CMAP

JUNE 12, 2019

POPULATION GROWTH AND DECLINE IS OCCURRING UNEVENLY ACROSS THE REGION

In spite of recent regional population declines, parts of the Chicago region are growing. This analysis applies recent regional findings on age, income, and race and ethnicity to the local level, using data from the U.S. Census Population and Housing Unit Estimates program, the 2010 Census, and the American Community Survey. The analysis shows that while growth is occurring in parts of the CMAP region — largely in Chicago's northern lakefront neighborhoods and some places in Kane, Kendall, and Will counties — elsewhere in the city and the region, some communities are struggling to retain residents and thrive economically. Population decline occurred largely in the city of Chicago's South Side, though decline also occurred in some suburban communities.

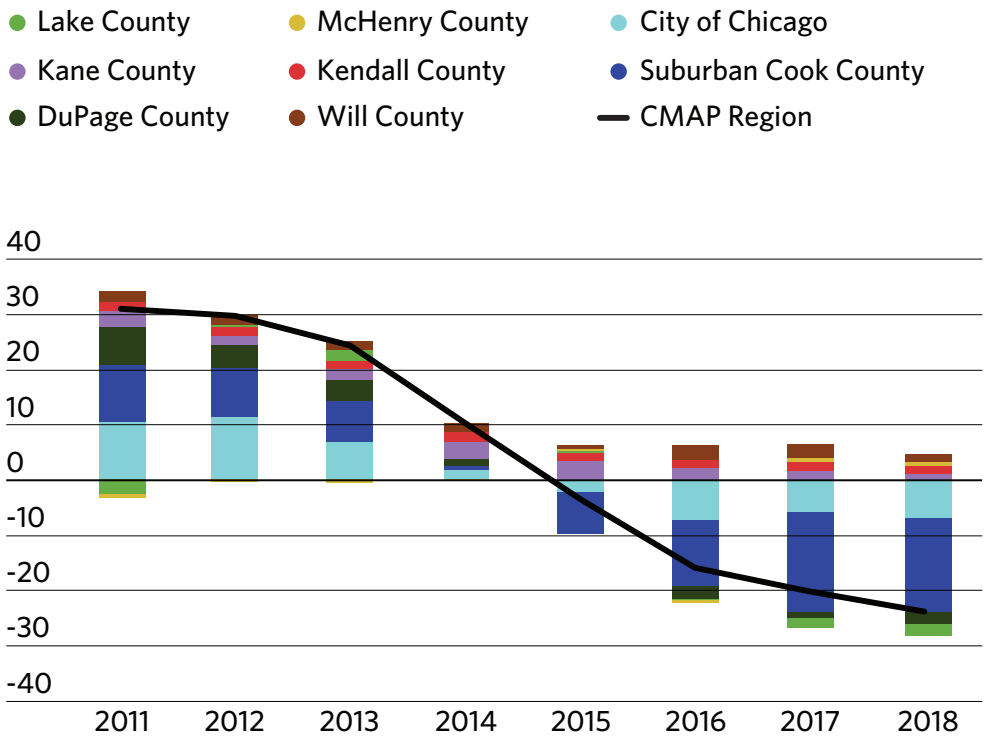
Understanding these local trends within the regional context is crucial to effective regional and local planning. Our region and its communities must work to achieve resilience in the face of changing conditions so that we can anticipate and adapt to future challenges and opportunities. ON TO 2050, the region's comprehensive plan, also emphasizes the importance of inclusive growth that offers all communities and residents opportunities to thrive. Specific plan recommendations include pursuing strategic and sustainable development, such as targeted infill development and reinvestment in disinvested areas, as well as encouraging responsive and strategic workforce development.

Population growth and decline occurred most in Chicago and Kane, Kendall, and Will counties

Four of the seven counties in the CMAP region — including DuPage, Kane, Kendall, and Will counties — experienced population growth between 2010 and 2018. In contrast, Cook, Lake, and McHenry counties lost residents between 2010 and 2018. In Cook County, population loss in suburban Cook County 2010-18 counteracted growth in the city. The region as a whole grew by less than half a percent since 2010, and has experienced small population losses each of the last four years.

Annual population change in the Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning region, by county, in thousands, 2011-18

Source: Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning analysis of U.S. Census Population and Housing Unit Estimates, 2010-18.

