Part 2: Citywide Analysis
The State of New Yorkers

Since 2000, New York City has become more diverse, with no racial or ethnic group making up more than a third of the population and a larger share of the population that was foreign-born. In addition, the composition of the city’s population shifted: the share of the population aged 65 and older increased between 2000 and 2014, while the share under 18 declined. Despite strong metropolitan GDP growth and falling unemployment rates since the Great Recession, median incomes stagnated and the poverty rate among older New Yorkers rose. Homelessness, particularly among families, remained high.

DEMOGRAPHICS

FINDING #1

New York City’s population changed to include relatively more older adults and fewer children between 2000 and 2014.

Between 2000 and 2014, the share of the city’s population aged 18 or older grew, while the percentage under 18 declined from over 24 percent of the city’s residents in 2000 to just over 21 percent by 2014, as shown in Figure 1. The proportion of the population aged 18 to 64—working-age adults—grew by nearly two percentage points, to reach 65.9 percent of the city’s population in 2014. The share of the population aged 65 and older grew by over one percentage point, from 11.7 percent in 2000 to 12.9 percent in 2014.

Figure 1: Demographic Characteristics of New Yorkers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2000</th>
<th>2014</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Population Under Age 18</td>
<td>24.2%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Population Age 18 to 64</td>
<td>64.1%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Population aged 65+</td>
<td>11.7%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Percent Asian</td>
<td>12.9%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Percent Black</td>
<td>24.5%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Percent Hispanic</td>
<td>27.0%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Percent White</td>
<td>35.0%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Foreign-Born Population</td>
<td>35.9%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Poverty Rate: Population Under 18</td>
<td>21.2%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Poverty Rate: Population 65 and Older</td>
<td>17.8%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bachelor’s Degree or Higher</td>
<td>27.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disconected Youth</td>
<td>9.3%</td>
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</table>

Sources: US Census (2000), American Community Survey (2014), NYU Furman Center
Note: The Hispanic population may be of any race, while we define the Asian, black, and white populations as being non-Hispanic.
The neighborhoods with both the largest increases and the largest declines in the share of households with children since 2000 were located in Brooklyn.

Figure 2 depicts the percentage point change in the share of households with children under age 18 in different neighborhoods between 2000 and 2014. While that share declined in most neighborhoods, 10 neighborhoods saw fairly significant increases. Park Slope/Carroll Gardens (BK 06) in Brooklyn experienced the largest increase at over seven percentage points, followed by the Upper East Side (MN 8) and Upper West Side (MN 7) in Manhattan and Bensonhurst (BK 11), Bay Ridge/Dyker Heights (BK 10), and Borough Park (BK 12) in southwestern Brooklyn, all of which saw increases between three and five percentage points. The neighborhoods with the largest declines were located in northern and eastern Brooklyn, particularly Bushwick (BK 4) and Bedford Stuyvesant (BK 3). Fordham/University Heights/Morris Heights/ Mount Hope (BX 5) in the Bronx also saw a sizeable decline.

Figure 3 maps changes in the population aged 65 and over between 2000 and 2014. A number of neighborhoods saw increases in the share of residents over 65, including South Beach/Willowbrook (SI 2) and Tottenville/Great Kills (SI 3) in Staten Island, central Manhattan, central and eastern Queens, and eastern Brooklyn (as well as Coney Island/Brighton Beach [BK 13]). Borough Park (BK 12) and Bay Ridge/Dyker Heights (BK 10) in Brooklyn and Morris Park/Allerton (BX 11) in the Bronx saw the most substantial declines in this population.
DEMOGRAPHICS

FINDING #4

Since 2000, the shares of the city’s population that are Asian and Hispanic grew, while white and black shares both decreased.

The share of New Yorkers identifying as Asian increased by four percentage points, from 9.7 percent in 2000 to 13.7 percent in 2014, while the share identifying as Hispanic increased by two percentage points. In 2000, whites constituted 35 percent of the city’s population, but, by 2014, no race or ethnicity accounted for more than a third of the total population.

Figure 4: Percentage Point Change in Percent Non-White Population by Sub-Borough Area, 2000-2014

- Decreased 10.0 or More
- Decreased 5.0-9.9
- Decreased 1.0-4.9
- Little Change (+/- 1.0)
- Increased 1.1 to 4.9
- Increased 5.0 to 10.0
- Increased More Than 10.0
- Insufficient data

Sources: US Census (2000), American Community Survey (2014), NYU Furman Center

DEMOGRAPHICS

FINDING #5

The city saw a slight increase in its foreign-born share of the population in 2014, but some Brooklyn neighborhoods saw large decreases.

Accompanying the increase in racial and ethnic diversity, the city experienced a slight increase in the percentage of residents born outside the United States, from 35.9 percent in 2000 to 37.2 percent in 2014 (see Figure 1).

As shown in Figure 5, the proportion of foreign-born residents increased in most of the Bronx between 2000 and 2014, with the largest increase in Morrisania (BX 3) and Belmont (BX 6), from 22 percent foreign-born in 2000 to 32 percent in 2014. A similar increase occurred in South Beach/Willowbrook (SI 2), raising from 18 percent in 2000 to 29 percent in 2014. The foreign-born share of the population went down by more than 10 percentage points in Williamsburg/Greenpoint (BK 1), from 34 percent in 2000 to 22 percent in 2014, and South Crown Heights/Prospect Lefferts Gardens (BK 9), from 48 percent in 2000 to 37 percent in 2014.

Figure 5: Percentage-Point Change in Percentage Foreign Born by Sub-Borough Area, 2000-2014

- Decreased 5.0 or More
- Decreased 1.0-4.9
- Little Change (+/- 1.0)
- Increased 1.1-5.0
- Increased More Than 5.0

Sources: US Census (2000), American Community Survey (2014), NYU Furman Center
**FINDING #6**

The number of New Yorkers in homeless shelters nearly doubled between 2005 and 2014 and remained high through 2015.

