

9-2021

Reflections on the 2020 Census: Trends in Cleveland's Hispanic and Latino Population

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Reflections on the 2020 Census: Trends in Cleveland's Hispanic and Latino Population

The 2020 Census is out. From 1990 to 2020, the country grew by nearly 83 million people. Nearly 40 million, or 48% of that growth, was due to the gains in those of Hispanic and Latino descent (See Figure 1). These gains are further illustrated in Figure 2. In 1970, 4.6% of the country was Hispanic or Latino. By 2020, that number rose to nearly 19%.

Figure 1: Population Change in the United States, Decennial Census, 1970 to 2020.

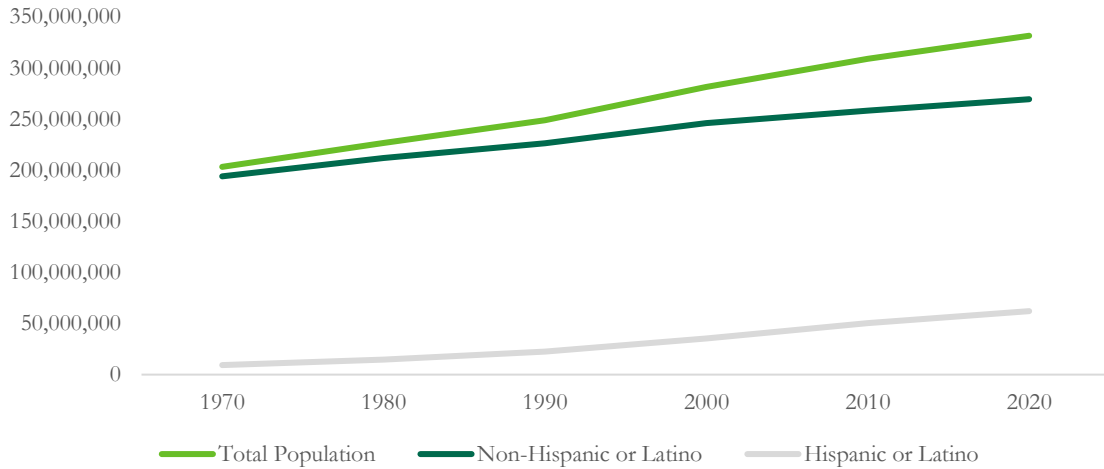
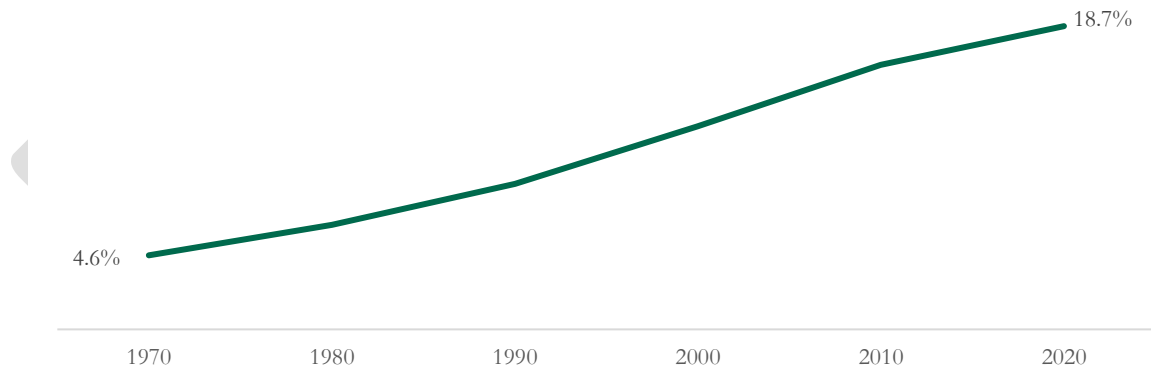


Figure 2: Percent of U.S. Population Who are Hispanic/Latino, Decennial Census, 1970 to 2020.



