2010 Census Mail Return
Rate by Census Tract

- 33% – 60%
- 60% – 65%
- 65% – 70%
- 70% – 73%
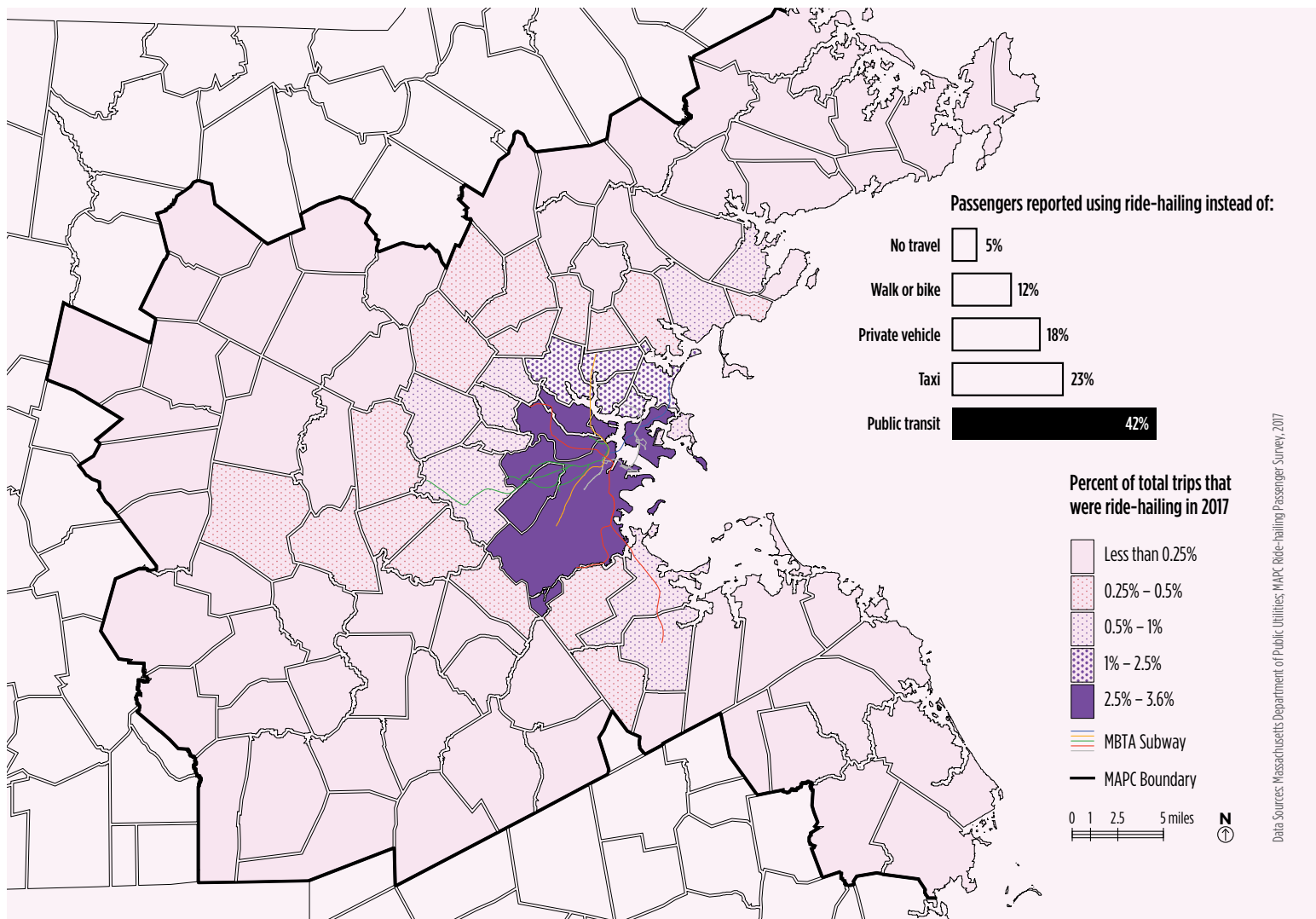- Above 73%
- MAPC Boundary

0 1 2.5 5 miles

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Census 2020 Hard to Count Areas

Congressional districts are redrawn and billions of federal dollars are distributed based on the Census Bureau's once-a-decade effort to tally every person in the U.S. Despite the goal of a full count, some areas and populations have lower Census mail return rates than others. These so-called 'hard to count' (HTC) groups include children, immigrants, people of color, rural and low-income households, those who have been targeted by law enforcement, and more.

As a result, White middle- to upper-income people are more likely to be accurately represented in the Census than marginalized groups, reinforcing structural inequities nationwide. Inner core communities have most of Greater Boston's HTC tracts, with more people of color, English language learners, and households below the poverty line than much of the region.

In 2018, the proposal to include a citizenship question on the 2020 Census, along with a push to move the Census online, raised concerns that participation rates will drop for non-citizens and those with limited Internet access. This, coupled with insufficient federal funding and limited testing of new methods, makes a full count more difficult. Public servants and advocates must reach HTC groups to avoid the negative consequences of under-counting our diverse region.

When a household doesn't return its completed census questionnaire, the Census Bureau sends people into the field to talk with each non-responding household one-by-one. These households are considered "hard to count."

Passengers reported using ride-hailing instead of:

No travel	5%
Walk or bike	12%
Private vehicle	18%
Taxi	23%
Public transit	42%

Percent of total trips that were ride-hailing in 2017

- Less than 0.25%
- 0.25 – 0.5%
- 0.5 – 1%
- 1 – 2.5%
- 2.5 – 3.6%
- MBTA Subway
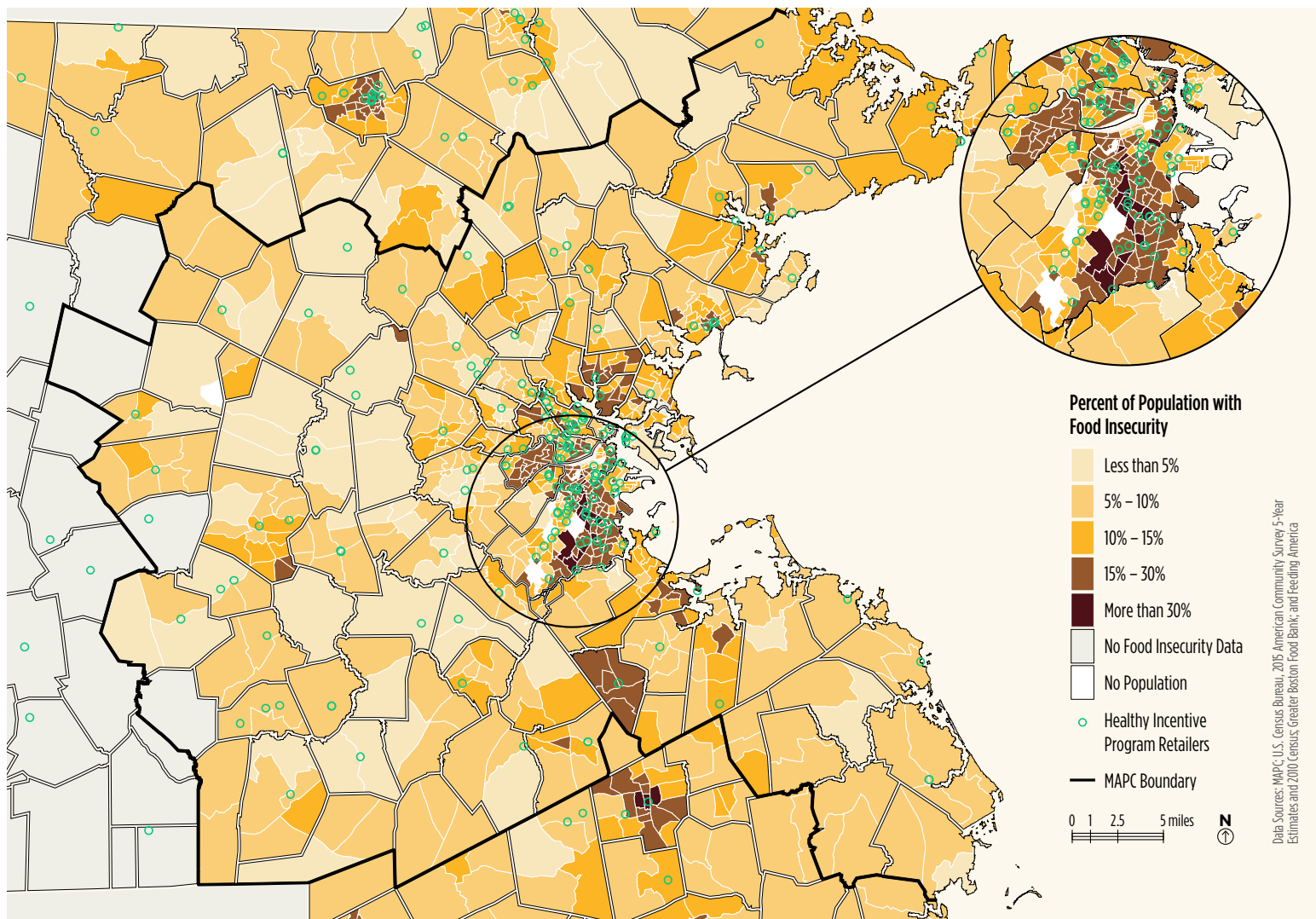- MAPC Boundary

0   1   2.5   5 miles

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The Ride-Hailing Effect in Greater Boston

In the past decade, ride-hailing companies such as Uber and Lyft have fundamentally altered the way people get around. Nearly 65 million ride-hailing trips started in Massachusetts in 2017, with over 85% originating in 19 of Greater Boston's inner core municipalities. While these services are useful, two MAPC studies suggest that not all outcomes have been positive: ride-hailing passengers are substituting for more sustainable transportation modes, adding more cars to our already-congested roadways.

MAPC surveyed nearly 1,000 ride-hailing passengers and found that 42% of respondents would have taken public transit were ride-hailing unavailable. Ride-hailing is most common in cities like Somerville, where more than one in 40 trips was via ride-hailing in 2017. The financial impact on the MBTA has been substantial. We estimate that the MBTA lost at least $16.5 million in net revenue in 2017 from ride-hailing trips starting in the core, even after considering passengers with stored value on transit passes.

While more nuanced data on ride-hailing travel patterns are needed to inform evidence-based policies, these data suggest a restructuring of the regional transportation landscape and a growing need for further research into the environmental, social, and economic impacts of ride-hailing.

Percent of Population with Food Insecurity

- Less than 5%
- 5% – 10%
- 10% – 15%
- 15% – 30%
- More than 30%
- No Food Insecurity Data
- No Population
- ○ Healthy Incentive Program Retailers
- — MAPC Boundary

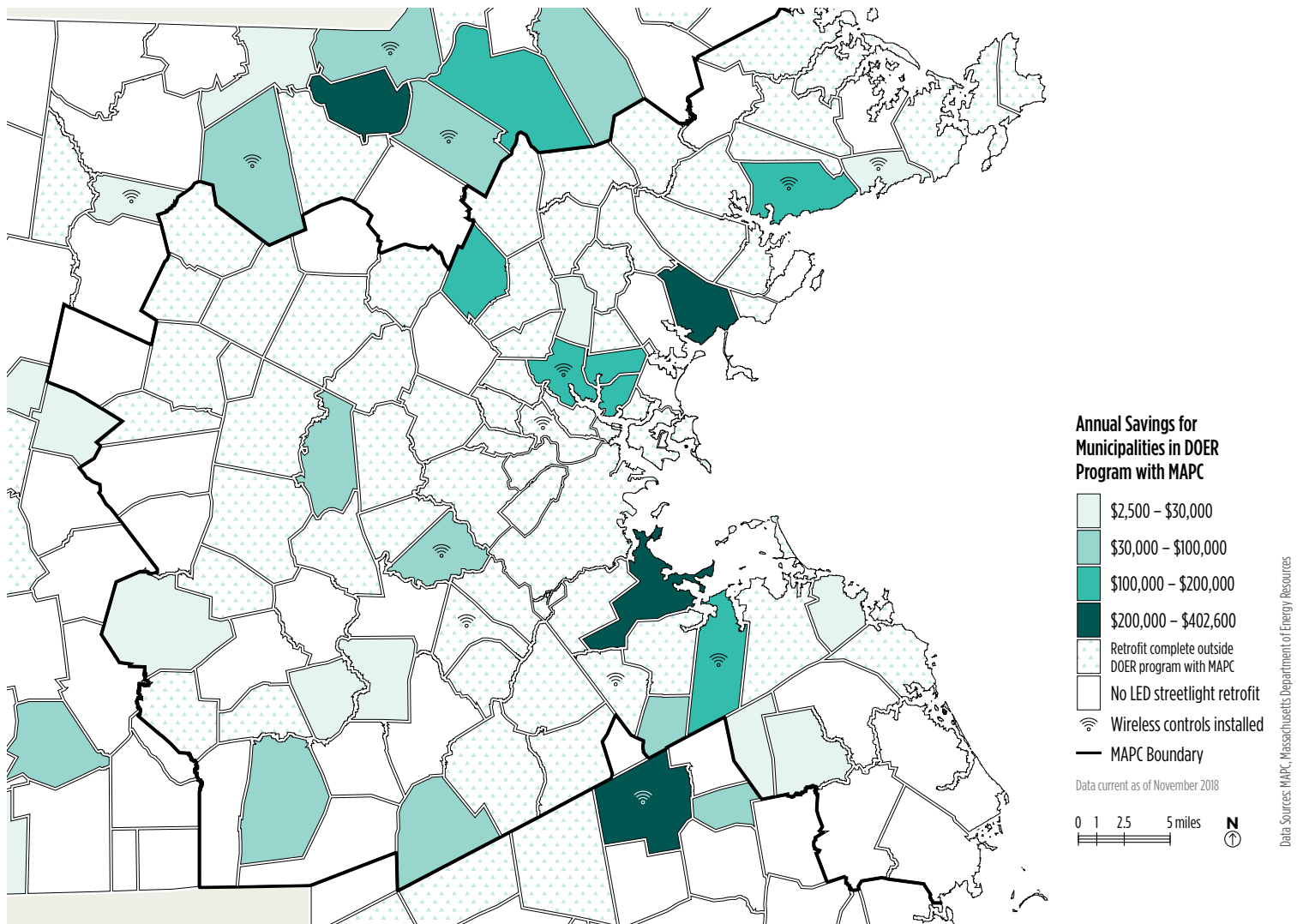0 1 2.5   5 miles

N

Food Access and Security

One in ten people in Massachusetts is food insecure, meaning they regularly struggle to feed themselves and their families. Food insecurity is driven by poverty and linked with poor health and developmental delays in children, maternal depression, and numerous other health issues. In Greater Boston, food insecurity is most prevalent in the inner core, but the issue affects communities far and wide, from Randolph and Framingham to several North Shore communities.