The population of the city’s homeless shelters grew dramatically between December 2005 and December 2014 and then remained steady over the next year. In December 2015, roughly 60,000 people lived in a homeless shelter—nearly 30,000 more than in December of 2005. Families, including over 23,000 children, made up 77 percent of the homeless population living in shelters, up from 74 percent in 2005.

*Figure 6: Homeless Shelter Population, New York City*

**FINDING #7**

The New York City region’s economy grew at a healthy rate between 2013 and 2014, outpacing the growth in metropolitan areas nationwide.

The New York City metropolitan area economy grew between 2013 and 2014, continuing an upward trend since 2009, as shown in Figure 7. Particularly rapid growth in gross domestic product (GDP) of 4.5 percent between 2013 and 2014 allowed the New York City metropolitan area to catch up with the recovery in metropolitan areas in the rest of the country. Both the metropolitan New York City GDP and the combined GDP of all US metropolitan areas grew in real terms by about 11.5 percent between 2009 and 2014.

*Figure 7: Index of Real Gross Domestic Product (Index = 100 in 2009)*

Sources: New York City Department of Homeless Services, NYU Furman Center, Bureau of Economic Analysis, NYU Furman Center
INCOME, POVERTY, AND INEQUALITY

FINDING #8

Despite strong regional economic growth in 2014, the New York City median income barely grew and remained well below its peak level in 2008.

Not all New Yorkers benefited from the growth in the regional economy. As shown in Figure 8, the inflation-adjusted median household income in New York City hit its lowest point since the start of the Great Recession at $52,025 in 2011. It recovered somewhat through 2013, reaching nearly $53,000, but it remained well below the 2008 peak of about $56,500. The median household income was essentially unchanged between 2013 and 2014.

Figure 8: Inflation-Adjusted Median Household Income (2015$)

Sources: American Community Survey, NYU Furman Center

INCOME, POVERTY, AND INEQUALITY

FINDING #9

Both the share of New York City households earning below $40,000 and the share earning over $250,000 increased between 2000 and 2014.

As the citywide median income declined between 2000 and 2014, the distribution of household income widened. The share of New York City households earning moderate or middle incomes fell, while households earning over $250,000 per year grew slightly, by 0.6 percentage points, and the share earning under $40,000 per year rose by three percentage points to 39 percent.

Figure 9: Household Income Distribution, New York City (2015$)

Sources: US Census (2000), American Community Survey (2014), NYU Furman Center
INCOME, POVERTY, AND INEQUALITY

FINDING #10

The city’s income inequality remained steady in 2014.

Figure 10 shows that the income diversity ratio in New York City, or the ratio of 80th percentile household income to the 20th percentile household income, has increased since 1990. In that year, the 80th percentile household earned 5.5 times as much as the 20th percentile household. As the incomes of high-income households grew more than those of low-income households, the income diversity ratio rose to 6.1 in 2006, fell to 5.7 the next year, and then began to rise again, reaching 6.2 in 2013. Between 2013 and 2014, the ratio remained stable at 6.2 (with the 80th percentile household earning $121,164 and the 20th percentile earning just $18,175).

Figure 10: Income Diversity Ratio, New York City

INCOME, POVERTY, AND INEQUALITY

FINDING #11

The share of New Yorkers below the poverty line did not change between 2013 to 2014, but poverty rates among seniors rose to the highest level since 2005.

The overall poverty rate in New York City remained steady between 2013 and 2014, at 20.9 percent. Figure 11 shows that in 2000, 21.2 percent of the city’s population had an income below the federal poverty line. After falling to a low of 18.2 percent in 2008, the poverty rate rose rapidly during the Great Recession and has since remained close to the 2000 level.

The poverty rate for children, historically higher than that for the whole population, fell slightly from 2013 to 2014, when 29.6 percent of children were below the poverty line. Meanwhile, the rate for seniors—adults aged 65 and older—increased by half a percentage point since 2013 to reach 19.3 percent in 2014, the highest level seen for this group since 2005.

Figure 11: Poverty Rate by Age, New York City

The share of New Yorkers with college degrees continued to grow.

The share of New Yorkers aged 25 and older with a four-year degree or higher increased from 27.4 percent in 2000 to 35.9 percent in 2014 (see Figure 1), consistent with increases nationwide. Figure 12 shows changes in the share of residents with a bachelor’s degree or higher at the neighborhood level between 2000 and 2014. During that period, the share increased by 20 percentage points or more in three neighborhoods: Greenpoint/Williamsburg (BK 1), up from 19 percent in 2000 to 50 percent in 2014; Central Harlem (MN 10), from 15 percent from in 2000 to 38 percent in 2014; and Astoria (QN 1), from 23 percent in 2000 to 43 percent in 2014. The share with a college degree actually went down in the Queens neighborhoods of Flushing/Whitestone (QN 7), down four percentage points, and Hillcrest/Fresh Meadows (QN 8), down one percentage point.

The city’s unemployment rate fell in 2015 to its lowest rate since 2008.

While the New York City unemployment rate was roughly the same as the national rate at its peak in 2010, the national rate has declined steadily since then, while the rate in New York City rose between 2011 and 2012 and has remained above the national rate. Starting in 2013, however, the rate in New York City has dropped more quickly than in the US as a whole, and between 2014 and 2015 it went down by 1.6 percentage points to 5.7 percent, less than half a percentage point above the national rate of 5.3 percent.
The share of New York City youth who were disconnected from both school and the labor market remained largely unchanged.

We define “disconnected youth” as people aged 16 to 19 who are neither enrolled in school nor participating in the labor force. According to the 2010-2014 American Community Survey, 7.3 percent of young people aged 16 to 19 were disconnected, just slightly below the 7.4 percent level recorded in the 2005-2009 survey. Figure 14 further breaks these figures down by borough. The disconnected youth share was highest in the Bronx, at 9.8 percent. Between 2005-2009 and 2010-2014, the disconnected youth share fell in Brooklyn, Manhattan, and Staten Island but rose in Queens.