What to make of these trends? They are plain-spoken, really. Writes demographer William Frey of Brookings¹:

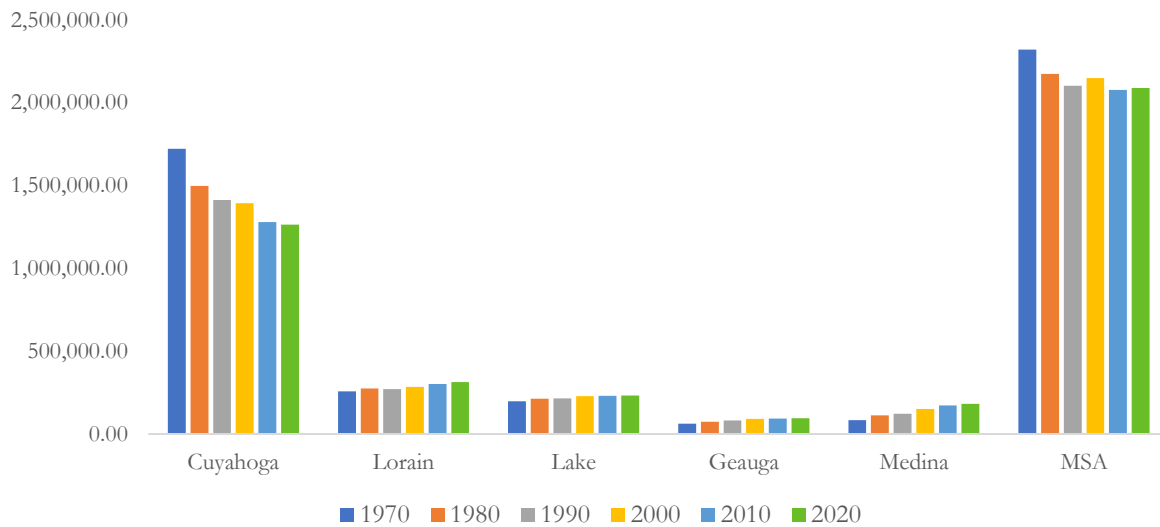
“[R]acial and ethnic diversity will be an essential ingredient of America’s future. The mostly white baby boomer culture that defined the last half of the 20th century is giving way to a more multihued, multicultural nation. The demographic underpinnings for this have been set in place for a while, but the new census data places an exclamation point on them.”

¹ <https://www.brookings.edu/research/new-census-data-shows-the-nation-is-diversifying-even-faster-than-predicted/>

- Trends in The Cleveland Metro**

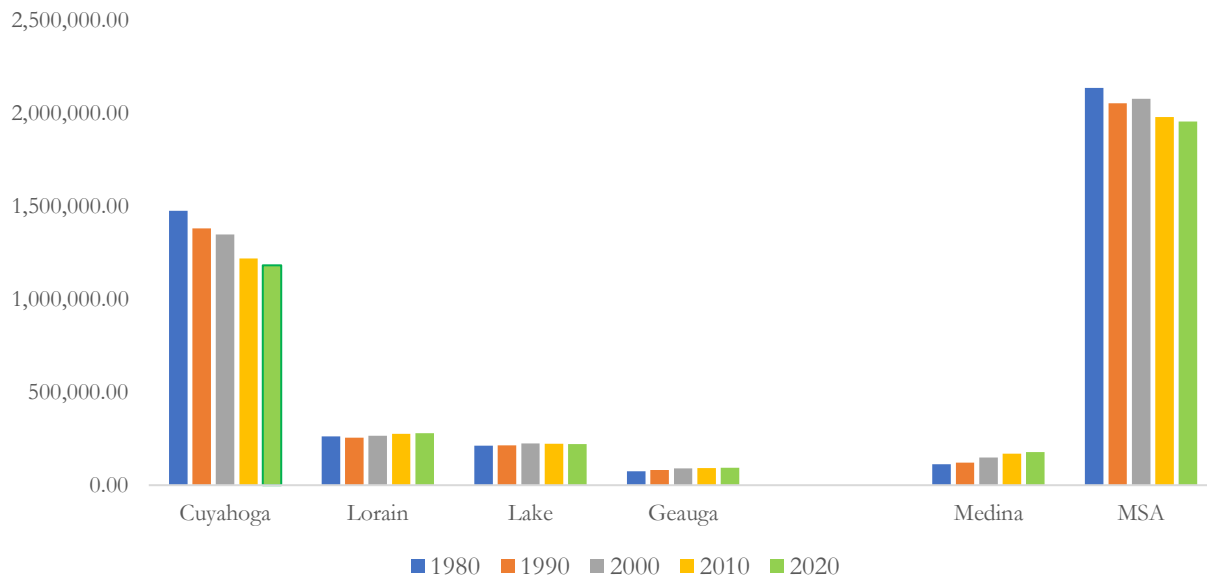
The 5-county Cleveland Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) lost 10% of its population from 1970 to 2020. That’s the bad news. The good news is that from 2010 to 2020, the metro’s population grew by Almost 1%. This is only the second time since 1970 the metro has experienced decade-over-decade growth (See Figure 3).

