Rochester Summary*

Demographics & Income:

Between 2000 and 2018, Rochester saw a 6.3% decrease in its population, the smallest decline of the four cities compared – Rochester, Batavia, Canandaigua and Geneva. The demographic makeup of the city changed from 2013 to 2017 as the African American population increased by 3%, the Asian population increased by 48%, and the Hispanic or Latino populations by 34%, and the white population decreased by 7%.

In 2013-17, 33% of people in Rochester lived in poverty, 7 points higher than 2000, and higher than the state rate of 15%. Rochester's child poverty rate (52%) was higher than the state (21%), and all other regional cities. Both poverty and child poverty rates in Rochester had large disparities in terms of race and ethnicity, with people of color living in poverty at higher rates than whites.

People Living in Poverty by Race/Ethnicity, 2013–17
Source: U.S. Census Bureau

Like the other cities in the region, Rochester had a decline in median household income from 2000 to 2013-17 (19%), a greater decline than that of the state as a whole (2%). Its level in 2013-17 was $32,347, the lowest of the four cities. There were great disparities in median household income between Black or African American households and white households.
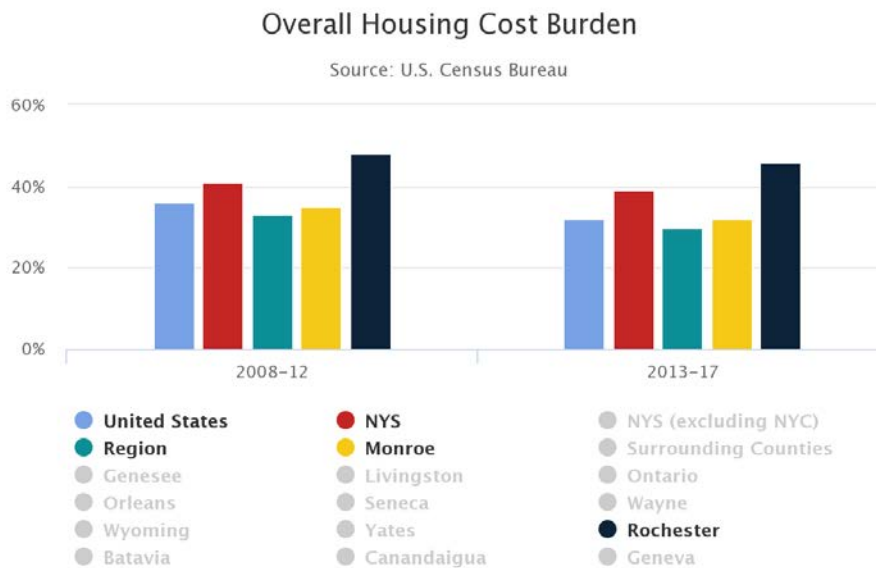

Please note, the indicator information included in this summary reflects the data available at the time of its composition. Some indicator data may have since been updated on our website. Visit actrochester.org/all-indicators for updates.

Housing:

Homeownership rates stayed fairly steady from 2000 to 2012-16 (40%), but declined to 37% in 2013-17. Rochester had disparities in rates of ownership between whites and people of color.

Rochester saw its median home value decrease by 13% from 2000 to 2013-17 to $79,400. This was larger than the decrease experienced by Geneva (down 8%), and in contrast to increases for Canandaigua and the state (14% and 35%, respectively).

An overall measure of housing affordability (including both homeowners and renters) shows that in 2013-17, 46% of Rochester households were utilizing more than 30% of their income on housing costs. This share was more than that of the state (39%) or regional (30%) levels.

Rochester's ratio of median home value to median household income, another measure of housing affordability for homeowners, increased by 9% from 2000. Rochester's rate for 2013-17 (2.5) moved its affordability above Batavia (2.1) and Geneva (2.3). A ratio below two or three is considered affordable.

In 2013-17, the average renter in Rochester spent $807, or 43% of their household income on rent. This is a higher share than Canandaigua's (30%), Batavia's (31%) and Geneva's (32%). Rochester's rate made it the least affordable city in the region for renters.

Children & Youth:

In 2017, Rochester's teen pregnancy rate was 5%, the highest teen pregnancy rate among the four cities compared. However, it has seen a decrease of 9 points from 2006, a decline that exceeds those of all other regional cities.