Figure 14: Disconnected Youth by Borough

Sources: American Community Survey (5-Year Estimates), NYU Furman Center
In 2015, New York City saw a large spike in the number of residential units authorized for construction, due in part to the uncertainty surrounding the 421-a property tax exemption program. Between 2014 and 2015, the number of completed residential units increased by 6.8 percent. There were few zoning changes in 2015, and only two dozen special permits approved, concentrated in Manhattan. The Landmarks Preservation Commission designated significantly more lots as part of historic districts in 2015 than in prior years, but it only designated six individual landmarks.

**CONSTRUCTION ACTIVITY**

**FINDING #1**

In 2015, New York City saw a spike in the number of permits issued for new housing units, including a large jump in the number of permitted units in large buildings with at least 50 units.

New York City experienced a spike in the number of new residential units authorized for construction in 2015. Over 39,000 of more than 51,000 newly permitted housing units were slated to be in buildings with 50 or more units, more than in any year since at least 2004. The 421-a property tax exemption program was slated to expire on June 15, 2015, and uncertainty surrounding the fate of that tax exemption (which was extended to construction commenced through December 31, 2016) likely pushed developers to rush to apply for permits under the old regime.

*Figure 1: Residential Units Authorized by New Building Permits by Property Size, New York City*

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<th>5-49 Unit</th>
<th>50+ Unit</th>
<th>Percentage of Units in Developments with 50+ Units</th>
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Sources: New York City Department of Buildings, NYU Furman Center
New construction permits in 2015 were concentrated in Brooklyn and Manhattan.

New buildings authorized in 2015 were largely concentrated in the Bronx, Manhattan, and Brooklyn. The size of buildings authorized by new permits varied across the city’s boroughs. One-to-four-unit buildings were concentrated in Staten Island, Brooklyn, and Queens. Permits for buildings with 100 or more units were granted in all boroughs except for Staten Island.

New York City saw a record number of commitments for new affordable units under the Inclusionary Housing Program.

New York City’s Inclusionary Housing Program allows housing development in certain areas of the city to build more floor area in exchange for the provision of affordable housing. In fiscal year 2015, developers signed regulatory agreements committing to build, preserve, or rehabilitate more than 3,000 new affordable units through the program, more than three times the number of units committed in the previous fiscal year and more than twice as many units as were committed in any year since the program’s inception in 1987.
Construction Activity
Finding #4

The number of completed residential units authorized for occupancy rose between 2014 and 2015 by seven percent, but remains below pre-2012 levels.

The number of new residential units authorized for occupancy rose in 2015 for the third straight year, but remains below pre-2012 levels. Seventy-nine percent of the new units receiving a certificate of occupancy were in rental buildings with 5 or more units. Just eight percent were condominiums, down from the height of 41 percent in 2008. Ten percent of new units were in buildings with 2-4 units and only three percent of them were single-family homes.

Figure 4: Types of Completed Residential Units Issued Certificates of Occupancy, New York City

Land Use Regulation
Finding #5

In 2015, New York City made zoning map amendments to only 16 blocks.

In 2015, New York City adopted eight rezonings (defined here as a zoning map amendment or a special-district boundary change) covering only 16 tax blocks, about the same as in 2014 (20 tax blocks). By comparison, the fewest number of blocks affected by rezonings during a single year during the Bloomberg administration was 317 in 2002.

Figure 5: Number of Blocks Affected by Rezonings, New York City

Sources: New York City Department of Buildings, NYU Furman Center
LAND USE REGULATION
FINDING #6

The New York City Department of City Planning approved 24 site-specific special permits in 2015, most of which were located in Manhattan.

Site-specific special permits enable development or use of an existing structure that does not strictly conform with bulk, use, or other regulations in the Zoning Resolution. Special permits allow modifications for a specific proposal and do not change the underlying zoning for a lot. In 2015, the New York City Department of City Planning approved 24 such permits. As shown in Figure 6, most special permits were in Manhattan.

Figure 6: Location of Special Permits Approved in 2015, New York City
- Sites of Approved Special Permits

HISTORIC PRESERVATION REGULATION
FINDING #7

In 2015, the city approved four new historic districts.

In 2015, the New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission (LPC) designated four new historic districts in Brooklyn and Manhattan, the two boroughs with the greatest concentration of historic districts. The LPC designated the Riverside-West End Historic District II on Manhattan’s Upper West Side and the Mount Morris Historic District Extension in Harlem. In central Brooklyn, the LPC designated the Bedford Historic District and the Crown Heights North III Historic District.

Figure 7: Historic Districts, New York City
- Designated In 2015
- Designated Before 2015

Sources: New York City Department of City Planning, NYU Furman Center, New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission, NYU Furman Center
Over 2,000 lots were located in the four new historic districts designated in 2015—the largest number of lots in newly designated districts in a given year since 1981.

In 2015, the New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission designated four historic districts that comprised over 2,000 individual tax lots, over 800 more lots than were included in newly designated districts in the peak year during the Bloomberg administration (2013).

The city designated six individual landmarks in Manhattan, Brooklyn, and Queens in 2015.

The New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission (LPC) designated six individual landmarks in 2015. In Manhattan, the LPC designated the Stonewall Inn and the Corbin Building. In Brooklyn, it designated the M. H. Renken Dairy Company Office Building and Engine Room Building, the Henry and Susan McDonald House, and the Brooklyn Public Library Stone Avenue Branch. In Queens, the LPC designated the Bank of the Manhattan Company Building in Long Island City.
The State of Homeowners and Their Homes

In 2015, home prices rose, the number of home sales dropped, and the number of foreclosures fell slightly but remained elevated compared to the years prior to the foreclosure crisis. Sales prices were higher in 2015 than in the previous year for residential properties in all boroughs. Prices were also higher across all property types, though the largest increase in prices was for multifamily buildings with five or more units. Close to 50 percent of mortgage-related foreclosure filings in 2015 were on properties that had received a foreclosure filing in the last six years with no change in ownership during that time, indicating prolonged homeowner distress. Pre-foreclosure notices, which indicate risk of foreclosure filings in the future, fell for a fourth year in a row in all boroughs.

New York City’s homeownership rate declined since peaking during the housing boom, but in 2014 remained above 2000 levels.

