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A Report on the Dayton Plan

Introduction

In 1970, regional planners in the Dayton, Ohio region (under the name of the Miami Valley Regional Planning Commission or MVRPC) decided that the lack of affordable housing in the suburbs was the reason that the metropolitan area was so racially segregated. Planners attempted to encourage suburban construction of affordable housing under what came to be known as the “Dayton Plan,” but not every suburb built units and some built them faster than others during the decade. This report details the level of racial and class segregation in the region as well as suburban affordable housing builds in the region from 1970 to 1980. It interrogates the extent to which race and class determined the construction of affordable housing in the suburbs of metropolitan Dayton, Ohio from 1970 to 1980 as well as the extent to which increased subsidized housing in the suburbs reduced residential segregation in metropolitan Dayton during the decade.

Literature Review

Myriad historical geographers have remarked that the suburbs were constructed as white, middle-class only enclaves with the help of the federal government. Because the real estate industry assumed that the movement of black citizens into white neighborhoods would decrease home values in these neighborhoods, they devised racially-restrictive covenants which forbade the sale of housing to black people. The federal government then mainstreamed the use of such covenants with its Federal Housing Administration manual in the late 1940s. By the 1960s, urban riots in black neighborhoods made the federal government act to decrease limitations on black movement to all-white suburbs, culminating in the federal Fair Housing Act of 1968. However, because black neighborhoods had been redlined by the real estate industry, there was a great wealth disparity between black homeowners and white homeowners, and many more black citizens rented than white residents. This wealth differential, owing to lack of equity in black homes, meant that black citizens could not afford houses in white neighborhoods by 1970. For this reason, George Romney’s Department of Housing and Urban development decided to increase government-sponsored affordable housing in the suburbs in order to address lack of black choice in where to live and to address racial segregation. However, most authors have presumed that suburbanites opposed the construction of affordable housing because they feared white flight would decrease the values of their homes during the 1970s.¹

¹ David M.P. Freund, *Colored Property: State Policy and White Racial Politics in Suburban America* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2007); Colin Gordon, *Mapping Decline: St. Louis and the Fate of the American City* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2008); Arnold R. Hirsch, *Making the Second Ghetto: Race and Housing in Chicago, 1940-1960* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1983); Kenneth T. Jackson, *Crabgrass Frontier: The Suburbanization of the United States* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1985); Kevin Michael Kruse, *White Flight: Atlanta and the Making of Modern Conservatism* (Princeton:

Problem statement

The novelty of this project, vis-à-vis the findings of previous authors, is that it questions whether or not all suburbs opposed the construction of affordable housing in their neighborhoods during the 1970s. Another novelty is that it challenges the assertion that increased affordable housing would have increased racial integration in the American metropolis.

To this end, this project asks (a) To what extent did race and class determine the construction of affordable housing in the suburbs of metropolitan Dayton, Ohio from 1970 to 1980?; (b) To what extent did increase subsidized housing in the suburbs reduce residential segregation in metropolitan Dayton from 1970 to 1980?

Objectives

In order to answer the above questions, the author had to investigate multiple geographical aspects of the Dayton Plan. First, the author had to understand how racially and economically segregated Dayton was in both 1970 and 1980. Second, the author asked how segregated the distribution of affordable housing was in 1970 and 1980. Third, the author sought to ask whether the racial or class makeup of a suburb determined its acceptance of affordable housing during the 1970s. In other words, was there a correlation between the rate of affordable housing construction in a given suburb and whether black people lived in that suburb? Finally, the last objective was to determine to what extent the suburbanization of affordable housing led to the suburbanization of African Americans during the 1970s.