Figure 3: Total Population by County and MSA. Source: Decennial Census, 1970 to 2020.



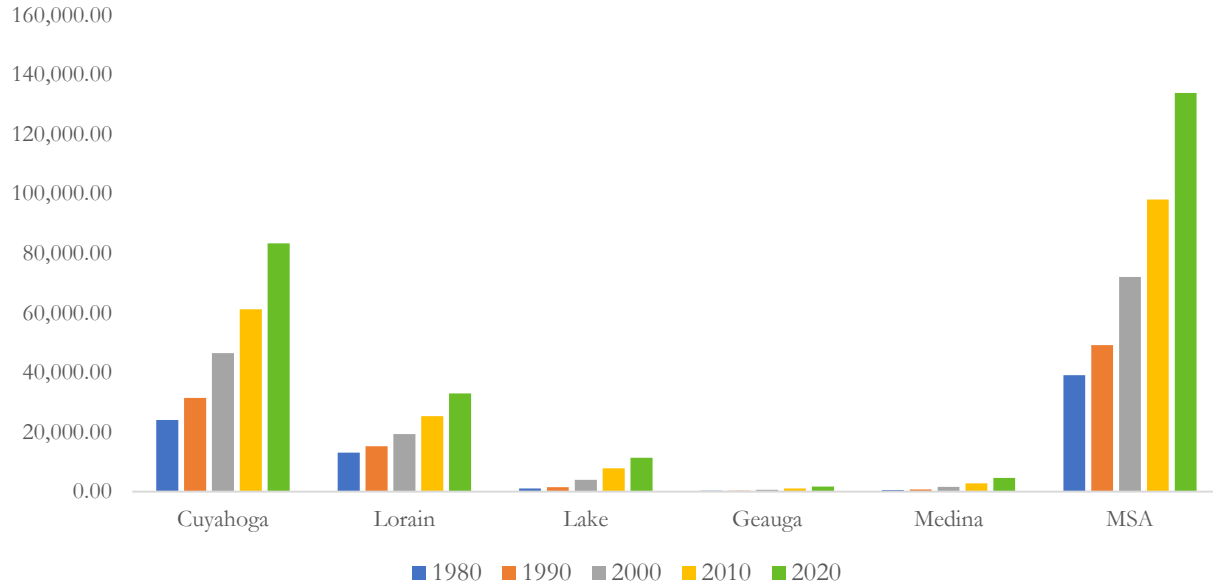
This growth would not have occurred but for the growth in Cleveland’s Hispanic and Latino population. As shown in Figure 4, the metro’s non-Hispanic/Latino population declined by 180,300, or 8.4%, from 1980 to 2020, with Cuyahoga County leading the way (-19.9%).

Figure 4 Non-Hispanic or Latino Population by County and MSA. Source: Decennial Census, 1980 to 2020.