Between 2000 and 2014, the U.S. homeownership rate fell by about three percentage points. By contrast, the homeownership rate in New York City in 2014 was one percentage point above where it was in 2000, after experiencing a nearly four-percentage-point jump during the housing boom, as Figure 1 shows. Of the New York City boroughs, Staten Island saw the largest increase in its homeownership rate between 2000 and 2007 (+7.4 percentage points), and its rate in 2014 was the highest compared to its homeownership rate in 2000 (+4.4 percentage points). The Bronx was the only borough where the homeownership rate was lower in 2014 than in 2000 (-1.4 percentage points).

Figure 1: Homeownership Rate by Borough

Homeownership rates increased in some New York City neighborhoods between 2000 and 2014.

The neighborhoods with the largest increase in homeownership rates between 2000 and 2014 were Park Slope/Carroll Gardens (BK 6, +8.4 percentage points), Rego Park/Forest Hills (QN 6, +7.0 percentage points), Coney Island (BK 13, +6.9 percentage points), the Upper West Side (MN 7, +6.9 percentage points), and Fort Greene/Brooklyn Heights (BK 2, +5.8 percentage points). The largest decline in homeownership occurred in Throgs Neck/Co-op City (BX 10) in the eastern Bronx, where the homeownership rate dropped from 45.5 percent in 2000 to 41.5 percent in 2014.

In 2015, home prices were up in all of New York City’s boroughs.

All of New York City’s boroughs saw an increase in home prices between 2014 and 2015, though the magnitude of the price growth varied significantly across boroughs, as shown in Figure 3. As measured using our index of housing price appreciation, prices grew the most in Brooklyn, with a 12 percent increase since the previous year; followed by Manhattan with a seven percent increase; Queens and Staten Island with five percent increases; and, finally, the Bronx with a one percent increase. By 2015, only Brooklyn and Manhattan had exceeded their pre-recession peaks (which occurred in 2006 for Brooklyn and 2008 for Manhattan), with indexed housing price values growing 15 and 35 percent, respectively, since 2007. Home prices in the Bronx were 19 percent lower in 2015 than they were in 2007 at that borough’s peak. While housing prices appreciated at relatively similar rates across boroughs between 2000 and 2005, since then appreciation rates have diverged. Between 2000 and 2005, the average residential property in Staten Island appreciated by 87 percent, while the average residential property in Manhattan appreciated by 95 percent. Between 2005 and 2015, however, properties in Staten Island depreciated by an average of four percent, while properties in Manhattan appreciated by 56 percent.
In 2015, for the fourth year in a row, sales prices rose for all property types in New York City compared to the previous year.

Sales prices rose across all property types in New York City between 2014 and 2015, as Figure 4 shows. Sales prices for condominiums and rental buildings with five or more units both exceeded their peak during the housing boom by a substantial amount (condo prices were up 26% from their peak in 2008; in rental building with five or more units prices were up 62% from their peak in 2007). The increase in prices for multifamily rental buildings in recent years has been dramatic; between 2012 and 2015, prices for these buildings increased by 68 percent.

Figure 4: Index of Housing Price Appreciation by Property Type, New York City (Index = 100 in 2000)

In every borough except the Bronx, the total number of property sales fell in 2015, compared to the previous year.

Between 2014 and 2015, the total number of property sales fell in all boroughs except the Bronx, where 60 more sales occurred in 2015 than in 2014 (an increase of 2.1%), as shown in Figure 5. This is a change from 2014, when all boroughs except Manhattan saw an increase in the number of property sales compared to the previous year. The drop in sales volume in 2015 was most pronounced in Manhattan, where sales dropped by 21.4 percent; the declines in the other boroughs were smaller (Brooklyn: -8.6%; Queens: -3.5%; Staten Island: -4.3%).

Figure 5: Property Sales Volume by Borough

Sources: New York City Department of Finance, NYU Furman Center
Note: Borough totals do not include sales of cooperative apartments.
In 2015, the overall decline in sales volume compared to the previous year was driven by a large decline in condominium sales.

The number of sales of condominium units decreased by 23 percent between 2014 and 2015, and two- to four-unit buildings and buildings with five or more units each saw five percent fewer sales. Property sales volume was up in 2015 for one-unit properties by two percent and for cooperative apartments by one percent, as Figure 6 shows.

Figure 6: Property Sales Volume by Property Type, New York City

![Graph showing property sales volume by property type in New York City](image)

Sources: New York City Department of Finance, NYU Furman Center

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Home purchase lending in New York City fell in 2014 compared to the previous year.

While the total number of home purchase loans made in the United States rose from 2013 to 2014 by 4.6 percent, the number fell in New York City by 7.7 percent, as shown in Figure 7. Lending levels for home purchase loans remained far below their levels in 2004 in the United States and New York City.

Figure 7: Index of Home Purchase Loan Originations (Index = 100 in 2004), 2004-2014

![Graph showing index of home purchase loan originations](image)

Sources: Home Mortgage Disclosure Act, NYU Furman Center

Note: Includes first-lien home purchase loans issued to owner-occupants of one- to four-family homes, condominiums, and cooperative apartments.
Home purchase lending in 2014 fell slightly in all five boroughs compared to the previous year.

Figure 8 shows that home purchase lending in all five of New York City’s boroughs fell between 2013 and 2014; the largest drops were in Manhattan (-11.7%) and Brooklyn (-9.1%). Home purchase lending remained well below year-2000 levels.

FHA/VA loans continued to make up a much larger share of both New York City and U.S. home-purchase mortgage originations than they did before the housing crisis.

In 2014, in both the United States and New York City, FHA/VA home purchase lending remained relatively stable, as shown in Figure 9. Citywide and nationally, FHA/VA loan originations made up a much smaller share of loan originations in 2014 than they did during the years immediately following the foreclosure crisis, but such loans represented a much larger share of total mortgage originations in 2014 than they did in the early 2000s.
Despite relatively low interest rates, the number of refinance loans made in New York City dropped in 2014, compared to the previous year.

