

# City Profile Report

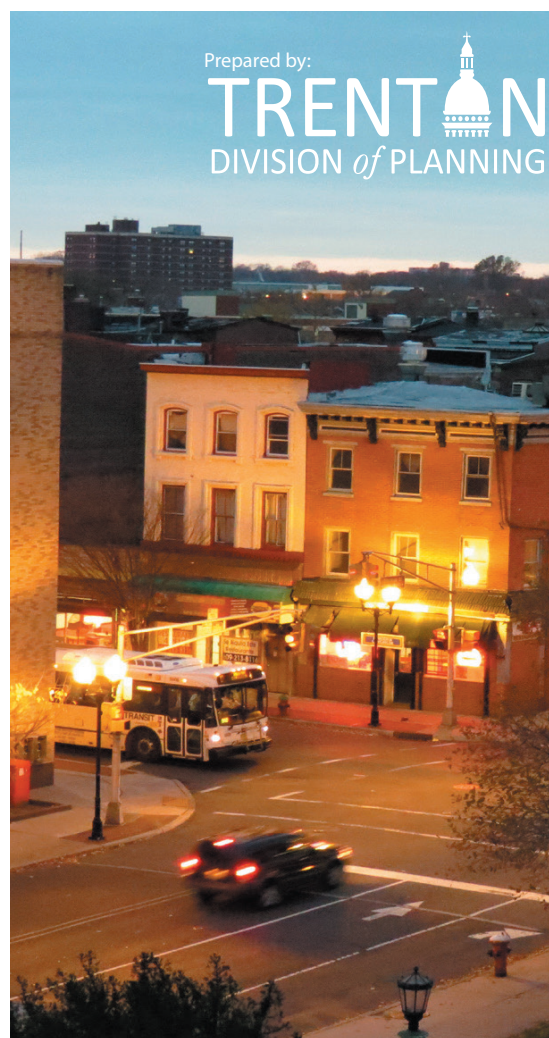
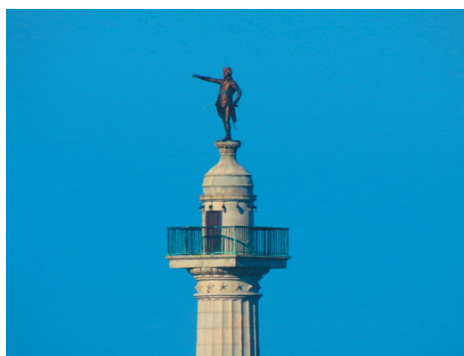
A City Master Plan Document

April 2014

[www.trenton250.org](http://www.trenton250.org)

# TRENTON250

1792-2042



**About this report:** Division of Planning Staff members Stephani Register and Regine Saintilien assisted in assembling this report. Allan Zaretsky assisted with research, mapping and graphic interpretation. Bill Haslag assisted with research. Stephanie Lipartito, Graphic Designer with the Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission, assisted with the preparation of the final report.

# FOREWORD

The City of Trenton has invested and dedicated itself to embark on a journey to define its future. This journey should answer three simple questions:

- Where are we now?
- Where do we want to be?
- How do we plan to get there?

The 2014 City Profile Report, developed by the Division of Planning, begins to answer the question ... Where are we now? It compiles readily available data and survey results from a wide range of sources to produce a succinct snapshot of Trenton. The report shows, with dynamic graphics and summations, the City's trends and current conditions to provide a foundation for upcoming discussions as we all embark upon the many phases of planning the city's future – *The Trenton250 Master Plan*.

The interpretations and discussions of trend data and survey results offer vital information about the current state of the City, while providing 'food for thought' to its challenges, old and new, that are foreseen and unforeseen. The objectives of this report are to:

- contextualize Trenton's "prospects and challenges" through comparison to itself, surrounding municipalities within Mercer County, the Greater Trenton region, and the state
- provide factual and impartial data
- establish a baseline for the community and decision makers with potential measurable indicators

Going forward, both during and after the Trenton250 master planning process, the Division of Planning will periodically produce this report to measure the City's progress. The data and measurable indicators will require adjustments and refinement over the years to more appropriately measure the City's strategies and policies identified in the Trenton250 Master Plan against the actual outcomes.

The Division of Planning anticipates that the variety of significant facts in this report, future reports, and eventually the adopted Trenton250 Master Plan will guide policy makers, City departments, local leaders, and concerned citizens as they do their best to make a difference in the City of Trenton.

**Jeffrey Wilkerson, PP, AICP**  
**Principal Planner**  
**Division of Planning**  
**Department of Housing and Economic Development**  
**City of Trenton**





