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**POPULATION AND  
DEMOGRAPHIC  
SUMMARY**

## 2. POPULATION AND DEMOGRAPHIC SUMMARY

### Overview

This chapter summarizes and illustrates population and demographic data for the MAPA region. Topics of focus include population, age, race, household and housing characteristics, and educational attainment. Supplemental data and demographic information for the MAPA region is located in Appendix A.

### Population

The MAPA region comprises six counties that represent the eight-county Omaha-Council Bluffs, NE-IA Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA). The Omaha-Council Bluffs region is an important economic center in the Midwest, and the largest MSA in Nebraska and Iowa with an estimated current population of 949,442, which places it 57th among the U.S.'s metropolitan regions. The MAPA region is home to 913,815 of the MSA's residents according to the U.S. Census (Table 2.1). Figure 2.1 illustrates the population distribution of the region by county. Since the 2010 decennial census, the MAPA region's population is estimated to have grown by 109,414 additional residents.



**Table 2.1:** Historic Population of the MAPA Region

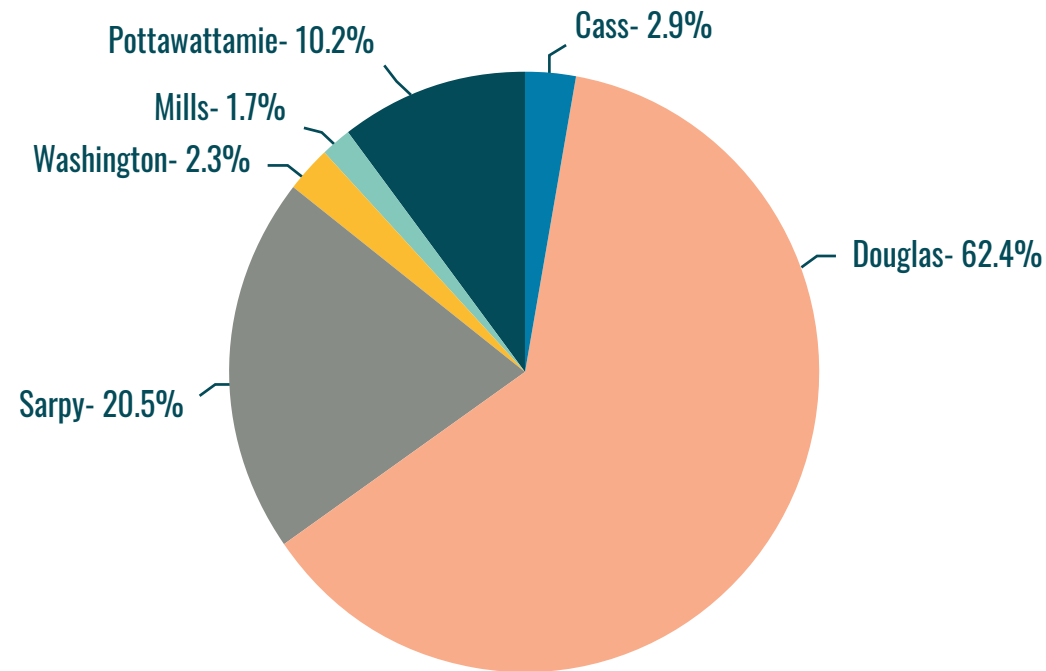
JURISDICTION	1970	1980	1990	2000	2010	2019	% CHANGE (2010-2019)
<b>Cass County</b>	18,076	20,297	21,318	24,334	25,241	26,248	4.0%
<b>Douglas County</b>	389,455	397,038	416,444	463,585	517,110	571,327	10.5%
<b>Sarpy County</b>	66,200	86,015	102,583	122,595	158,840	187,196	17.9%
<b>Washington County</b>	13,310	15,508	16,607	18,780	20,234	20,729	2.4%
<b>Mills County</b>	11,832	13,406	13,202	14,547	15,059	15,109	0.3%
<b>Pottawattamie County</b>	86,991	86,561	82,628	87,803	93,158	93,206	0.1%
<b>MAPA Region Total</b>	585,864	618,825	652,782	731,644	804,401	913,815	13.6%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2019 American Community Survey (ACS) 1-Year Estimates