All New York City boroughs saw a large drop in refinance lending between 2013 and 2014, as shown in Figure 10, with the biggest decline in Manhattan (-70.9%) followed by Brooklyn (-56.3%), Queens (-55.8%), the Bronx (-52.6%), and Staten Island (-49.1%). In four of the five boroughs, the number of refinance loans originated in 2014 was less than a fifth of the number originated in 2004, despite the fact that the conforming interest rate in 2014 was almost two percentage points below the 2004 level.

The number of foreclosure filings in New York City fell slightly in 2015 compared to 2014, but remained almost double the number filed in 2000.

While foreclosure filings in New York City have fallen from their peak in 2009, Figure 11 shows that in 2015 they still remained elevated far above the number of yearly filings prior to the foreclosure crisis. However, the share of filings that were repeat filings (properties with a prior foreclosure filing within the past six years and no change of ownership during that time) grew dramatically (from 19.5% in 2000 to 49.3% in 2015), suggesting that a greater share of foreclosure notices were issued to borrowers experiencing prolonged distress. The number of initial foreclosure filings in 2015 was the lowest it had been since 2005.
FINDING #12

The number of foreclosure filings on one- to four-unit buildings and condominiums fell in every borough in 2015, compared to the previous year, though the drops in Queens and the Bronx were very small.

The number of foreclosure filings on one- to four-unit buildings and condominiums fell across the city between 2014 and 2015, as Figure 12 shows. The drops in Queens and the Bronx were very small (four fewer filings each), but the number of filings dropped by 15.7 percent in Brooklyn; 13.7 percent in Manhattan; and 5.3 percent in Staten Island. Despite the declines, in 2015 there were more than twice as many foreclosure filings in the Bronx and Staten Island, and 93 percent more in Queens, than there were in 2000.

Figure 12: Foreclosure Filings on One- to Four-Unit Buildings and Condominiums by Borough

Sources: Public Data Corporation, New York City Department of Finance, NYU Furman Center

FINDING #13

The number of properties entering bank ownership after a completed foreclosure remained low in 2014.

In 2014, 429 one- to four-unit properties in New York City were transferred to the foreclosing lender following a completed foreclosure (called real estate owned or REO; this happens when the property fails to sell for a price acceptable to the foreclosing lender after a completed foreclosure). This is the second year that the number of REOs has risen slightly after a multi-year drop, likely reflecting an increase in the number of completed foreclosures following the glut of cases filed during the foreclosure crisis. This was 56 percent lower than the number of properties entering REO in 2000, and 77 percent lower than the number entering REO in 2008, as shown in Figure 13.

Figure 13: One- to Four-Unit Properties Entering REO, New York City

Sources: Public Data Corporation, New York City Department of Finance, NYU Furman Center
The number of pre-foreclosure notices issued to one- to four-unit properties and condominiums in 2015 fell from the previous year.

Pre-foreclosure notices for one- to four-unit properties and condominiums, which lenders must send to delinquent borrowers at least 90 days prior to filing a foreclosure case, dropped by 23 percent between 2014 and 2015 citywide, with all boroughs experiencing significant reductions, as shown in Figure 14. Citywide, pre-foreclosure notices declined over 55 percent since 2011. Along with the indicators on repeat foreclosure filings, this indicates that the number of borrowers entering new bouts of distress has gone down considerably since the Great Recession, although many borrowers who fell into financial difficulties during the recession may remain distressed.

### Table 1: Pre-Foreclosure Notices Issued to One- to Four-Unit Properties and Condominiums

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<td>21,768</td>
<td>19,745</td>
<td>12,530</td>
<td>9,185</td>
<td>-27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manhattan</td>
<td>1,142</td>
<td>1,154</td>
<td>1,213</td>
<td>733</td>
<td>608</td>
<td>-17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Queens</td>
<td>29,307</td>
<td>28,721</td>
<td>25,712</td>
<td>16,007</td>
<td>12,563</td>
<td>-22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staten Island</td>
<td>10,319</td>
<td>10,274</td>
<td>9,163</td>
<td>6,222</td>
<td>4,983</td>
<td>-20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New York City</td>
<td>70,889</td>
<td>70,873</td>
<td>64,289</td>
<td>40,951</td>
<td>31,663</td>
<td>-23%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sources: New York State Department of Financial Services, NYU Furman Center
The vast majority of New York City households are renters.

Nearly 70 percent of households in New York City rented their homes in 2014, almost twice the national rate. Of the five boroughs, the Bronx had the highest rental share in 2014 (81.8%) and Staten Island had the lowest share (31.8%). Most households in Brooklyn (71.5%), Manhattan (77.3%), and Queens (56.9%) lived in rental units in 2014.

New York City has been a majority renter city since at least the 1970s, though the overall renter share has declined since 1980.

Historically, a majority of New York City households have rented their homes. During the lead-up to the Great Recession, the share of households that rented declined until it hit a low of 65.6 percent of households in 2006. In the subsequent years, the renter share of households increased by more than three percentage points, though it remained below the levels seen in 2000.
RENT LEVELS
FINDING #3

Rents remained high and have risen every year since at least 2005.
Rent levels have risen faster than incomes in recent years. Figure 3 compares the change in median gross rent and median renter household income, indexed to 2005 values. Between 2005 and 2014, median gross rent increased by a total of 14.7 percent citywide, while the typical renter household’s income increased by just 1.7 percent. Between 2013 and 2014, the median gross rent rose by 2.6 percent, while the median income for New York City renters declined.

Figure 3: Index of Real Median Gross Rent and Real Median Renter Household Income (Index=100 in 2005), New York City

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Median Gross Rent</th>
<th>Median Renter Household Income</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>102</td>
<td>102</td>
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<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>104</td>
<td>104</td>
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<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>106</td>
<td>106</td>
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<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>108</td>
<td>108</td>
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<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>110</td>
<td>110</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>112</td>
<td>112</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>114</td>
<td>114</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>116</td>
<td>116</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sources: American Community Survey, NYU Furman Center

RENT LEVELS
FINDING #4

All boroughs, except for Staten Island, saw increases in median gross rent between 2005 and 2014.
Citywide, the median gross rent rose steadily between 2005 and 2014. Of the five boroughs, only Staten Island residents did not see an increase in median gross rent during this period. Comparing median gross rent in 2005 and 2014, Manhattan saw the largest increase (21.7%), followed by Brooklyn (17.2%), the Bronx (13.1%), and Queens (11.5%). The median gross rent in Staten Island decreased by 3.2 percent between 2005 and 2014.

