



# A Study of Affordable Housing in the City of Syracuse

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## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This study represents the convergence of several different data collection efforts and community requests that arose over the past several years to evaluate the degree to which there is affordable housing density at the neighborhood and census tract level in the Syracuse community. We would like to thank CNY Fair Housing, Syracuse University's Community Geography Program, the Greater Syracuse Tenant's Network, and the Affordable Housing Subcommittee of the Housing and Homeless Coalition, as well as the myriad of housing development agencies who provided data for this project. We would also like to recognize that members of Tomorrow's Neighborhoods Today (TNT) and Syracuse United Neighbors (SUN) have been advocating for the availability of this data on an ongoing basis, and the Department of Neighborhood and Business Development is committed to maintaining this dataset and ensuring its continued availability. This study combines and builds on the hard work of these organizations and community stakeholders and we are grateful for their contributions to this project, for which we hope is just the start of a larger conversation around strategic affordable housing development.

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# Affordable Housing in the City of Syracuse

## INTRODUCTION: DEFINING AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Much of the work of the Department of Neighborhood and Business Development (NBD) is deeply connected to the development of a variety of housing opportunities in the city. This work includes allocating federal funds from the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) for housing development projects that meet the definition and standards of affordable housing required by HUD; namely, that housing costs paid by unit occupants amount to no more than 30% of gross income and projects meet established affordability guidelines by income category and fair market rents published annually by HUD.<sup>1</sup>

For the purpose of this study, documented affordable housing includes project-based, subsidized, rental housing units, known to NBD and its partners, which have been verified by property owners and federal databases when available. Affordable housing units documented here include both family units and those reserved for special populations, such as the elderly, homeless veterans and individuals with disabilities. This study does not include units that meet affordability criteria in the private market or individual subsidy granted to a particular household not fixed to a specific housing unit or location, such as section 8. Data were corroborated by the monthly parcel file.<sup>2</sup>

The monthly parcel file, prepared by NBD on a routine basis, is used in this study to aggregate a count of housing units in the city according to property records maintained by both the City of Syracuse and Onondaga County. Occupied units in this record are counted by property, so the potential margin of partially-occupied residential structures - excluding apartment complexes and multiple residence structures - is approximately 13% of the total occupied unit count employed herein.

## FINDINGS: AFFORDABLE HOUSING MEASURES

Approximately 10.7% (6,586 units) of the 61,392 occupied housing units in Syracuse are affordable, totaling 6,586 units in the city. The total number of affordable housing units counted in this study are provided by 213 sites in the city.

In this study, approximately 70.9% of the 55 census tracts defined in the city have at least one affordable housing unit – 39 census tracts in total. Of the 32 neighborhoods in the city, 28 neighborhoods include affordable housing units. An even distribution of affordable housing units across all census tracts would equal 120 units of affordable housing per tract. An even distribution across the city's neighborhoods would equal 205 units of affordable housing in each neighborhood. Because some census tracts and some neighborhoods include no affordable housing, unit distribution is not even.

The distribution of affordable housing units is concentrated in several of the city's census tracts. Census tract 42 has 11% of the total affordable rental housing units in the city, where 777 units of 871

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<sup>1</sup> See the glossary available at [https://www.huduser.gov/portal/glossary/glossary\\_a.html](https://www.huduser.gov/portal/glossary/glossary_a.html)

<sup>2</sup> The monthly parcel file, prepared by NBD on a routine basis, is used in this study to aggregate a count of housing units in the city, according to property records maintained by both the City of Syracuse and Onondaga County. Occupied units in this record are counted by property, so the potential margin of partially-occupied residential structures, excluding apartment complexes and multiple residence structures, is approximately 13% of the total occupied unit count employed herein.

occupied units (89.2%) in the census tract are affordable. Census tract 61.02 has 9.2% of the total affordable units in the city, where 605 units of 1,507 occupied units (40.2%) are affordable. Neither census tract represents the highest density of affordable units as a percentage of the total occupied units; census tract 43.01 has 378 affordable housing units of 380 occupied housing units (99.5%). There are no affordable housing units known to NBD in census tracts 4, 7, 9, 15, 17.02, 18, 21.01, 24, 29.01, 44, 45, 49, 56.01, 56.02, 57 or 61.03. See the table included in page 7 for a detailed breakdown of affordable housing units by census tract.

Affordable rental housing units are also concentrated in a few of the city's neighborhoods. The Southside neighborhood has 16.4% of the total affordable housing units in the city, where 1,077 units of 2,238 occupied units (48.1%) are affordable. The Near Westside has 11.1% of the total affordable housing units in the city, where 733 of 2,469 occupied units (29.7%) are affordable. The Southside neighborhood represents the highest density of affordable units as a percentage of occupied units and the highest total number of affordable units in any neighborhood; the Near Eastside is the second most densely concentrated, where 480 units of 1,025 occupied units (46.8%) are affordable. There are no affordable rental housing units known to NBD in the following neighborhoods: Lakefront, Park Ave, South Campus, University Neighborhood; there are fewer than 5 affordable housing units known to NBD in the Court-Woodlawn, Elmwood, Salt Springs, Sedgwick and Tipp Hill neighborhoods. See the table included in page 13 for a detailed breakdown of affordable housing units by neighborhood.

In June of 2016 the Syracuse Industrial Development Agency (SIDA) amended its property tax abatements schedules.<sup>3</sup> The Priority Commercial and Residential category includes a provision that development projects located outside of the Syracuse Neighborhood Revitalization Strategy Area (NRSA) may be eligible for an enhanced abatement schedule if the development incorporates 20% of the proposed residential units at 65% AMI rent limits for the City of Syracuse.<sup>4</sup> One goal of the policy change is to encourage affordable units in private market rate development projects across a broader geography.

## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:**

1. The total number of documented affordable housing units in the city is 6,586.
2. Census tract 42 has the highest number of affordable housing units. (n = 777)
3. Census tract 43.01 has the highest concentration of affordable housing units. (99.5% of all occupied units are affordable housing units)
4. Apartments are the land use that hold the largest number of affordable housing units. (n = 5,875)
5. Census tract 53 has the highest number of affordable housing sites. (n = 29)
6. The Southside neighborhood has the highest number of affordable housing units. (n = 1,077)

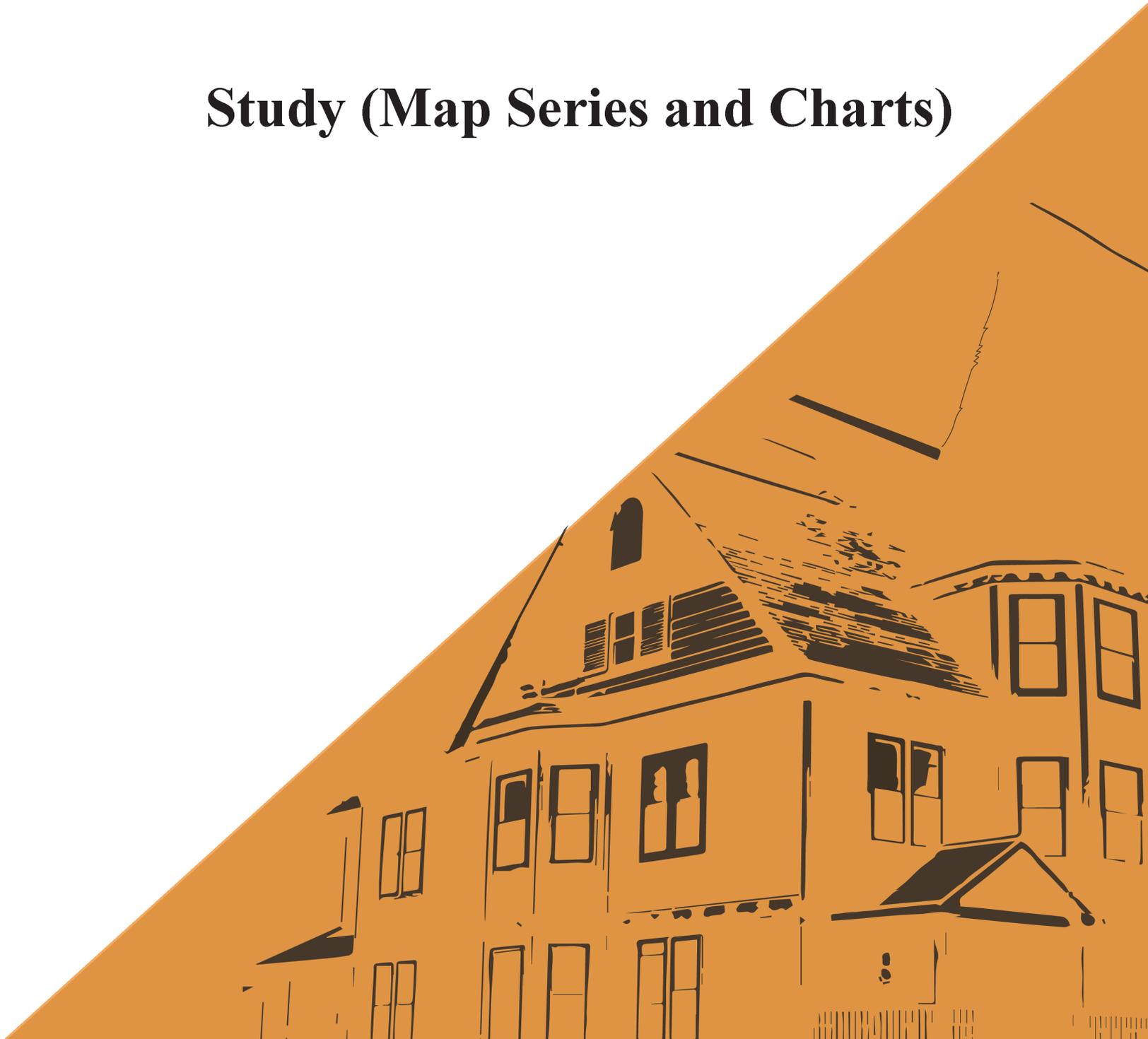
The Department of Neighborhood and Business Development is committed to maintaining and updating the data that informs this report. These findings will inform the Development's affordable housing investment strategy.

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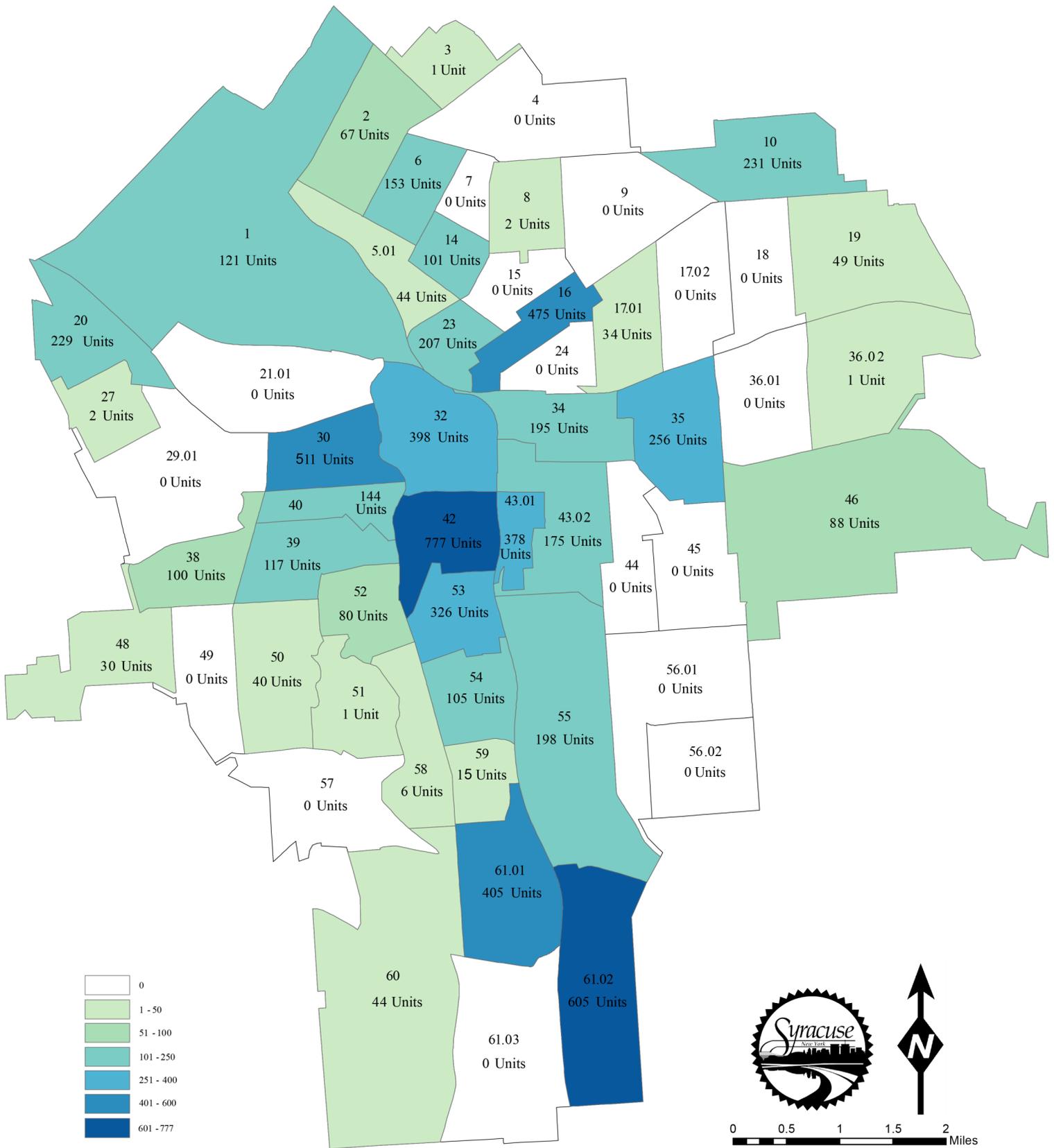
<sup>3</sup> See a copy of the policy at: [http://www.syr.gov.net/uploadedFiles/Departments/Economic\\_Development/Content/Economic\\_Development\\_Landing\\_Page/SIDA/Uniform%20Tax%20Exemption%20Policy%20rev%2006-21-16.pdf](http://www.syr.gov.net/uploadedFiles/Departments/Economic_Development/Content/Economic_Development_Landing_Page/SIDA/Uniform%20Tax%20Exemption%20Policy%20rev%2006-21-16.pdf)