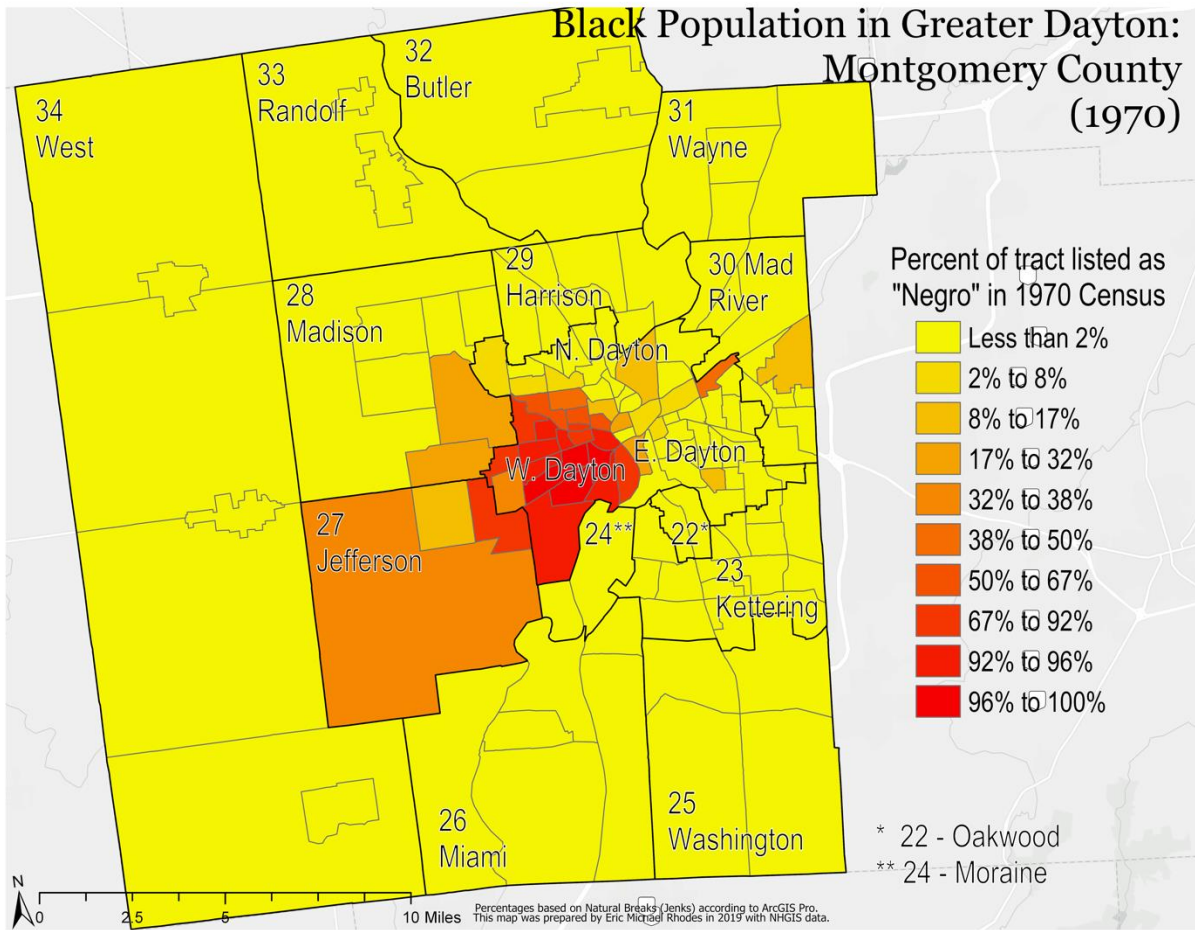
Methods

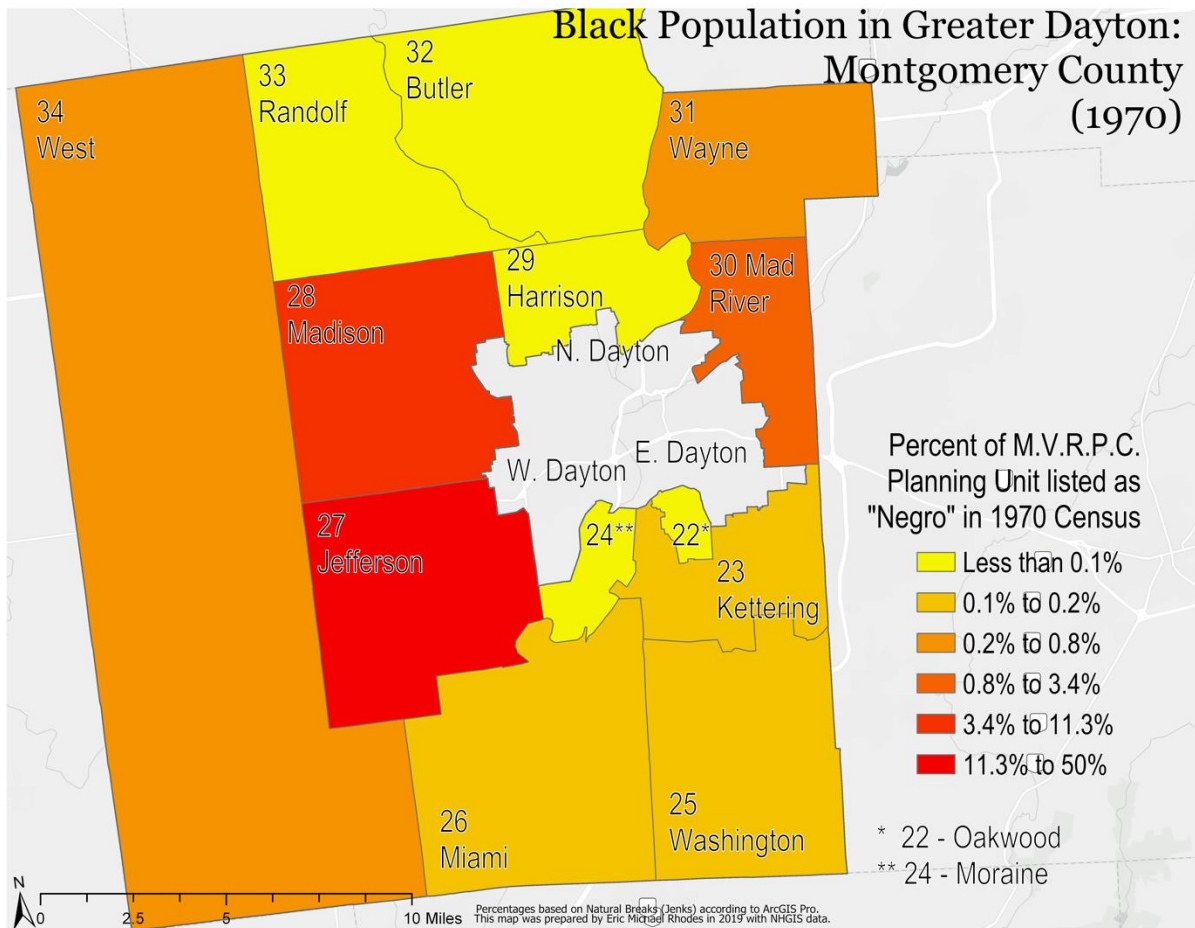
For this report, there were several sources of data. As a work of historical GIS, this project drew from the NHGIS website for historical census data on race, class, and population; from the Miami Valley Regional Planning Commission archives for the approximate location of affordable housing in metropolitan Dayton in 1970, 1973, and 1978 (and for suburban planning unit boundaries). Maps were prepared in ArcGIS Pro with standard state plane projections (NAD 83) by averaging census tracts into suburban planning unit boundaries, by natural breaks or Jenks.

Princeton University Press, 2007); Charles Lamb, *Housing Segregation in Suburban America Since 1960: Presidential and Judicial Politics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005); Matthew D. Lassiter, *The Silent Majority: Suburban Politics in the Sunbelt South* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2006); Douglas S. Massey and Nancy A. Denton, "Suburbanization and Segregation in U. S. Metropolitan Areas.," *American Journal of Sociology* 94, no. 3 (November 1988): 592–626; Douglas S. Massey and Nancy A. Denton, *American Apartheid: Segregation and the Making of the Underclass* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1993); Richard Rothstein, "The Making of Ferguson: Public Policies at the Root of Its Troubles," *Inequality and Poverty* (Washington, DC: Economic Policy Institute, October 15, 2014), <http://www.epi.org/files/2014/making-of-ferguson-final.pdf>; Richard Rothstein, *The Color of Law: A Forgotten History of How Our Government Segregated America* (New York: Liveright Publishing Corporation, 2018); Thomas J. Sugrue, *The Origins of the Urban Crisis: Race and Inequality in Postwar Detroit: With a New Preface by the Author.* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2005).