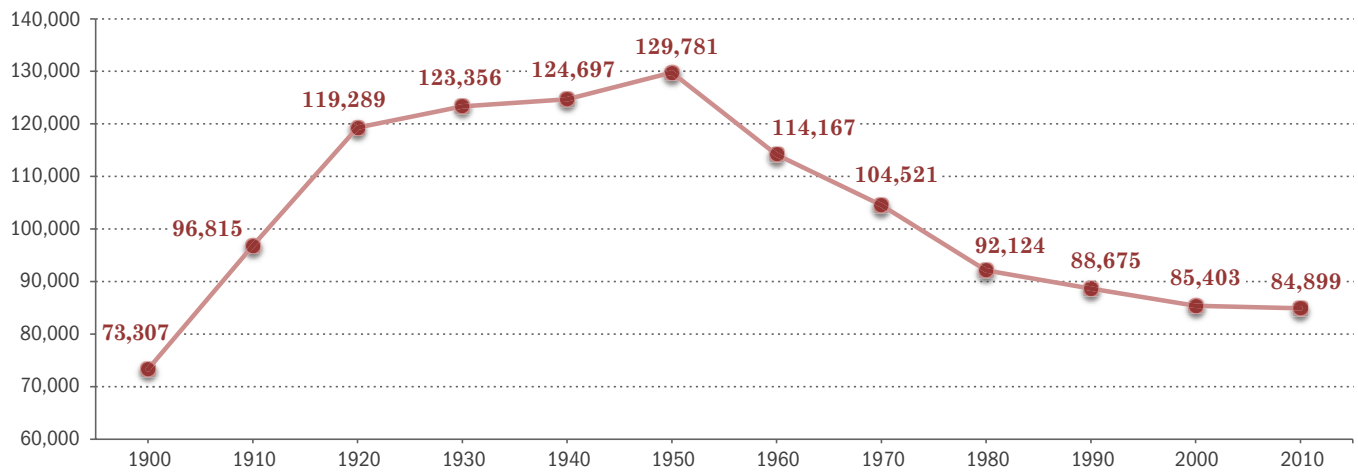
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## DEMOGRAPHICS

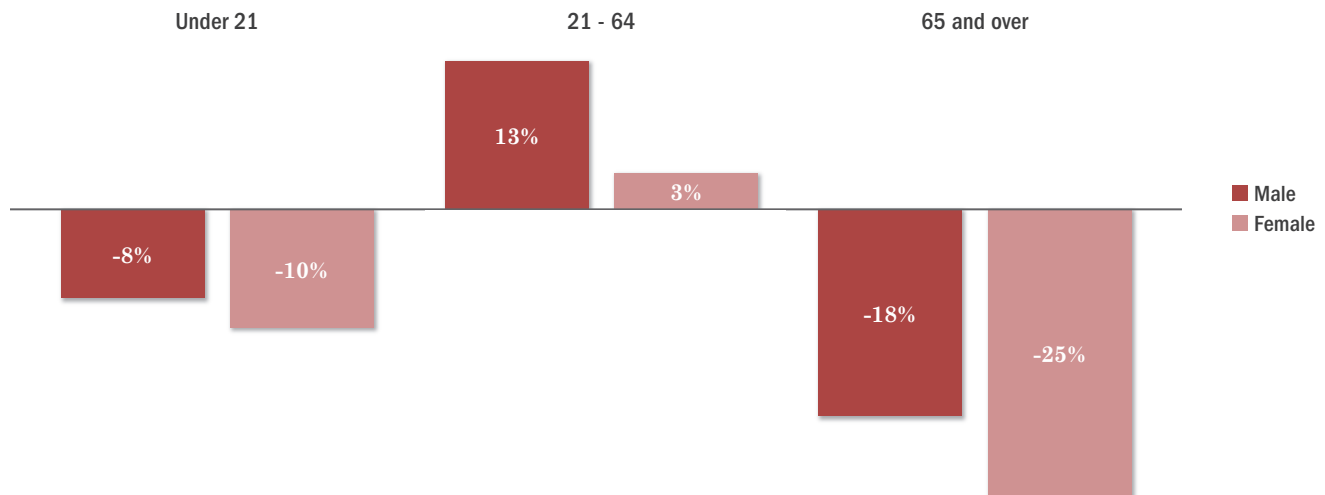
Trenton Population, 1900 – 2010



SOURCE: US CENSUS BUREAU

Trenton's population peaked in the 1950s and has experienced a continuous decline ever since. The past 20 years have seen the population stabilize at its current level.

Percent Change in Age Groups Between 2000 and 2010

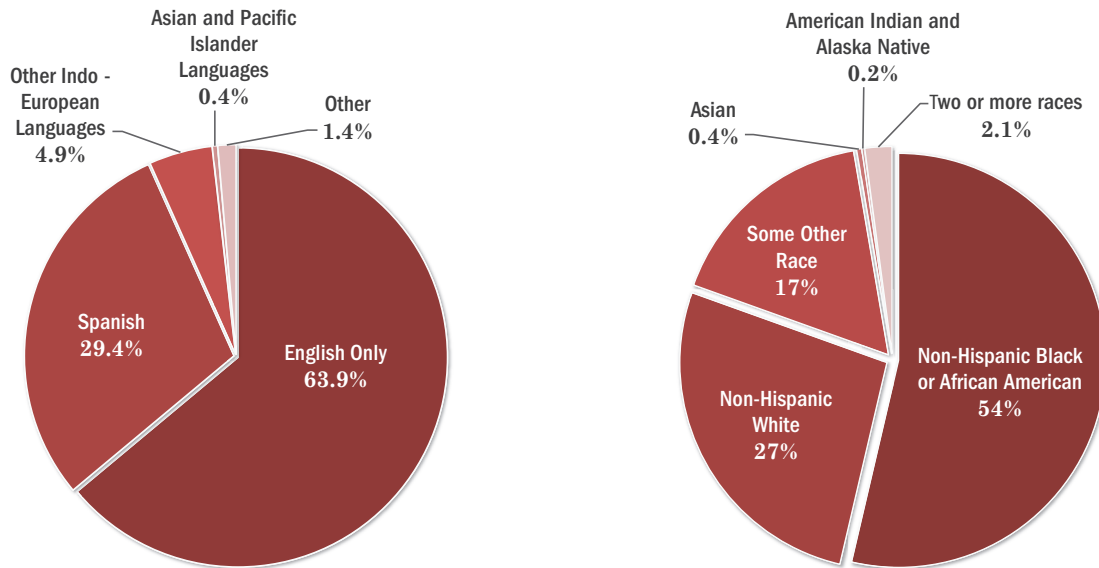


SOURCE: US CENSUS BUREAU

In the last decade, Trenton's working age demographic groups (21-64 years) experienced dramatic increases, especially among males. At the same time there were declines in the younger and older age groups residing in the City.