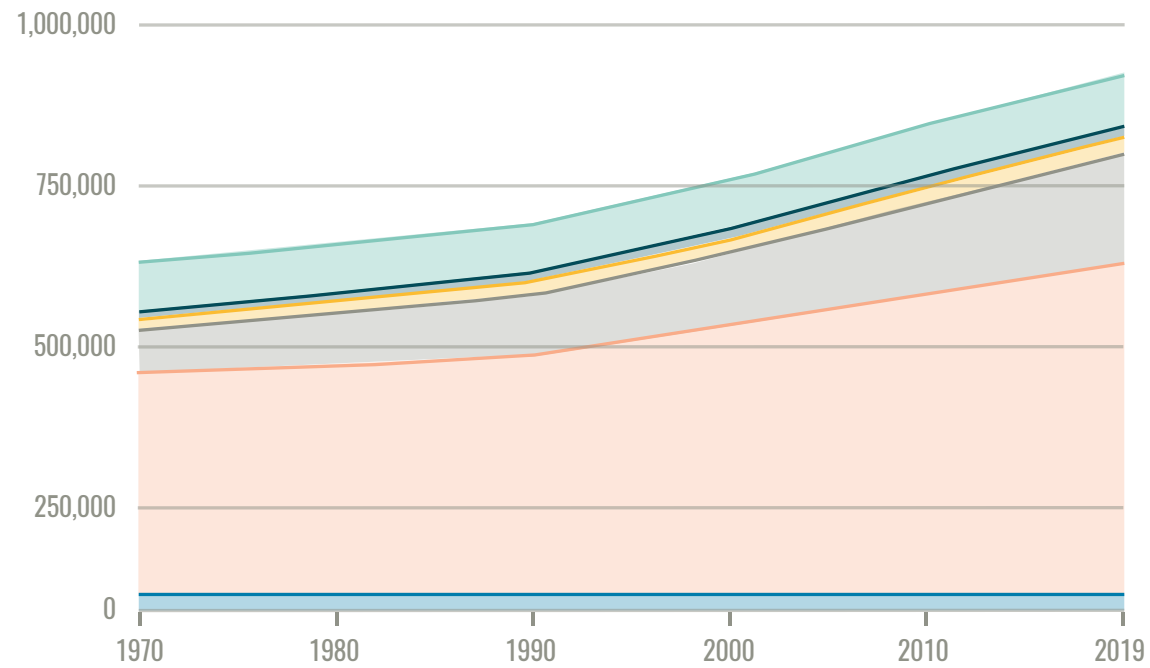
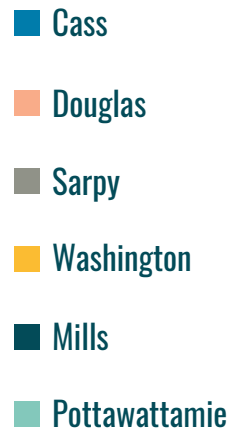
**Figure 2.1:** Population Distribution of the MAPA Region



The six-county region's total population increased by 55 percent from 1970 when the population was 585,864. This population growth has not been shared equally among all counties. The population of Sarpy County has increased rapidly since 1970, averaging more than 20 percent growth each decade (and nearly 18% since 2010), while Douglas County's population has tracked closely with the MAPA region, ranging between 5 and 12 percent growth per

decade. In contrast, the counties surrounding the core urban area have grown at a much slower rate. Pottawattamie County saw a population decline during the 1970s and 1980s but rebounded back to consistent growth from the 1990s through the 2010 census. Whereas Figure 2.2 shows the growth trend by decade for each of the six MAPA counties as a share of the region's overall growth.

**Figure 2.2:** Population Growth of the MAPA Region



The population declines and slowing growth that occurred in the 1970s and 1980s were due largely to shifts in domestic migration. Table 2.2 shows the trends in net migration from 1950 to 2010. Following a half century of industrial growth driven by industries such as the stockyards and railroads, many residents left the region for other areas of the country, including the “Sun Belt.” Since 1990,

the overall trend of net migration has reversed largely. Between 2000 and 2010, more than \_\_\_ new residents migrated to the MAPA region – supporting a significant portion of the region’s population growth. Combined with a high rate of natural increase (more \_\_\_ net births between 2000 and 2010), the region’s total population has continued to grow.

**Table 2.2:** Total Net Migration by Decade, 1950 to 2010

<b>JURISDICTION</b>	<b>1950s</b>	<b>1960s</b>	<b>1970s</b>	<b>1980s</b>	<b>1990s</b>	<b>2000s</b>
<b>Cass County</b>	-577	-1,551	899	-558	-1,845	-95
<b>Douglas County</b>	7,844	-8,756	-33,721	-14,883	6,020	8,116
<b>Sarpy County</b>	10,378	24,183	7,024	2,516	3,112	18,553
<b>Washington County</b>	-672	466	1,460	377	1,706	870
<b>Mills County</b>	-1,950	-2,460	Data not available	270	1,690	1,167
<b>Pottawattamie County</b>	1,680	-6,787	-8,203	-9,274	-248	1,887
<b>MAPA Region Total</b>	16,703	5,095	-32,541	-21,552	10,435	30,498