Results and Discussion

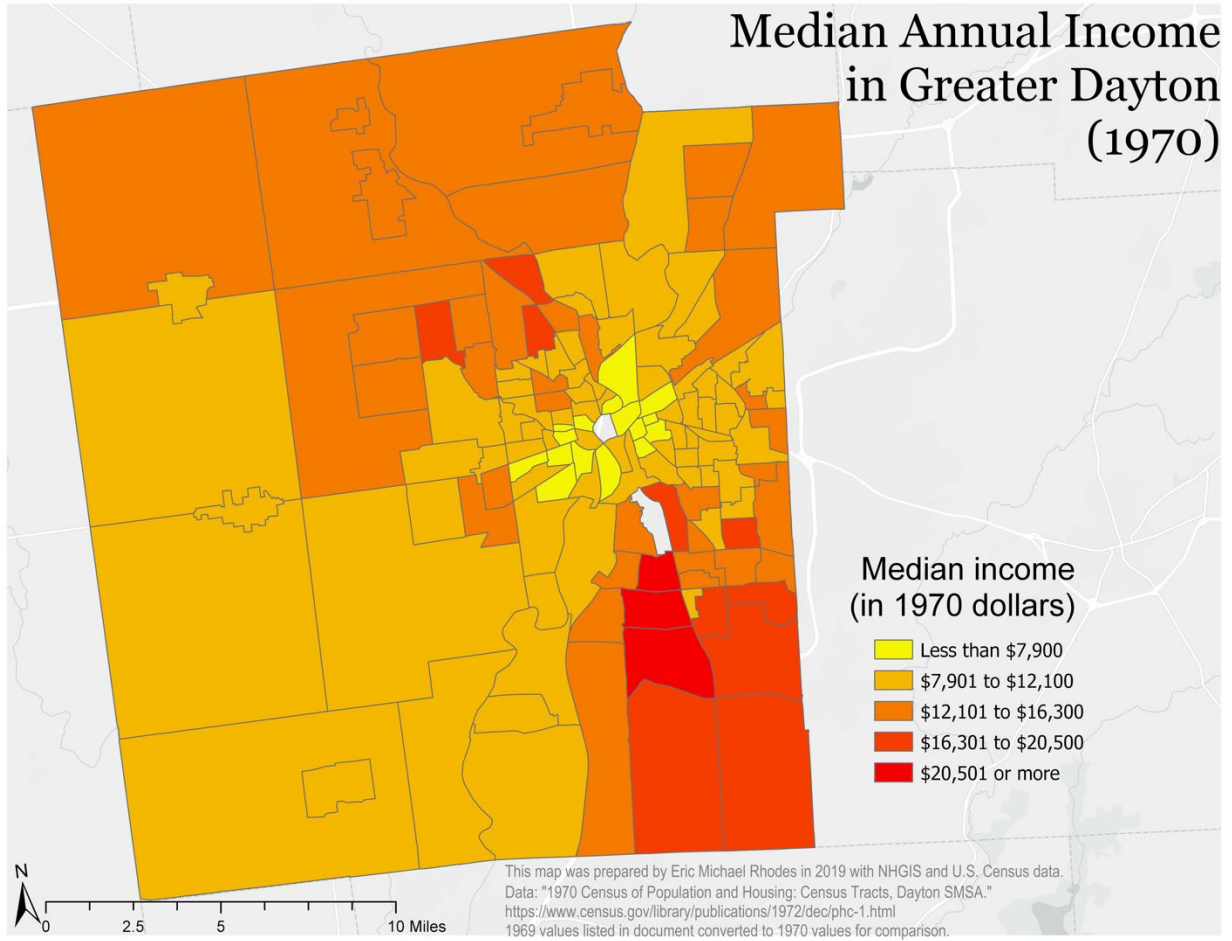
Racial segregation in metropolitan Dayton in 1970