The Healthy Incentives Program (HIP) is an evidence-based state policy aimed at improving food security. Launched in April 2017, HIP provides participants with a dollar-for-dollar match for SNAP (the federal Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program) when vegetables and fruits are purchased at participating farmers' markets, community-supported agriculture (CSA) programs, farm stands, and mobile markets across the state. Since its launch, SNAP recipients—over 39,000 households—have purchased more than $4 million of produce from local farmers, marking nearly a 600% increase in fresh, healthy, local food sales to low-income families compared to 2016. HIP substantially increases food security—continued support is necessary to improving healthy food access for all.

Annual Savings for Municipalities in DOER Program with MAPC

- $2,500 – $30,000
- $30,000 – $100,000
- $100,000 – $200,000
- $200,000 – $402,600
- Retrofit complete outside DOER program with MAPC
- No LED streetlight retrofit
- Wireless controls installed
- MAPC Boundary

Data current as of November 2018

0 1 2.5 5 miles

N

Cost Savings from LED Streetlight Conversions

Massachusetts municipalities are rapidly installing energy-efficient LED streetlights to replace older fixtures, providing better light quality and significant savings. From 2013 through 2016, MAPC helped facilitate these retrofits in about 30 cities and towns across the state. In 2017, the Massachusetts Department of Energy Resources (DOER) selected MAPC to manage the Rapid LED Streetlight Conversion Program, a statewide grant program to convert the remaining municipally-owned streetlights to LEDs. Through this program, MAPC worked with more than 60 municipalities. By the end of the program in March 2019, these municipalities will have collectively converted more than 95,000 lights, saving $4.48 million and 28.8 million kWh of electricity each year. This equates to approximately 9,942 metric tons of carbon dioxide in avoided emissions.

All streetlights in the program are "control-ready," meaning that they can support wireless controls that allow for dimming during part of the night when low pedestrian activity does not require as much light. At least 12 municipalities in the program have installed wireless controls to achieve greater energy savings through dimming. For more information, visit **MAPC.MA/LED.**

Rapid LED Streetlight Conversion is a municipal streetlight retrofit program funded by the Massachusetts Department of Energy Resources (DOER). MAPC administered the program for all cities and towns that receive electricity from National Grid and Eversource.
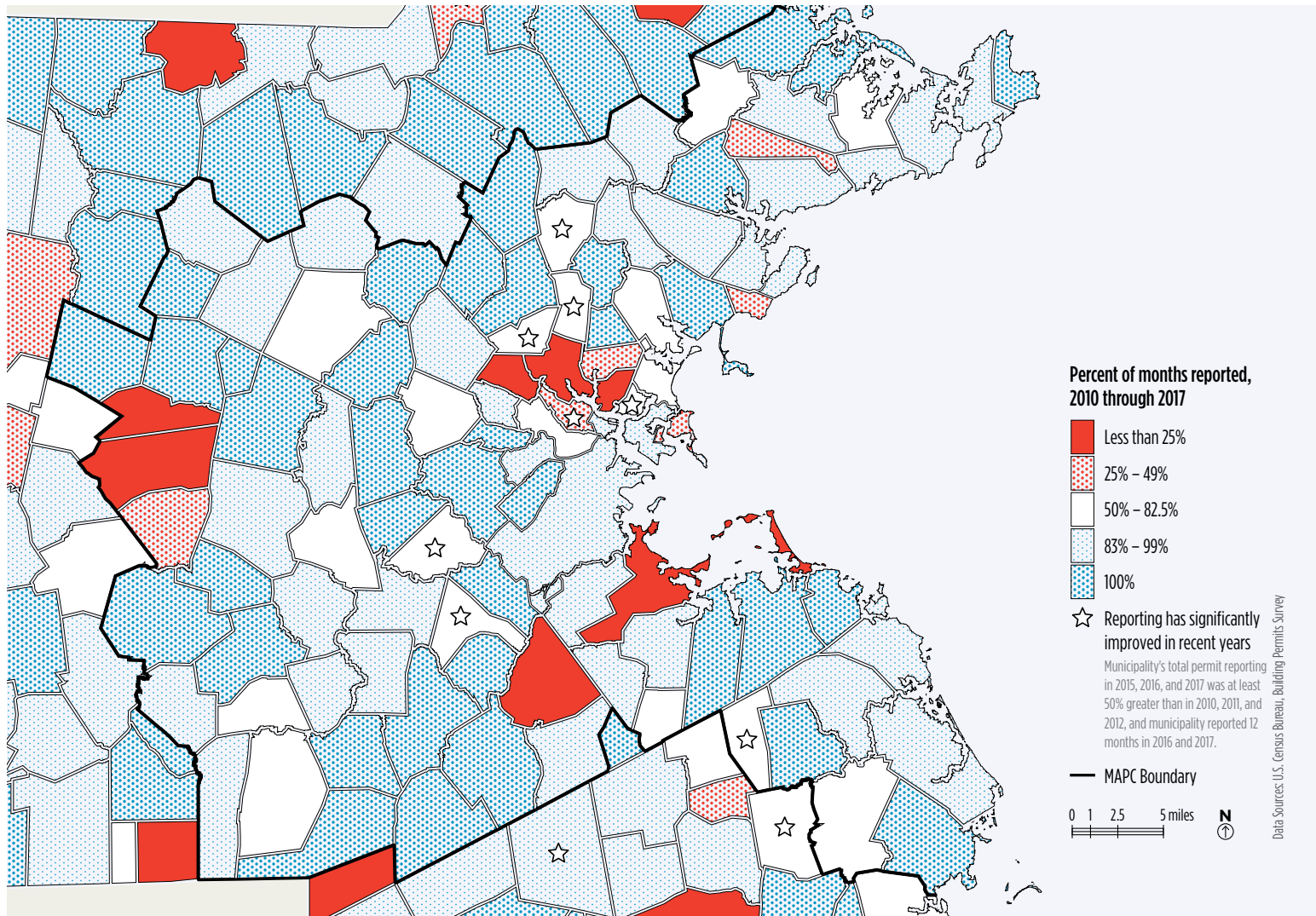
Housing Building Permit Reporting

Greater Boston is in a housing crisis. Since the 1990s, housing production has not kept up with population growth, resulting in low vacancy rates and high prices. Many state and local leaders are working to alleviate the pressure through new housing programs, policies, and production, but progress is slower than needed. Tracking housing production progress requires good data, and the best available come from the U.S. Census Bureau's Building Permits Survey (BPS), which tracks new housing units authorized by building permits every month. However, the BPS is only useful if all municipalities submit accurate monthly permit information to the Bureau, and keeping and reporting data is a staff expense that municipalities have to incur.