Figure 4: Inflation-Adjusted Median Gross Rent (2015$) by Borough

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bronx</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brooklyn</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manhattan</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Queens</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staten Island</td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NYC</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sources: American Community Survey, NYU Furman Center
Asking rents varied widely across neighborhoods.

Rent reported by all residents may not reflect the experience of those currently searching for housing on the private market; median gross rent includes tenants who have lived in rent-stabilized units for many years, for example. The asking rent is the rent for units being advertised for lease. Using data from StreetEasy, which lists available rental units in New York City, the citywide median asking rent in 2014 was $2,800. Asking rent varied by neighborhood; in Manhattan south and west of Central Park, median asking rent was more than $3,000. In outer Brooklyn and Queens, median asking rent was generally between $1,500 and $2,000.

Figure 5: Median Asking Rent by Community District, 2014

New York City renters continued to spend a high share of income on rent.

A household spending 30 percent or more of its pre-tax income on rent and utilities is considered rent burdened. Using this threshold, in order to afford a unit renting at the 2014 median gross rent of $1,277 per month, a household needed to earn an annual income of at least $51,080. Yet, the median household income for New York City in 2014 was $41,210—almost a full $10,000 less. A household looking to move into a rental unit needed to earn even more—$112,000—to afford the median asking rent for listings on StreetEasy: $2,800.

Not all renter households were equally likely to be rent burdened. Nearly 90 percent of extremely low-income renters, with household incomes no more than 30 percent of the area median income (AMI), were rent burdened in 2014. Seventy percent of extremely low-income households were severely rent burdened, with gross rent totaling at least 50 percent of household income. Low-income renters, or those with incomes between 51 percent and 80 percent of AMI, saw the largest increase in rent burdens: by 2014, most low-income renter households were rent burdened (62%)—an increase of nearly 14 percentage points since 2006.

Figure 6: Rent-Burdened Share by Income, New York City

Sources: American Community Survey, US Department of Housing and Urban Development Section 8/HOME Program Income Guidelines, NYU Furman Center

Note: Two community districts, South Ozone Park/Howard Beach (QN 10), and Tottenville/Great Kills (SI 03), were excluded from this analysis because there were fewer than 30 rental listings in 2014.
Households with children under 18, seniors, and people living alone were more likely to be rent burdened and severely rent burdened than renter households as a whole.

Between 2006 and 2014, the share of single-person households that were rent burdened increased by seven percentage points—an increase nearly twice as large as that for renter households overall. Households with children under 18 years old and single-person households saw rising rent burdens during this period; in both groups, the share of severely rent burdened households in 2014 exceeded one third.

**Figure 7: Rent-Burdened Share by Household Type, New York City**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Household Type</th>
<th>2006</th>
<th>2014</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Households with Children under 18</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Households with Seniors</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Single-Person Households</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All Households</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Very few recently available rental units were affordable to low- and moderate-income households.

Households living in recently available units (occupied units whose tenants moved in less than 12 months before their survey date) paid higher gross rent on average than households who had lived in their homes for more than a year. Figure 8 shows the share of appropriately sized, recently available units that households at different income levels could afford. In 2014, only five percent of these units were affordable to households earning 30 percent of AMI; households earning 50 percent of AMI could afford 12 percent of recently available units. For households earning 80 percent of AMI, 40 percent of recently available units were affordable, down 12 percentage points from 2006.

**Figure 8: Recently Available Rental Units Affordable to Appropriately-Sized Households, New York City**

Sources: American Community Survey, US Department of Housing and Urban Development Section 8/HOME Program Income Guidelines, NYU Furman Center
New York City residents using housing choice vouchers were concentrated in lower-cost neighborhoods.

The neighborhoods with the highest housing choice voucher shares had some of the lowest asking rents in the city. The maximum standard payment for a two-bedroom unit in New York City in FY2015 was $1,481. The top three neighborhoods with the highest voucher holder shares were in the Bronx: 20.2 percent of housing units used housing choice vouchers in University Heights/Fordham/Morris Heights/Mount Hope (BX 05), followed by 19.1 percent in Morrisania/Belmont (BX 03 and BX 06), and 15.1 percent in Mott Haven/Hunts Point (BX 01 and BX 02).

New York City continued to face a shortage of rental housing units.

The rental vacancy rate in New York City fell slightly between 2013 and 2014, reaching 3.4 percent in 2014—tied with 2007 as the lowest rate since at least 2005.
FINDING #11

In 2014, Brooklyn had the highest share of renter households that were severely crowded.

Faced with increasing rents and fewer available units, households may turn to doubling up. A renter household is considered to be severely overcrowded if there are more than 1.5 people per room in the unit. Citywide, 4.4 percent of renter households were severely crowded in 2014, but there was considerable variation across boroughs. In Brooklyn, five percent of households were severely crowded, followed by the Bronx (4.7%) and Queens (4.6%). Severe crowding rates in Manhattan (2.5%) and Staten Island (2.8%) were significantly lower.

Figure 11: Severe Crowding Rate, 2014

FINDING #12

The housing code violation rate increased between 2013 and 2015.

In 2015, the city issued about 231.4 housing code violations per 1,000 units. This was an increase of about 15 percent from 2013, the year the city issued the lowest number of violations since its 311 hotline became fully operational in 2004. While the number of total housing code violations issued increased, serious violations experienced a slight decline of 1.6 percent from 2014 to 2015.

Figure 12: New Housing Code Violations (per 1,000 Privately-Owned Rental Units), New York City

Source: New York City Department of Housing and Preservation and Development, New York City Housing Authority, NYU Furman Center

Sources: American Community Survey, NYU Furman Center
The State of Neighborhood Services and Conditions

Indicators of school performance continued to improve, although there was wide variation in neighborhoods across the city. Subway ridership reached an all-time high, while subway performance declined. Compared to the previous year, in 2015 the violent crime rate rose in the Bronx, Manhattan, and Staten Island but declined in Brooklyn.