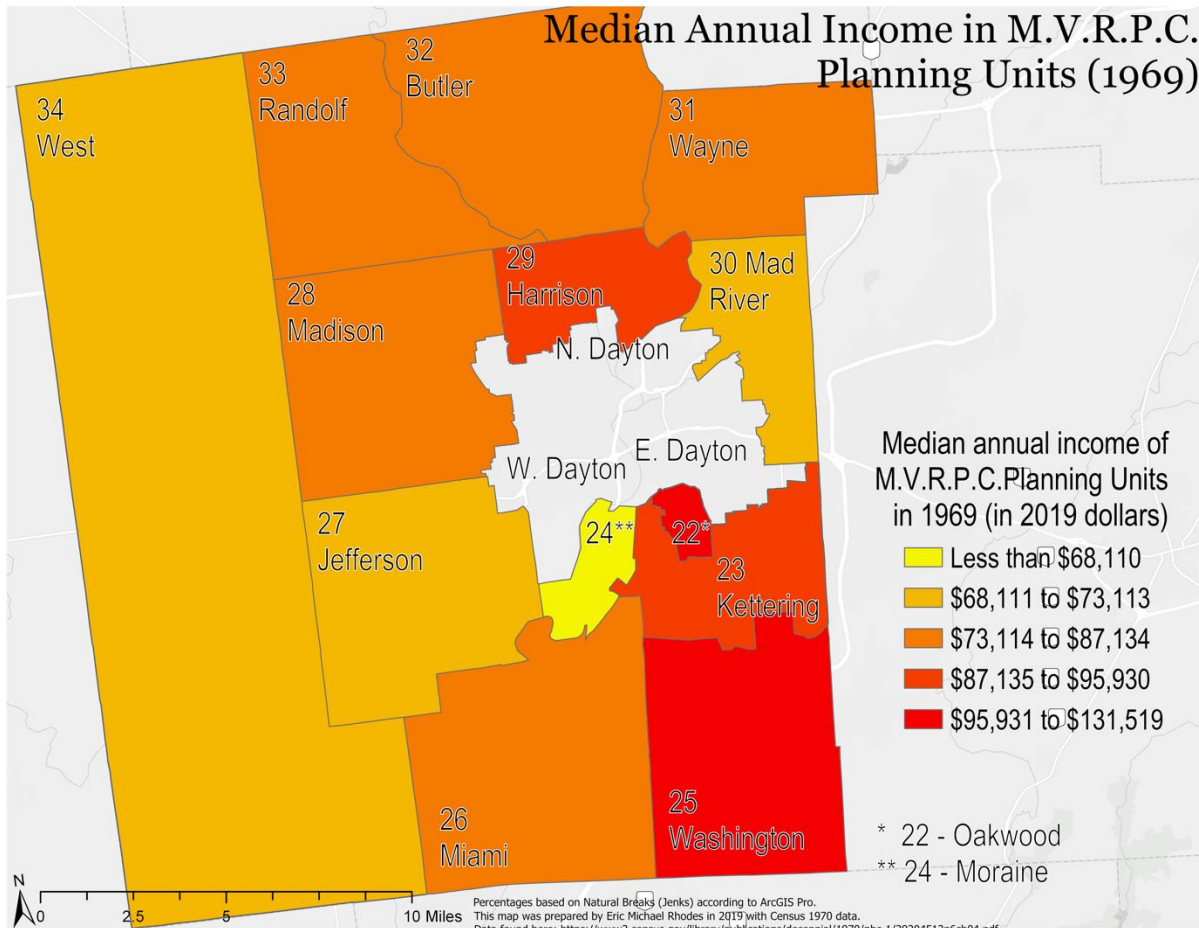




First, I downloaded NHGIS/Tigerline data and boundaries to project in ArcGIS Pro. Then, for the second map, I digitized MVRPC boundaries for “Planning Units,” which I will refer to as “suburbs” in this report. Regarding the “Black Population in Greater Dayton” map, we see that only in particular places (Census tracts) was the black population over 50% in 1970 (West Dayton, parts of Madison, and Jefferson). Regarding the second map, in which I aggregated the data for race for the suburbs, we see that only Madison, Mad River, and Jefferson had appreciable numbers of African Americans in 1970. It appears that MVRPC was right to contend that the Dayton metropolitan area was very racially segregated in 1970.

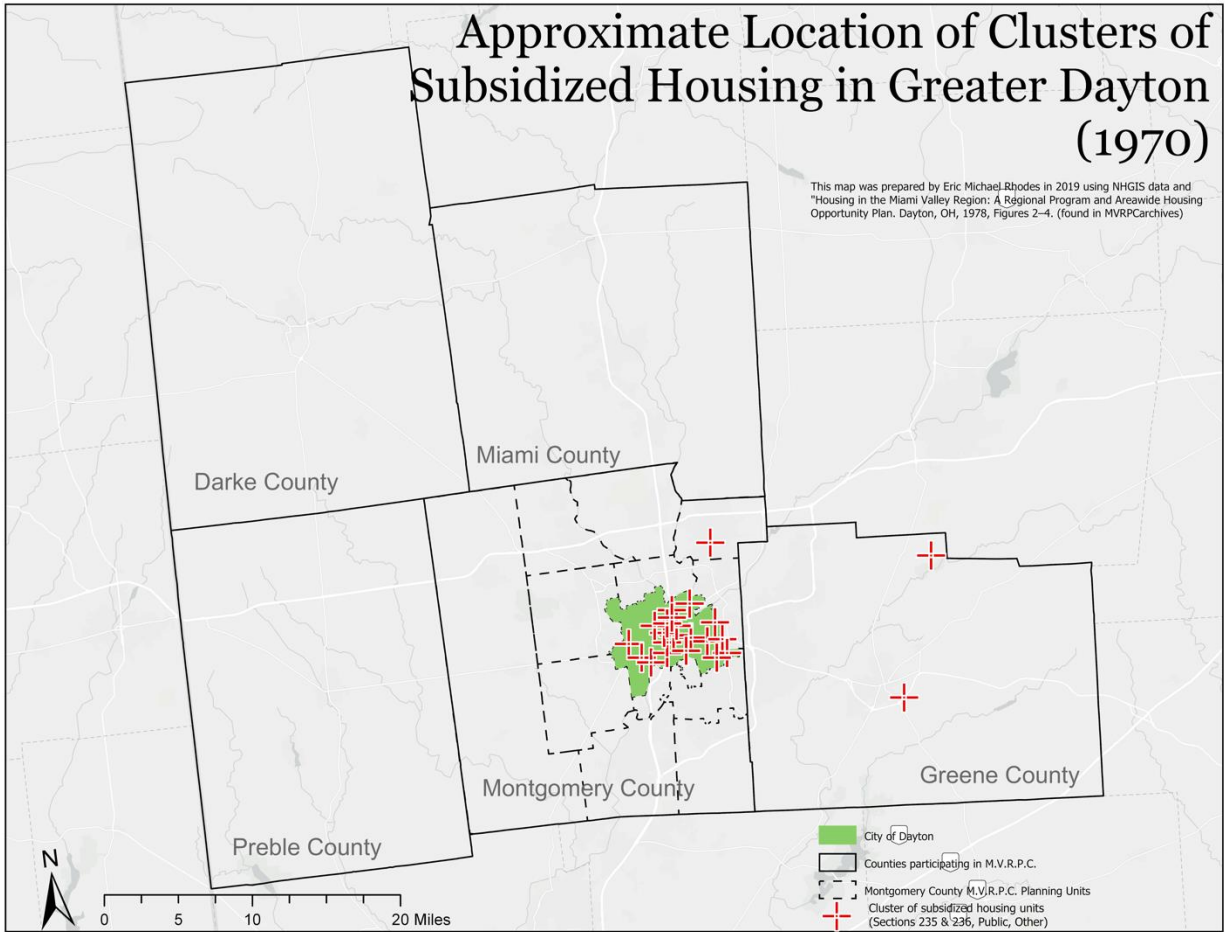
Class segregation in metropolitan Dayton in 1970





