY LLC.	142	4.4%
Endzone Properties Inc.	68	2.1%
GSPDC	52	1.6%
Syracuse Model Neighborhood Corporation	45	1.4%
Revin Associates LLC.	40	1.2%
Antimo J. Vigliotti	37	1.1%
Joda Properties LLC.	31	1.0%
Brian A. Murphy	30	0.9%
A Clark and Daughters Inc.	25	0.8%
Joslyn Court Housing LLP.	24	0.7%
Salina Square LLC.	24	0.7%
Lisi Alessandro	21	0.6%
Frank A. Canzano	21	0.6%
<b>Total</b>	<b>560</b>	<b>17.3%</b>

Source: Eviction Cases, Volunteer Lawyers Project, 2015

# **POLICY RECCOMENDATIONS**



# Bridge Subsidy Demonstration Program

## *What is it?*

The Bridge Subsidy Demonstration Program (BSDP) is a transitional program that New York State could establish to increase the residential stability of low-income renters. The program provided up to three years of rental assistance to individuals who had a disability, were making less than \$15,000 a year, and were on a waitlist for long-term federal housing assistance such as Section 8 vouchers. Program participants were required to spend 30% of their adjusted monthly income on rent and utilities—the threshold for being cost-burdened. The program paid the difference between 30% of participants' income and the actual cost of rent directly to the landlord. BSDP was first funded by the Maryland state government in 2006. In total, they spent \$2.1 million successfully serving 75 participants. The program was temporary in its initial design and is currently no longer accepting new members. It will only continue to make payments until the final participant has transitioned to permanent housing (Reed, 2017).

This method of providing transitional housing to people on waitlists for Section 8 vouchers would help ensure that our most vulnerable populations do not fall deeper into poverty or develop or exacerbate other socioeconomic, health, and academic problems because of residential instability. BSDP could be implemented to house other vulnerable groups waiting for Section 8 vouchers. For example, families with children under the age of five constitute a population highly vulnerable to the negative effects of residential instability (Ziol-Guest and McKenna, 2014) and may therefore be included among the types of individuals and families who would qualify for a Syracuse version of BSDP.

## *How would we implement it?*

Local organizations and government officials should attempt to secure state resources for the implementation of BSDP at the local level. HOME funds from the Division for Housing and Community Renewal are one avenue to pursue. This policy is less costly than expanding the voucher program in general and could still ensure housing for the most vulnerable populations.

## *Why is it important?*

The United States Department of Housing and Urban Development recommends that tenants spend no more than 30% of income on rent and utilities or they become cost-burdened (Crowley, 2008). This program helps ensure vulnerable populations are not cost-burdened and evicted while they are waiting for Section 8. When persons become close to the top of

the waitlist, their housing history is evaluated and those with past evictions are less likely to receive a voucher or public housing. BSDP participants may thus be less likely to accrue a new eviction and be denied assistance. Transitional assistance is also better than forms of short-term assistance (such as loans for rental assistance when a tenant falls behind on payment) because it provides funding before tenants are on the edge of eviction (Reed, 2017).

# Tenant Landlord Connection

## *What is it?*

The Tenant Landlord Connection (TLC) program provides “education, information, and problem solving assistance” to help improve tenant-landlord relationships with the ultimate goal of decreasing eviction rates in local communities. The program is currently offered by a nonprofit organization called “One Roof,” which builds stable and thriving neighborhoods in Duluth, Minnesota by building and helping families maintain quality housing. The TLC program provides a number of services to landlords and tenants, including:

- ◆ “Ready-to-Rent” classes which help tenants recondition their rental histories
- ◆ Workshops for landlords delineating “fair housing laws, local government rules and requirements, business fundamentals and other common issues”
- ◆ Mediation for conflicts between landlords and tenants and disputes between neighbors (Tenant Landlord Connection, 2015)

In its first year of operation (July 2015-July 2016), TLC served 520 renters and 130 landlords. It ultimately prevented 21 eviction cases from being filed and de-escalated many more disputes that could have eventually led to eviction (Passi, 2016).

## *How would we implement it?*

TLC was created after a coalition of grassroots activists, elected local officials, and relevant city nonprofits united around the goal of improving landlord-tenant relationships to prevent evictions. The coalition selected One Roof as the nonprofit agency best able to provide this service (Gustafson, 2015). A similar coalition could be built in Syracuse to collectively express demand for such a program. The coalition could also select an existing local nonprofit—such as CNY Fair Housing or one of the city’s many neighborhood associations—to deliver the program. During its first year, the budget for TLC was \$140,000, which paid for 1.5 full-time positions. Its funding has come from a mixture of sources, including city tax revenue, the Duluth Housing Authority, community development block grants, and other various sources of local public and private funds (J. Corey, personal communication, April 23, 2017). Grants from local philanthropies such as the Central New York Community Foundation and financial assistance from the Syracuse Housing Authority could be sought to run a pilot version of the program in Syracuse.