**ELEMENTARY AND MIDDLE SCHOOLS**

**FINDING #1**

**Student performance in math continued to improve citywide, but disparities persisted across boroughs.**

Citywide, students in grades three through eight performed better in math in 2015 than they did in the previous year. While, in most boroughs, proficiency rates in math increased between 2014 and 2015, the gains were smaller than they had been between 2013 and 2014, and in Staten Island proficiency rates in fact fell slightly. The highest proficiency rates were in Queens (42.7%) and Manhattan (41.6%), while barely more than one of every five students in the Bronx were proficient in math in the school year ending in 2015.

**Figure 1: Share of Students (Grades Three through Eight) Performing at Grade Level in Math**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Borough</th>
<th>2013</th>
<th>2014</th>
<th>2015</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bronx</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brooklyn</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>34%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manhattan</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>42%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Queens</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>39%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staten Island</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New York City</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>36%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Sources: New York City Department of Education, NYU Furman Center*
Student performance in English language arts continued to improve citywide.

In English language arts, students performed better in all five boroughs in 2015 than they did the year before, although significant disparities remained. Manhattan and Staten Island were tied for the highest proficiency rates in the subject, at 37.6 percent. The Bronx had the lowest proficiency rate at 17 percent and the smallest year-over-year gain of 1.5 percentage points. In all boroughs and citywide, proficiency rates were lower for English language arts than for math, and Staten Island was the only borough to make larger gains, in percentage point terms, in English language arts than in math between 2013 and 2015.

Figure 2: Share of Students (Grades Three through Eight) Performing at Grade Level in English Language Arts

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2013</th>
<th>2014</th>
<th>2015</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bronx</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brooklyn</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manhattan</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Queens</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staten Island</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New York City</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Student performance varied widely across schools.

In many schools, fewer than 15 percent of fourth graders scored proficient on either the English language arts or math subject tests in 2015. Lower-performing schools were concentrated in the southern and central Bronx, eastern Brooklyn, and northern Manhattan. In some neighborhoods, however, such as Queens Village (QN 13) in Queens, Flatlands/Canarsie (BK 18) in Brooklyn, and East Harlem (MN 11) in Manhattan, schools that were geographically quite close together had proficiency rates that differed by upwards of 30 percentage points.

Figure 3: Fourth Grade Math Performance and Number of Students Tested by School, 2015

- Math Proficiency: Less than 20%
- Math Proficiency: 20% to 40%
- Math Proficiency: 40% to 60%
- Math Proficiency: 60% or greater

Number of 4th Graders Tested
- <100 students
- 100+ students

Sources: NYU Institute for Education & Social Policy, New York Education Department, NYU Furman Center
**SECONDARY SCHOOLS**

**FINDING #4**

**High school graduation rates improved citywide.**

Citywide, more than 70 percent of the high school class of 2015 graduated by June of their senior year, a sizeable increase from the rate of about 52 percent just ten years earlier. While Staten Island continued to have the highest high school graduation rates among the five boroughs in 2015, it saw a small decline from 2014. In every other borough, graduation rates continued the recent upward trend.

*Figure 4: Four-Year High School Graduation Rates (Measured in June)*

![Graph showing high school graduation rates](source)

Source: New York City Department of Education, NYU Furman Center

**SECONDARY SCHOOLS**

**FINDING #5**

**Increases in high school graduation rates came from declining dropout rates and a falling share of students enrolled beyond their senior year.**

The dropout rate (defined as the share of students who, as of June 30, four years after entering ninth grade, have not graduated and are not still enrolled in school) dropped by seven percentage points—from 16 percent to nine percent—between the class of 2005 and the class of 2015. Furthermore, the share of students who were still enrolled four years after entering ninth grade also declined as graduation rates increased.

*Figure 5: High School Outcomes in June of Class Year (Four Years after Matriculation)*

![Graph showing high school outcomes](source)

Source: New York City Department of Education, NYU Furman Center
The share of 5- to 17-year-olds attending private schools declined.

Citywide, the share of 5- to 17-year-olds attending private schools, including both religious and secular private schools, declined from a peak of 21.6 percent in 2007 to less than 17 percent in 2014. Manhattan had the highest rates of private school attendance between 2006 and 2014, but that rate declined precipitously between 2009 and 2010 in the midst of the Great Recession, falling from nearly 30 percent to slightly less than 25 percent in just one year. The Bronx was the only borough where less than one in ten school-aged children attended a private school in 2014.

The share of students attending private schools varied widely by neighborhood.

In the Upper East Side (MN 8) in Manhattan, and in Borough Park (BK 12) in Brooklyn, more than half of school-aged children attended private schools, according to 2010-2014 estimates from the American Community Survey. In general, the neighborhoods with higher shares of students attending private schools did not have poorer performance in public elementary schools; indeed, very few students attended private schools in the neighborhoods with the lowest proficiency rates (see Figure 3).
CRIME FINDING #8

Serious crime rates went down slightly from the previous year.
The New York City Police Department tracks serious felonies, which include murder and non-negligent manslaughter, rape, felony assault, and robbery (broken out as violent crimes), as well as burglary, grand larceny, and car theft (broken out as property crimes). The total rate of serious crimes per 1,000 residents declined slightly between 2014 and 2015 (from 13.0 to 12.9), to match the lowest rate since 2000, recorded in 2010. Although the total number of violent crimes rose from 38,023 in 2014 to 38,667 in 2015, the resulting change in the violent crime rate was less than 0.1 crimes per 1,000 residents. All of the reduction in the overall serious crime rate, therefore, was attributable to the decline in the property crime rate from 8.4 in 2014 to 8.1 in 2015.