<sup>4</sup> For more information on the NRSA areas please refer to: [http://www.syracuse.ny.us/uploadedFiles/Departments/Neighborhood\\_and\\_Business\\_Development/Content/NRSA%202011-2015.pdf](http://www.syracuse.ny.us/uploadedFiles/Departments/Neighborhood_and_Business_Development/Content/NRSA%202011-2015.pdf)

# Study (Map Series and Charts)



# Number of Affordable Housing Units by Census Tract



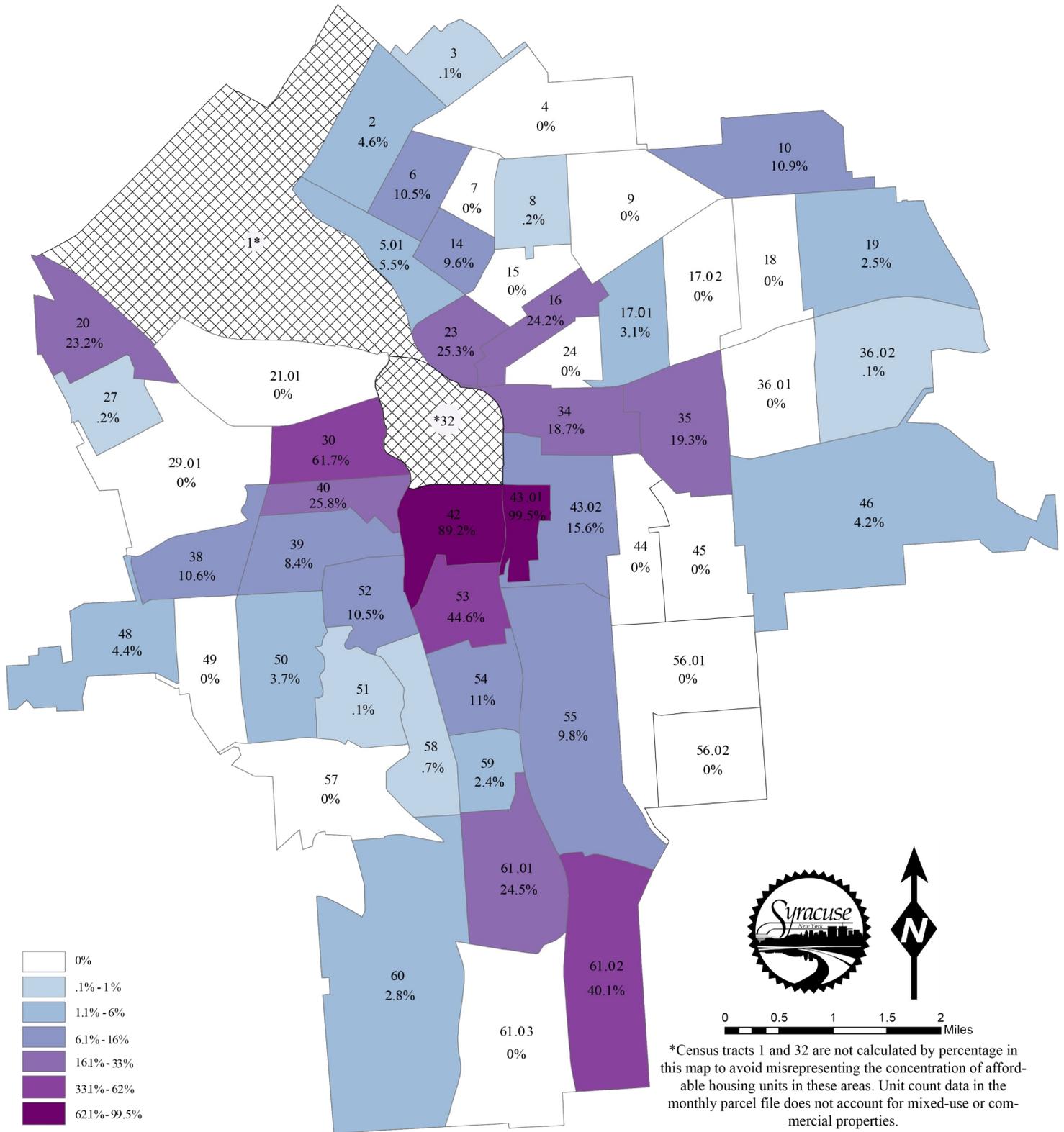
This map illustrates the concentration of number of affordable housing units in the City of Syracuse by census tract. The census tract with the highest number of affordable housing units is 42, with 777 units.

Occupied & Affordable Housing Units by Census Tract		
Census Tract	Occupied Units	Affordable Housing Units
1	545	121
2	1,459	67
3	693	1
4	1,566	0
5.01	801	44
6	1,463	153
7	665	0
8	1,058	2
9	1,492	0
10	2,123	231
14	1,056	101
15	942	0
16	1,966	350
17.01	1,098	34
17.02	1,145	0
18	1,276	0
19	1,923	49
20	986	35
21.01	1,130	0
23	819	207
24	823	0
27	928	2
29.01	1,346	0
30	828	511
32	1,330	398
34	1,044	195
35	1,327	256
36.01	964	194
36.02	1,006	1
38	939	100
39	1,399	117
40	559	144
<b>42</b>	<b>871</b>	<b>777</b>
43.01	380	378
43.02	1,125	175
44	708	0
45	1,634	0
46	2,079	88
48	682	30
49	612	0
50	1,091	40
51	935	1
52	765	80
53	731	326
54	954	105
55	2,018	198
56.01	726	0
56.02	1,253	0
57	780	0
58	875	6
59	636	15
60	1,577	44
61.01	1,652	405
61.02	1,507	605
61.03	1,102	0
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>61,392</b>	<b>6,586</b>

There are an estimated total of 6,586 affordable housing units known to NBD in the City of Syracuse, which is 10.7% of all occupied residential units and 10.3% of all residential units in Syracuse.