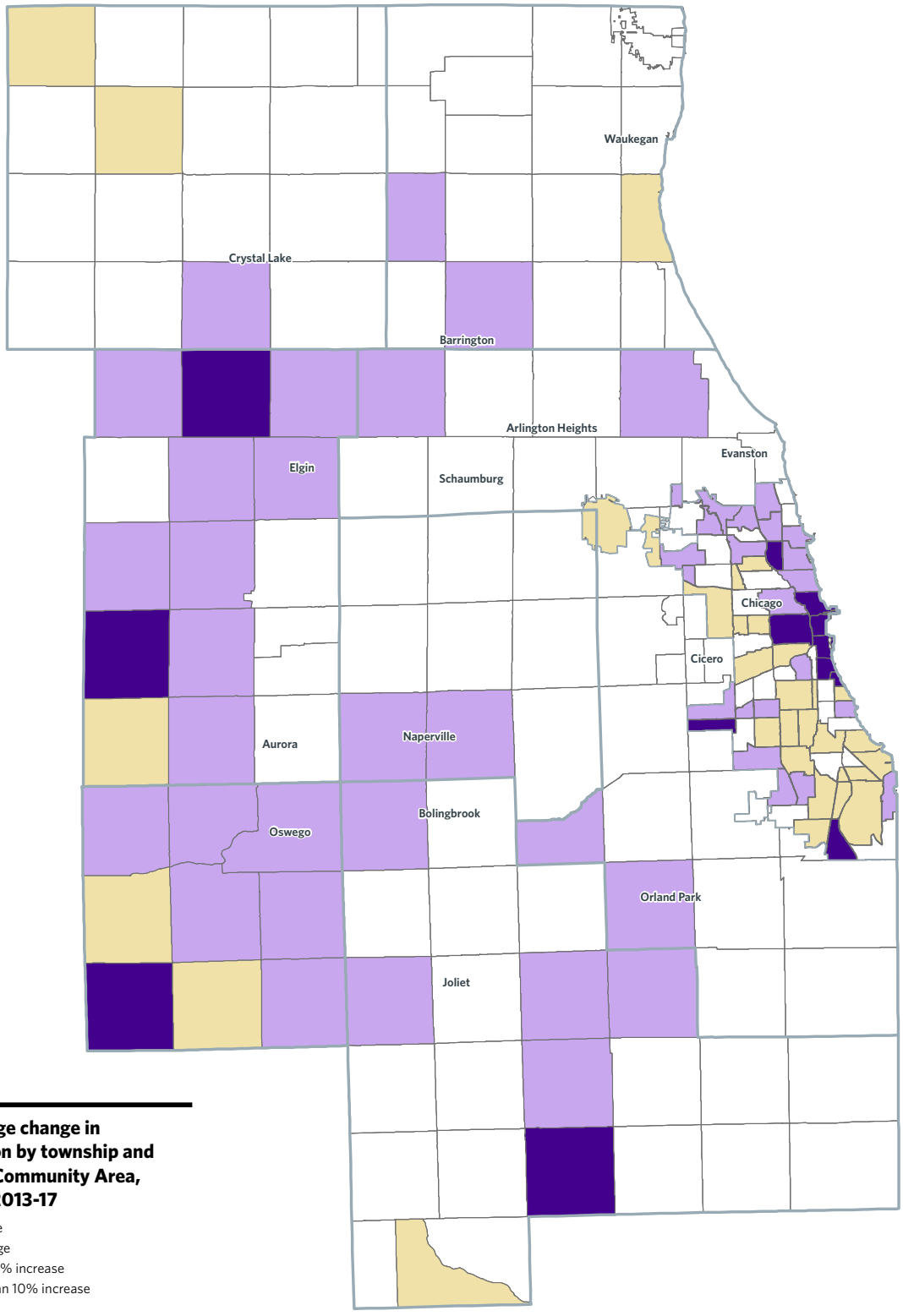


Population growth varied across communities in the CMAP region between 2010- and 2013-17. Some communities grew more than others. In many places, population is neither declining nor increasing but rather experiencing only small changes.

Communities in Kane, Kendall, and Will counties, as well as in the northern parts of the city of Chicago grew the fastest, reflecting general growth in these counties and the city. Some communities, largely in Kane and Kendall, grew a significant amount relative to their current small population size, but did not contribute significantly to overall regional growth because they are small in size relative to the region's other communities.

Communities in Chicago's Central Business District and its north lakefront communities, including the Loop, Near West Side, and Near North Side, also added residents since 2010. Growth in these areas could be driven by various factors including an increase in investment, high accessibility to transportation options and job opportunities, and a growing preference for walkable communities.

Elsewhere in Chicago, predominately black communities on the South Side are rapidly losing residents, reflecting the region's persistent loss of black residents. For example, the smaller communities of Fuller Park and Burnside and the larger communities of Englewood and West Englewood each lost residents. The region's black population has declined every year since at least 2005.



Percentage change in population by township and Chicago Community Area, 2010 to 2013-17