# DEMOGRAPHICS

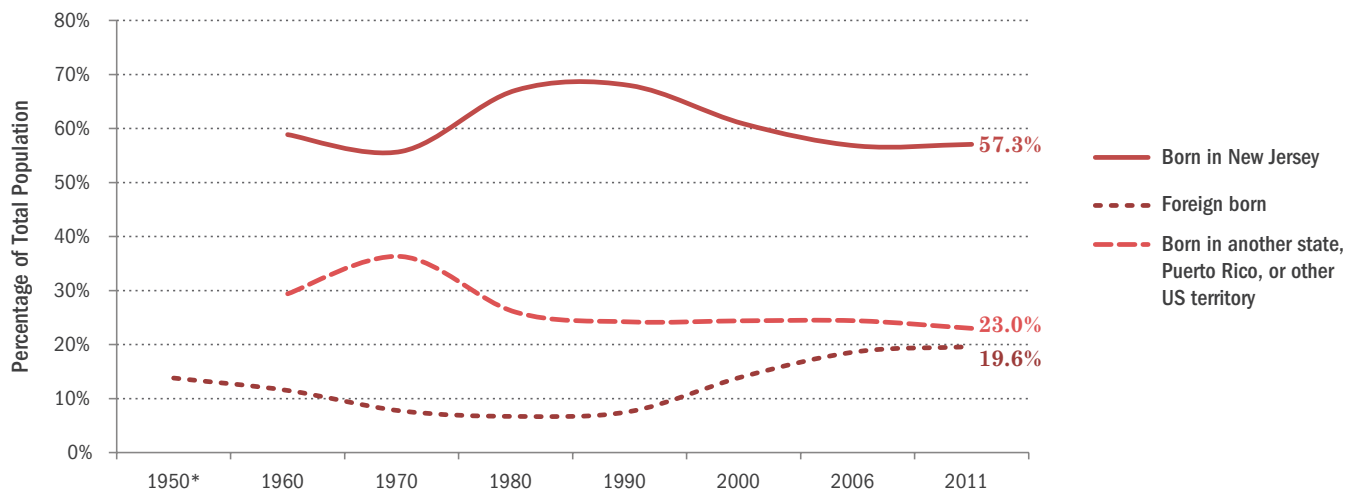
## Languages Spoken & Racial Composition of Trenton, 2011



SOURCE: US CENSUS 1-YEAR ESTIMATE AMERICAN COMMUNITY SURVEY 2011

Nearly a third of Trenton's population claim Spanish as their primary language. Just over half of Trenton residents identify themselves as non-Hispanic Black or African American.