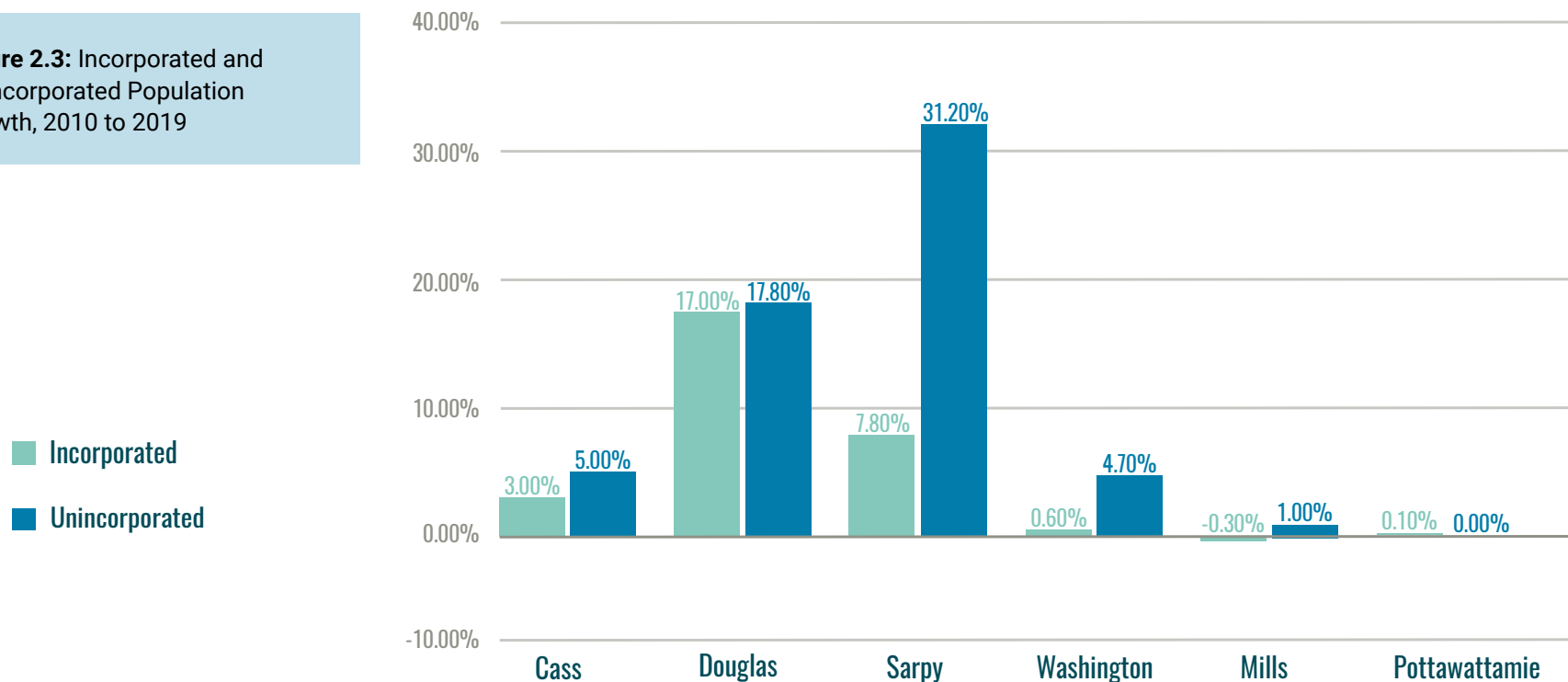
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, County-to-County Migration Flows



Population change within the MAPA region has increased in suburban and exurban areas, while population decline and economic disinvestment have occurred in many urban neighborhoods during the last 40 years. Smaller rural communities located outside of the urbanized area have also experienced population decline. Between 2010 and 2019, nine communities outside of the MPO planning area (Douglas, Sarpy, and western Pottawattamie counties) saw declines in residents. In that same period, four of six MAPA coun-

ties saw higher growth in unincorporated areas vs incorporated cities (Figure 2.3). Sarpy County experienced an unincorporated growth rate of 31 percent compared to 7 percent among its urban communities. These trends indicate that there is continued and strong demand among a segment of the population to reside in less densely populated locales outside or on the fringes of established communities.