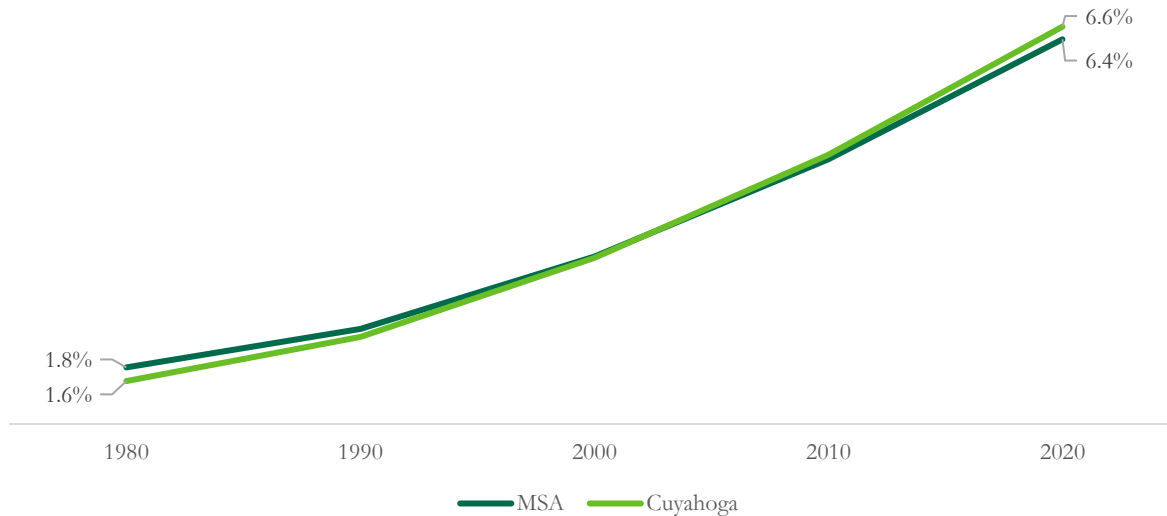
Conversely, from 1980 to 2020 the Cleveland metro’s Hispanic and Latino population grew from about 39,000 to 133,900 (Figure 5), or about 243%. In Cuyahoga County, the totals increased from about 24,000 to 83,300—a gain of 247%.

Figure 5 Hispanic or Latino Population by County and MSA. Source: Decennial Census, 1980 to 2020.



The rise of the region’s Hispanic and Latino population, coupled with the decline those non-Hispanic/Latino, has meant increased concentrations of Clevelanders who are of Latin or Hispanic descent (Figure 6). As of 2020, 6.6% of the metro’s total population was Hispanic or Latino, up from 1.8% in 1980. For Cuyahoga County, the concentration increased 5 percent points, or from 1.6% to 6.6%.

Figure 6 Percent of Population that is Hispanic or Latino. Source: Decennial Census, 1980 to 2020.



- **Trends in the City of Cleveland**

The City of Cleveland lost about 24,200, or 6.1%, of its population between 2010 and 2020 (See Figure 7). Yet the rate of loss has improved from previous decennial counts. This is in part due to the growth of the City’s Hispanic and Latino population totals, which increased by 23% from 2010 to 2020 (compared to a loss of 9% of Cleveland residents who aren’t Hispanic or Latino). Those shifting demographics are shown in Figure 8. In 1980, only 3.1% of the city proper was of Hispanic or Latin descent. By 2020 that increased by a whopping 10 percent points to 13.1%. By comparison, only 4.4% of the State of Ohio’s population is Hispanic and/or Latino².

Figure 7: Decade-over-decade Population Change in City of Cleveland. Source: Decennial Census, 1980 to 2020.