CRIME FINDING #9

Although crime declined overall between 2014 and 2015, rates of murder, rape, and robbery went up.
In 2015, there were 352 homicides (crimes classified as murder or non-negligent manslaughter) in New York City, an increase from the 333 recorded in the previous year though still below the 419 homicides in 2012. There were 1,435 recorded rapes in 2015, compared to 1,352 in 2014, and 16,930 robberies, up from 16,533 in the previous year. Crimes of all types have declined since 2000, and the recent increases in certain categories were small compared to the gains made since that year.

Sources: New York City Police Department, US Census, NYU Furman Center

Note: Due to rounding, the sum of violent crime rate and property crime rate may not exactly equal total serious crime rate.
**FINDING #10**

**Compared to the previous year, in 2015 the violent crime rate rose in the Bronx, Manhattan, and Staten Island, but declined in Brooklyn.**

The rate of serious violent crimes rose by more than five percent compared to the previous year in the Bronx (6.5%), Manhattan (7.6%), and Staten Island (6.0%). In Brooklyn, the violent crime rate dropped from 5.3 per 1,000 residents in 2014 to 5.0 in 2015, a decline of 4.1 percent.

**Figure 10: Serious Violent Crime Rate (per 1,000 Residents) by Borough**

Sources: New York City Police Department, US Census, NYU Furman Center

**FINDING #11**

**The rate of serious property crimes fell citywide but rose in the Bronx and Manhattan, compared to the previous year.**

The rate of serious property crimes per 1,000 residents rose in the Bronx (from 7.4 per 1,000 residents in 2014 to 7.7 in 2015) and Manhattan (from 12.2 in 2014 to 12.5 in 2015). In Queens, the property crime rate fell from 6.9 per 1,000 residents in 2014 to 6.3 in 2015, a drop of more than eight percent.

**Figure 11: Serious Property Crime Rate (per 1,000 Residents) by Borough**

Sources: New York City Police Department, US Census, NYU Furman Center
**Transit and Transportation**

**Finding #12**

**More than two-thirds of New Yorkers commuted without a car.**

A large majority—70.8 percent—of New Yorkers commuted to work without relying on a car in 2014.\(^1\) The share of commuters travelling by bicycle increased slightly since 2000, while the share walking to work declined. The largest increase in car-free commuting was in the share of commuters travelling to work by public transportation; this share increased from 52.6 percent in 2000 to 59.4 percent in 2014. In 2000, 33.9 percent of New York City commuters drove to work; by 2014, that share had declined to 27.5 percent.

**Figure 12: Means of Travelling to Work (Share of Workers Who Do Not Work at Home), New York City**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Public Transit</th>
<th>Bike</th>
<th>Walk</th>
<th>Car</th>
<th>Car Free (Transit + Walk + Bike)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2000</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>55%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sources: US Census (2000), American Community Survey (2014), NYU Furman Center

1 The census and American Community Survey ask about the primary means of travelling to work, so some residents who, for example, drive to a subway station and take the subway most of the way to work, will be recorded as commuting by public transit only. See the Indicators Definitions and Methods sections for more information about this indicator.

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**Transit and Transportation**

**Finding #13**

**Subway ridership rose in recent years, while bus ridership declined.**

Over half a million more people rode the subway on an average weekday in 2014 than did in 2007, and ridership increased every year since 2009. Overall, between 2007 and 2014, average weekday ridership on the subway increased 11 percent. Average weekday ridership on Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA) buses (including MTA Bus Company\(^2\) and New York City Transit Bus), however, dropped by about 170,000, or six percent, during this same period.

**Figure 13: Average Weekday Ridership on Metropolitan Transportation Authority, New York City**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Subway</th>
<th>Bus</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>4,500,000</td>
<td>1,500,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>5,000,000</td>
<td>1,400,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sources: Metropolitan Transportation Authority, NYU Furman Center

Note: Bus category includes both New York City Transit bus and MTA Bus Company ridership.

2 Some MTA Bus Company routes have stops both outside and within New York City, so not all riders represented in bus ridership figures live within the five boroughs.
Ridership increased throughout the subway system.

Between 2009 and 2014, ridership increased in the vast majority of subway stations, but the increase was particularly strong in northern Brooklyn and Manhattan. Five of the ten stops with the greatest percentage increase in total ridership (excluding stations where significant construction occurred in 2009) were on the L line in northern Brooklyn.

Subway performance declined in recent years.

The Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA) computes two main indicators of subway performance. On-time performance measures how well the system is at keeping to a schedule. Maintenance, equipment problems, sick passengers, and other problems can reduce on-time performance. Subway wait assessment is the MTA's standard measurement of delays, and measures the likelihood that a passenger would have to wait longer than scheduled for a train. Both indicators show that subway reliability has declined in recent years. In October of 2015, only 67.5 percent of trains were on time at the terminal, down from 91.3 percent in 2010. Subway wait assessment scores have fallen from a peak of 80.3 in June of 2013 to 77.5 in October of 2015.

Sources: Metropolitan Transportation Authority, NYU Furman Center
Subway reliability varied widely across the city. Lines that serve much of the Bronx, the east side of Manhattan, and southern Brooklyn, including the 2, 4, 5, and 6 trains, had substantially lower rates of on-time performance, with less than 60 percent of trains arriving at their respective terminals close to their scheduled time in 2015 (through October of that year). Only the 7 train, serving much of Queens; the L train, serving northern Brooklyn; and shuttle trains were on time at least 80 percent of the time—which may be due to recent upgrades to these lines.

Figure 16: On-Time Subway Performance by Subway Route, 2015

Subway service degraded much more rapidly in some neighborhoods than in others. Between 2010 and 2015 (through October), on-time performance on lines serving much of the Bronx, the east side of Manhattan, and southern Brooklyn declined by more than 30 percentage points. The 7 and L trains, on the other hand, maintained relatively good on-time performance during this period, likely due to recent upgrades to these lines. Most lines, however, saw on-time performance drop by more than 10 percentage points.

Figure 17: Percentage Point Change in On-Time Subway Performance by Subway Route, 2010-2015

Sources: Metropolitan Transportation Authority, NYU Furman Center
Note: On-time performance is reported for each subway line. For each station, we take the average performance level for all the lines serving that station.