**Figure 2.3: Incorporated and Unincorporated Population Growth, 2010 to 2019**



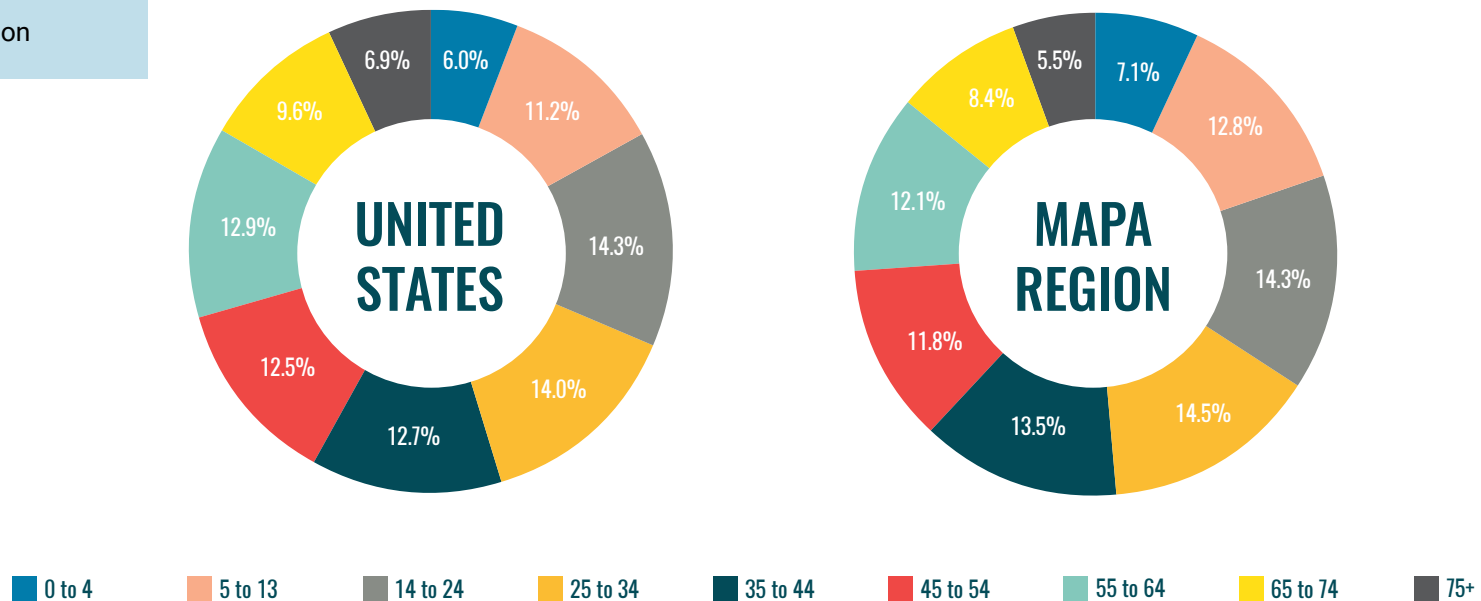
## Age

The median age of U.S. residents is 38 based on 2019 ACS one-year data. Douglas and Sarpy Counties are the youngest counties in the region by median age, which is 35 for both jurisdictions. The remaining counties in the MAPA region have a median age that ranges between 40 and 43.

The age cohorts (Figure 2.4) of 14 to 24 and 25 to 34 represent 28 percent of the MAPA region's total population. Individuals 13 and younger constitute 19 percent of the regional population, two points

higher than the same age group within the U.S. The MAPA region's younger population can be attributed partially to individuals deciding to return home after time away in college or elsewhere, whether for financial reasons, lack of job opportunities, or other considerations. There is also anecdotal evidence that suggests younger families are returning to the region due to a stable job market, low cost of living, and perceived quality of life features such as schools, public safety, etc.

**Figure 2.4: Age Distribution**



The region's population aged 65 and older is 127,639, an increase of almost 41 percent from 2010. The large baby-boomer generation has now entered largely into retirement years, resulting in older persons constituting a greater share of the total population, almost 19 percent of the MAPA region based on 2019 data. By 2050, persons older than 65 years of age will comprise at least 16 percent of the region's population. As a result, a smaller percentage of the total future population will be in the workforce, even though all age ranges are expected to increase in population by 2050.

It has been observed that baby-boomers' social and economic behaviors have departed from previous generations, maintaining a greater level of activity into their later years and often continuing to work, at least on a part-time basis. It is likely these changing behaviors and preferences will impact how communities accommodate the aging demographic in the coming years with regards to housing, service delivery, and transportation among other considerations.

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## Race

The population of the MAPA region is predominantly white with concentrations of minorities located in higher density urban areas. The MAPA region has a non-white population of 16 percent, although 79 percent of non-whites reside in Douglas County, mainly in Omaha. The region as a whole has a Hispanic population of 11

percent, which is up from 9 percent in 2010. All MAPA counties have seen growth in their Hispanic populations since the last decennial census. Figure 2.5 illustrates the MAPA region's racial composition compared to the U.S.



