

ANALYSIS OF IMPEDIMENTS OVERVIEW

DeKalb County has prepared a fair housing study known as an Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing Choice (AI). This study discusses patterns of race, poverty, and housing needs; access to opportunity; and housing barriers in the county. It also outlines strategies DeKalb County plans to take to improve housing choices for their residents. The study is required by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development for jurisdictions that receive certain community development and affordable housing grant funds.

Community Engagement

An important part of the AI involved hearing from local residents and other stakeholders. During the community engagement process, 18 people participated in interviews, more than 200 attended a public meeting or focus group, and 100 responded to a survey.

When asked to identify housing needs in DeKalb County, stakeholders identified neighborhood stabilization, rental assistance, and multifamily rehabilitation as top priorities. When asked about needs related to homelessness, permanent housing and permanent supportive housing were top selections, each identified as a high need by about 70% of survey respondents.

Additional needs identified through focus groups and community meetings included development and preservation of affordable housing, including housing for seniors and people with disabilities, as well as small multifamily, mixed-income, and mixed-use development with access to transportation.



Stakeholders noted that housing choices in DeKalb County may be impacted by a variety of factors, including high housing costs and rents, access to transportation and childcare, landlords' acceptance of housing vouchers, provision of accessible and supportive housing for people with disabilities, language barriers, and screening of tenants regarding arrest records.

Public meeting and focus group participants were also asked about public service needs in DeKalb County. Priorities for public services identified by participants included childcare with expanded hours, mental health services, health screenings, youth employment services, and emergency transportations services.

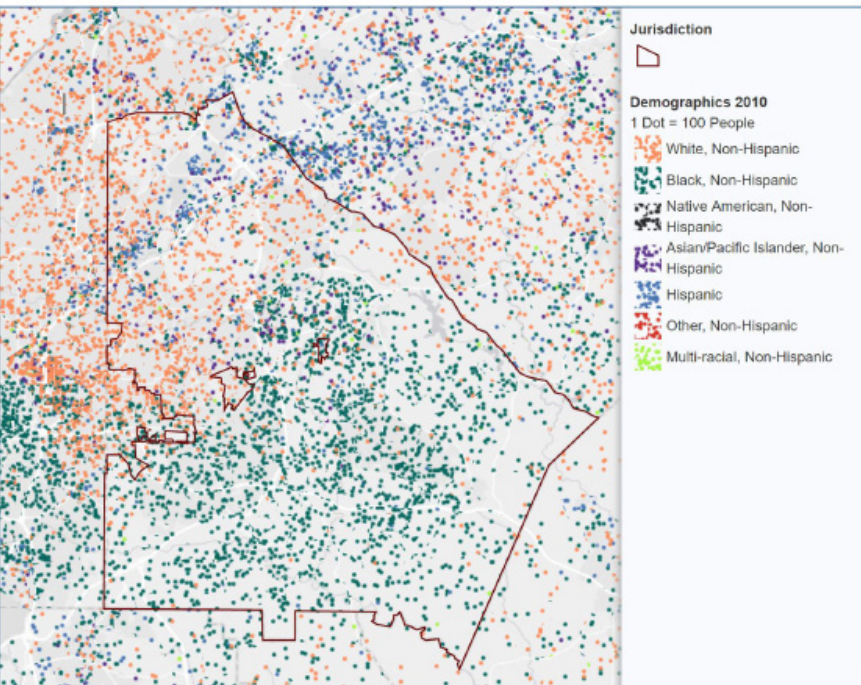
DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE

Black or African American residents account for 57.4% of DeKalb County's current population after experiencing a growth rate of 75.6% and a 15.4 percentage point increase in population share since 1990. During that timeframe, the white population in DeKalb County decreased by 36.2%, from about one-half of the County's population in 1990 to 25.6% currently.

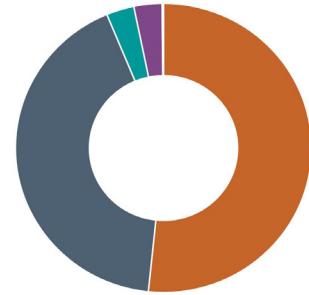
The Hispanic population comprises 10.1% of DeKalb County's current population and surpassed the Asian population as the third largest racial or ethnic group after significant growth between 1990 and 2000. The number of Asian residents doubled since 1990, however, only experienced a 1.8% gain in population share to 4.9% of the current population. The population share of Native American residents remained under 1% since 1990 with the largest population recorded in 2010. Population shares of Hispanic and Asian populations in DeKalb County are similar to the MSA comprising 10.1% and 4.9% of the population, respectively.