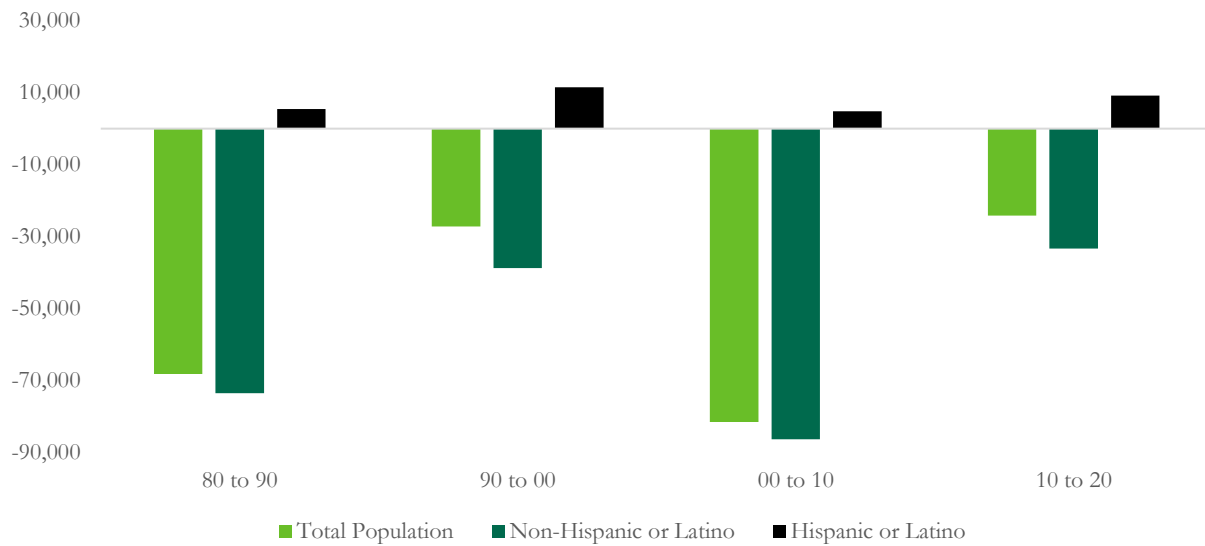
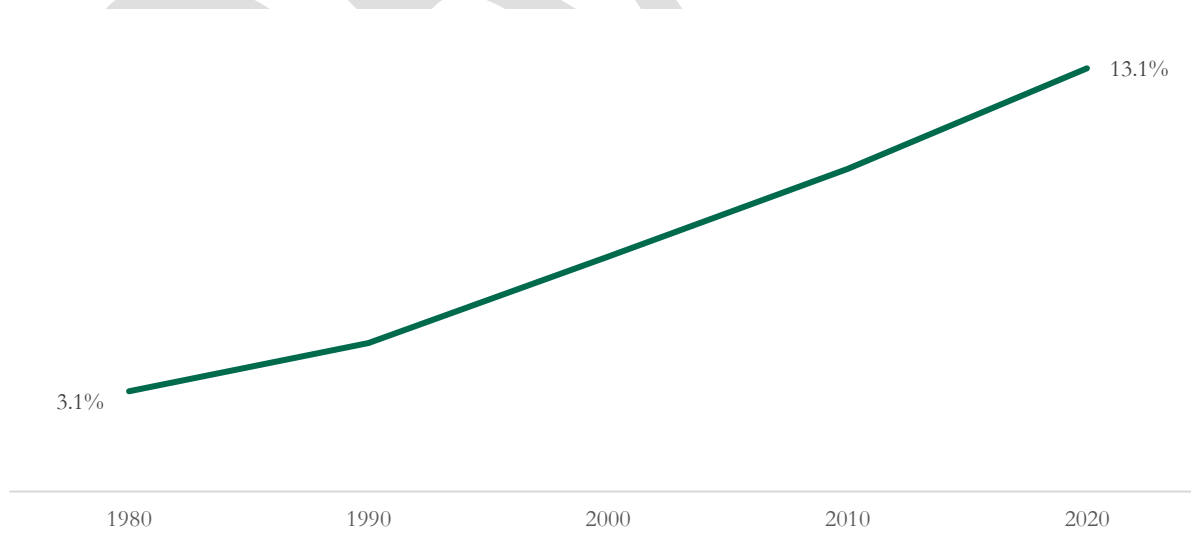