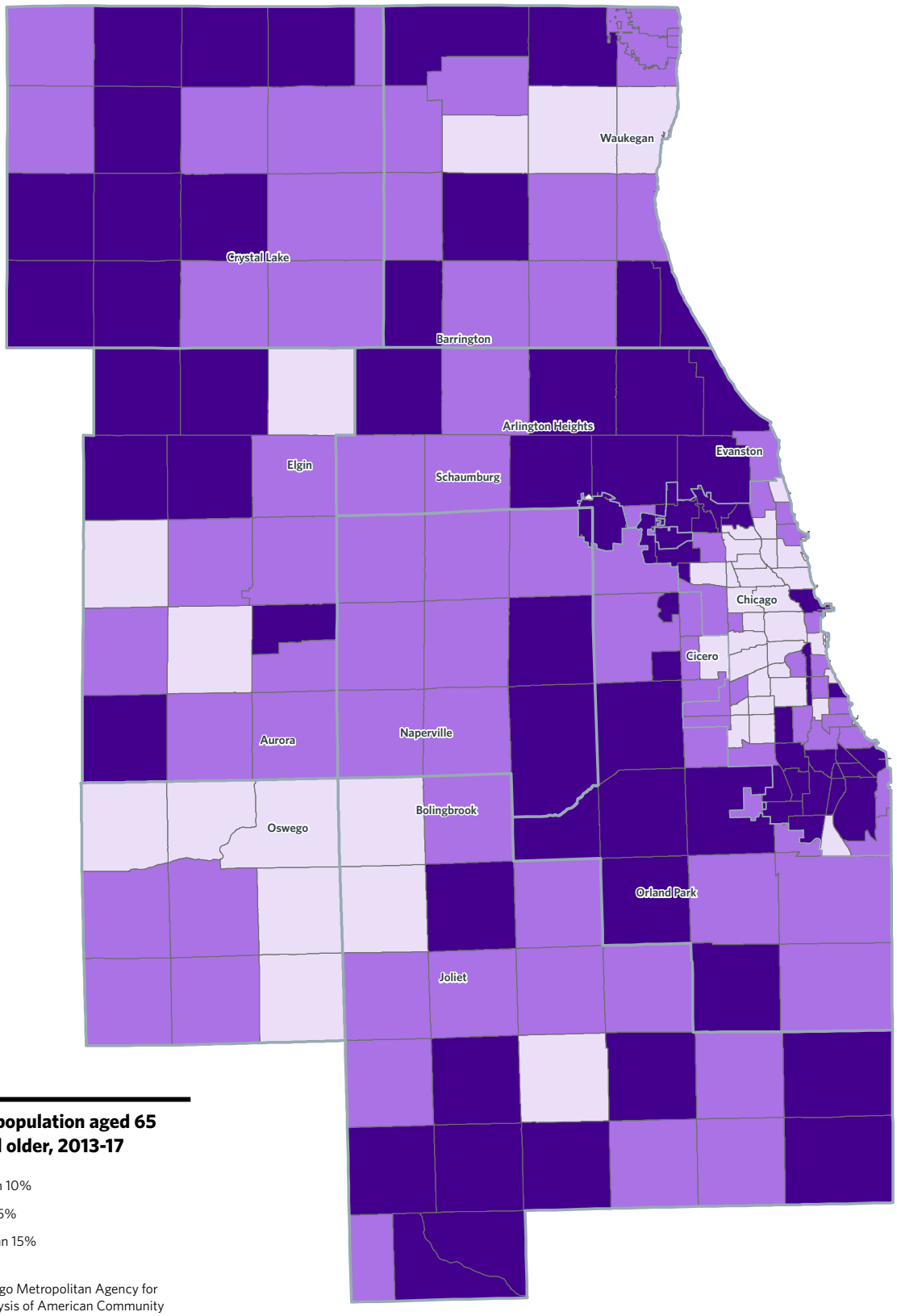
- Decrease
- No change
- 2% to 10% increase
- More than 10% increase

Note: No change is defined as either a population change of fewer than 100 individuals or an increase or decrease of less than two percent.

Source: Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning analysis of 2010 Decennial data and American Community Survey data, five-year estimates, 2013-17.

The region is following nationwide aging trends

Delayed marriages, declining birth rates, and an aging Baby Boomer generation are resulting in an older nation and region. Median age in the CMAP region was 37 years in 2017, 1.6 years older than the median age in 2010 yet still younger than the national median age in 2017 of 38.1. In the CMAP region, communities in the city of Chicago, with the exception of the city's South Side communities, are generally younger than the region's suburban communities.