## Place of Origin for Trenton Residents, 1950 - 2011



\* Only foreign born data available for 1950

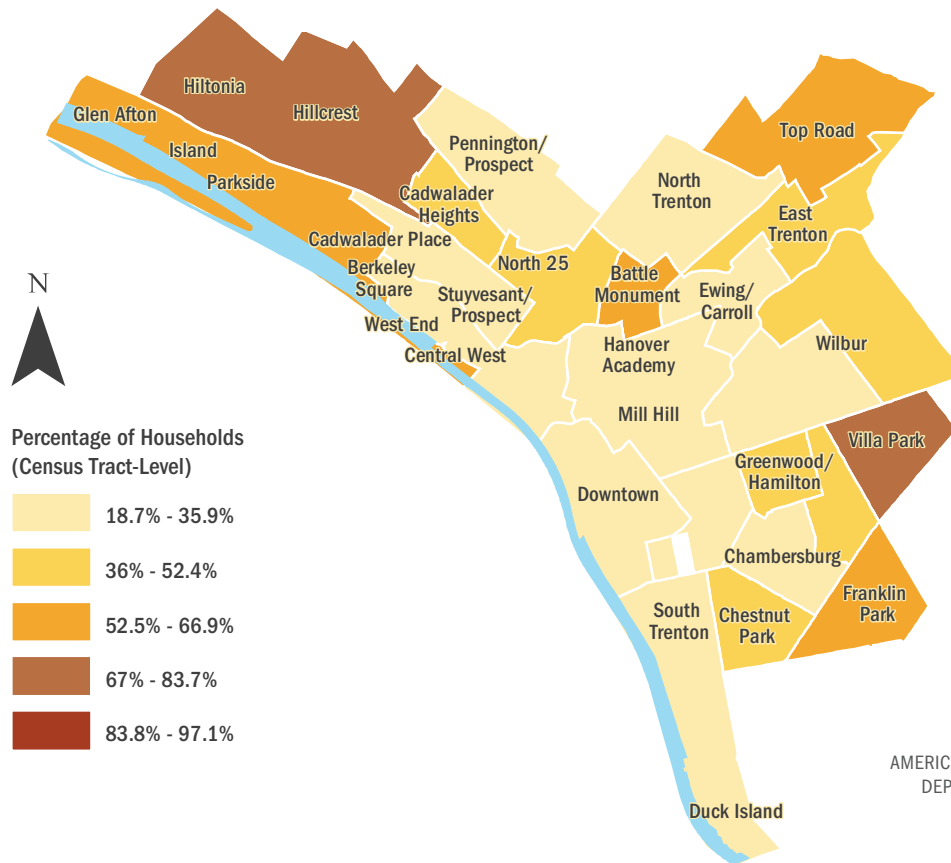
SOURCE: U.S. CENSUS BUREAU

The share of Trenton residents born abroad has doubled in the past twenty years to its highest percentage since before the 1950s at nearly 20% of the current population. The percentage of residents born in-state has fallen since the mid-1980s to stabilize at about 57%, while the percentage of residents born in other states before moving to Trenton has remained flat since the 1980s at about 23%.



## HOUSING

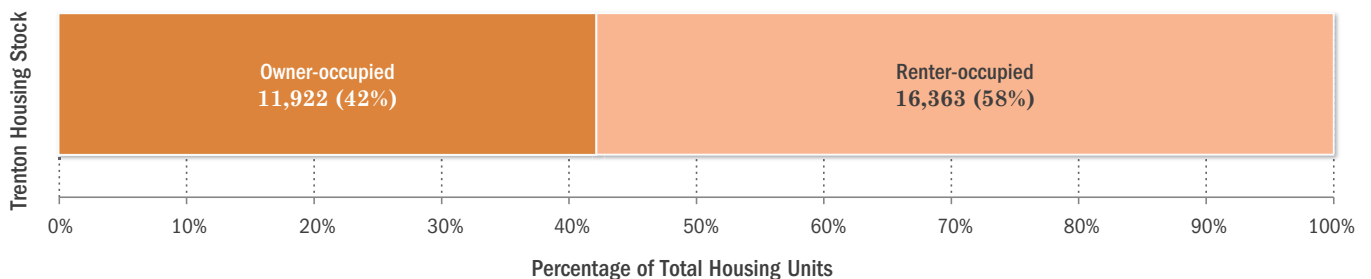
### Homeownership Rates Across Trenton



SOURCE: U.S. CENSUS 5-YEAR ESTIMATE  
AMERICAN COMMUNITY SURVEY 2007 - 2011, NEW JERSEY  
DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION, CITY OF  
TRENTON, DIVISION OF PLANNING

Homeownership rates are highest in the neighborhoods of Hiltonia, Hillcrest, and Villa Park. Neighborhoods closer to the center and downtown districts of the city have lower homeownership rates. Larger rental percentages are common across much of the city.