### *Why is it important?*

Jeff Corey, Executive Director of One Roof, explains that evictions often occur “when communication [between landlords and tenants] goes down. Tenants get a scary letter from their landlord and just avoid talking to them” (personal communication, April 23, 2017). TLC lowers eviction rates by strengthening landlord-tenant relationships. Stronger relationships mean that tenants are more likely to approach landlords about eviction notices, and landlords are more likely to work out payment plans with tenants when they fall behind on rent. This program will likely help prevent female tenants from getting evicted in particular, as Desmond (2014a) notes that women are more likely to be evicted than men because they are less likely to confront their landlords after receiving eviction notices.

TLC also ensures that landlords and tenants are properly educated on their rights and responsibilities. This education not only helps prevent potential landlord-tenant disputes, but also gives tenants the cultural and legal knowledge to know when their landlord is illegally evicting them and can be turned in to the police.

# Improving McKinney-Vento Services

## *What is it?*

The McKinney-Vento Education for Homeless Children and Youth Program is a federal law providing funding to assist homeless students in public education institutions. States who accept this conditional funding give money to local school districts to aid students and families experiencing homelessness as a result of fire, inadequate living conditions, infestation, death or absence of a guardian, eviction, etc. The goal of the act is to limit the negative effects of homelessness and housing instability on youths' academic outcomes. Through this act, local school districts "provide services and activities to improve the identification of homeless children and youths (including preschool-aged homeless children) and enable such children and youths to enroll in, attend, and succeed in school, including, if appropriate, in preschool programs" (McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act, 2015, p.3). Participating school districts have one or more McKinney-Vento liaisons to coordinate services according to the law.

The Syracuse City School District's (SCSD) McKinney-Vento liaison Debra Montroy provides counseling services to referred students and families who have been evicted or otherwise displaced from their homes. She connects these families to agencies in the county that will help them secure temporary and permanent housing and other necessities. Ms. Montroy also coordinates provisions of backpacks and school supplies and access to tutoring services for the homeless youth she serves. An additional benefit of McKinney-Vento is that homeless children are given the choice between staying in their original school district even if they no longer live within district borders and changing districts to be closer near their temporary housing. Ms. Montroy's job is to ensure that homeless children switching schools get reenrolled quickly and easily at their new school (without requesting typically required documents such as medical records). Once a student finds housing, they continue to receive McKinney-Vento services for the year (D. Montroy, personal communication, April 10, 2017).

Currently, Ms. Montroy has been unable to track students after they receive services. Therefore, no data has been collected to indicate if these interventions actually buffer the negative consequences of instability. This will soon change, however: the SCSD McKinney-Vento program just received a grant from the New York State Department of Education to hire an additional staff person to track students who have been helped under the act. Their goal is to determine if McKinney-Vento services are actually improving the educational outcomes of service-receiving students (D. Montroy, personal communication, April 10, 2017).

The biggest challenge for Ms. Montroy is locating homeless youth who qualify for services. Student referrals are currently obtained from school counselors, social workers, community agencies, and from intermittent checks at homeless shelters. Yet if students do not end up at homeless shelters or choose to tell a school employee that they are homeless, they will likely go unidentified and unassisted. A presentation given by the SCSD's McKinney-Vento liaison proclaimed that "often schools are not aware that children have become homeless" and that "students hide their homelessness due to stigmas" (Gramet et al., n.d.).

With this information in mind, we propose two suggestions to strengthen existing school-based services assisting residentially unstable students.

First, to better identify residentially unstable and evicted youth who qualify for services, the SCSD should partner with the Onondaga County Department of Social Services (DSS). Social assistance recipients contact the DSS if they relocate so that they can continue receiving their assistance in the mail. The DSS could keep track of reported moves involving children and report the names of these children to the McKinney-Vento liaison.

Second, protocol for helping residentially unstable students must consider the long-term negative consequences of instability on youth's academic and social outcomes. Currently, McKinney-Vento services are provided in 12-month increments. Yet experiencing several moves during key developmental phases has effects that transcend the year following a move. As such, Syracuse schools, including pre-schools, should locate those students with histories of chronic residential mobility and give them additional academic and socio-emotional supports. An example of an additional support may be helping residentially mobile students sign up for a community- or school district-based mentoring program.