Share of population aged 65 years and older, 2013-17

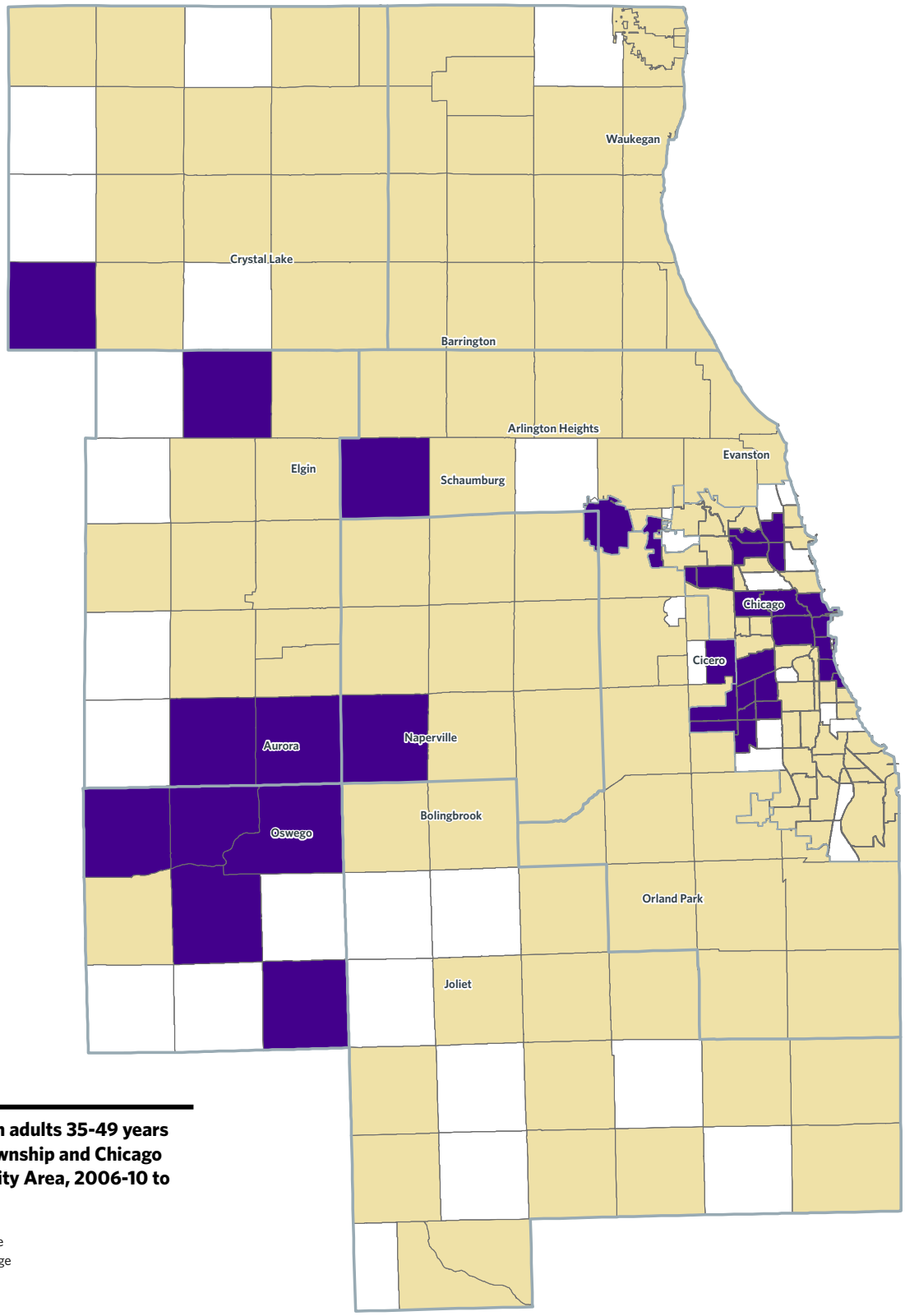
- Less than 10%
- 10% to 15%
- More than 15%

Source: Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning analysis of American Community Survey data, five-year estimates, 2013-17.

In 2017, 13 percent of the CMAP region's total population was at least 65 years old, a two percentage point increase from 2010. Senior residents will continue to grow as a share of the region's population as millennial and baby boomer residents naturally age into older cohorts. This trend mirrors national trends. Nationally, the number of people age 65 years and older is projected to more than double in the next 40 years, and CMAP forecasts a similar regional trend.

In contrast, the CMAP region has fewer younger residents, particularly children as well as adults ages 35-49 years, which also contributes to the region's aging. These declines are in part due to delayed marriages and declining birth rates, which drive down natural increase — the difference between births and death. The decline in the number of adults age 35-49 years could be due in part to Generation X (people age 35-49) being smaller relative to millennials (people age 15-34) and Baby Boomers (people age 50-69), both regionally and nationally.

The number of middle-aged adults in the region is particularly important because these adults are the region's prime-working age residents, and are essential to sustaining the region's labor supply as the population, and consequently its labor force, ages. Despite these general decreases, a few parts of the region — specifically fast-growing neighborhoods on Chicago's North and Southwest sides — added middle aged adults.



Change in adults 35-49 years old by township and Chicago Community Area, 2006-10 to 2013-17