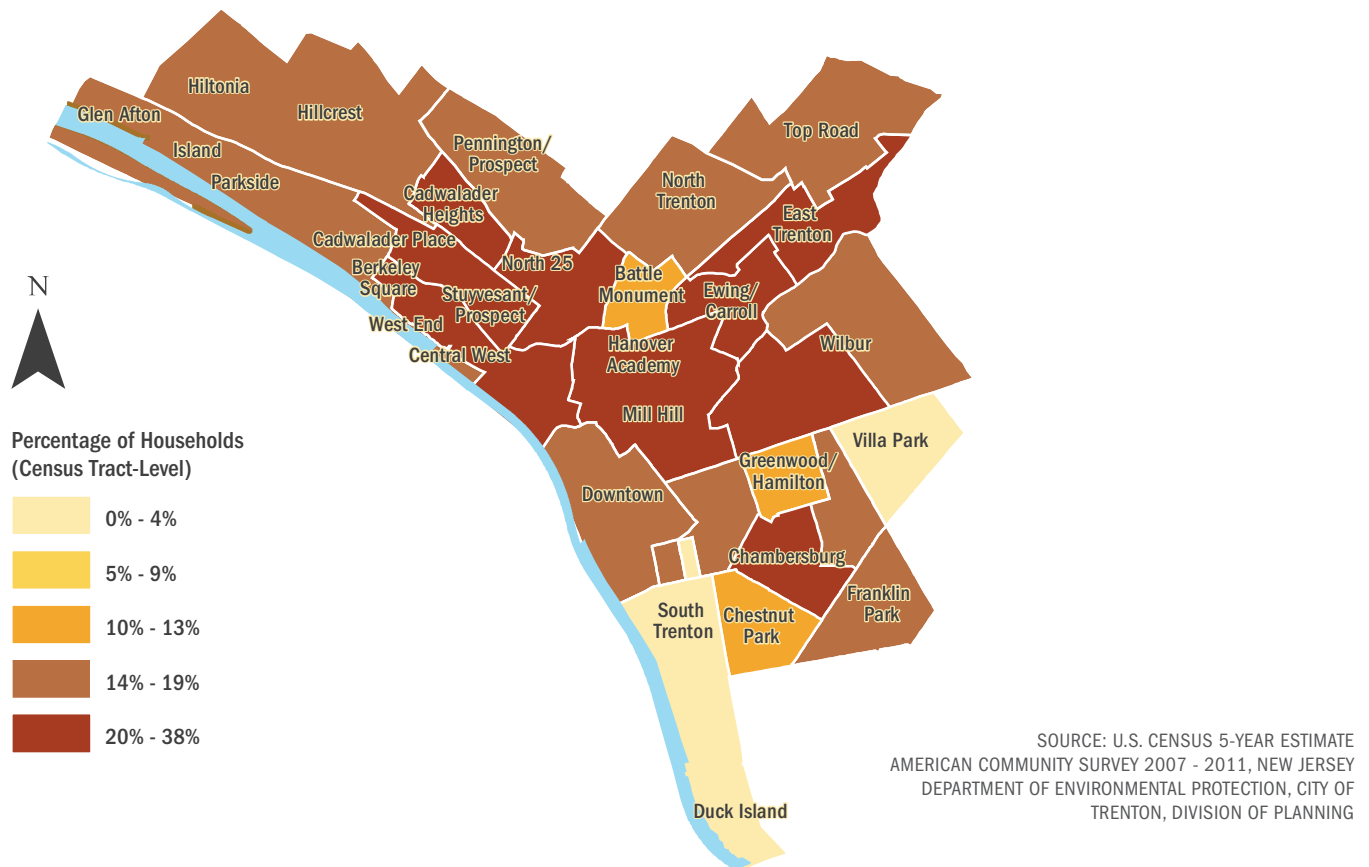
### Housing Ownership and Renter Rates



SOURCE: U.S. CENSUS 5-YEAR ESTIMATE AMERICAN COMMUNITY SURVEY 2007 - 2011

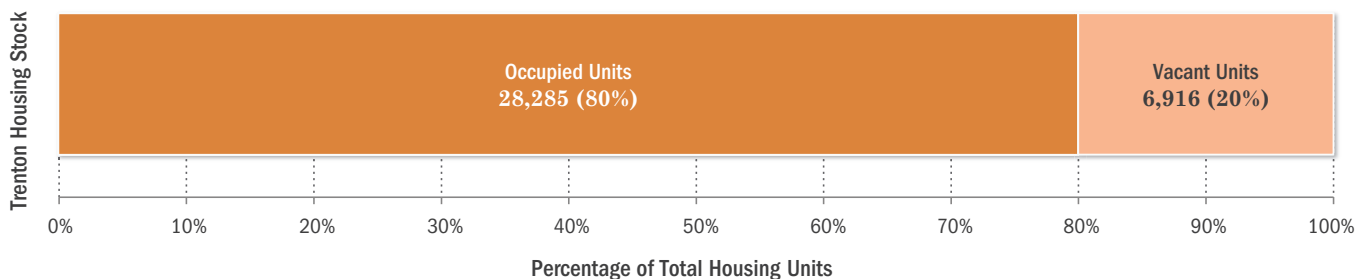
Homeownership rates are generally lower in Trenton than the rest of the state (66% statewide vs. 42% in Trenton). Renter occupied housing continues to make up the bulk of housing.

## Housing Vacancy Rates Across Trenton



Housing vacancy rates vary broadly across Trenton. Lower vacancy rates for neighborhoods are more common in the South and East Wards, while higher housing vacancy rates are concentrated in the center of the city.

## Housing Occupancy and Vacancy Rates



Trenton's vacancy rate of 20% is nearly double the New Jersey average (roughly 10% in 2012).



# HOUSING

## Trenton Housing Costs

Median Monthly Rent

**\$962**

Median Monthly Mortgage Costs

**\$1,421**

Trenton Median Home Value

**\$126,400**

Percentage of Trenton **cost-burdened** households  
paying **more than 30%** of monthly household income in...