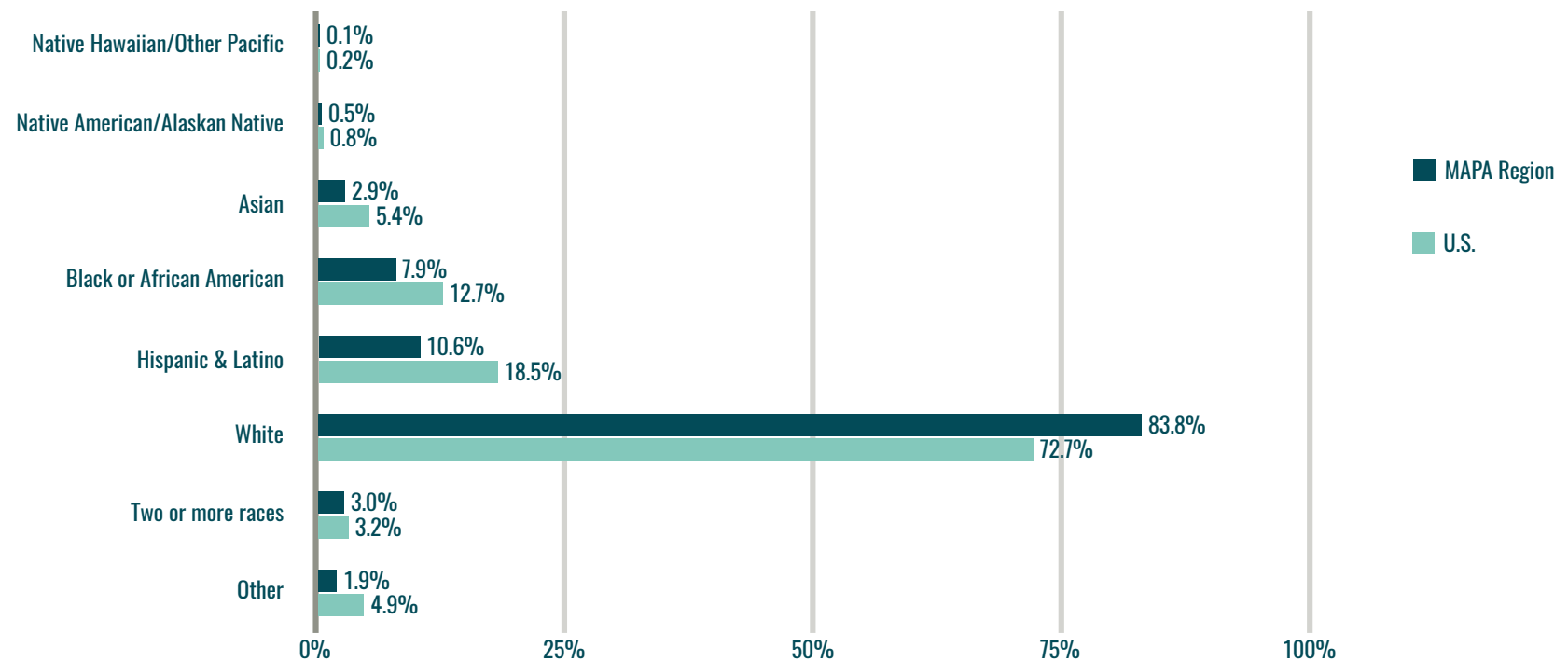


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**Figure 2.5: Racial Composition**



## Households and Housing

A household is defined as including all people who occupy a housing unit as their usual place of residence. A family household is defined as a householder living with one or more people related by birth, marriage, or adoption. A non-family household is defined

as a householder living alone or with nonrelatives only (e.g. foster children, domestic partners). Table 2.3 shows total households, households by type, and average household and family size for each MAPA county, the total region, and the U.S.

**Table 2.3:** Household Characteristics

JURISDICTION	Total Households	% Family Households	% Non-Family Households	Average Household Size	Average Family Size
Cass	10,005	70.7%	29.3%	2.54	3.02
Douglas	215,787	61.9%	38.1%	2.51	3.19
Sarpy	65,045	72.8%	27.2%	2.72	3.20
Washington	8,125	71.4%	28.6%	2.45	2.90
Mills	5,587	70.5%	29.5%	2.58	3.11
Pottawattamie	36,881	65.4%	34.6%	2.47	3.04
MAPA Region	341,430	65.0%	35.0%	2.55	3.15
U.S.	121,520,180	65.2%	34.8%	2.63	3.23

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2018 ACS 5-Year Estimates



Sarpy County has the highest proportion of family households and the largest average household and family size of counties in the MAPA region. By contrast, Douglas County has the lowest proportion of family households. Both average household and family size of the MAPA region are less than the U.S. averages slightly. It is expected that both household and family size will decline over time, yet it is likely there will be continued growth in total number of

households, especially in Douglas and Sarpy Counties. This probably indicates that future household growth will consist of more householders and families with fewer children and dependents. The following table shows that the rates of households in the MAPA region with related and non-related persons under 18 years of age have been in decline since 2010, similar to the U.S.

**Table 2.4:** Percent of Households with People Under 18 Years of Age, 2010 and 2018

JURISDICTION	Total Households (Includes Related & Non-Related Children)		Households w/ Own (Related) Children	
	2010	2018	2010	2018
Cass	33.5%	33.8%	31.9%	30.8%
Douglas	33.6%	33.0%	31.2%	30.6%
Sarpy	40.8%	40.2%	38.5%	37.2%
Washington	31.7%	30.1%	30.3%	28.3%
Mills	32.3%	31.2%	30.7%	28.3%
Pottawattamie	32.4%	29.9%	29.3%	26.9%
U.S.	33.9%	31.4%	30.6%	27.9%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

Single-family residential homes are the dominant housing type in the MAPA region. The early concentration of housing in the MAPA region's urbanized area and incorporated cities has given way over time to lower-density, decentralized development. Land consumption for new development in the region is outpacing population

growth. As the region's largest county by population, Douglas County has been the center of housing activity in the MAPA region historically; however, Sarpy County has gradually accounted for a greater share of new housing over time. Table 2.5 and the proceeding graphic present housing growth trends from 1950 to present.