The largest number of affordable housing units are in census tract 42 (777 units), containing 11.8% of all affordable units in the city, followed by census tract 61.02 (605 units), which has 9.2% of the affordable housing units. There are no affordable housing units known to NBD in census tracts 4, 7, 9, 15, 17.02, 18, 21.01, 24, 29.01, 44, 45, 49, 56.01, 56.02, 57, and 61.03. As illustrated in the corresponding map, these census tracts are located next to at least one tract with a higher than average number of affordable housing units.

# Percentage of Affordable Housing Units as a Percentage of Occupied Units by Census Tract



This map illustrates the percentage of occupied units per census tract estimated to be affordable housing units in the City of Syracuse. The census tract with the highest percentage of affordable housing units is 43.01, with 99.5% of all occupied units deemed affordable.

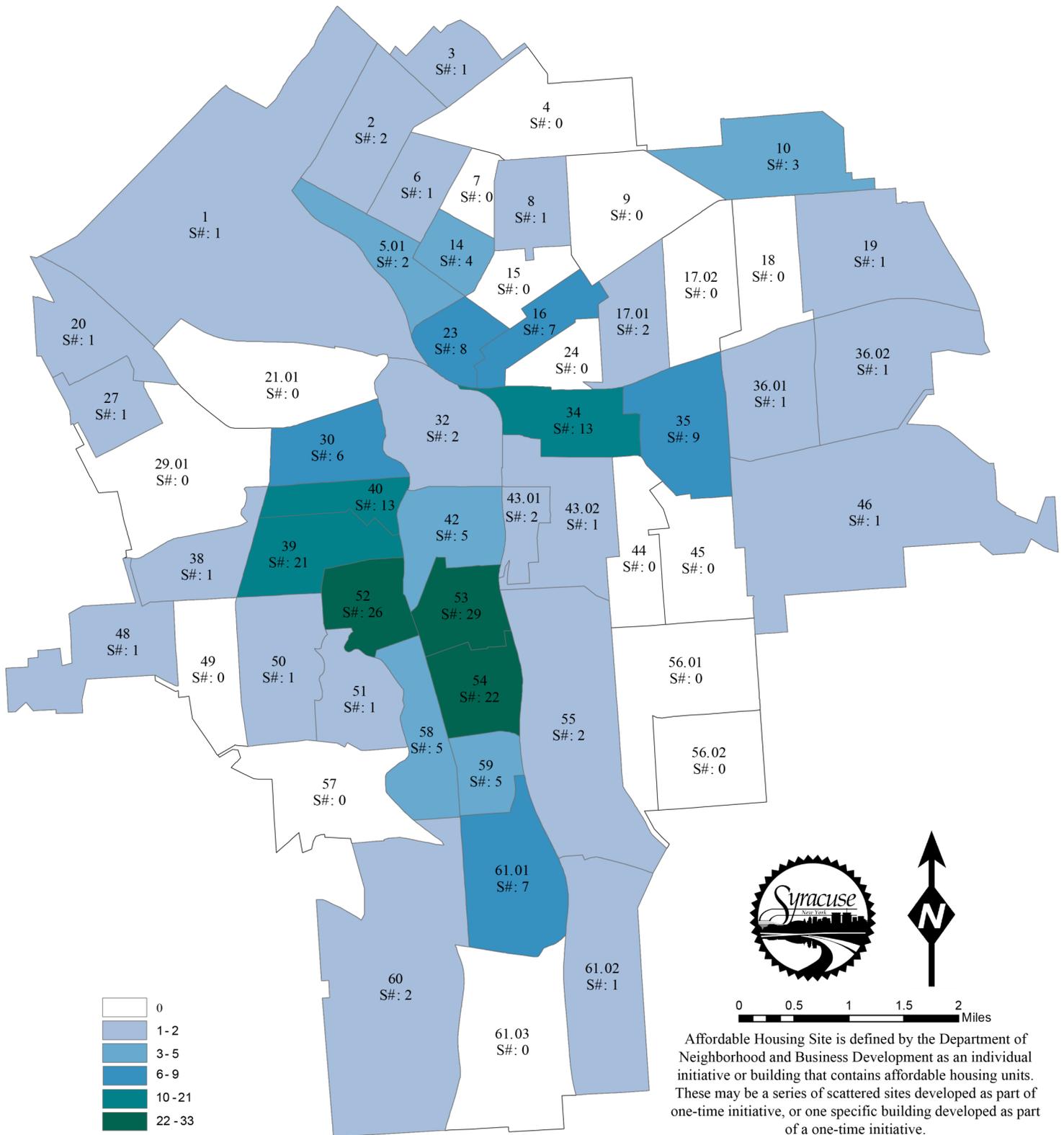
Occupied & Affordable Housing Units by Census Tract				
Census Tract	Occupied Units	Affordable Housing Units	Percentage Affordable Units of Occupied Units in Census Tract	Percentage Affordable Units of Total Affordable
1	545	121		1.84%
2	1,459	67	4.59%	1.02%
3	693	1	0.14%	0.02%
4	1,566	0	0.00%	0.00%
5.01	801	44	5.49%	0.67%
6	1,463	153	10.46%	2.32%
7	665	0	0.00%	0.00%
8	1,058	2	0.19%	0.03%
9	1,492	0	0.00%	0.00%
10	2,123	231	10.88%	3.51%
14	1,056	101	9.56%	1.53%
15	942	0	0.00%	0.00%
16	1,966	350	17.80%	5.31%
17.01	1,098	34	3.10%	0.52%
17.02	1,145	0	0.00%	0.00%
18	1,276	0	0.00%	0.00%
19	1,923	49	2.55%	0.74%
20	986	35	3.55%	0.53%
21.01	1,130	0	0.00%	0.00%
23	819	207	25.27%	3.14%
24	823	0	0.00%	0.00%
27	928	2	0.22%	0.03%
29.01	1,346	0	0.00%	0.00%
30	828	511	61.71%	7.76%
32	1,330	398		6.04%
34	1,044	195	18.68%	2.96%
35	1,327	256	19.29%	3.89%
36.01	964	194	20.12%	2.95%
36.02	1,006	1	0.10%	0.02%
38	939	100	10.65%	1.52%
39	1,399	117	8.36%	1.78%
40	559	144	25.76%	2.19%
<b>42</b>	<b>871</b>	<b>777</b>	<b>89.21%</b>	<b>11.80%</b>
<b>43.01</b>	<b>380</b>	<b>378</b>	<b>99.47%</b>	<b>5.74%</b>
43.02	1,125	175	15.56%	2.66%
44	708	0	0.00%	0.00%
45	1,634	0	0.00%	0.00%
46	2,079	88	4.23%	1.34%
48	682	30	4.40%	0.46%
49	612	0	0.00%	0.00%
50	1,091	40	3.67%	0.61%
51	935	1	0.11%	0.02%
52	765	80	10.46%	1.21%
53	731	326	44.60%	4.95%
54	954	105	11.01%	1.59%
55	2,018	198	9.81%	3.01%
56.01	726	0	0.00%	0.00%
56.02	1,253	0	0.00%	0.00%
57	780	0	0.00%	0.00%
58	875	6	0.69%	0.09%
59	636	15	2.36%	0.23%
60	1,577	44	2.79%	0.67%
61.01	1,652	405	24.52%	6.15%
61.02	1,507	605	40.15%	9.19%
61.03	1,102	0	0.00%	0.00%
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>61,392</b>	<b>6,586</b>	<b>10.73%</b>	