Rent

**38.0%**

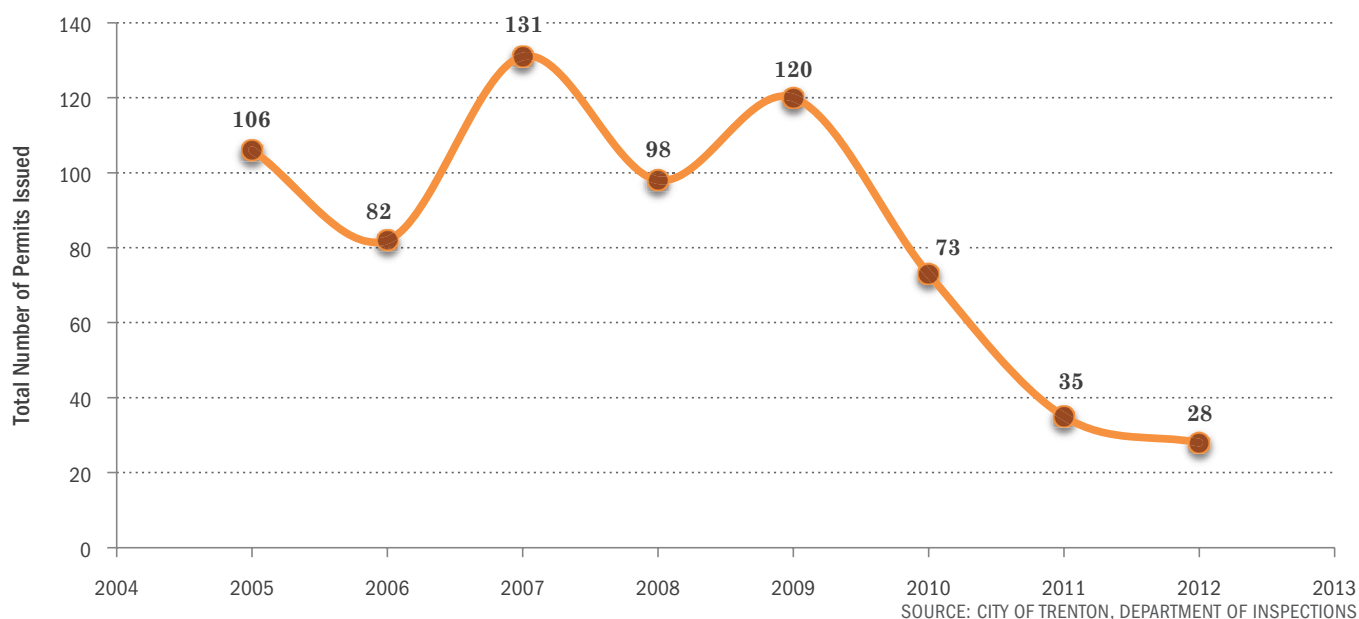
Home Owner Costs

**59.1%**

SOURCE: U.S. CENSUS 5-YEAR ESTIMATE AMERICAN COMMUNITY SURVEY 2007 - 2011

Census survey data in the 5-year period ending in 2011 for the State of New Jersey shows cost-burdened renters comprise 52.7% of the State's renting population and cost-burdened homeowners comprise 29.1% of the homeowner population. The City of Trenton shows a significantly lower percentage of cost-burdened renters and a significantly higher percentage of cost burdened homeowners than the State over the same 5-year period.

## Number of Housing Permits Issued (New Buildings & Additions)

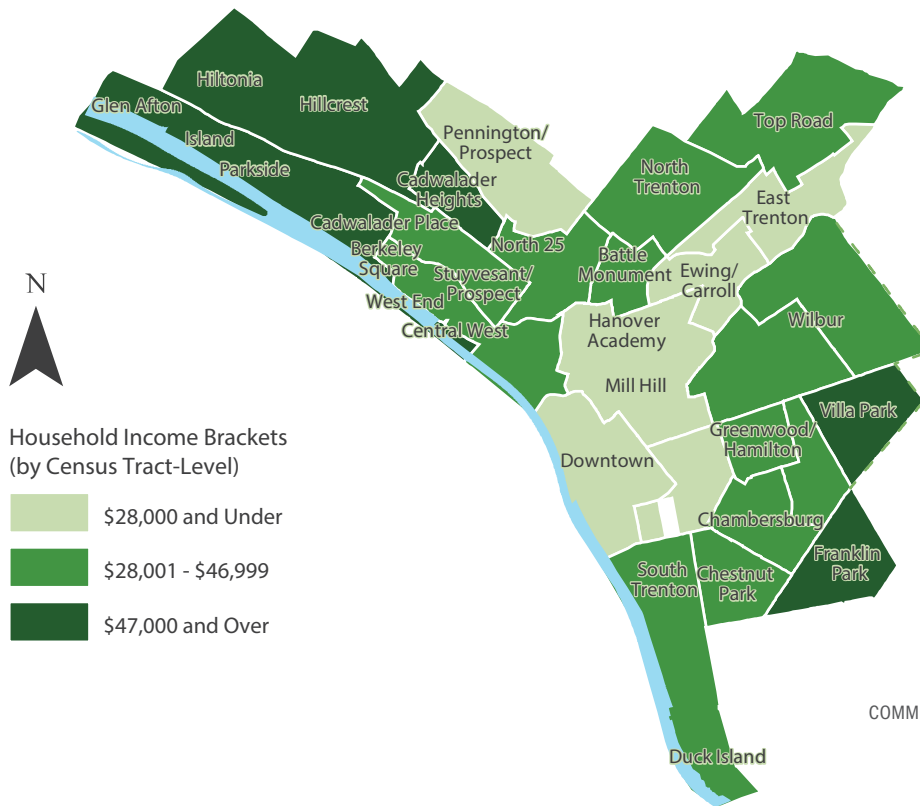


With the onset of the housing recession, housing permits issued by the City of Trenton fell precipitously from a high of 131 in 2007 to a low of 28 in 2012, a 79% decline.



## INCOME AND POVERTY

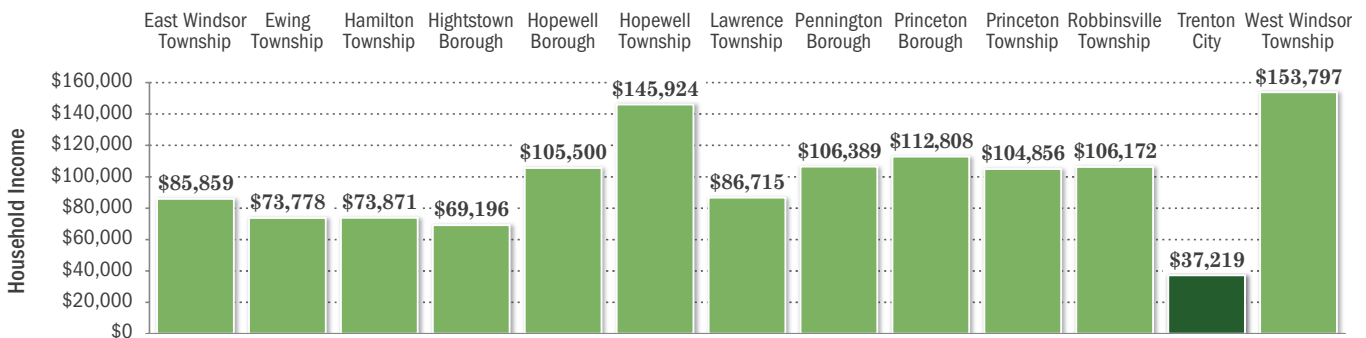
### Median Household Income in Trenton



SOURCE: U.S. CENSUS 5-YEAR ESTIMATE AMERICAN COMMUNITY SURVEY 2007 - 2011, NEW JERSEY DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION, CITY OF TRENTON

Higher income households are clustered around the West and East wards, with the lowest income households predominantly lying within the Census tracts just east of the Route 1 freeway.