From 2010 to 2017, more than 60% of MAPC's cities and towns provided complete or near-complete permit information. However, 14 municipalities in the region reported data less than half the time. When data is unreported, the Bureau fills in missing values based on prior years, which can severely underestimate the number of units built in rapidly-growing areas and overestimate in areas where current growth has dropped. To accurately track our housing production goals, municipalities must consistently report their housing permits.
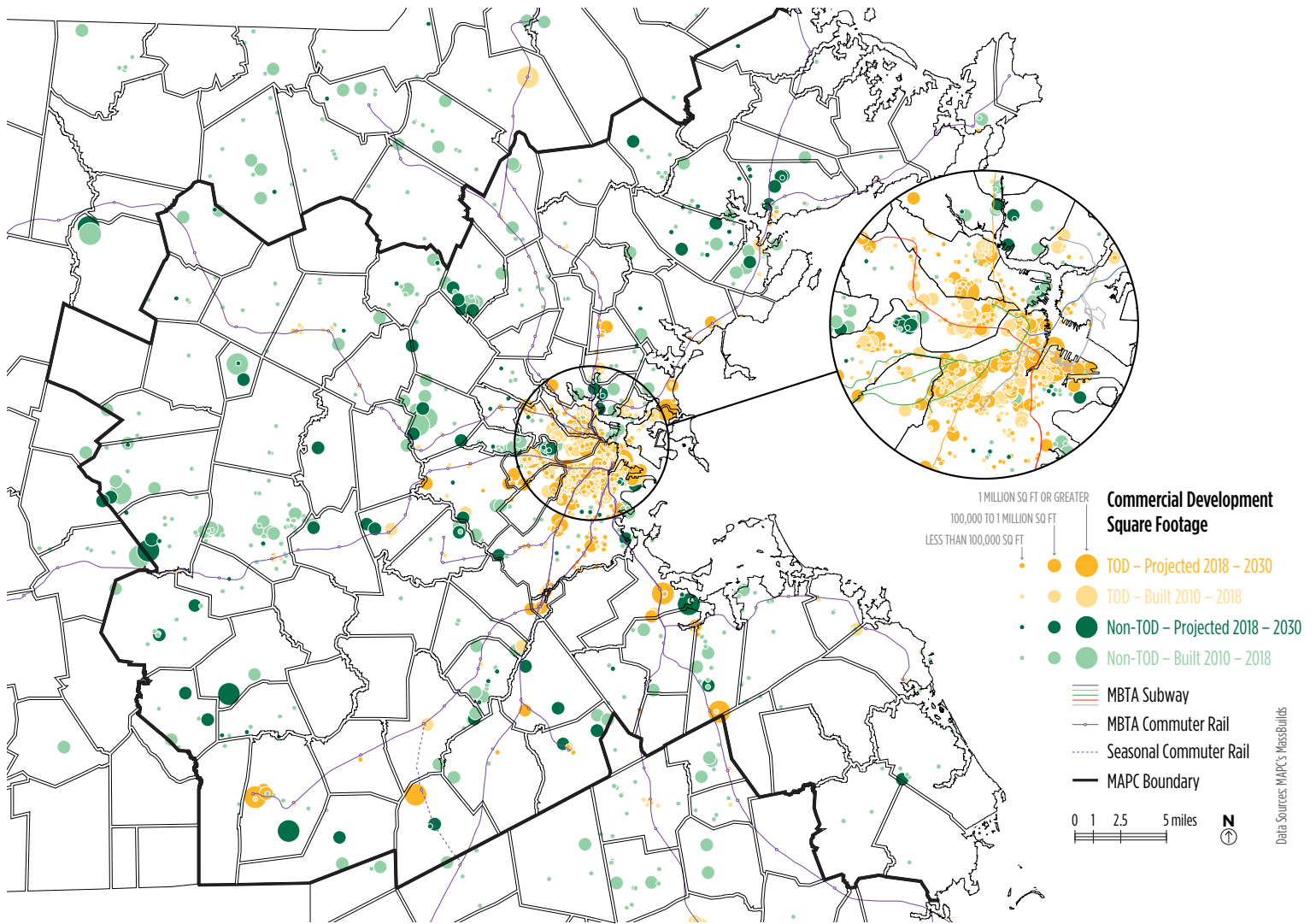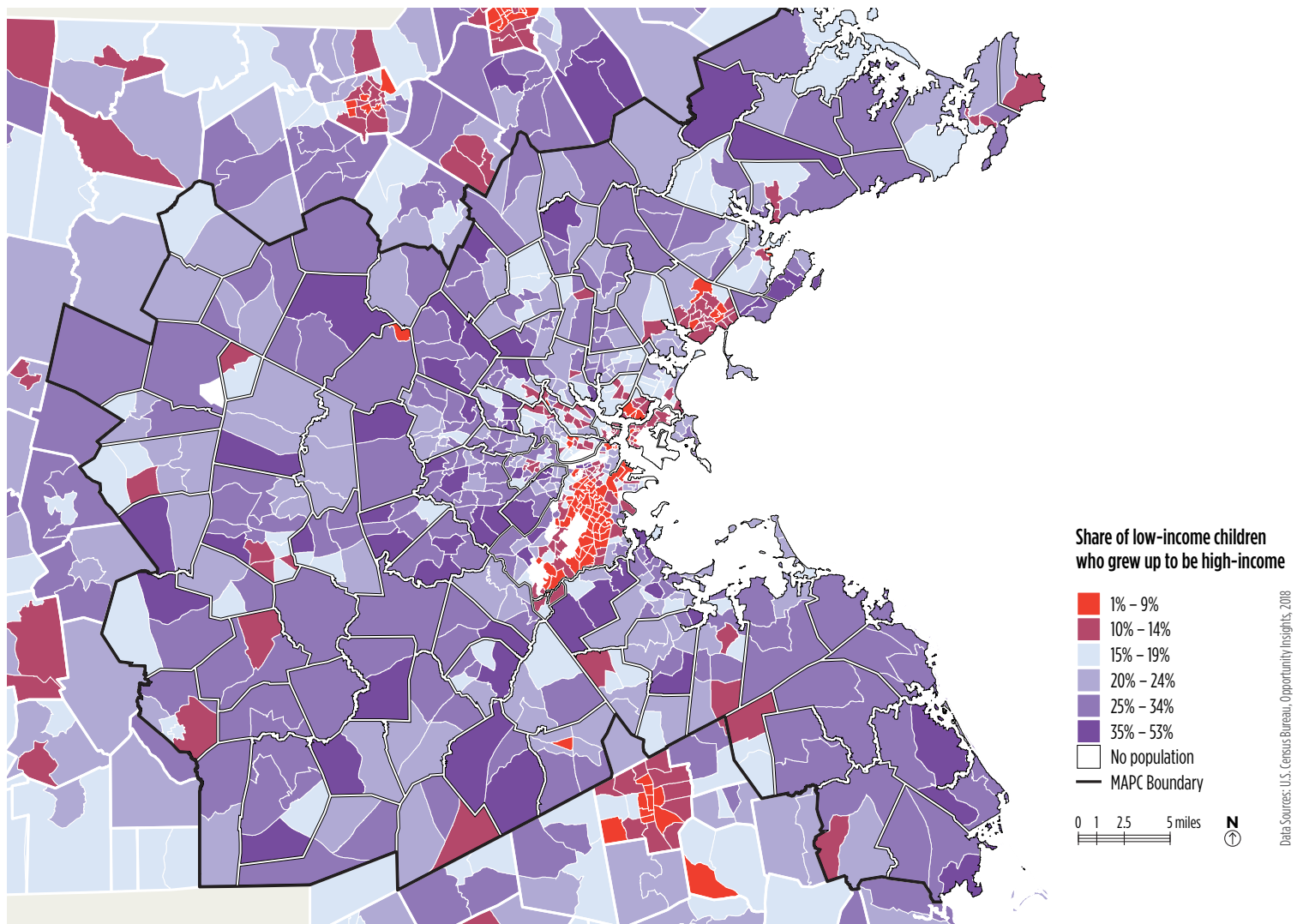
Transit-Oriented Commercial Development

MAPC collects information on commercial and residential development from developers, municipal officials, and the public through MassBuilds, an interactive and public website. MassBuilds data helps us keep track of development trends and plan for the future.