This table breaks down each census tract by the number of affordable housing units, the number of total occupied units, and the percentage of occupied units that are estimated to be affordable.

The data for the Lakefront (1) and Downtown (32) in the monthly parcel File, which does not accurately reflect the number of residential units in mixed use structures.

Census tract 43.01 has the highest concentration of affordable housing units, but only 5.7% of the total affordable housing units available in the City of Syracuse. Census Tract 42, however, has the highest number of affordable housing units (777), and 89.2% of all occupied units in this census tract are affordable housing. Census tract 42 also includes the highest percentage of total affordable housing units in the city (11.8%).

# Affordable Housing Sites by Census Tract



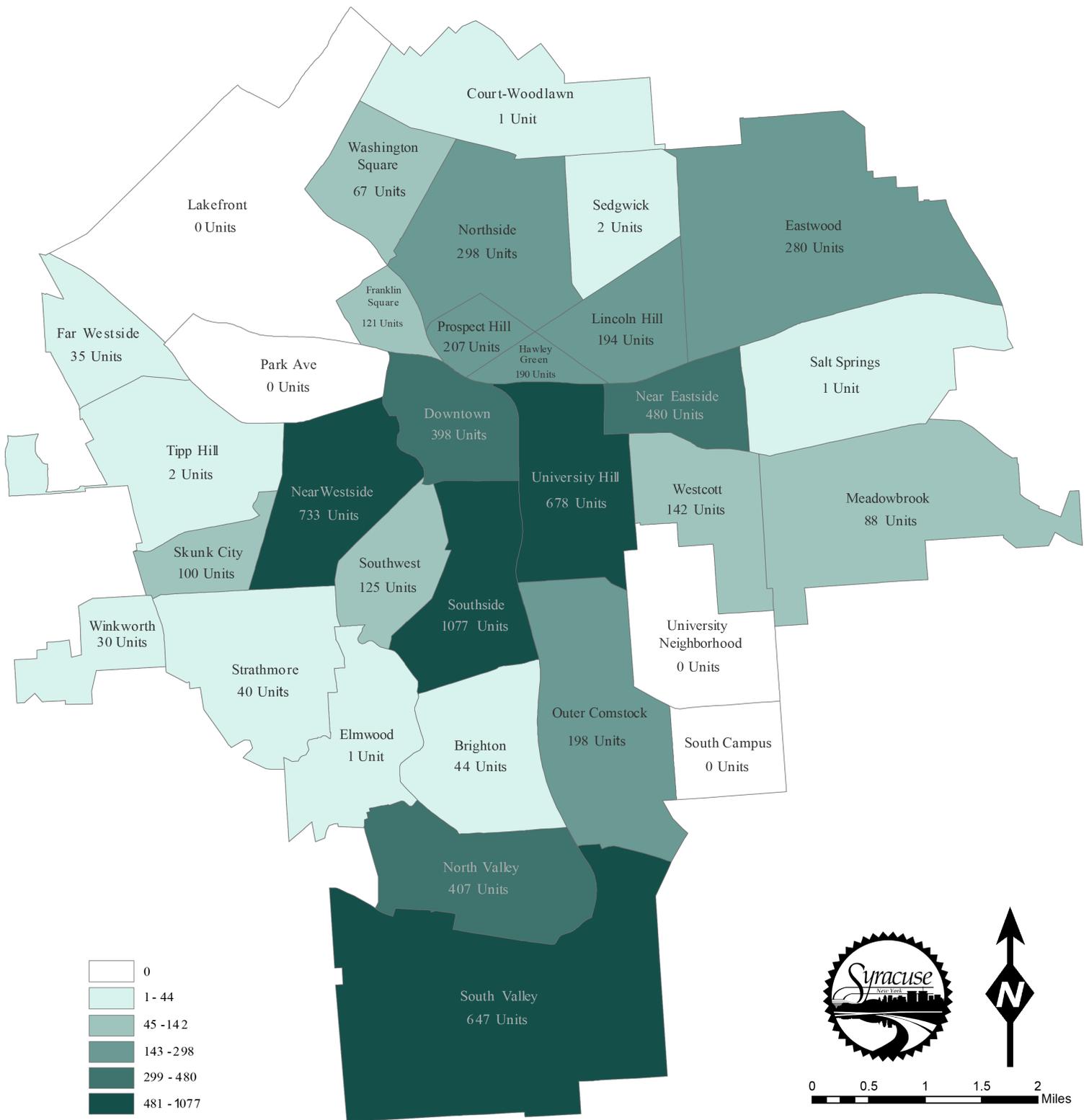
This map illustrates the concentration of number of affordable housing *sites* in the City of Syracuse by census tract. The census tract with the highest number of affordable housing units is 53, with 29 projects.