Foreign-born residents of DeKalb County make up a significant share (16.6%) of the total population. The top three countries of origin among foreign-born residents in DeKalb County are Mexico, Jamaica, and Ethiopia. Over one-fifth of the foreign-born population originate from Mexico while nearly one-tenth are from Jamaica. DeKalb County is also home to a large Ethiopian population that represents 6.2% of the foreign-born population. Other significant countries of origin include Guatemala, India, Vietnam, China, Burma, Korea, and Guyana.

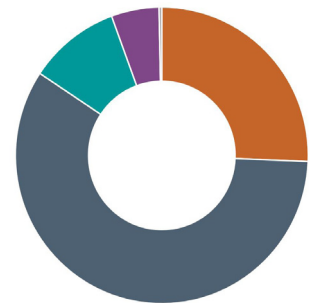
Residential Patterns and Segregation Levels



Race and Ethnicity, 1990



Race and Ethnicity, 2010



- Non-Hispanic White
- Hispanic
- Non-Hispanic Black
- Non-Hispanic Asian
- Non-Hispanic Other Race

Demographic data indicates moderate to high levels of racial and ethnic segregation within DeKalb County as of 2010. The highest levels of segregation occur between the Black and white populations. Hispanic and white populations also display relatively high levels of segregation. Asian and white populations have low to moderate levels of segregation.

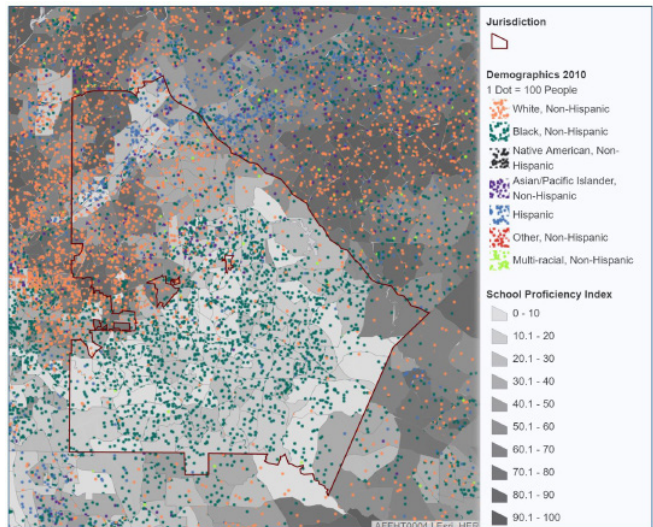
The map shows the distribution of the population by race and ethnicity in DeKalb County census tracts. It shows that overall population density is spread relatively evenly throughout the county. White and Hispanic residents make up larger shares of the population in the northern portion of the county, while Black residents are the majority of the population in the southern and eastern portions of the county.

ACCESS TO OPPORTUNITY

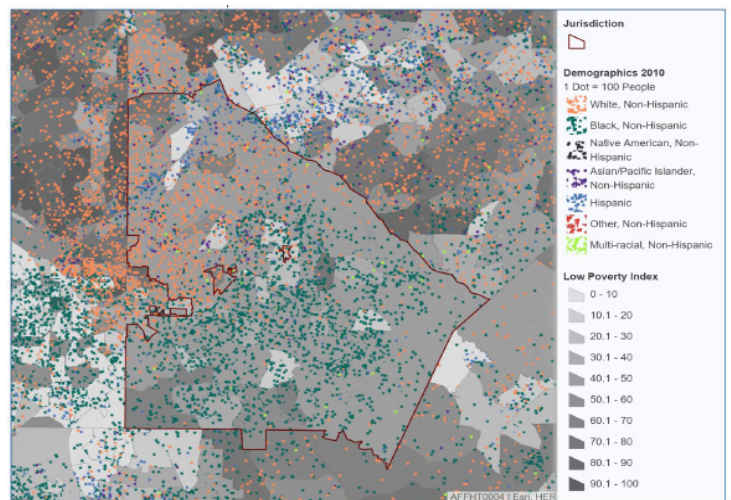
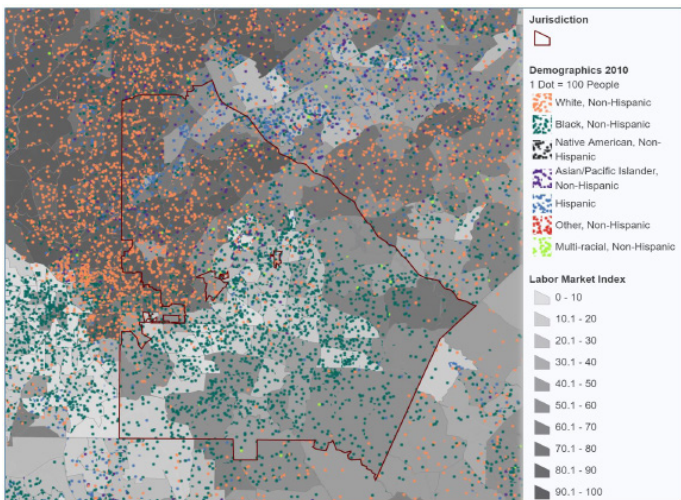
Among the many factors that drive housing choice for individuals and families are neighborhood characteristics including access to quality schools, jobs, transit, and a healthy environment. To measure these conditions at a neighborhood level, HUD developed a methodology to quantify the degree to which a neighborhood provides such opportunities. For each block group in the U.S., HUD provides a score on several “opportunity dimensions,” including school proficiency, poverty, labor market engagement, job proximity, transportation costs, transit trips, and environmental health. Higher scores (and darker shading on the maps below) indicate greater access to opportunity.