- Decrease
- No change
- Increase

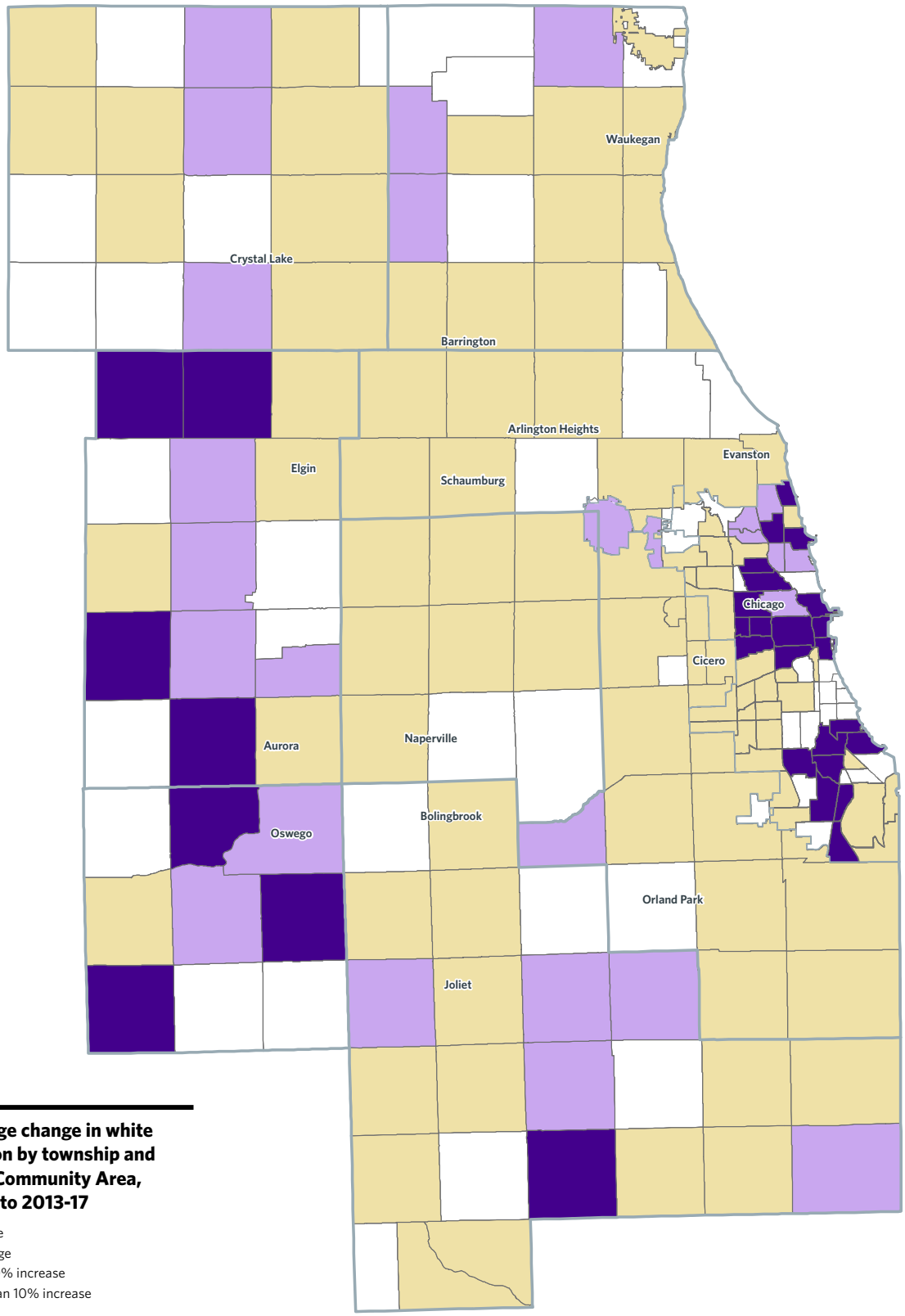
Note: No change is defined as either a population change of fewer than 100 individuals or an increase or decrease of less than two percent.

Source: Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning analysis of American Community Survey data, five-year estimates, 2006-10 and 2013-17.

City gains white residents and loses black residents as the rest of the region gains residents of color

As prior CMAP analysis has indicated, the Chicago region is growing increasingly diverse, largely due to growing Hispanic and Asian populations and migration of white residents from suburban to urban areas. The region's suburbs are growing more diverse though they remain less diverse than the region's core.

The region's white population is currently a majority through much of the region. Suburban communities have particularly high concentrations of white residents and are often less diverse than communities found in the city. This is in part due to movement in earlier decades of white residents from the city and urban areas to the suburbs. In contrast to the white flight that occurred throughout the latter half of the 20th Century, white residents are now moving back to the city. Many of these white residents are affluent and highly educated. Regions across the country are also experiencing the return of white and/or affluent residents to city neighborhoods and suburban downtowns.