Affordable Housing Sites by Census Tract		
Census Tract	Site(s)	Percentage Affordable Housing Sites in Tract of Total Affordable Housing Sites in the City
1.00	1	0.47%
2	2	0.94%
3	1	0.47%
4.00	0	0.00%
5.01	2	0.94%
6	1	0.47%
7.00	0	0.00%
8.00	1	0.47%
9.00	0	0.00%
10	3	1.41%
14	4	1.88%
15	0	0.00%
16	7	3.29%
17.01	2	0.94%
17.02	0	0.00%
18.00	0	0.00%
19	1	0.47%
20.00	1	0.47%
21.01	0	0.00%
23	8	3.76%
24.00	0	0.00%
27.00	1	0.47%
29.01	0	0.00%
30	6	2.82%
32	2	0.94%
34	13	6.10%
35	9	4.23%
36.01	1	0.47%
36.02	1	0.47%
38	1	0.47%
39	21	9.86%
40	13	6.10%
42	5	2.35%
43.01	2	0.94%
43.02	1	0.47%
44.00	0	0.00%
45.00	0	0.00%
46.00	1	0.47%
48	1	0.47%
49.00	0	0.00%
50.00	1	0.47%
51.00	1	0.47%
52	26	12.21%
<b>53</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>13.62%</b>
54	22	10.33%
55	2	0.94%
56.01	0	0.00%
56.02	0	0.00%
57	0	0.00%
58	5	2.35%
59	5	2.35%
60	2	0.94%
61.01	7	3.29%
61.02	1	0.47%
61.03	0	0.00%
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>213</b>	

Census tract 53 has the highest number of affordable housing sites, but only 44.6% of its occupied units are affordable. While census tract 43.01—with the highest percentage of occupied units which are affordable—has only two affordable housing sites. This suggests that there is little correlation between the number of affordable housing sites and affordable housing units.

Compared to the total number of affordable housing sites, census tracts 53 and 52 have the highest number of affordable housing sites in the City of Syracuse (13.6% and 12.2% respectively).

# Affordable Housing Units by Neighborhood



This map shows the concentration of affordable housing units by neighborhood. The neighborhood with the largest number of affordable housing units is the Southside (1,077), making up 48% of its occupied housing units. The neighborhood with the second highest number of affordable housing is the Near Westside (480), making up 47% of its occupied housing units.

<b>Occupied &amp; Affordable Housing Units by Neighborhood</b>				
<b>Neighborhood</b>	<b>Occupied Units</b>	<b>Affordable Housing Units</b>	<b>Percentage Affordable Units of Occupied in Neighborhood</b>	<b>Percentage Affordable Units of Total Affordable</b>
Brighton	2,235	44	1.97%	0.67%
Court-Woodlawn	2,767	1	0.04%	0.02%
Downtown	1,330	398	29.92%	6.04%
Eastwood	6,893	280	4.06%	4.25%
Elmwood	1,450	1	0.07%	0.02%
Far Westside	1,352	35	2.59%	0.53%
Franklin Square	423	121	28.61%	1.84%
Hawley Green	1,074	190	17.69%	2.88%
Lakefront	122	0	0.00%	0.00%
Lincoln Hill	1,960	194	9.90%	2.95%
Meadowbrook	1,995	88	4.41%	1.34%
Near Eastside	1,025	480	46.83%	7.29%
Near Westside	2,469	733	29.69%	11.13%
North Valley	2,274	407	17.90%	6.18%
Northside	4,974	298	5.99%	4.52%
Outer Comstock	2,251	198	8.80%	3.01%
Park Ave	1,130	0	0.00%	0.00%
Prospect Hill	1,121	207	18.47%	3.14%
Salt Springs	1,973	1	0.05%	0.02%
Sedgwick	1,704	2	0.12%	0.03%
Skunk City	938	100	10.66%	1.52%
South Campus	1,253	0	0.00%	0.00%
South Valley	3,339	647	19.38%	9.82%
<b>Southside</b>	<b>2,238</b>	<b>1,077</b>	<b>48.12%</b>	<b>16.35%</b>
Southwest	1,061	125	11.78%	1.90%
Strathmore	2,041	40	1.96%	0.61%
Tipp Hill	1,908	2	0.10%	0.03%
University Hill	2,110	678	32.13%	10.29%
University Neighborhood	1,504	0	0.00%	0.00%
Washington Square	1,875	67	3.57%	1.02%
Westcott	2,154	142	6.59%	2.16%
Winkworth	449	30	6.68%	0.46%
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>61,392</b>	<b>6,586</b>	<b>10.73%</b>	

The neighborhood with the highest number of affordable housing units is the Southside (1,077), making up 48.1% of its total occupied housing units. When compared to the total number of affordable units in the City of Syracuse, the Southside neighborhood includes 16.5% of all affordable housing units in the city. The Near Westside includes the second largest number of affordable units in the city (11.1% of the total), but just under 30% of the housing units in its geographic boundaries are affordable housing units. The Near Eastside has a high percentage of affordable occupied units (46.8%) but represents a much lower percentage of the total affordable units in the city (7.3%).

Occupied & Affordable Residential Units by Land Use Category			
Land Use Category	Occupied Housing Units	Affordable Housing Units	Affordable Unit Percentage of Total
Apartment	21,337	5,875	27.53%
Cemetery	0	0	0%
Commercial*	139	139	
Community Services*	14	14	
Industrial	0	0	0%
Multiple Residence	601	29	4.83%
Parking	0	0	0.00%
Parks	0	0	0%
Recreation*	99	99	
Religious	0	0	0%
Schools**	60	0	0%
Single Family	23,544	119	0.51%
Three Family	2,211	81	3.66%
Two Family	13,347	230	1.72%
Utilities	0	0	0%
Vacant Land	0	0	0%
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>61352</b>	<b>6586</b>	<b>10.73%</b>

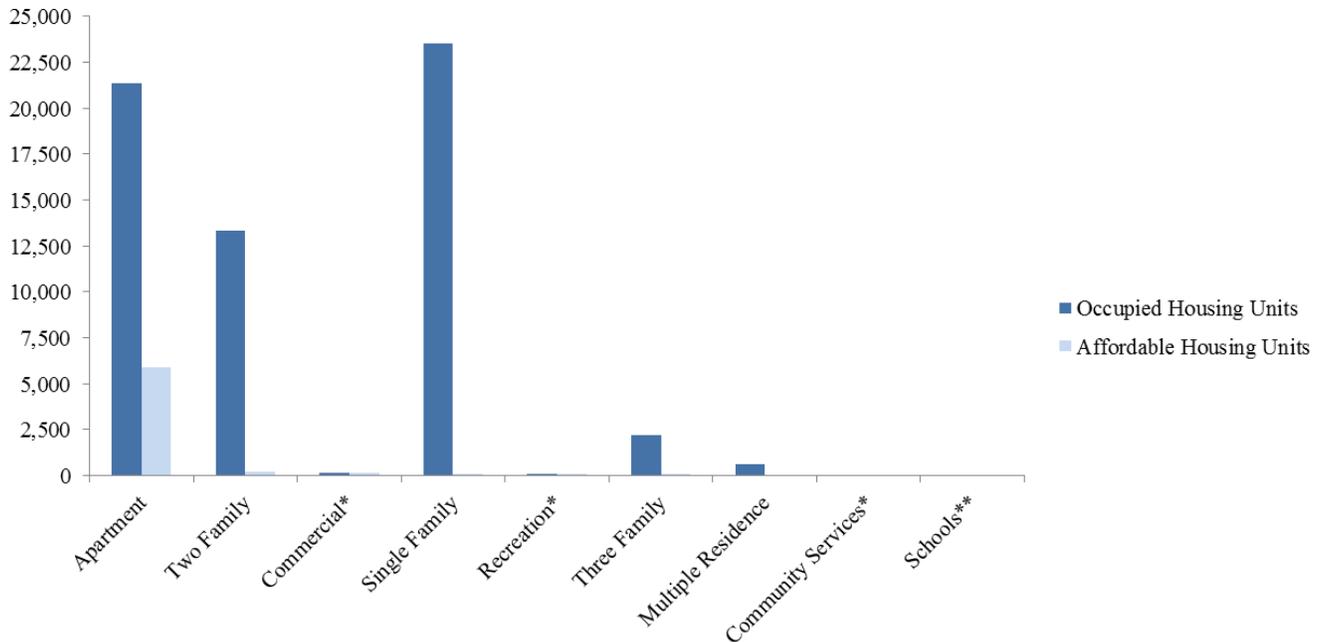
Land use indicates the type of structure on a parcel. The majority of the affordable housing units in the city are within apartments (89.2%), with the second highest land use with affordable housing units being Multiple Residence (4.8%).