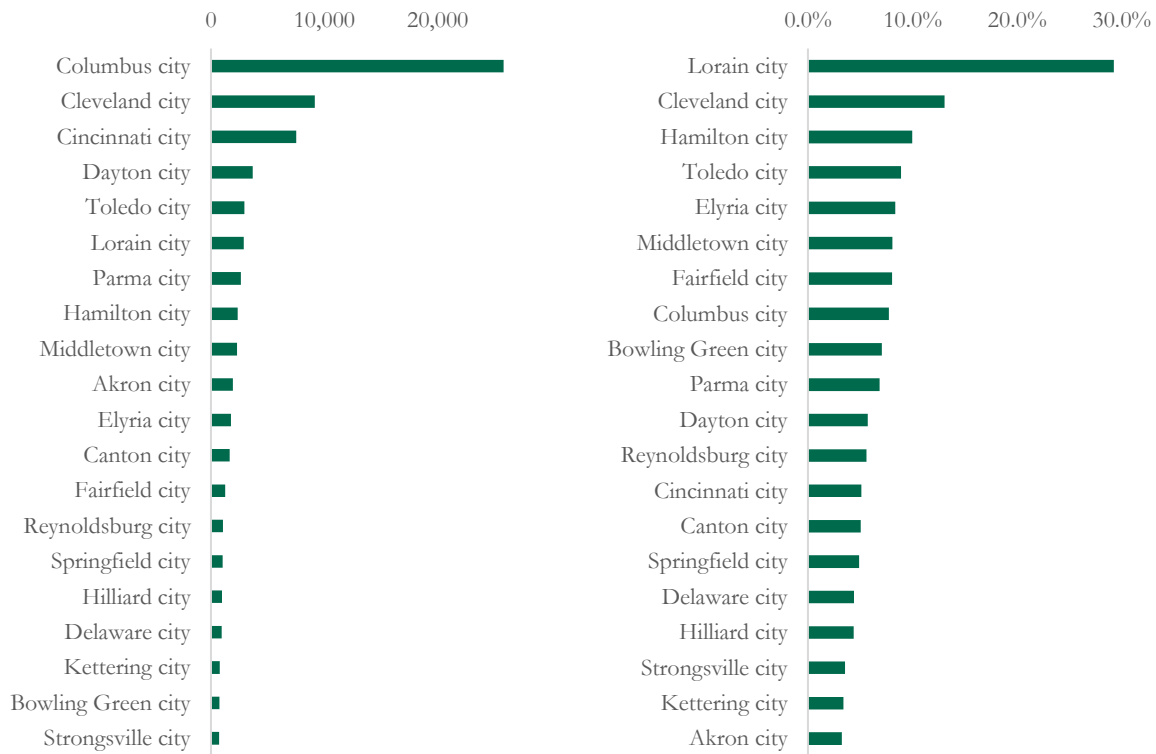
Figure 8 Percent of City of Cleveland Population that is Hispanic or Latino. Source: Decennial Census, 1980 to 2020



² Source: Decennial Census, 2020

How does Cleveland’s gain of Hispanic and Latino residents compare with the largest cities in Ohio? Figure 9 shows that between 2010 and 2020, the City of Cleveland was second to Columbus in the total number of Hispanic and Latino residents gained among Ohio’s largest 50 cities. When it comes to the concentration of the population that is of Latin or Hispanic descent, Cleveland’s 13.1% ranks second to Lorain (29.2%).

Figure 9 and 10: Top Ohio Cities in Gains in Hispanic/Latino from 2010 to 2020 for (Left). Highest Concentrations in Hispanic/Latino (Right). Source: Decennial Census, 2010 and 2020