Rochester saw a 1-point decline in babies born with low birth-weights from 2006 to 2017, bringing its rate to 13%, the highest rate of the four cities. This measure is a leading predictor of neonatal death and higher risks of long-term developmental and neurological disabilities.
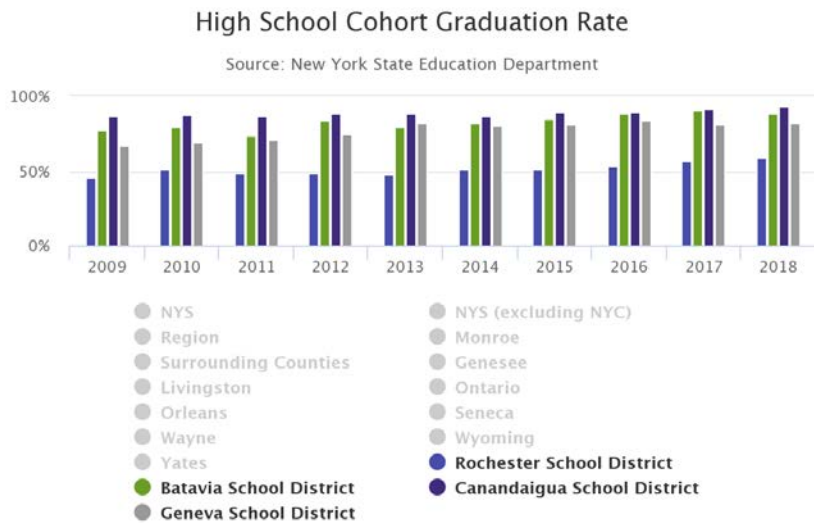
Education:

In 2017, Rochester spent $23,289 per student in its education system, just below the state ($23,741). Rochester's spending level has increased by 39% since 2000 ($16,715). This was the smallest increase of the four cities in the region.

Rochester had the second highest rate of library visits per resident, with 7 visits in 2017, an 8% increase since 2000.

In 2018, Rochester's 3rd grade English proficiency rate was 17%. This measure, important to assessing early reading skills, was below all of the cities in the region, as well as the state (51%). Though the rate increased by 11 percentage points from 2013 to 2018, its improvement was the lowest of any of the four cities during this period. Rochester had tremendous disparities by ethnicity with only 15% of its Hispanic students and 14% of Black or African American students achieving proficiency (in comparison to 29% of white students). This disparity highlights that the city's academic gains were not evenly distributed among students.

8th grade math proficiency, an important predictor of high school success in math, was at only 14% in 2018, a 3 percentage point gain from 2015. Rochester's proficiency rate was far below Canandaigua (62%) Geneva (26%), Batavia (43%) and the state (48%).

In 2018, Rochester's high school graduation rate was 59%, lower than all other cities in the region and the state. The graduation rate increased by 7 percentage points from 2008, the smallest increase of the cities compared. African American students' graduation rates were 7 percentage points below those of white students (60% and 67%, respectively). Hispanic and Asian students were also not served as well by the education system, with only 55% and 62%, respectively, graduating in 2018.
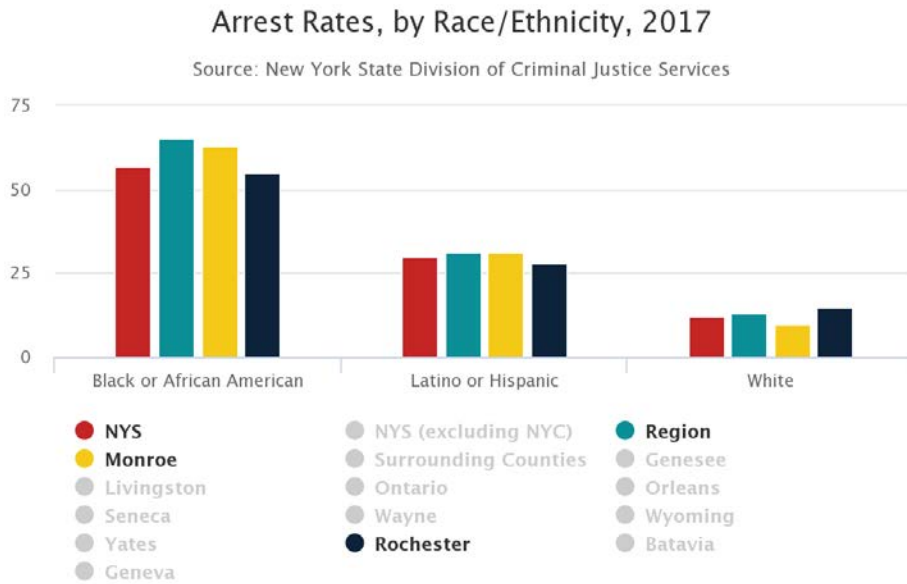

High School Cohort Graduation Rate
Source: New York State Education Department

Crime:

Rochester's rate of serious crimes in 2017was 471 per 10,000 residents – the highest among other cities in the region and above the state (182). However, this reflected a 39% decrease in the rate from 2000.

In 2017, there were 127 victims of domestic violence per 10,000 residents in Rochester. Though the city's rate has decreased 16% since 2009, it remains the highest of the four cities compared, and at least double the rate of the region and state (excluding NYC).

Rochester had approximately 352 arrests per 10,000 residents in 2017. Arrests in the city saw a 30% decrease from 2000 (502), was above the region (198), and greater than the state (226). Rochester had lower arrest rates than Monroe County among its Black or African American population (55 city, 65 county) and its Hispanic or Latino populations (28 city, 31 county), and slightly higher arrest rates than the county for whites (15 city, 10 county).

Arrest Rates, by Race/Ethnicity, 2017

Source: New York State Division of Criminal Justice Services

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