One clear trend found in MassBuilds is that commercial development is increasingly likely to be built near public transportation. From 2010 to 2014, 48% of commercial development was within a half-mile of transit, increasing to 57% from 2015 to 2018. Looking out to 2030, 68% of commercial development projects in the pipeline are situated near transit.

The trend towards more transit-oriented commercial development is not surprising. These developments, and the businesses and jobs that fill them, are easily accessible to the potential workers and customers who live near and commute via transit. Since fewer people need parking, developers can use more area for rentable space. These developments also help reduce greenhouse gas emissions since fewer people drive to reach them. Municipalities and legislators should continue to push for policies, programs, and incentives for transit-oriented commercial development.

To view and download the data, visit **MASSBUILDS.COM**.

Share of low-income children who grew up to be high-income

- ■ 1% – 9%
- ■ 10% – 14%
- ■ 15% – 19%
- ■ 20% – 24%
- ■ 25% – 34%
- ■ 35% – 53%
- □ No population
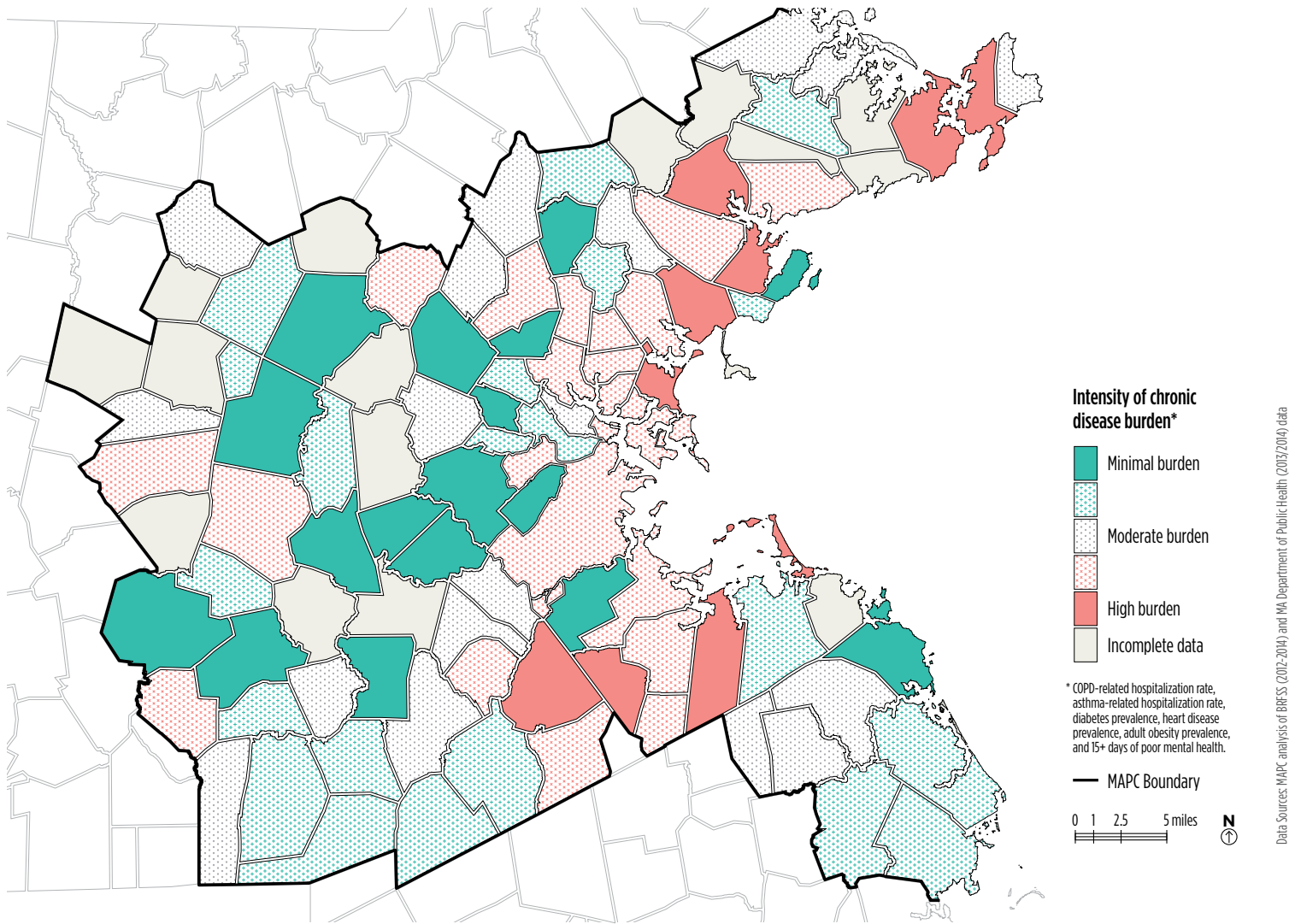- — MAPC Boundary

0 1 2.5 5 miles

N ↑

Economic Mobility in Greater Boston

Greater Boston is often lauded as a prosperous region with a strong economy. However, the region consistently ranks near the top of lists for income inequality, and legacies of disinvestment and discrimination have created pockets of chronic disadvantage in Greater Boston's neighborhoods. New data from the U.S. Census Bureau, with research from Harvard and Brown Universities, highlight that the invisible lines separating neighborhoods have long-ranging impacts on the children who grow up within them.

The Opportunity Atlas, an extensive, publicly-available data project, tracks the economic trajectories of children born between 1978 and 1983. It shows that children born to parents with low incomes in suburban areas in the MAPC region were more likely to climb the economic ladder than those born in the inner core. Yet within the inner core, pockets of advantage and disadvantage are sometimes next door. Comparing these neighboring communities offers potential insights for positive change. Policies should bolster opportunity in neighborhoods where economic mobility is stymied and dismantle barriers that prevent low-income households from accessing housing throughout the region. This requires correcting historical and present wrongs that have maintained racial and class segregation and disadvantage.

The color gradient in this map represents the probability that a child born into a low-income household between 1978 and 1983 in a given census tract now lives in a high-income household—one with an income in the top 20% of the nation.

Intensity of chronic disease burden*

- Minimal burden
- Moderate burden
- High burden
- Incomplete data

* COPD-related hospitalization rate, asthma-related hospitalization rate, diabetes prevalence, heart disease prevalence, adult obesity prevalence, and 15+ days of poor mental health.