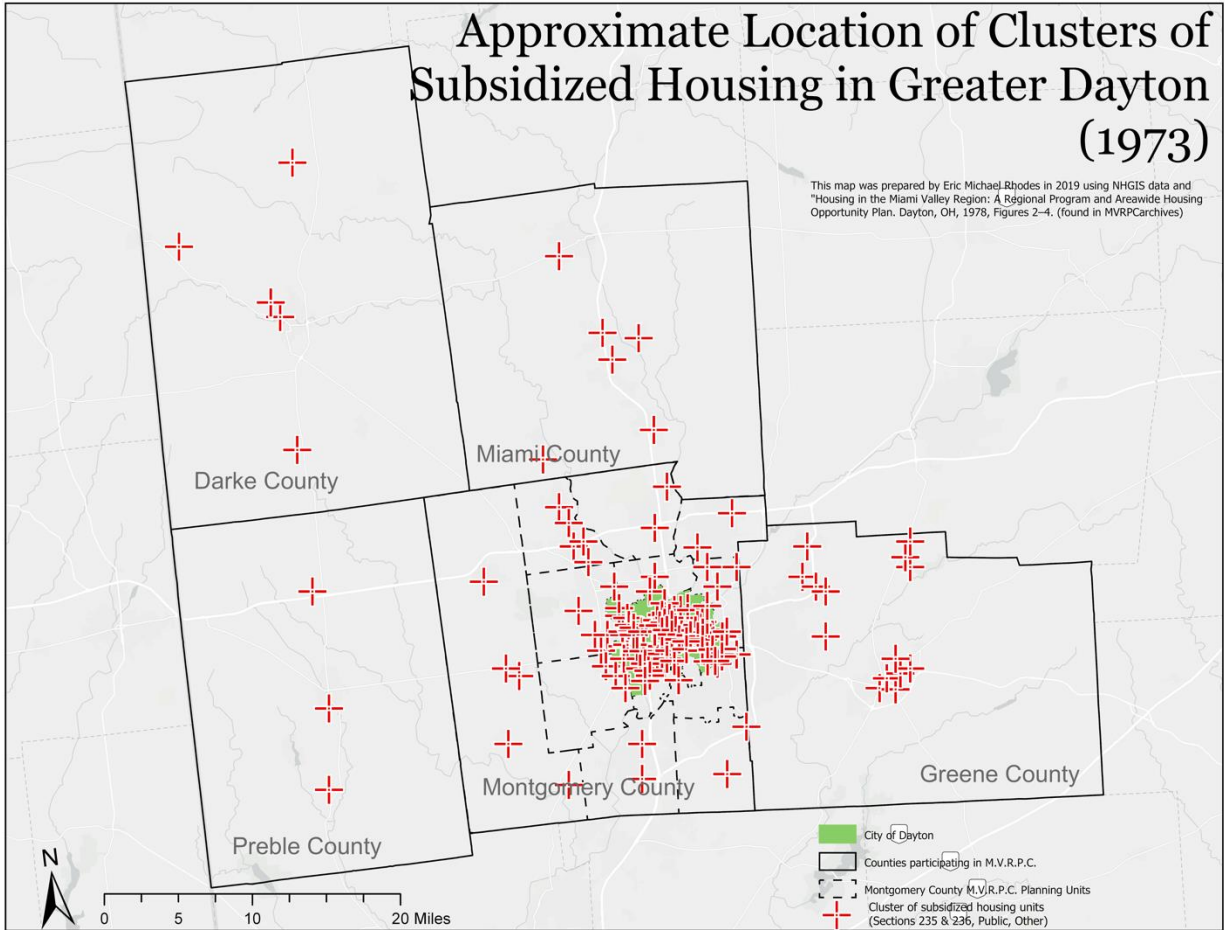
First, I downloaded NHGIS/Tigerline data and boundaries to project in ArcGIS Pro. Then, for the second map, I digitized MVRPC boundaries for “Planning Units.” I repeated the steps listed in the previous subsection, but for median annual income for tracts and for Planning Units (suburbs). Two observations came out of these two maps. First, that class and race were correlated, especially in West Dayton. Second, however, we see that one all-white suburb, Moraine, was relatively poor. Jefferson (a black suburb) earned more money on average per year than Moraine did. Still, the tracts in Madison where black people lived were poorer than sections of Madison where white people lived. This appears to uphold the premise of the MVRPC—that race and class were to a large extent linked in Greater Dayton in 1970.

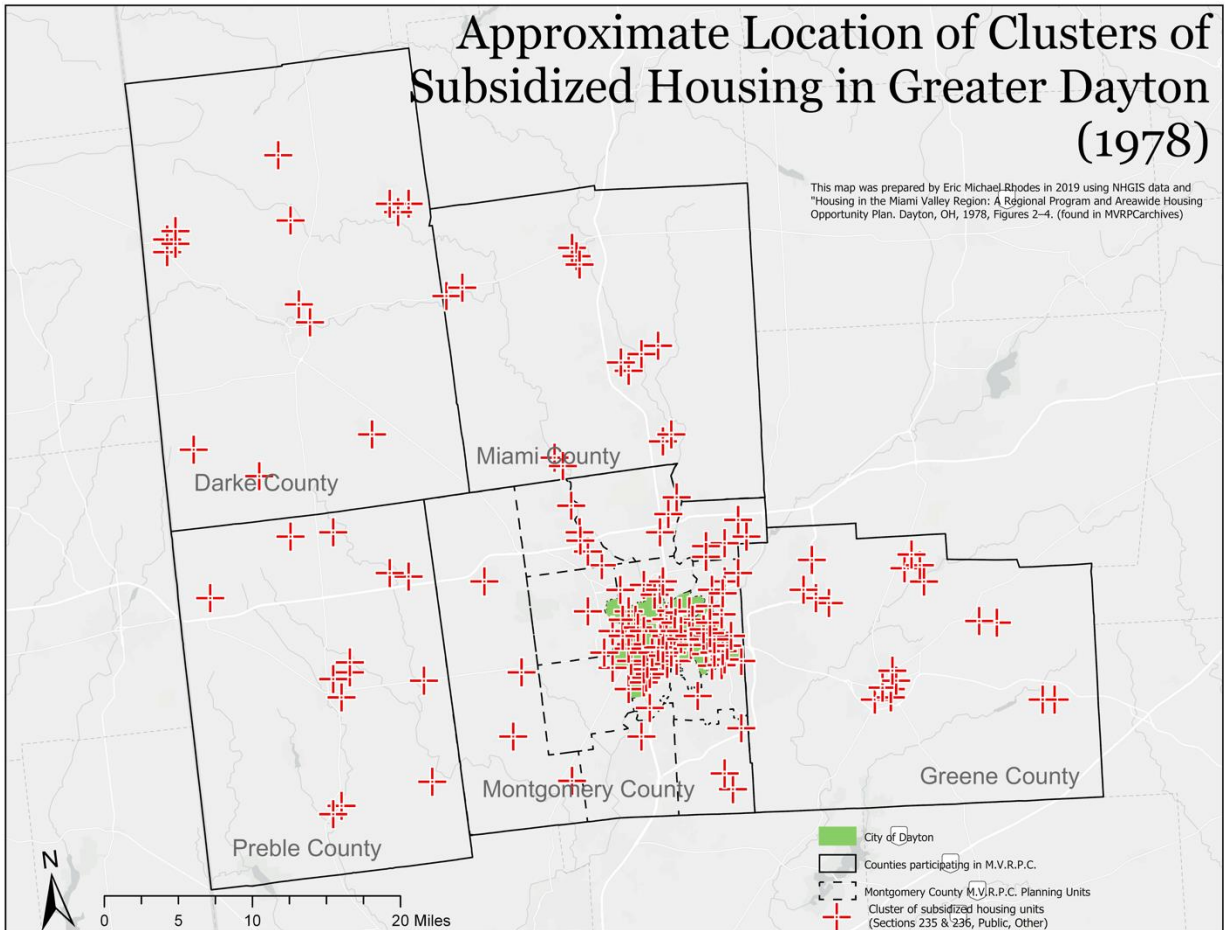
Approximate location of affordable housing (1970, 1973, 1978)