• **Trends in the Neighborhoods of Cuyahoga County**

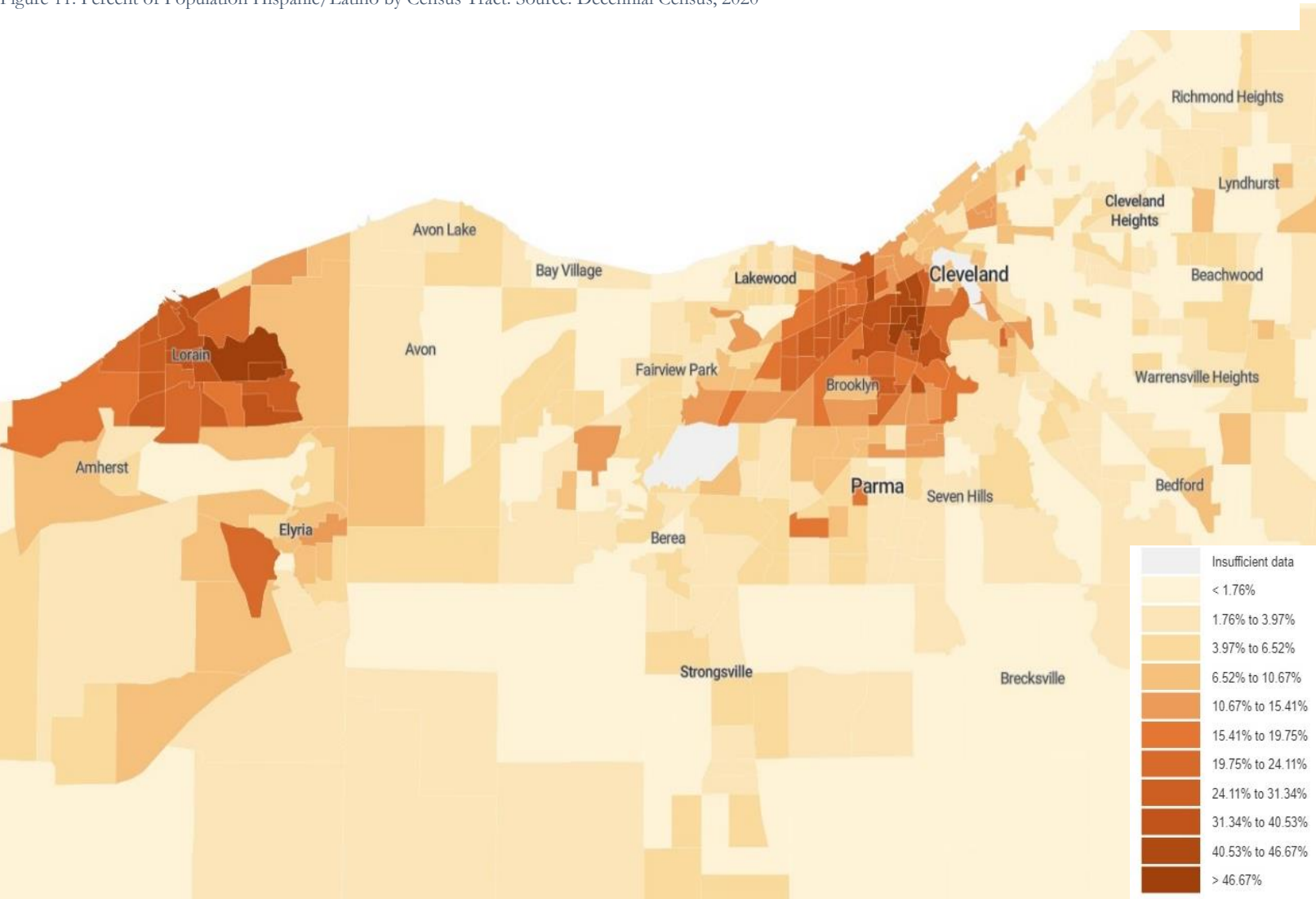
Lastly, we look at the neighborhoods in the City of Cleveland and Cuyahoga County with the largest increases in Hispanic and Latinos, as well as the neighborhoods with the largest percent of residents with Latin or Hispanic descent. From 2010 to 2020, two census tracts in Cleveland’s Old Brooklyn neighborhood, or 1057 and 1061, had two of the top 3 gains among all census tracts in Cuyahoga County. Among suburbs, Brooklyn’s tract, 1974, was tops. That said, the southern edge of Cleveland proper has become the epicenter of Hispanic and Latino growth.

Figure 11 shows the neighborhoods with the largest concentrations of Hispanic and/or Latinos in Greater Cleveland. The gravity of the Hispanic and Latino population in Greater Cleveland is centered in two communities: Cleveland’s Near West and Near South sides, and Eastern Lorain. In Cuyahoga County, two neighborhoods are over 50% Hispanic/or Latino, and they include the Clark/Fulton neighborhood bounded by tract 1029 and the Brooklyn Centre neighborhood bounded by tract 1976³. Both neighborhoods comprise parts of Cleveland’s Ward 14, led by Councilwoman Jasmin Santana: the

³ Source: Decennial Census, 2020

first Latina council member in the City’s history⁴. The current Majority Whip, Santana represents a shift in political representation in Cleveland’s historically- Black and White power structure that’s mirroring the City’s demographic shift, with the latter a leading indicator of change. Put simply, expect more Hispanic and Latinos elected into positions of power as Cleveland’s and Cuyahoga County’s demographic evolution continues to unfold.