— MAPC Boundary

0 1 2.5   5 miles

N

Data Sources: MAPC analysis of BRFSS (2012-2014) and MA Department of Public Health (2013/2014) data
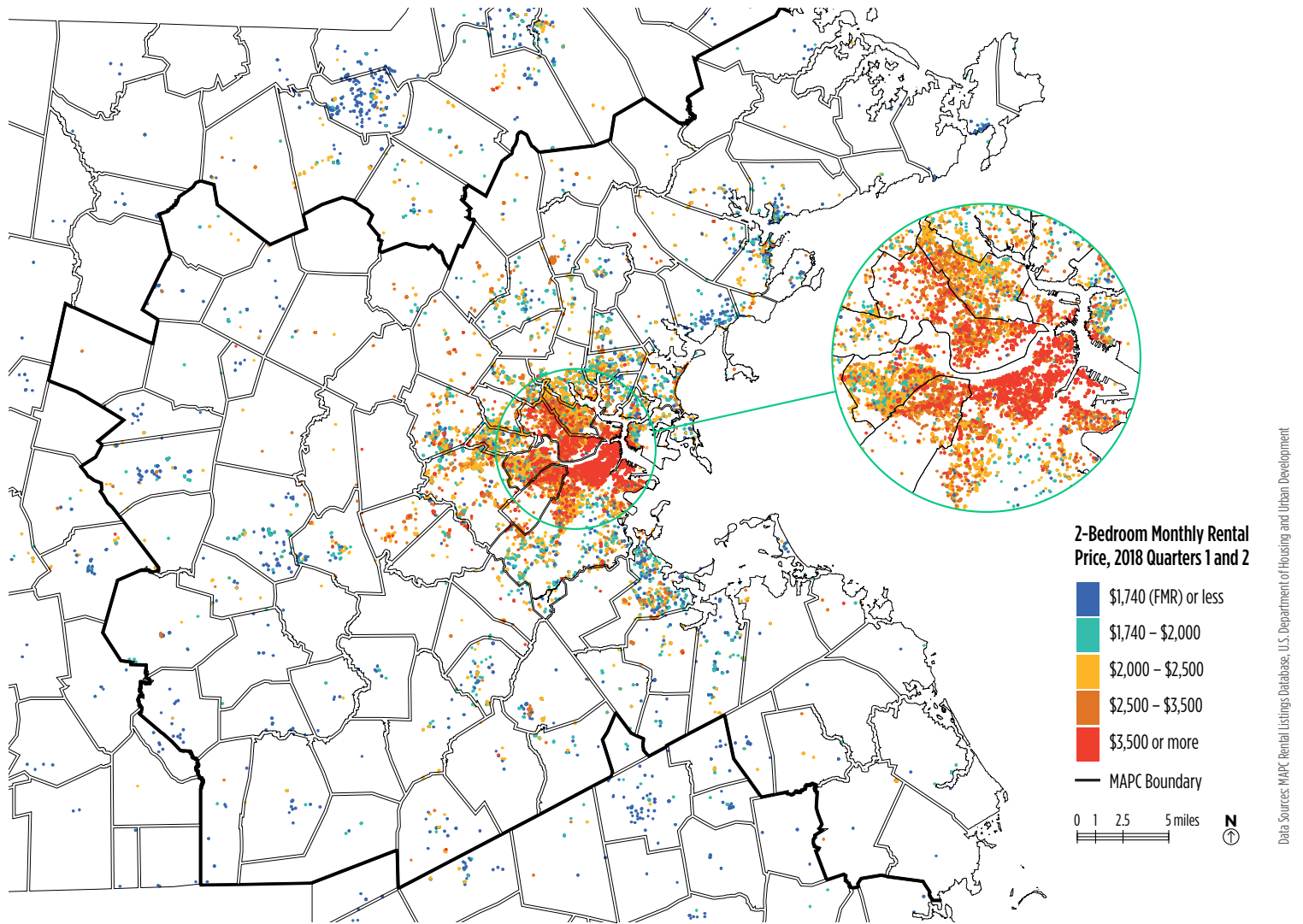
Chronic Disease and Climate Change

Neighborhoods are a more telling predictor of community health than any other factor. Where you live can dictate the quality of the air you breathe, your housing and healthy food options, and your access to jobs, social networks, and quality health care. Often, because of discriminatory policies that have led to disparate neighborhood conditions, low-income communities and people of color have a disproportionately high chronic disease burden.

One way to understand how place affects health is with MAPC's chronic disease index, which classifies each municipality in the region on its prevalence of six chronic diseases influenced by the physical, environmental, and social features of one's neighborhood. The index includes hospitalization rates for asthma and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD); and prevalence of diabetes, heart disease, adult obesity, and probable depression.

Interestingly, seven of the nine MAPC municipalities with high chronic disease burden are coastal. In the event of climate-related flooding and storm events, people with chronic diseases may require unique support services, such as transportation and stable electricity. Each city and town must consider the health needs of at-risk residents and develop health-conscious climate preparedness strategies.

2-Bedroom Monthly Rental Price, 2018 Quarters 1 and 2

- $1,740 (FMR) or less
- $1,740 – $2,000
- $2,000 – $2,500
- $2,500 – $3,500
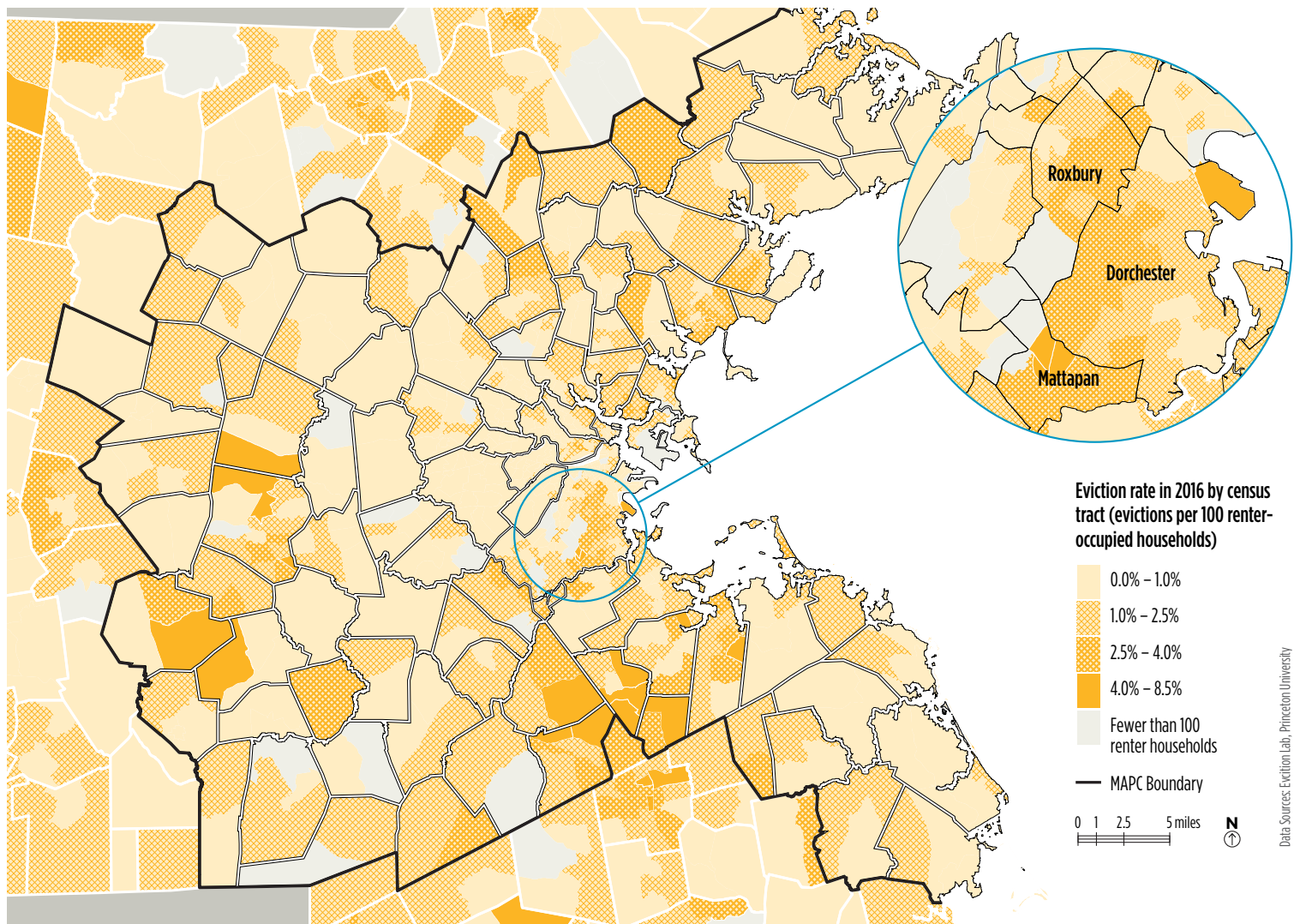- $3,500 or more
- MAPC Boundary