Approximate Location of Clusters of Subsidized Housing in Greater Dayton (1973)

This map was prepared by Eric Michael Rhodes in 2019 using NHGIS data and "Housing in the Miami Valley Region: A Regional Program and Areawide Housing Opportunity Plan. Dayton, OH, 1978, Figures 2-4. (found in MVRParchives)



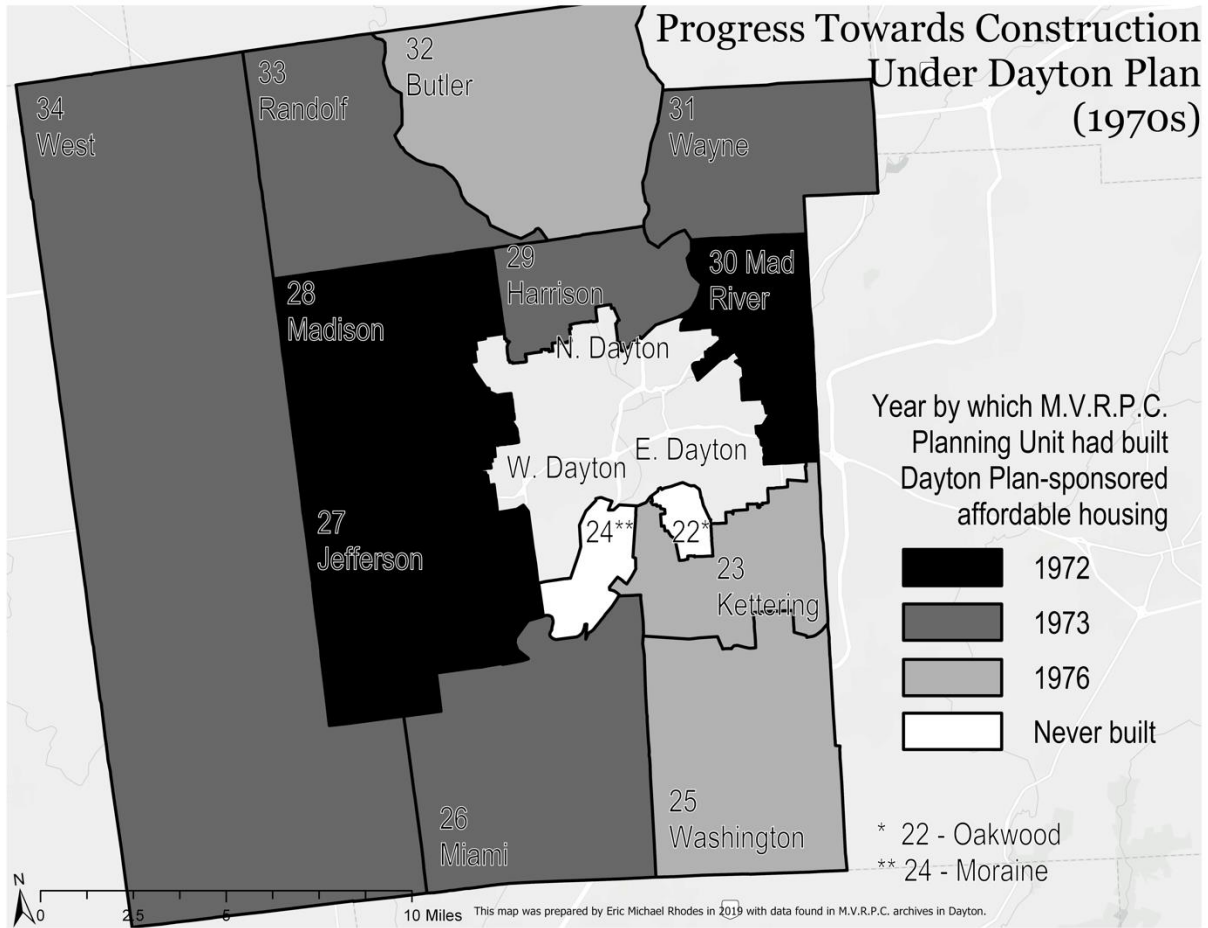


This time-based series of maps records the approximate location of affordable housing in the five county region for which MVRPC planned during the 1970s (also included are MVRPC “Planning Units” for Montgomery County, outlined by dashed lines). For three of the years of the 1970s (1970, 1973, 1978), MVRPC recorded the location of affordable, government-sponsored housing units. I digitized this data (found in MVRPC archives) to show the progress of construction of affordable housing and mapped it in ArcGIS Pro.

We see from these maps that indeed, in 1970, almost all of the affordable housing in Greater Dayton was located in the city and not in the suburbs—much of it on the predominantly-black West Side of Dayton. This lends credence to MVRPC planners’ assertion that affordable housing for black or white low-income families was limited to the places they already lived—in the city—in 1970.

More interestingly, under the MVRPC’s Dayton Plan, many suburbs *did* build affordable housing in their suburbs—this is a refutation of the literature explored in the literature review. In my thesis, I outline the reasons why suburbs in Dayton decided to build. Briefly, the federal government and the business elite of Dayton pressured the suburbs to do so. We see that MVRPC was successful during the 1970s at increasing the affordable housing stock in Dayton during the 1970s.