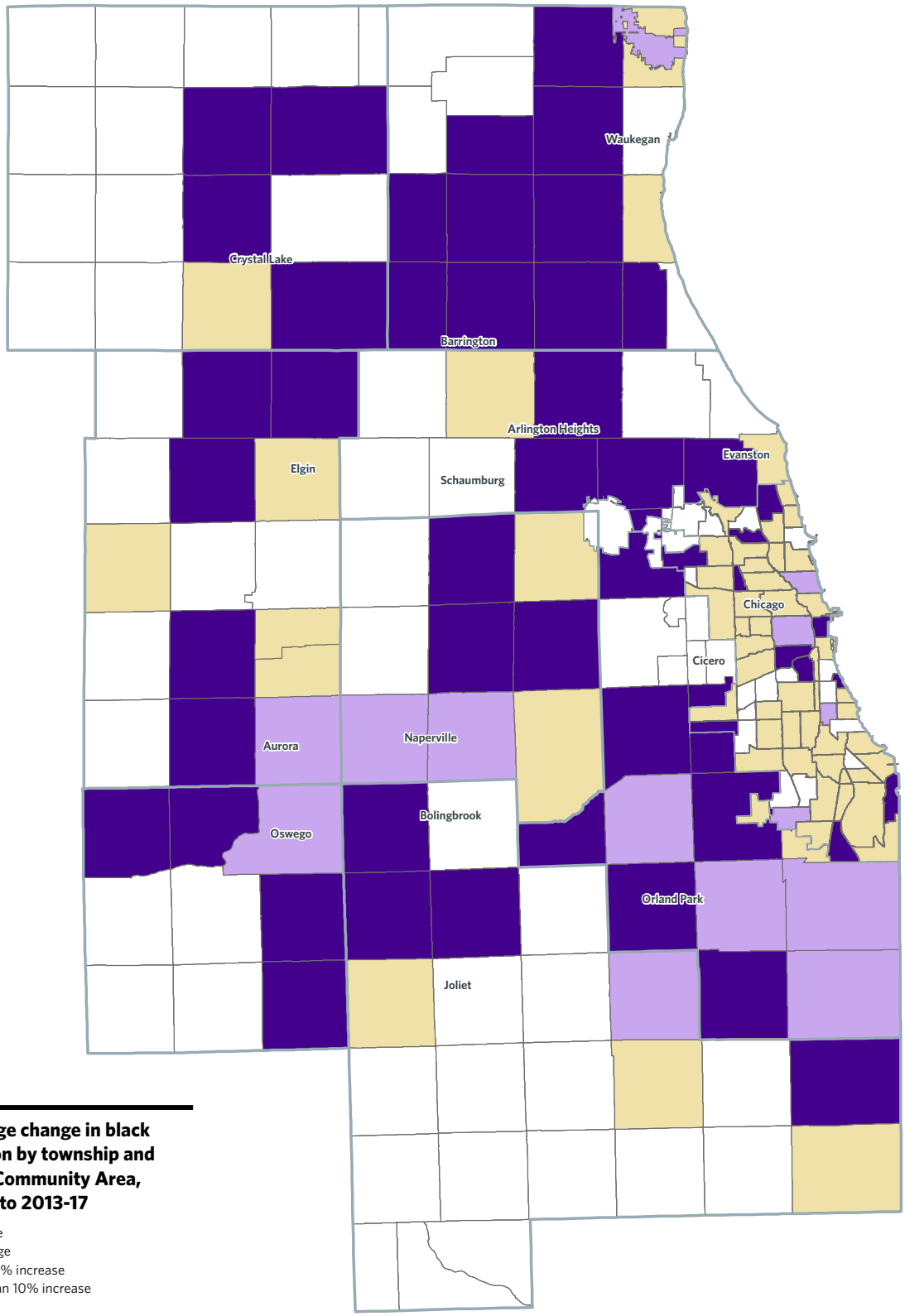
Percentage change in white population by township and Chicago Community Area, 2006-10 to 2013-17

- Decrease
- No change
- 2% to 10% increase
- More than 10% increase

Note: No change is defined as either a population change of fewer than 100 individuals or an increase or decrease of less than two percent.

Source: Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning analysis of American Community Survey data, five-year estimates, 2006-10 and 2013-17.

The region has been losing black residents, although it is gaining higher income black residents. As white residents move back to the urban core, the region's black residents — who are primarily concentrated on Chicago's West and South sides, as well as south suburban Cook County — are moving out of the city. In some communities in the city, black population loss is occurring simultaneously with white population gains. In other communities, black population loss is unaccompanied by gains in other demographic groups, contributing to persistent loss of residents in these neighborhoods. This loss of black residents in the region's urban core overwhelms the growth in black population elsewhere in the region, resulting in a regional loss of black residents. Prior CMAP analysis suggests that black residents may be leaving the region in pursuit of better economic opportunity: Black residents were hardest hit during the 2007-09 recession and have been slowest to recover. These trends reflect the national trend of black residents leaving northern cities and regions to live in growing southern cities and regions.