Figure 11: Percent of Population Hispanic/Latino by Census Tract. Source: Decennial Census, 2020



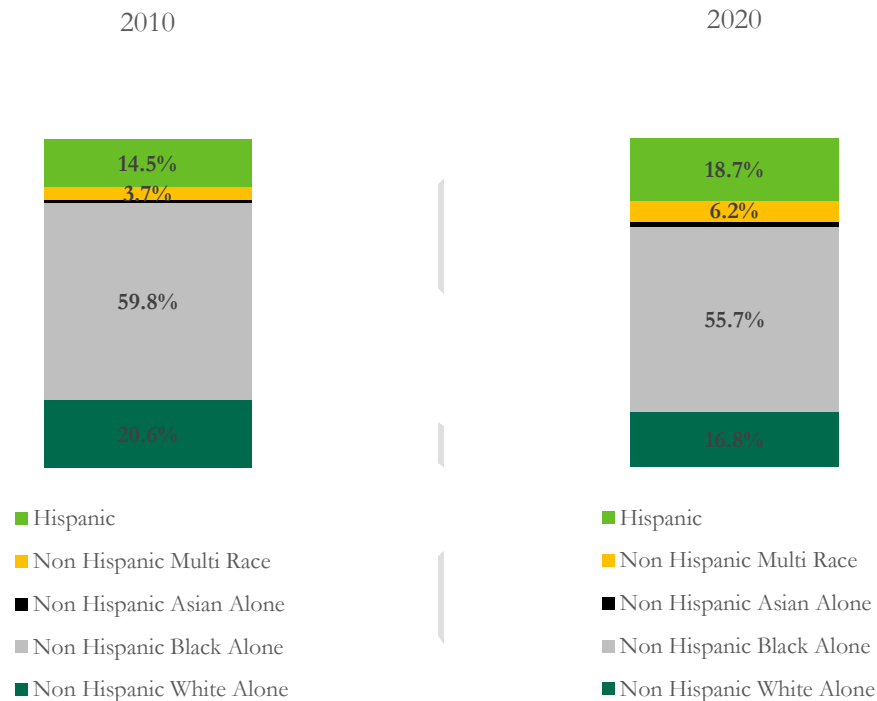
- **A Look Forward**

There is a saying amongst demographers that “demography is destiny”. That is, by peering back at what’s coming you can peer ahead at what’s next. What’s next is that the diversification of the nation, the region, and the City of Cleveland will only continue, especially given the fact that younger people are more racially and ethnically diverse than older people. Figure 12 and 13 are illustrative. They show the breakdown of race and ethnicity for City of Cleveland residents under the age of 18—the majority of which belong to “Generation Z”. In 2010, 14.5% of Cleveland residents under 18 were Hispanic. Only

⁴ <https://clevelandcitycouncil.org/ward-14>

ten years later, that grew to nearly 19%. The percent of younger Clevelanders that identified as multi-racial also grew, going from 3.7% in 2010 to 6.2% in 2020. Conversely, the percent of the youth population in Cleveland that is non-Hispanic White declined from 20.6% to 16.8%, whereas for Blacks it went from 59.8% to 55.7%. As these trends not only hold but hasten, the future of the region (and the nation) will be one of increasing diversity, in which the majority is becomes the minority.

Figure 12 and 13. Percent of City of Cleveland Population 18 and Under by Race/Ethnicity in 2010 (left) and 2020 (right). Source: Decennial Census, 2010 and 2020.



The ramifications of these realities are many. They range from shifting ideological fault lines in national politics to shifting electoral fault lines in local politics. Beyond political ramifications, there are societal implications as well. “As the nation becomes even more racially diverse from the ‘bottom up’ of the age structure,” notes Brookings’ William Frey, “more attention needs to be given to the needs and opportunities for America’s highly diverse younger generations. The demography alone dictates that this will be necessary to ensure success for these youth and the nation as a whole.”⁵

⁵ <https://www.brookings.edu/research/new-census-data-shows-the-nation-is-diversifying-even-faster-than-predicted/>