Progress towards building units of affordable housing by suburbs (1970 to 1978)



In this subsection and with the above map, we explore whether or not there was a correlation between race/class makeup of particular suburbs and their speed of building affordable housing under the Dayton Plan. I found data in the MVRPC archives which detailed the speed of construction within each planning unit. Some general observations, made clearer by this map and the following table, reveals a stronger link between the racial makeup of a particular suburb in 1970 and the speed with which it built affordable housing than there is between the class makeup of a particular suburb in 1970 and the speed with which it built

affordable housing.

Table 1: Progress of Construction Under Dayton Plan

Building Progress in the Miami Valley Under Dayton Plan						
M.V.R.P.C.			Units Built Under Plan			
Planning Unit No.	Planning Unit Name	% of Residents Black	Jan. '70	Mar. '72	Jan. '73	Jan. '76
27	Jefferson	50	0	110	110	140
28	Madison	11.3	152	152	193	431
30	Mad River	3.4	0	165	209	349
31	Wayne	0.8	0	0	196	240
34	West	0.5	0	0	73	187
26	Miami	0.2	0	0	20	66
23	Kettering	0.2	0	0	0	184
25	Washington	0.2	0	0	0	232
33	Randolph	0.1	0	0	50	222
29	Harrison	0.1	0	0	5	274
22	Oakwood	0.1	0	0	0	0
24	Moraine	0	0	0	0	0
32	Butler	0	0	0	0	153

The shape which appears above shows that there was significant correlation between the amount of existing African Americans in a suburb and the speed with which it built affordable housing. Three groupings appear.

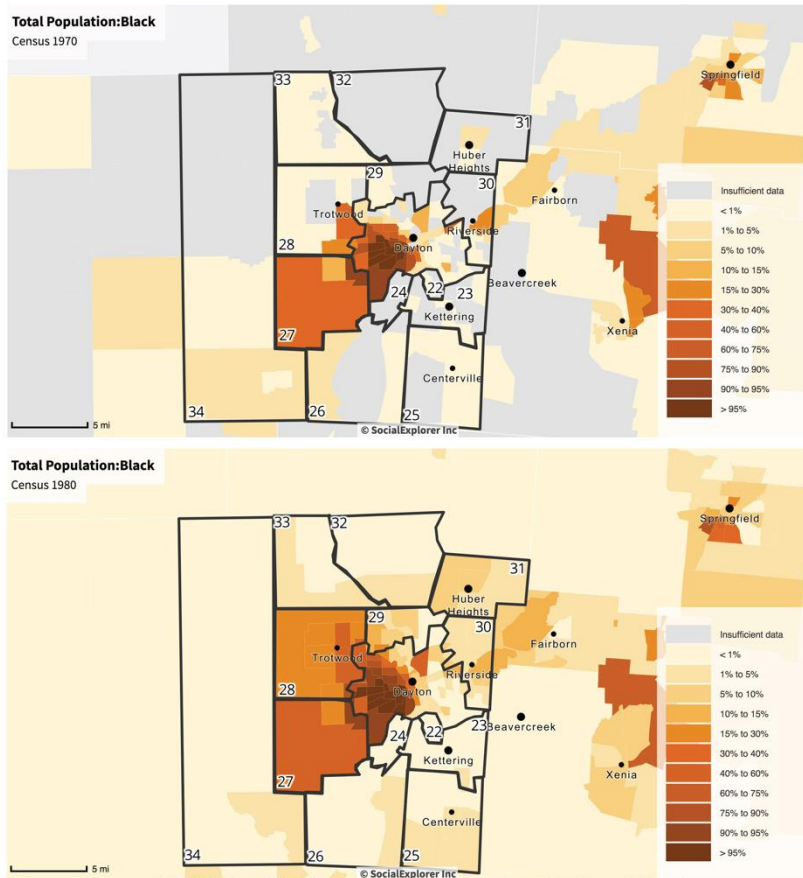
The first group were suburbs with African American populations which comprised 3.4 to 50% of a given suburb's population. Though it seems that Jefferson's African American middle class was not as keen to build affordable housing as Madison was, Jefferson, Madison, and Mad River had built affordable housing by March of 1972.

The second group were suburbs with African American populations comprising .8 to .01% of their population—and which had built by January of 1973. With the exception of Kettering and Washington, all suburbs built by this date. It is likely that the class character of Kettering, and Washington—see the above maps, which show that they had higher median incomes than other suburbs—affected the speed with when they built (they did not build until a few years later). The general trend which is emerging is that the higher the income of a particular suburb in 1970, the slower the construction; and the higher the black population in 1970, the faster the construction.

The final group, comprising Oakwood and Moraine, never built affordable housing under the Dayton Plan. These two suburbs had no listed African American residents in 1970. Interestingly, class did not matter in this analysis—Oakwood was metropolitan Dayton's richest suburb while Moraine was its poorest suburb. This grouping appears to show that race was the defining characteristic and was the most predictive of whether or not a suburb built subsidized housing under the Dayton Plan.²

² Butler eventually built affordable housing by January of 1976, even though it was an all-white suburb.