School proficiency is evaluated based on elementary school student performance on state reading and math exams. The variation in levels of access to proficient schools among block groups is high in DeKalb County. The lowest scoring block groups are located in the southern half of the county where there are greater shares of Black or African American residents. Most of the highest scoring block groups are located in the northern half of the county and have populations that are predominantly white.

HUD’s indices show gaps in access to opportunity by race and ethnicity related to labor market engagement and poverty. The Labor Market Engagement Index is based on unemployment rate, labor force participation rate, and the percent of the population age 25 and over with a bachelor’s degree or higher. The map (bottom left) shows that the variation in levels of labor market engagement among block groups is high in DeKalb County. Labor Market Index scores in DeKalb County indicate that on average Asian and white populations live in areas with greater engagement than do Black, Native American, and Hispanic populations. There is an over 41-point difference in labor market engagement between white and Black/African American populations, the highest and lowest scoring populations for labor market engagement. White and Asian residents are also more likely to live in areas that are near job centers or major employment areas.



HUD’s Low Poverty Index uses family poverty rates (based on the federal poverty line) to measure exposure to poverty by neighborhood. People of color in DeKalb County have greater exposure to poverty than the white population, with Hispanic residents experiencing high exposure to poverty. White residents in DeKalb County have the lowest levels of exposure to poverty. The disparity in exposure to poverty between white households, the racial/ethnic group with the lowest exposure to poverty, and Hispanic households, the group with the highest exposure, is 28 points.



HOUSING NEEDS

The availability of quality affordable housing plays a vital role in ensuring housing opportunities are fairly accessible to all residents. On the surface, high housing costs in certain areas are exclusionary based solely on income. But the disproportionate representation of protected class groups, particularly people of color, in low and middle income levels can lead to unequal access to housing options and neighborhood opportunity in high-cost housing markets. Black and Hispanic residents, immigrants, people with disabilities, and seniors often experience additional fair housing barriers when affordable housing is scarce.

Housing Needs

To assess affordability and other types of housing needs, HUD defines four housing problems:

1. Cost burdens: Monthly housing costs exceed 30% of monthly income.
2. Overcrowding: More than one person per room, including bed, dining, and living rooms but not kitchens or baths.
3. Lack of complete kitchen facilities: Lacks cooking facilities, a refrigerator, or a sink with piped water.
4. Lack of complete plumbing facilities: Lacks hot and cold piped water, a flush toilet, or a bathtub or shower.

In DeKalb County, 42.5% of households countywide have one or more of the four housing problems. Levels of housing need vary by race and ethnicity. About 29% of white households (21,373 households) have a need, compared to 59.6% of Hispanic households (9,143 households) and 48% of Black and Native American households (61,019 and 333 households, respectively).

Disproportionate Housing Needs	DeKalb County			
	Households with one or more Housing Problems	# with problems	# of households	% with problems
Race/Ethnicity				
White, Non-Hispanic	21,373	74,431	28.7%	
Black, Non-Hispanic	61,019	127,094	48.0%	
Hispanic	9,143	15,336	59.6%	
Asian or Pacific Islander, Non-Hispanic	4,556	9,829	46.3%	
Native American, Non-Hispanic	333	689	48.3%	
Other, Non-Hispanic	1,668	3,568	46.8%	
Total	98,105	230,970	42.5%	

Affordable Housing Locations

The study also looked at locations for public housing, project-based Section 8, and Low Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) units. Nearly all the project-based Section 8 developments are in the northern half of the county, with a majority clustered roughly along the Memorial Drive corridor. Because the county's housing authority no longer operates any public housing, these are limited to just a few sites where other public housing authorities serving the county have developments. LIHTC developments achieve a relatively even distribution throughout DeKalb County, located in neighborhoods of varied demographics.

