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The Cost of Segregation || Part I: Racial Attitudes

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Steve Cutri / Associated Press

The Cleveland suburb of Shaker Heights has remained stable in its racial makeup, thanks in part to programs promoting integrated neighborhoods.

Detroit slow to find ways to integrate

Chicago, Cleveland build more stable neighborhoods

By Gordon Trowbridge / The Detroit News

For all the similarities between Metro Detroit and other highly segregated regions, there is much that sets Detroit apart -- and more than just a few points on a segregation index.

"Race in Detroit has predominated as in no other major northern city -- and it may still," said James Whitbeck, a state Court of Appeals judge who worked in federal integration efforts in the 1970s.

A look at the rest of the top five metro areas in The News' analysis of the nation's most segregated metro areas shows more differences:

CyberSurvey

Will segregation end on its own?

Do you think segregation in Metro Detroit will eventually go away on its own, without the intervention of government, business or other groups?

yes no

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No. 5: Cleveland

A revival has pumped new life into Cleveland's downtown, but residents -- especially whites -- still are leaving. The city's white population fell 21 percent in the 1990s.

Unlike Metro Detroit, the Cleveland area has a history of efforts to combat segregation. The suburbs of Shaker Heights and Cleveland Heights have remained relatively stable in their racial makeup, thanks in part to programs promoting integrated neighborhoods. "What these suburbs have said is that we must attract white residents while also being open to minorities," said W. Dennis Keating, a Cleveland State University professor.

No. 4: Chicago

Another massively segregated metropolis with a history of racial tension, Chicago also has much more history of efforts toward integration than Detroit.

Experts point to the Gautreaux Project, the outcome of a 1976 lawsuit by Chicago public housing residents. A portion of the city's minority public-housing population was given a chance to move to new facilities in the suburbs, resulting in better economic, educational and social circumstances for those residents. Also, the suburb of Oak Park has, like some of those in Cleveland, sought to build stable, integrated neighborhoods.

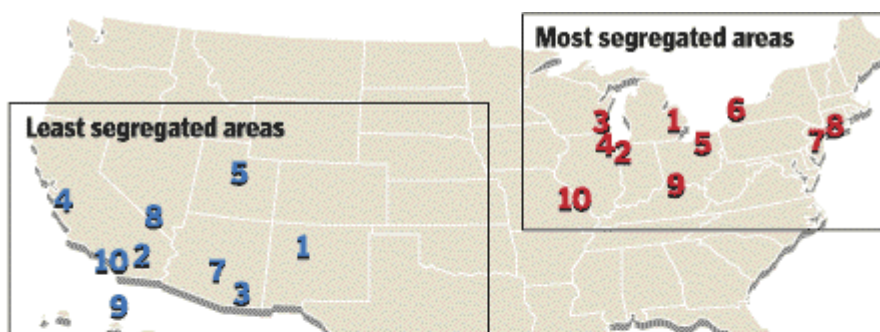
No. 3: Milwaukee

The area has seen even less movement of blacks to the suburbs than Detroit: Only 5 percent of the region's black population lives outside the central city. Still, the city itself remains about 50 percent white, a much higher percentage than Detroit and many other large northeastern cities, meaning whites are more likely to live in the same community, if not the same neighborhood as blacks.

No. 2: Gary, Ind.

Though much smaller than Detroit, Gary mirrors many of Metro Detroit's characteristics: A nearly all-black city, surrounded by white suburbs, is largely dependent on one industry (steel) for the bulk of its economic strength.

One area of optimism for Gary: Segregation fell in the 1990s faster than in other highly segregated areas. Segregation levels fell by about 6.5 percent in Gary, compared to about 2 percent in Detroit.





The 10 least segregated areas

RANK	METRO AREA	SEGREGATION SCORE	
		2000	1990
1	Albuquerque, N.M.	28.0	36.3
2	Orange County, Calif.	31.5	37.4
3	Tucson, Ariz.	35.1	39.7
4	San Jose, Calif.	35.4	39.7
5	Salt Lake City	37.0	50.4
6	McAllen, Texas	39.5	49.5
7	Phoenix	39.5	48.0
8	Las Vegas	39.6	51.1
9	Honolulu	40.4	44.3
10	Riverside, Calif.	42.0	41.6

The 10 most segregated areas

RANK	METRO AREA	SEGREGATION SCORE	
		2000	1990
1	Detroit	85.2	87.2
2	Gary, Ind.	82.8	88.5
3	Milwaukee	82.4	82.7
4	Chicago	79.2	82.9
5	Cleveland	77.6	82.4
6	Buffalo	77.4	80.0
7	Newark, N.J.	77.1	80.4
8	New York	74.9	76.0
9	Cincinnati	74.5	76.7
10	St Louis	73.9	77.3

Areas with large black populations

Researchers say metro regions where a large percentage of the population is black are more likely to be heavily segregated. But of the areas where blacks comprise 20 percent of the population or more, Metro Detroit's segregation score is the highest by eight points, and several have scores significantly lower than Detroit's:

METRO AREAS (OVERALL RANK)	SEGREGATION	
	PCT. BLACK	SCORE
Detroit (1)	22.9%	85.2
Newark, N.J. (7)	22.3	77.1
New York (8)	24.6	74.9
Philadelphia, Pa.-N.J. (13)	20.1	71.9
Miami, Fla. (17)	20.3	71.1
Birmingham, Ala. (21)	30.3	70.1
New Orleans (24)	37.6	68.4
Baltimore (26)	27.4	67.9
Memphis, Tenn.-Ark. (27)	43.4	67.7
Baton Rouge, La. (35)	32.2	64.9
Atlanta (37)	29.0	63.7
Mobile, Ala. (45)	27.4	62.2
Washington, D.C.-Va.-Md.-W. Va. (46)	26.1	62.2
Little Rock, Ark. (50)	21.9	60.6
Fort Lauderdale, Fla. (54)	20.6	59.4

Areas with slow growth

All of the most-segregated regions in the country had slow population growth, but slow growth doesn't automatically mean high segregation. Of the regions with population growth of less than 5 percent in the 1990s, segregation scores were sometimes significantly lower than Detroit's:

METRO AREA (OVERALL RANK)	POPULATION SEGREGATION	
	CHANGE	SCORE
Detroit (1)	4.0%	85.2
Gary, Ind. (2)	4.4	82.8
Milwaukee (3)	4.8	82.4
Cleveland (5)	2.2	77.6
Buffalo (6)	-1.6	77.4
Cincinnati, Ohio-Ky.-Ind. (9)	1.6	74.5
Youngstown, Ohio (11)	-1.0	72.8
Philadelphia, Pa.-N.J. (13)	3.6	71.9
Dayton, Ohio (14)	-0.2	71.5
Syracuse, N.Y. (18)	-1.4	70.5
Toledo, Ohio (20)	0.7	70.1
Pittsburgh (23)	-1.5	68.6
New Orleans (24)	4.1	68.4
New Haven, Conn. (28)	2.0	67.3
Rochester, N.Y. (29)	3.4	66.8

Note: Segregation ranks listed are from Detroit News ranking of the 100 largest metropolitan areas.

Source: Detroit News analysis of U.S. Census Bureau data

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