Racial segregation in metropolitan Dayton in 1980



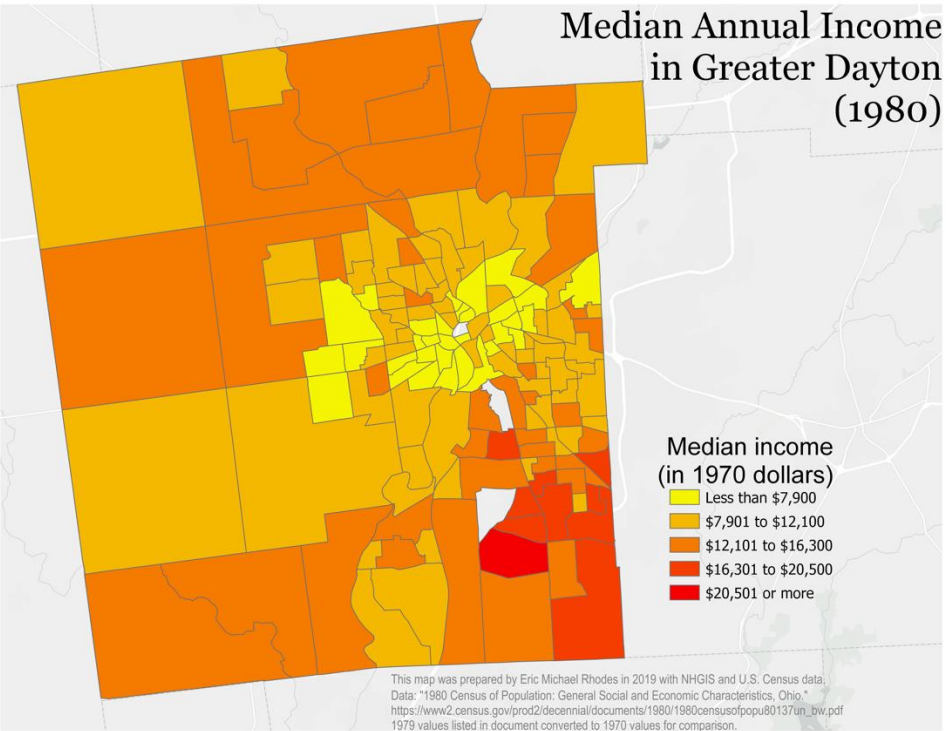
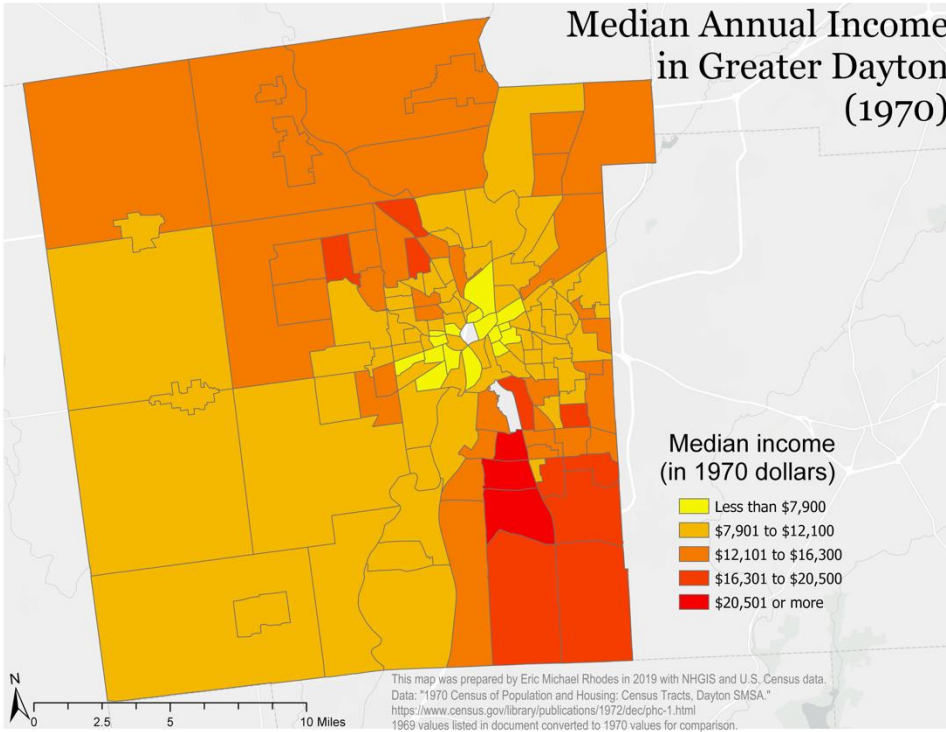
Percent Of Each Census Tract in Montgomery County Listed as Black in Census (1970–1980)

This map prepared in 2019 by Eric Michael Rhodes using Social Explorer, U.S. Census. Citation: U.S. Census Bureau. Race, 1970 and 1980. Prepared by Social Explorer.

Now, we move to the question of whether or not the construction of affordable housing under the Dayton Plan occasioned racial integration. In other words, the question is whether economic integration of housing during the 1970s led to racial integration of housing. For this map, I compared the percent of each census tract which was African American in 1970 to 1980—using Social Explorer and digitized Planning Unit boundaries.

While the black population suburbanized significantly, it was not to the extent that planners expected. When black residents moved into the suburb of Madison, white flight—in which whites left the suburb—occurred and Madison became a black suburb. More significantly, the black population remained in West Dayton, to a large extent. Jefferson remained a black suburb. The conclusion is that no significant racial integration occurred with the construction of affordable housing in the suburbs under MVRPC’s Dayton Plan.

Class segregation in metropolitan Dayton in 1980



If affordable housing did not lead to significant racial integration, to what extent did it lead to economic integration of the suburbs? For these two maps, I downloaded NHGIS/Tigerline data and boundaries to project in ArcGIS Pro.

A few observations can be made about these two maps. First, in most census tracts, there was a decrease in real dollars of annual median income during the 1970s—likely due to

deindustrialization. But the general geographic makeup of low income in Greater Dayton was not significantly changed except in Mad River. We see that both Madison and Jefferson were more economically diverse after the Dayton Plan, but each remained, as explained above, black suburbs. Wealth tended to remain concentrated in Kettering, Oakwood, and Washington. The conclusion is that there was some economic integration, but not profound economic integration of the suburbs under the Dayton Plan.

Conclusion

In the final analysis, we see that while the Dayton Plan was successful in integrating affordable housing throughout the suburbs, and also increased the amount of affordable housing in the city of Dayton.

Table 2: Existing Subsidized Units by City and Suburb, 1970s

<u>Existing Subsidized Units, 1970-1980</u>			
	1970	1980	% Increase
City of Dayton	3,000	5,206	73.5
Suburbs of Dayton	200	3,953	1,876.5

Racial makeup of a given suburb in 1970, it appears from the maps, determined the speed with which a given suburb built units of affordable housing under the Dayton Plan. And the Dayton Plan did not decrease residential segregation or class to any significant extent (except for in the black suburbs of Jefferson and Madison). I argue in my thesis, for which these maps were prepared, that deindustrialization was the reason for this. As deindustrialization hit black workers first and hardest, this impoverishment meant that moving to the suburbs was increasingly hard—during such hard times, one’s community on whom one can rely for childcare and social capital, becomes more important and moving to the suburbs which had few transportation options was less likely for black individuals during the recession.



Figure 22 Average Household Income, 1970-1990

The above chart shows how black Dayton was hit harder than African American suburbanites or the white community or Montgomery County at large during the 1970s.

References

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