Of all the occupied units in apartments 5,875 are affordable (27.5%). Out of all occupied units in multiple residence structures, 29 are affordable (4.8%). While out of all occupied single family structures, 119 (.5%) have affordable housing units.

\* The parcel records kept by the City do not count residential units for non-residential land uses; for the purpose of this study, known affordable housing units on non-residential land use parcels have been updated to reflect an accurate unit count. Other housing units on non-residential land use parcels are not reflected in this count.

\*\*includes Syracuse University owned properties with residential uses

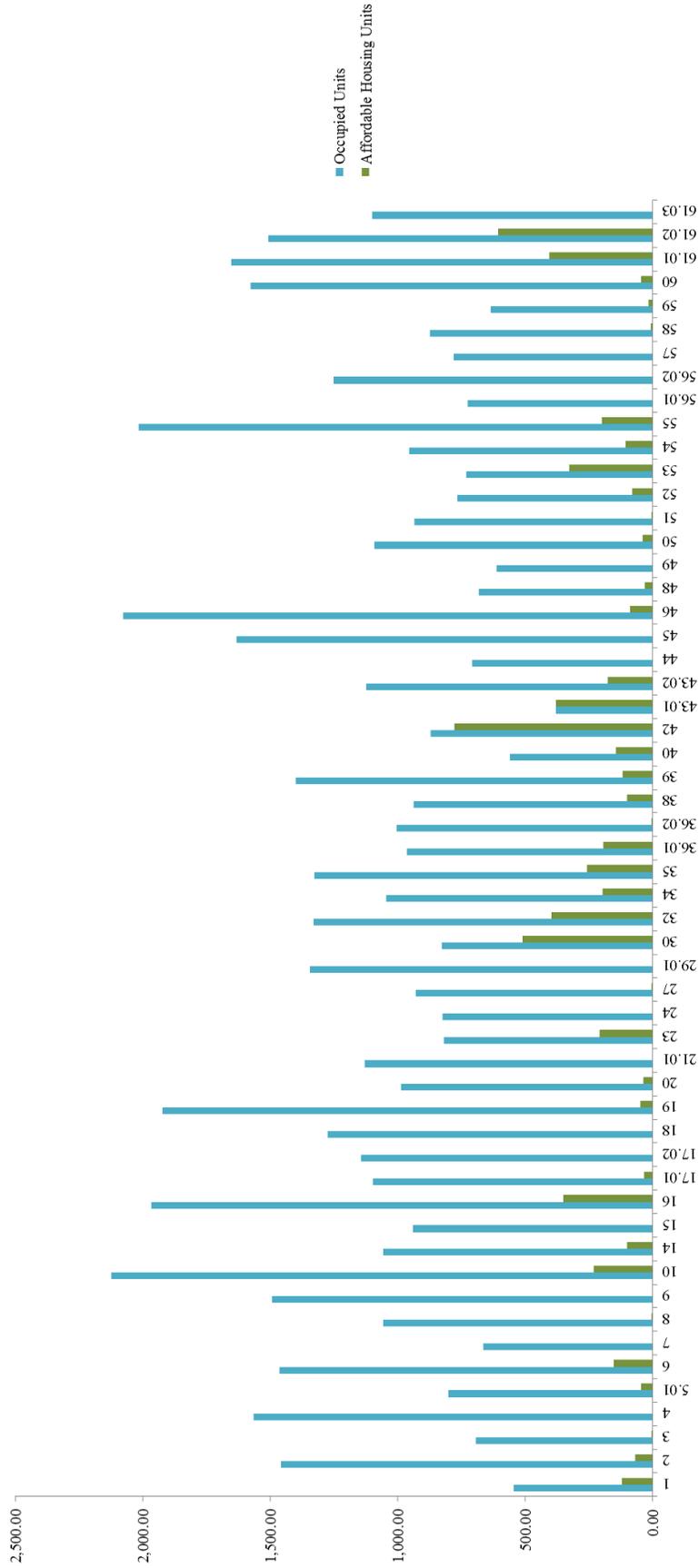
**Occupied and Affordable Residential Units by Land Use Category**