0   1   2.5   5 miles

N

Renting an Apartment in Greater Boston

Finding an apartment to rent in Greater Boston is stressful. Prices are high, available units are scarce, and getting a lease is often competitive. For lower-income households the process is even harder, with few naturally affordable apartments and lottery waiting lists in the hundreds for deed-restricted affordable units. For those low-income households able to get a rental assistance voucher, the monthly pressure of making rent is somewhat reduced—that is, if they can find an apartment listed under Fair Market Rent (FMR) with a landlord who accepts vouchers.

As seen in the map above, this isn't so simple. Through an analysis of MAPC's Rental Listings Database, we find that only 6% of two-bedroom apartments in Greater Boston available for rent through online sources are listed at or below FMR, and only 2% in the inner core. The data also confirm that even for households making up to $96,000, finding an affordable apartment in the inner core can be hard, with only 36% of two-bedroom units listed at $2,400 or less. Advocates, local officials, and legislators must push for action to make housing affordable and available to all.

Fair Market Rent (FMR) is the maximum rent for an apartment to be eligible for federal housing voucher programs. FMR is used as a standard for many other housing programs.

Eviction rate in 2016 by census tract (evictions per 100 renter-occupied households)

- 0.0% – 1.0%
- 1.0% – 2.5%
- 2.5% – 4.0%
- 4.0% – 8.5%
- Fewer than 100 renter households
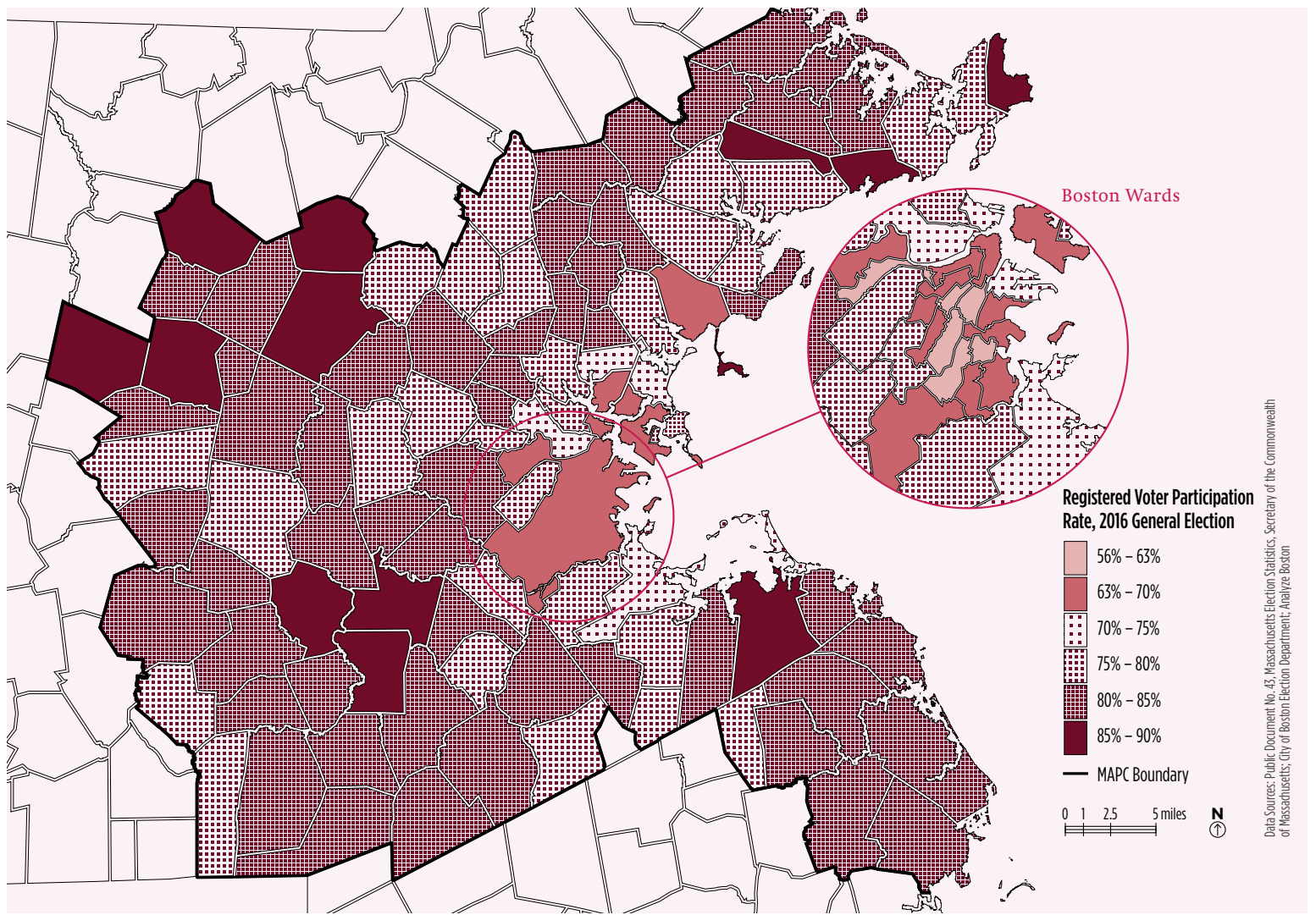- — MAPC Boundary

0   1   2.5   5 miles

N

Eviction Rates in Greater Boston

As the housing crisis continues to worsen, the specter of eviction looms over vulnerable renters. Evictions are a devastating shock to households. They put families at further risk of homelessness and are linked to job loss and poor mental health. Research shows the risk for eviction is highest among low-income women of color, victims of domestic violence, and families with children.