### Median Household Incomes in Mercer County

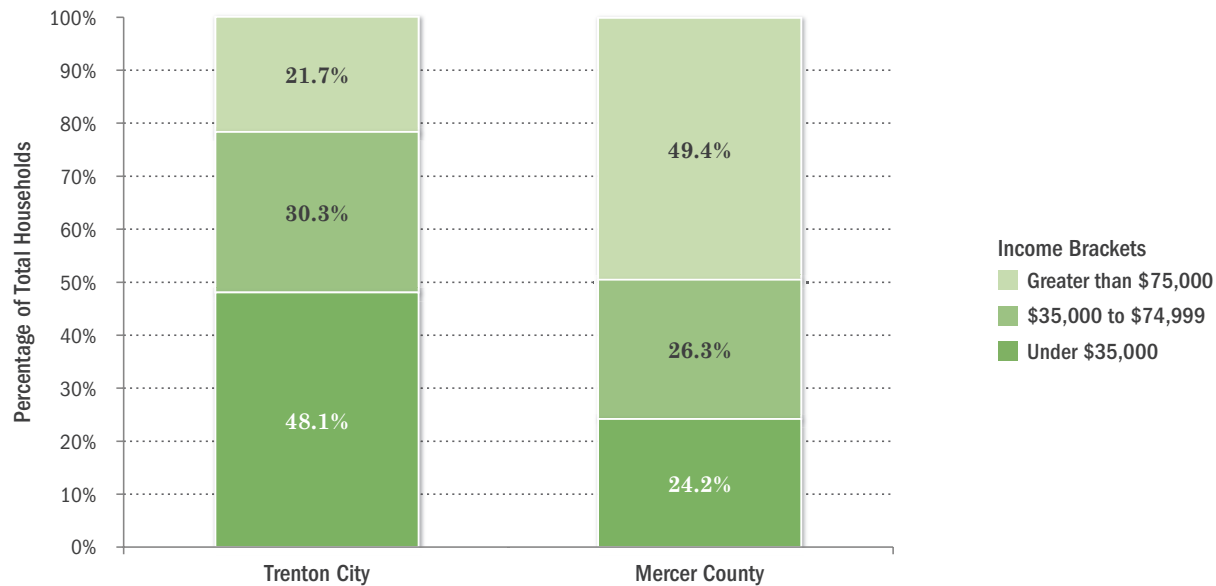


SOURCE: U.S. CENSUS 5-YEAR ESTIMATE AMERICAN COMMUNITY SURVEY 2007 - 2011

The median household income in Trenton is \$37,219, the lowest in Mercer County. Trenton's median household income is nearly half that of the next lowest Mercer County municipality: Hightstown with a median household income of \$69,196. It is less than a quarter of West Windsor's, which is the highest in Mercer County at \$153,797.

# INCOME AND POVERTY

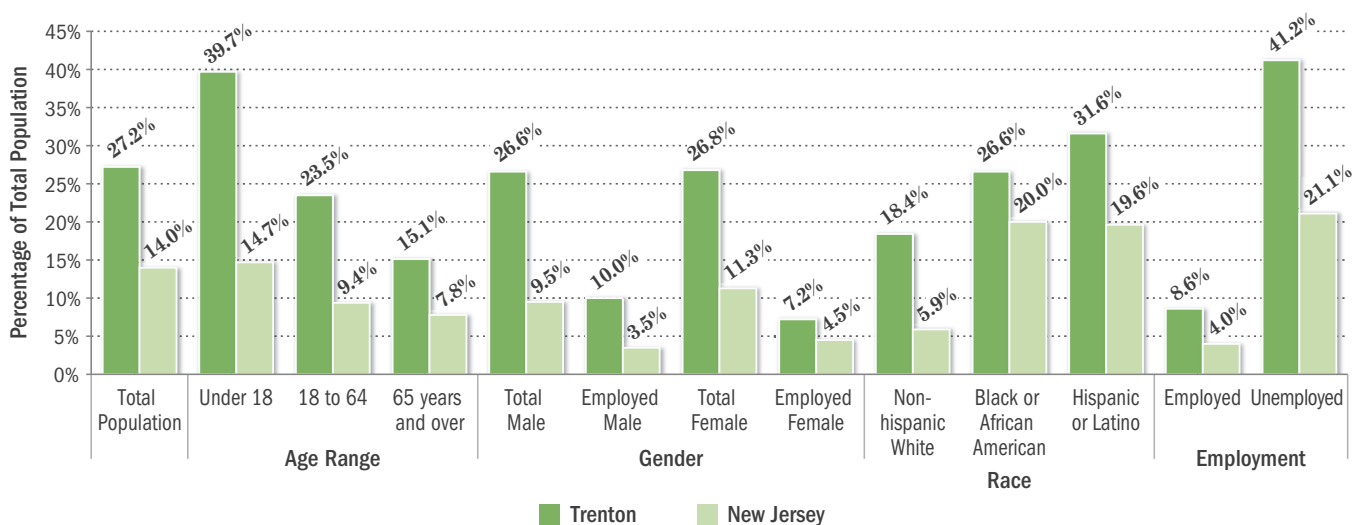
## Household Income Brackets (in 2011 Inflation-Adjusted Dollars)



SOURCE: U.S. CENSUS 5-YEAR ESTIMATE AMERICAN COMMUNITY ESTIMATE 2007 - 2011

A larger percentage of Trenton households, 48.1%, have incomes less than \$35,000 as compared overall with Mercer County at only 24.2%. Conversely, nearly half of all Mercer County households earn over \$75,000 while just over a fifth of all Trenton households are earning that amount.