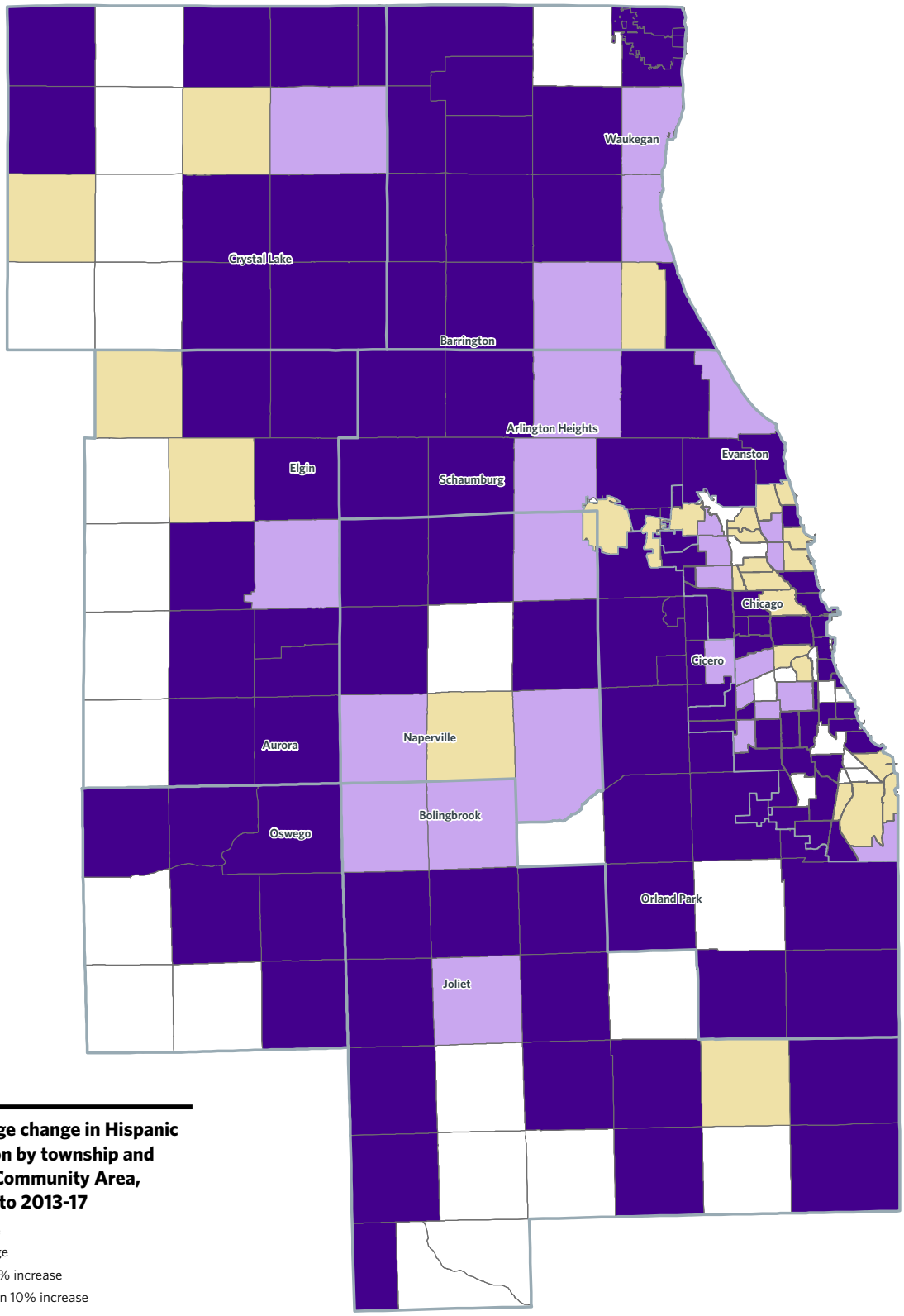
Percentage change in black population by township and Chicago Community Area, 2006-10 to 2013-17

- Decrease
- No change
- 2% to 10% increase
- More than 10% increase

Note: No change is defined as either a population change of fewer than 100 individuals or an increase or decrease of less than two percent.

Source: Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning analysis of American Community Survey data, five-year estimates, 2006-10 and 2013-17.

Despite some declines in various parts of the region, the Hispanic population continues to grow in the CMAP region overall. The region's suburban communities experienced the largest growth in Hispanic residents, contributing to the overall diversification of the suburbs. Hispanic growth is critical for the region's suburbs as it counteract declines in the white population. However, Hispanic population growth has slowed in recent years and could contribute to slower population growth overall in the region and its communities.



Percentage change in Hispanic population by township and Chicago Community Area, 2006-10 to 2013-17

- Decrease
- No change
- 2% to 10% increase
- More than 10% increase

Note: No change is defined as either a population change of fewer than 100 individuals or an increase or decrease of less than two percent.

Source: Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning analysis of American Community Survey data, five-year estimates, 2006-10 and 2013-17.