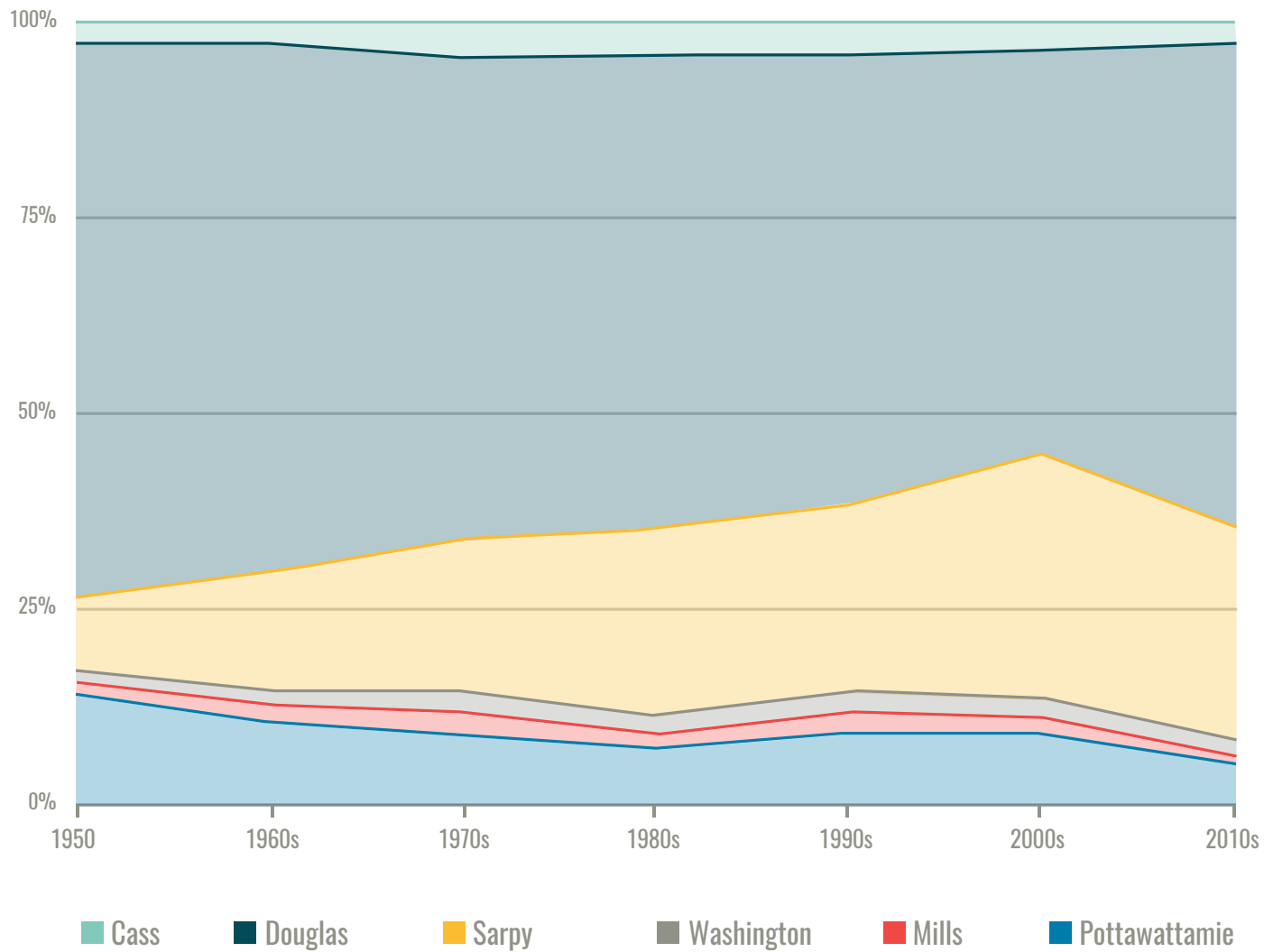
**Table 2.5: Housing Growth, 1950 to Present**

Decade	Beginning Inventory	Ending Inventory	Net Growth	Growth Rate
1950s	74,517	107,560	33,043	44.3%
1960s	107,560	152,238	44,678	41.5%
1970s	152,238	206,289	54,051	35.5%
1980s	206,289	243,390	37,101	18.0%
1990s	243,390	290,859	47,469	19.5%
2000s	290,859	345,785	54,926	18.9%
2010s	345,785	366,137	20,352	5.9%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2018 ACS 5-Year Estimates