Looking at the racial and ethnic composition of households in various types of publicly supported housing shows that Black residents make up larger shares of public housing households (96%) than they do of all low- or moderate-income households (about 62%). Black households are also overrepresented in other publicly-supported housing, while Hispanic households are underrepresented in these housing options. White households are overrepresented in project-based Section 8 housing and underrepresented in other housing types.

IDENTIFICATION OF IMPEDIMENTS

Based on the data and public input collected for this analysis, the following fair housing impediments were identified. For each impediment, selected activities planned to address the impediment are shown below. The full report contains descriptions of each impediment and a complete listing of associated activities, goals, timelines, and responsible parties.

<p>IMPEDIMENT #1:</p>	<p>Continued Need for Neighborhood Infrastructure and Expanded Access to Opportunity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to fund projects that expand or improve public facilities in low- and moderate-income census tracts. Target investment of CDBG funds in RECAPs. • Continue code enforcement efforts and demolition of condemned structures. Continue looking for infill residential development opportunities • Continue County promotion of Low and Moderate Income (LMI) Tracts as Opportunity Zones for the purpose of attracting businesses. • Continue to provide economic development support such as infrastructure assistance for new small businesses that fill market niches and create jobs. • Explore potential opportunities for improved transportation connections between employers and low- and moderate-income census tracts • Consider opportunities to use CDBG funding to address potential barriers that clients of continuing education providers and job search assistance agencies face. • Continue providing CDBG or other funding for youth education enrichment activities to encourage reading proficiency, high school completion, career and/or college preparation, and other education components.
<p>IMPEDIMENT #2:</p>	<p>Publicly Supported Housing Options are Limited</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regular, ongoing campaigns to reach and recruit new landlords into the HCV program should be implemented by the county’s housing authorities. • The local public housing authorities and the private property managers of properties containing Project-Based Section 8 units should review their Affirmative Marketing Plans and consider new and creative marketing techniques to reach applicants of a wide variety of backgrounds. • Request that property managers at publicly supported housing developments conduct a periodic self-review of their practices and procedures, to include the racial and ethnic composition of resident-facing staff, the holidays celebrated at the property, and the content of flyers, newsletters, and wall posters to ensure inclusiveness and cultural sensitivity.
<p>IMPEDIMENT #3:</p>	<p>Additional Fair Housing Enforcement and Education is Needed</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue delivering fair housing education programs that reaches the public as well as housing industry professionals with information about fair housing rights and responsibilities. • Conduct outreach to local agencies serving immigrants, refugees, and other populations with limited English proficiency to collaborate on approaches to provide fair housing education and enforcement to these populations

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<p>IMPEDIMENT #4:</p>	<p>Fraudulent Mortgages and Housing Scams</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue providing financial support to a partner organization to educate DeKalb County homeowners regarding home purchase scams and to assist homeowners facing fraudulent mortgage or other housing scams. • Provide financial support to an appropriate partner organization to establish or enhance an existing mission related to identifying, investigating, and enforcing fair housing violations.
<p>IMPEDIMENT #5:</p>	<p>Availability of Housing and Community Amenities Accessible for People with Disabilities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider opportunities to encourage or incentivize the construction of new accessible housing units for people with disabilities. • Meet with Department of Planning and Community Services staff to review results of the zoning code review and consider potential opportunities for possible code amendments to improve housing choice for people with disabilities.
<p>IMPEDIMENT #6:</p>	<p>Lack of Affordable Housing Disproportionately Impacts People of Color</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue using CDBG and HOME funds to increase and maintain the availability of high-quality, affordable rental and for-sale housing through new construction and rehabilitation. • Continue to review the Annual Qualified Allocation Plans issued by Georgia DCA under its Low Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) program to identify local government policies or actions that may positively impact the competitiveness of developers' applications. • For developers proposing LIHTC projects in areas with access to key community resources/opportunity factors, such as accessibility to employment centers and deconcentrated areas, or areas experiencing a loss of affordable rental units, work closely with developers to increase the competitiveness of their applications through letters of support, provision of data and information, gap financing, and other assistance. • Consider and adopt zoning code amendments that could increase possibilities for development of affordable housing. • In the routine monitoring of County-funded housing owners/operators, ensure that affirmative marketing plans are in place, are adhered to, and are effective in promoting affordable housing opportunities to diverse groups of residents, including people of color.