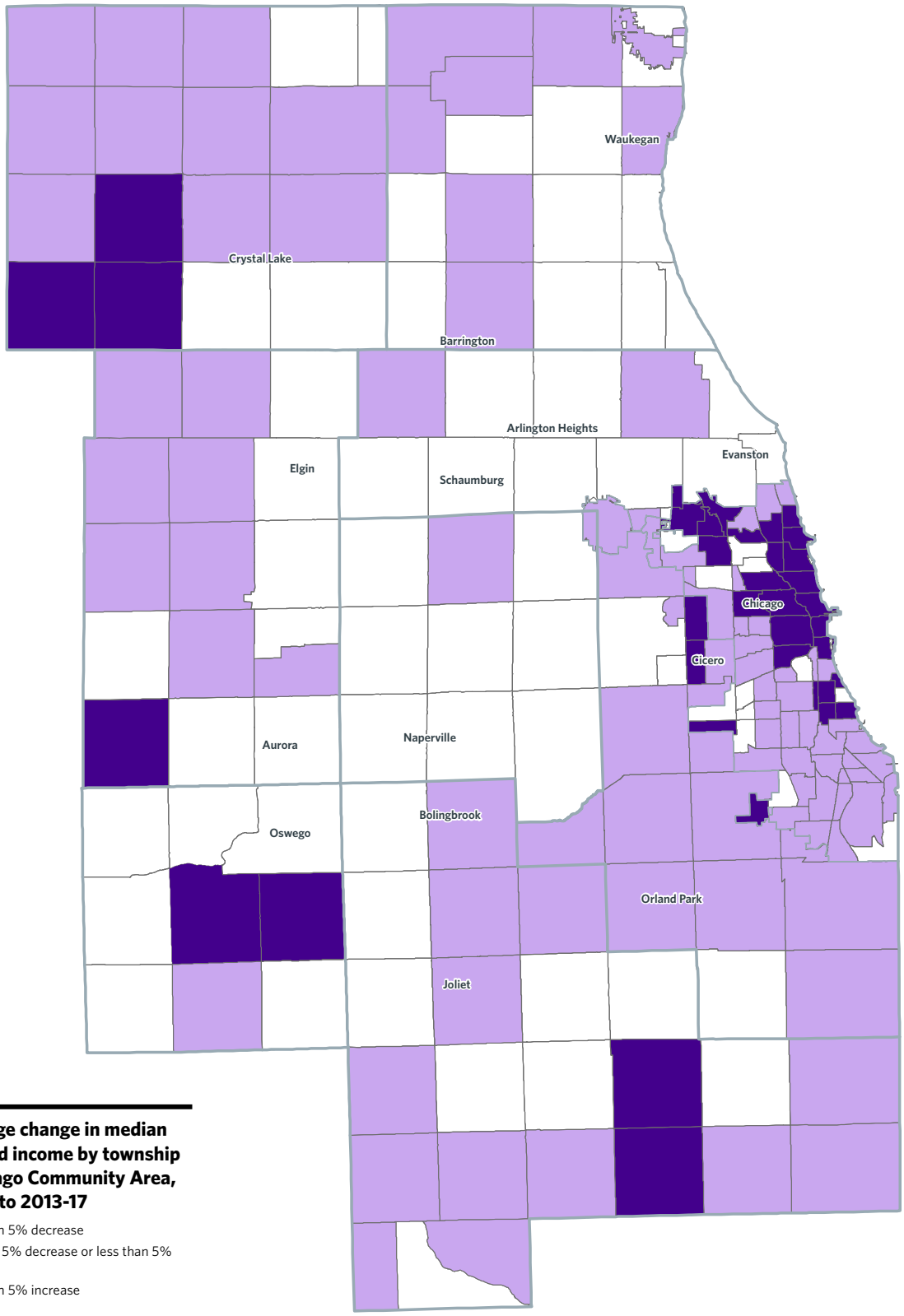
Income decreases for Chicago's South Side and region's rural communities, increases most along city's northern lakeshore communities

Though people move for many reasons, population growth can often be both a driver and consequence of economic growth because residents move where economic opportunities exist for them. As such, shifting demographic trends also illustrate shifts in some economic patterns.

The city's northern lakeshore communities are rapidly growing in both population and prosperity driven by a growth in white, affluent residents. In these parts of the city, increased investment and new development could be contributing to decreased affordability. The accompanying rise in property values and housing costs could place lower income residents in these areas at risk of displacement.

Chicago's South and West sides, however, are experiencing troubling trends in both population and prosperity. These predominately black communities are losing residents in part due to economic opportunities, which continue to be limited even a decade after the 2007-09 recession. Median household income decreased in these already struggling communities, in stark contrast to income growth in the city's northern lakeshore communities.

Other parts of the region also experienced decreases in median household income, including Thornton and Bloom townships in south and southwest Cook, Crete Township in Will County, and some communities in McHenry, Kane, and Lake counties. While some of these counties also experienced population losses, others gained population. Some suburban communities did experience increases in median household income, though generally not to the same degree as the growth seen in the city's northern lakeshore communities.



Percentage change in median household income by township and Chicago Community Area, 2006-10 to 2013-17

- More than 5% decrease
- Less than 5% decrease or less than 5% increase
- More than 5% increase

Source: Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning analysis of American Community Survey data, five-year estimates, 2006-10 and 2013-17.

Looking ahead

The region's communities are not the same, nor do they share the same struggles or successes — a story that holds true for population and income trends, illustrating the socioeconomic disparities that exist among the region's many diverse communities. ON TO 2050 emphasizes the need for racial and economic inclusion to ensure every resident and community can fully contribute to and benefit from our economy. Inclusive growth plays a crucial role in the region's long term prosperity, as the region simply cannot thrive with so many people and communities left behind. The Plan recommends investing in struggling communities caught in a cycle of disinvestment. The region must also leverage its assets, such as its transportation network and diverse talent pool, to promote economic opportunity for all. In doing so, the region will be better equipped to support its many diverse communities.

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