**Figure 2.6:** Share of Housing Growth by County, 1950 to Present



## Education

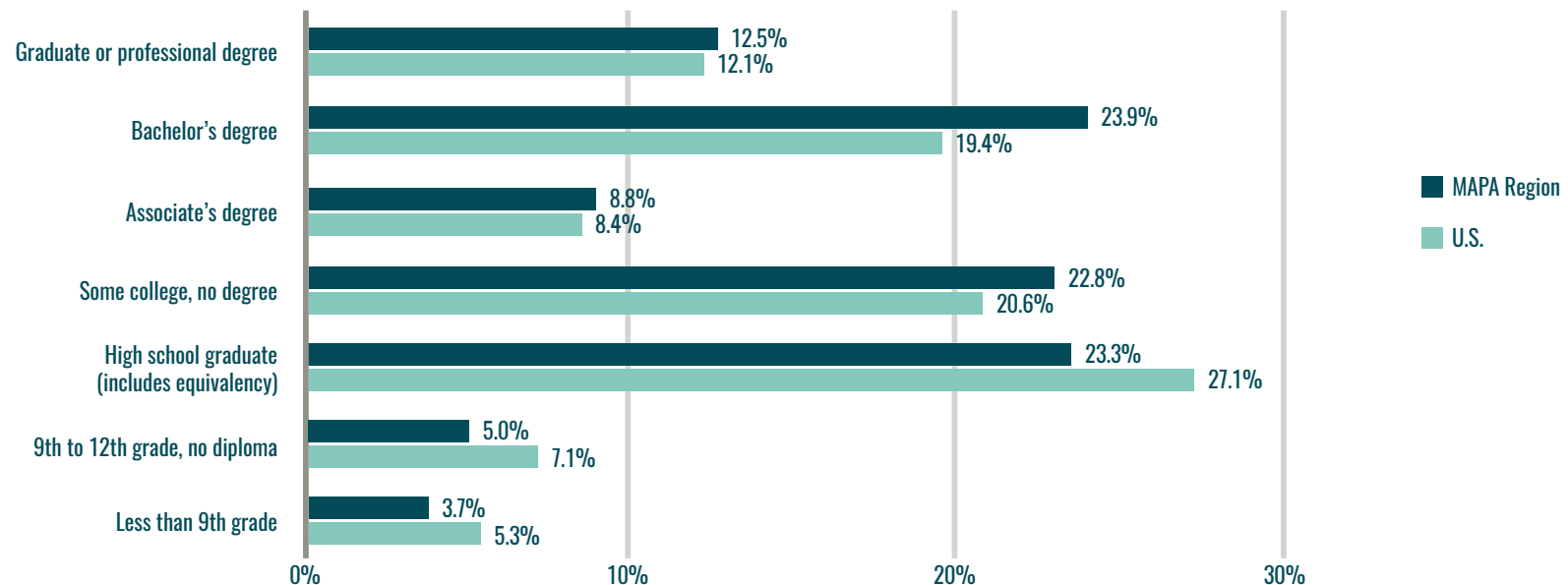
An educated workforce is significant to the prosperity of a region's economy, and an important aspect of regional competitiveness. Employers require access to a reliable and skilled workforce. For local governments, a well-trained and educated workforce is vital in attracting potential employers that may be looking for communities in which to invest.

There are 29 public school districts in the MAPA region, both urban and rural. The MAPA region is also home to a number of parochial schools and post-secondary institutions that include Creighton University, the University of Nebraska Omaha, and the University of Ne-

braska Medical Center, the latter two being part of the University of Nebraska system. A full listing of the MAPA region's school districts and post-secondary institutions is located in **Appendix A**.

Educational attainment in the MAPA region is comparable generally to the U.S. For the population 25 years of age and older, 91 percent have attained at least a high school education or equivalent, higher than the national rate of 87 percent. The MAPA region's proportion of the population with at least a bachelor's degree, 36 percent, is also higher than the national rate of 31 percent. Figure 2.7 illustrates educational attainment in the MAPA compared to the U.S.