Gathering eviction data has been a major challenge for local officials and policymakers. To illuminate the scale and distribution of evictions, researchers from Princeton's Eviction Lab have collected records from across the country to create the first national evictions database. In 2016, one in eight evictions in Greater Boston happened in three Boston neighborhoods—Mattapan, Roxbury, and Dorchester. Two suburban municipalities—Randolph and Holbrook—had eviction rates of 5%, the highest of any municipality in the region.

There were nearly 8,000 evictions in the region in 2016—thousands of families and individuals forced deeper into housing instability. Programs to promote successful tenancies, and policies such as a right to counsel in all eviction cases, are crucial to keeping vulnerable households in a home they can call their own.

Boston Wards

Registered Voter Participation Rate, 2016 General Election

- 56% – 63%
- 63% – 70%
- 70% – 75%
- 75% – 80%
- 80% – 85%
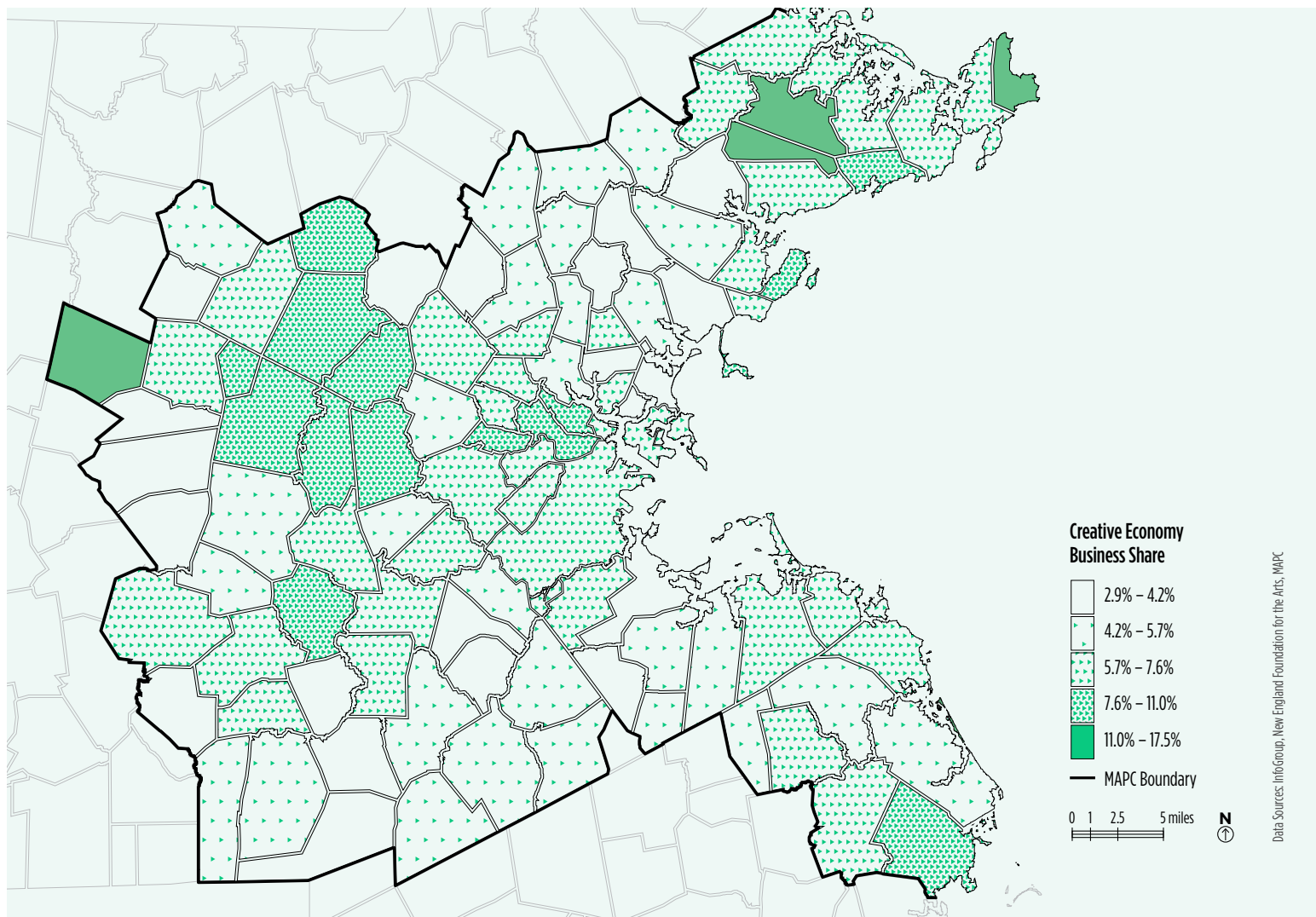- 85% – 90%
- —— MAPC Boundary

0 1 2.5   5 miles

N

Voter Participation in the 2016 General Election

The vote is one of the most important tools that can be exercised in a democratic society. Voting patterns during the 2016 U.S. general election, however, reveal that voter participation rates vary widely across Greater Boston, with registered voters in wealthier suburbs participating at higher rates than those in the inner core. Research has long found correlations between voter participation and median household income or median age—a relationship that we find rings true for the MAPC region. But why?

According to a national survey by the Pew Research Center, half of nonvoters in the 2016 election did not vote because of a feeling their vote wouldn't make a difference (15%), conflicting schedules (14%), illness or disability (12%), registration issues (4%), transportation problems (3%), or inconvenient hours or polling locations (2%). These issues are less likely to affect older voters or those with higher incomes, who often have more residential and economic stability, and more evidence of their influence on political decision making, than young voters, voters of color, and low-income voters.

While outreach efforts and policies such as early voting have tackled some of these issues, more work is needed to address the remaining difficulties that disproportionately limit turnout in the region's core.

**Creative Economy
Business Share**

☐ 2.9% – 4.2%

▸ 4.2% – 5.7%

▹ 5.7% – 7.6%

⬚ 7.6% – 11.0%

🟩 11.0% – 17.5%

— MAPC Boundary

0 1 2.5   5 miles

N ↑

The Creative Economy in Greater Boston

Arts and culture are essential to expressing the vibrancy, history, and creativity of Massachusetts. Many municipalities are looking to strengthen arts and culture to promote civic engagement, celebrate a diverse local identity, and create a more robust local economy. Creative workers help anchor local economic activity and civic vitality. In many places, like museums, performance venues, book publishers and graphic design studios, art retail stores, and more, working artists attract those looking to live, work, and raise families near creative spaces.

MAPC found that 7% of all businesses in the region are "creative enterprises" as defined by the New England Foundation for the Arts (excludes electronics stores). Nearly a quarter of the region's creative businesses are found in Boston, highlighting the capital's role as a creative engine. However, the MAPC cities and towns with the greatest share of creative businesses are generally outside of the inner core: Nearly one in five businesses in Rockport are in the creative economy (18%), followed by Hamilton (15%), Bolton (13%), and Wenham (12%).

As more cultural data are collected and analyzed, policy tools can be targeted in more efficient and effective ways to help municipalities grow their creative assets.