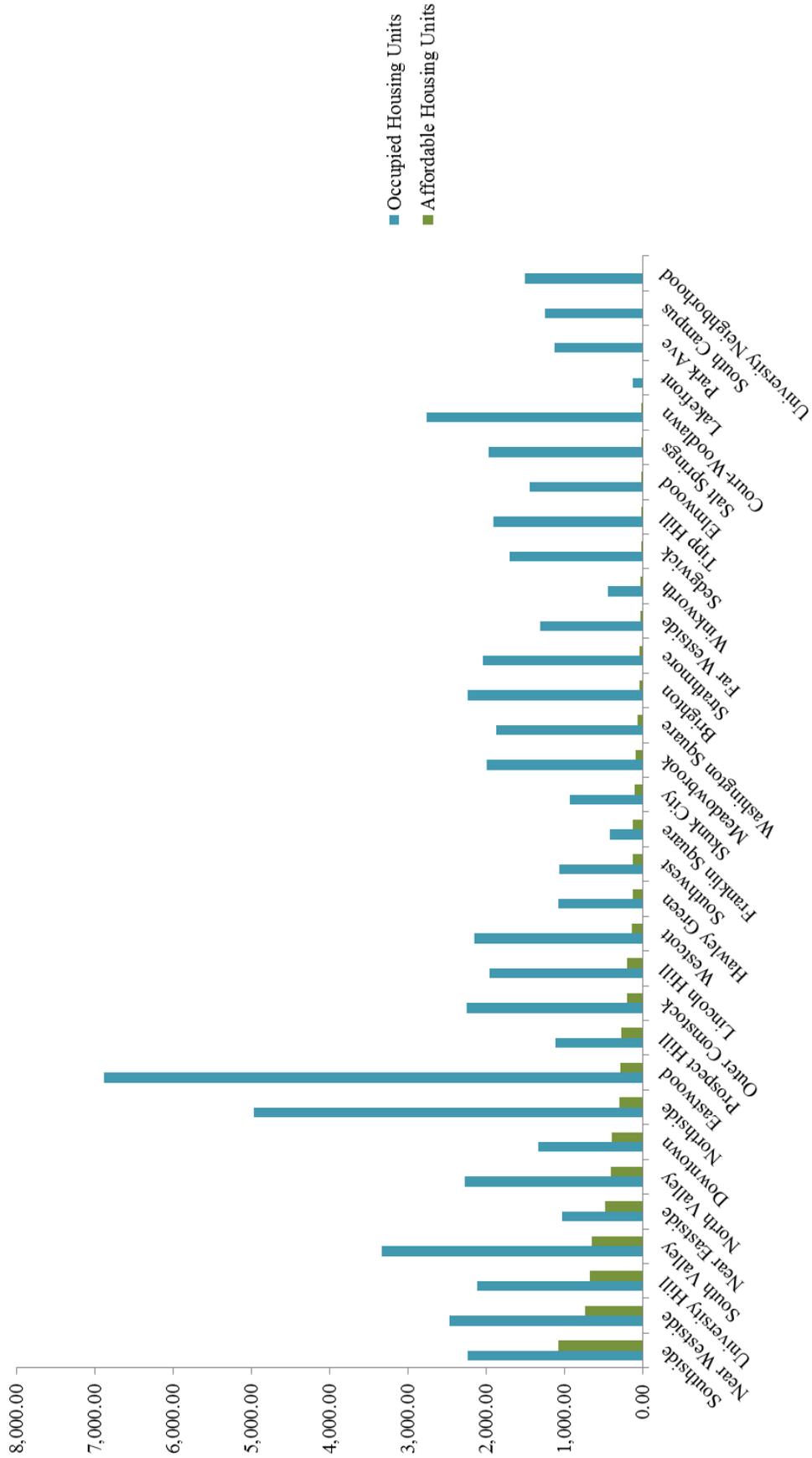
# Appendix



## Occupied Units and Affordable Housing Units by Census Tract

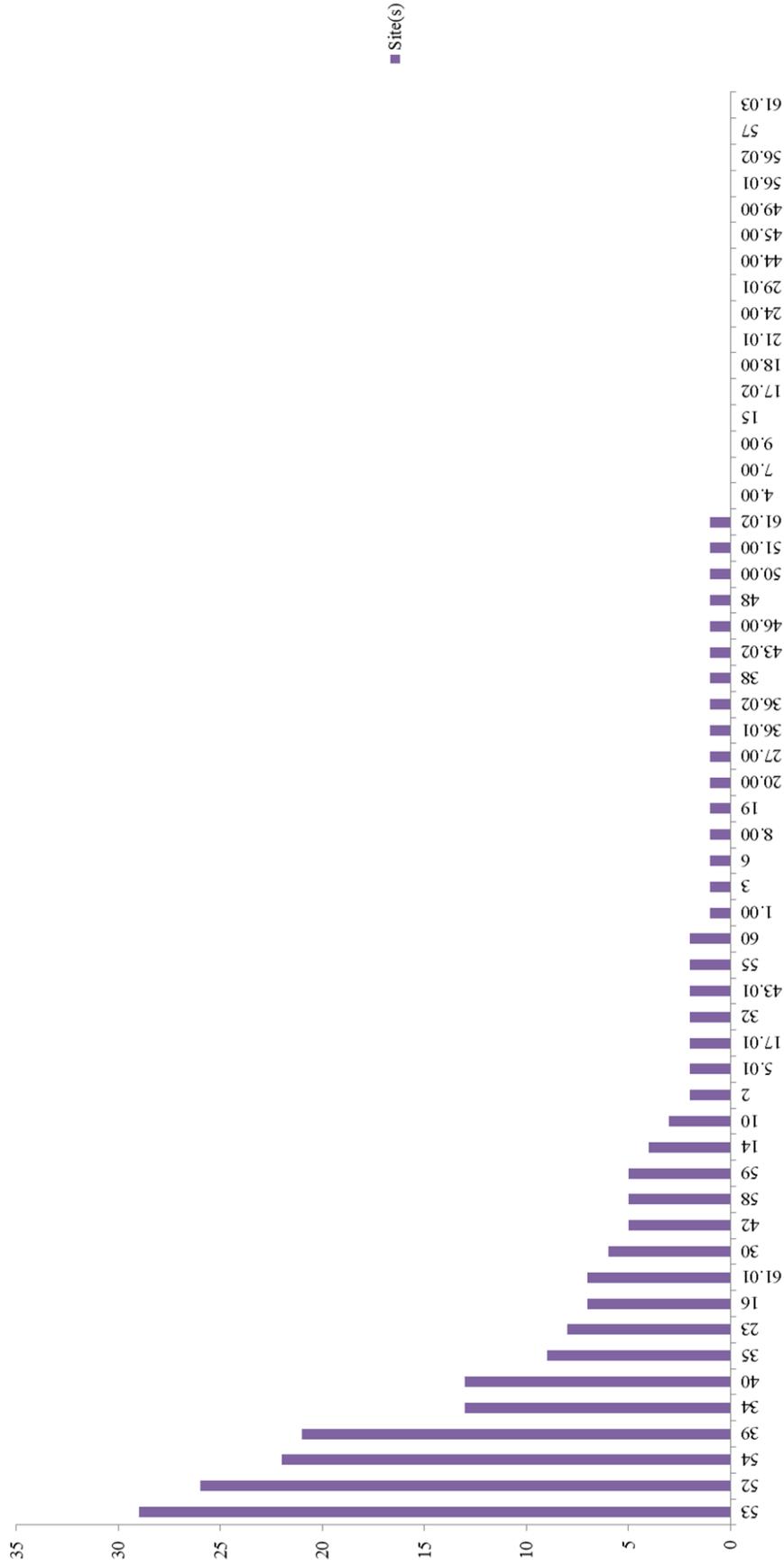


# Occupied and Affordable Housing Units by Neighborhood



## Estimated Number of Affordable Housing Projects by Census Tract\*

N=213



\*Census tracts 44, 45, 49, 56.01, 56.02, 57, and 61.03 were omitted from this chart due to lack of existing affordable housing projects.