**Figure 2.7: Educational Attainment**

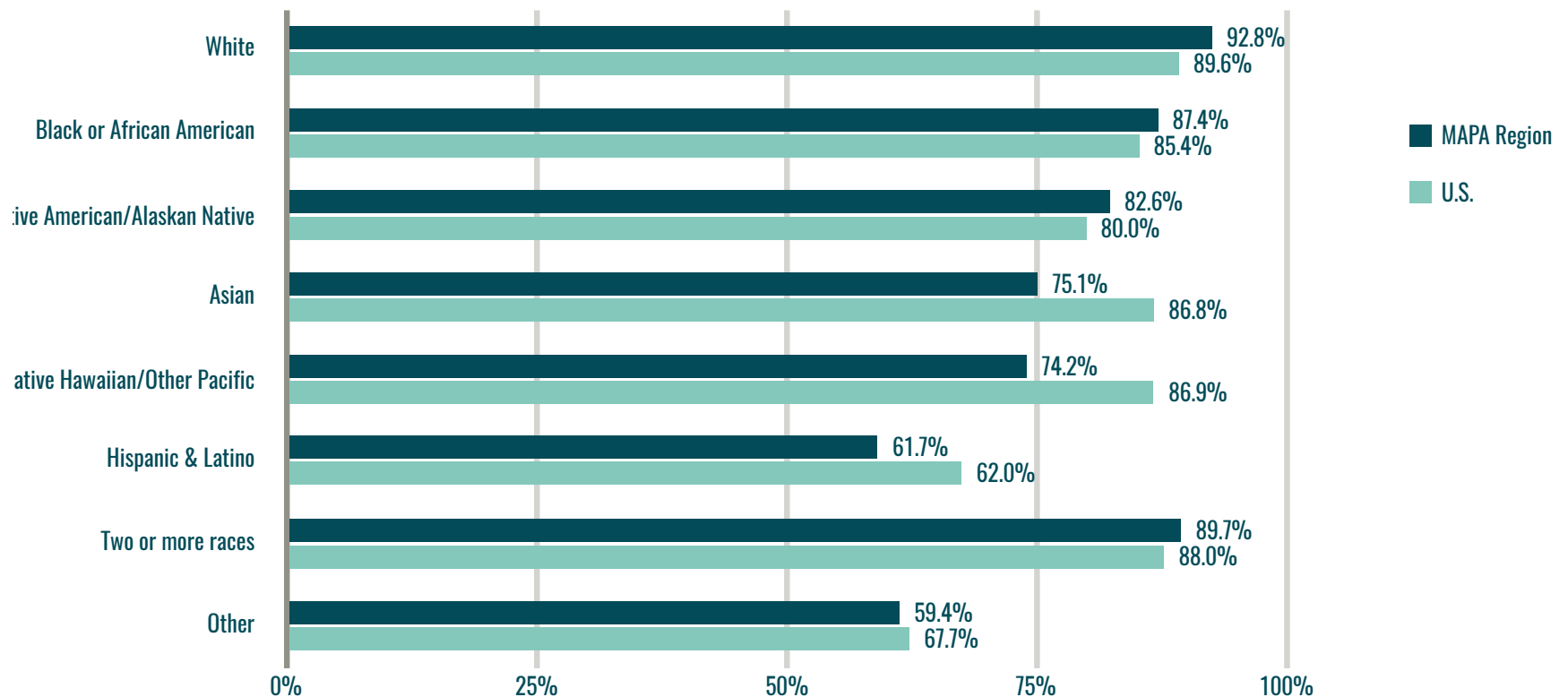




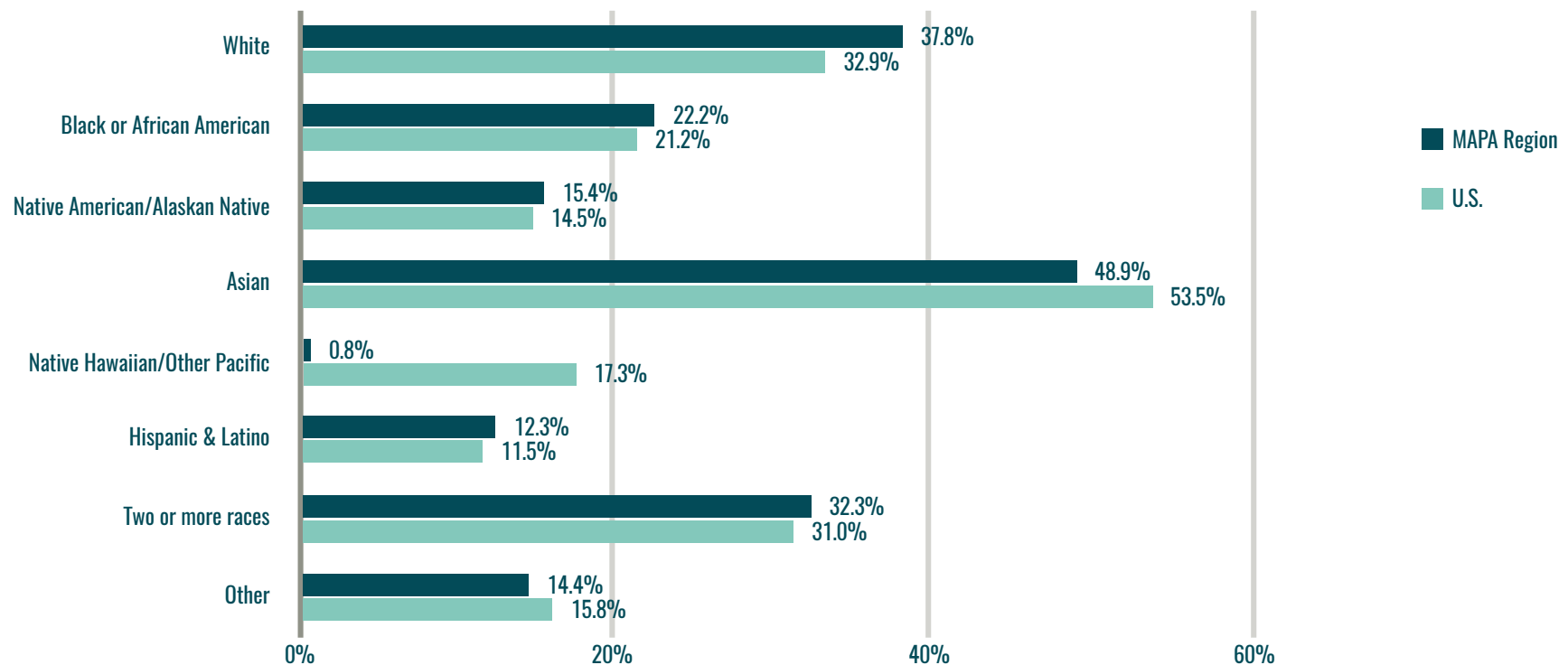
Similar to much of the country, educational attainment in the MAPA region has been higher historically among whites. Almost 93 percent of the white population 25 years of age and older have attained at least a high school education or equivalent compared to 82 percent among minorities and 59 percent among Hispanics and

Latinos. For the population in the MAPA region with a post-secondary degree, nearly 38 percent of whites have at least a bachelor's degree compared to 27 percent of minorities. The following graphics illustrate high school and bachelor's degree attainment by race in the MAPA region and U.S. according to 2018 ACS five-year data.

**Figure 2.8:** Educational Attainment by Race, High School Graduate or Higher



**Figure 2.9:** Educational Attainment by Race, Bachelor's Degree or Higher



There is a strong correlation between education and income. Many of today's high paying jobs require an advanced degree and a knowledge-based skills set. The following chapter will examine income and other financial indicators of economic well-being, as

well as circumstances with regards to social and economic equity throughout the MAPA region and among the region's minority and vulnerable populations.