### *How would we implement it?*

The first suggestion—having the DSS relay information about student moves to the McKinney-Vento liaison—would require diligence on the part of DSS employees. They would need to check to see if the recipient changing their address has children, what their children's names are, and then keep this information in a spreadsheet that could be sent to the liaison twice or so a week.

Implementing the second suggestion—providing multiyear services to residentially unstable students—first involves locating who among the student body could be classified as "residentially unstable." This can be done by sending home a form in the beginning of each school year with other required paperwork asking parents how many times their family has been evicted and/or how many times their child has been involved in a move. A list of students whose parents report at least three

moves/evictions should be provided to counselors and teachers who could give additional support to students on the list. Schools could also make parents registering their child for kindergarten report how many times their child has experienced a residential move. Residential instability is defined here as three or more moves because this is what multiple studies documenting the negative relationship between youth residential instability and poor educational outcomes have defined as residentially unstable (see Ziol-Guest and McKenna, 2014).

### *Why is it important?*

Youth are too often victims of eviction and residential instability. These processes render children susceptible to poorer academic outcomes. For example, poor youth who move at least three times within their first five years of life exhibit greater attention problems, internalizing behavior (depressed, anxious, or withdrawn), and externalizing behaviors (aggressive, non-compliant, hyperactive) (Ziol-Guest and McKenna, 2014). This is why having parents fill out a form describing their history of residential mobility while enrolling their child in kindergarten would be helpful. In this case, kindergarten teachers could then identify which youth have been residentially unstable and work with them especially to combat internalizing and externalizing behaviors.

# Community Partnerships with Maxwell's X Lab for Behavioral Science

## *What is it?*

Psychology and behavioral science research may provide low-cost, big-impact tweaks in how eviction notices are presented and notices of late rental payment are communicated that could ultimately help lower Syracuse's eviction rate. A 2016 study by the Behavioral Insights Team in Chattanooga, Tennessee made slight alterations to the appearance of mailed letters demanding payment of late utilities bill. For example, they changed the letter's language slightly to make it sound more serious and included a blood-red stamp on its exterior that read "PAY NOW." These alterations were intended to make the letter seem more urgent. Study participants who received the mailed letter with these alterations paid their bills at a rate 4% higher than those who received the letter as it was normally sent (Sweeney and Phillips, 2016). These same sort of changes could be applied to eviction notices demanding tenants appear in court.

In 2014, a study from the government of New South Wales found that when tenants of public housing who had fallen into arrears of rent were sent customized text message reminders to pay, they were more likely to pay off their debt. Those tenants who received text message reminders paid off their debt almost 10% more often than those who did not receive the text message and relied only on mail. This saved thousands of tenants from potential water shutoffs (New South Whales government, 2012). When tenants ignore mail or do not have a computer in their home to check e-mails, text messages can be a non-intrusive yet still urgent reminder of a tenant's responsibilities for rent and utility payments, court appearances, or caseworker meetings. A similar text messaging system could be used by local landlord and nonprofits.

## *How would we implement it?*

Small changes like the ones delineated above could be tested and made in Syracuse if local housing non-profits and landlords establish partnerships with the X Lab in the Maxwell School of Citizenship and Public Affairs. The X lab is the behavioral and social science arm of the Center for Policy Research. Joseph Boskovski, Managing Director and Co-Founder of the X Lab, is available for strategic partnerships and consultation with community partners. He would develop experiments to test the efficacy of specific procedural tweaks in affecting positive behavioral changes among tenants and then would work with partnering organizations to implement them. This policy would be most effective if landlords with the highest

number of evictions and eviction rates developed X Lab partnerships. These partnerships would be mutually beneficial by lowering landlords' costs spent on eviction court proceedings. City governments and nonprofits have tight budgets in communities where evictions are most prevalent, so X Lab partnerships would be a cheap way to potentially lower Syracuse's eviction rate.

### *Why is it important?*

Small changes made to rental payment and eviction procedures could lower eviction rates in Syracuse. Eviction cases are brought to court when tenants fall behind on rental payments, so using tested applications of behavioral science to increase tenants' likelihood of making payments would be effective at preventing evictions. When tenants do not show up for their court hearing, they are automatically evicted. This has vast implications for eviction rates, as Desmond's (2012) six-week survey of eviction court proceedings found that most (71.5%) Milwaukee tenants involved in an eviction case did not show up on their scheduled court date. Sending text reminders, using different language and color schemes in eviction notices, and other such tweaks could help tenants make it to court and remain in their home.

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