## Poverty Rates in Trenton and New Jersey, 2011

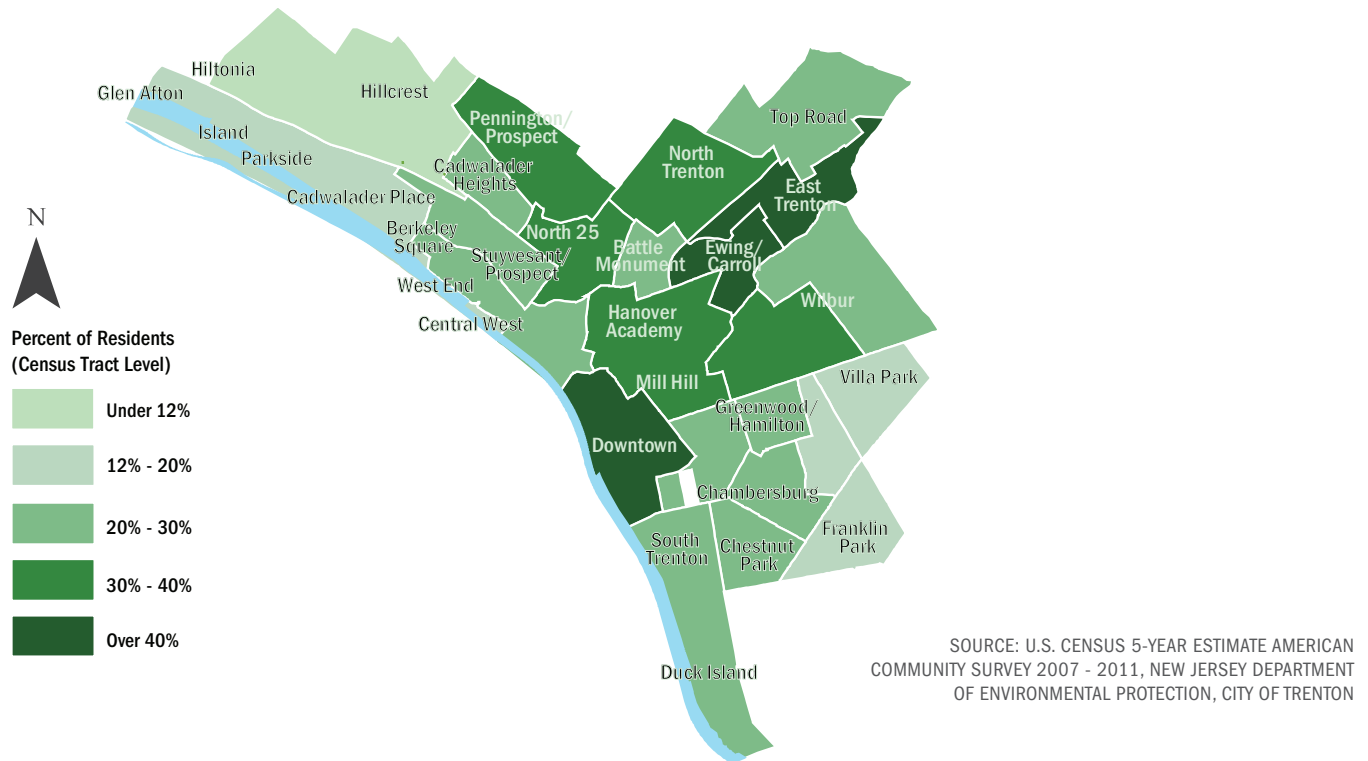


SOURCE: U.S. CENSUS 1-YEAR ESTIMATES AMERICAN COMMUNITY SURVEY, 2011

The incidence of poverty in Trenton, 27.2% of residents, is almost double that of New Jersey's rate of residents living in poverty at 14.0%. Trenton incurs much higher rates of poverty across age, gender, race and employment categories when compared to New Jersey as a whole.

# INCOME AND POVERTY

## Poverty Rates in Trenton



Poverty rates across Trenton generally mirror household income distribution, with lower rates of poverty found within exterior neighborhoods such as Hillcrest and Franklin Park, and larger poverty rates found in the city center. Within the Census tracts comprising the Downtown, Ewing-Carroll and East Trenton neighborhoods, poverty rates exceed 40% of residents.



SOURCE: CITY OF TRENTON, 2013

Businesses on Warren Street during a quiet afternoon.

## Economic Development

According to the 2011 Economic Development Summit Survey Results, the top four items that will create jobs and generate economic development opportunities in Trenton are:

- Financial Incentives to Existing Businesses to Create Jobs
- Financial Incentives to Develop New Businesses/Industries and Expand Business Industries
- Grants to Start Up Businesses
- Clean Up and Beautify Streets and Neighborhoods.

SOURCE: MAYOR'S ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT SUMMIT, MARCH 31, 2011, TRENTON, NJ

# INCOME AND POVERTY

## Public Assistance Funding in Trenton, 2011

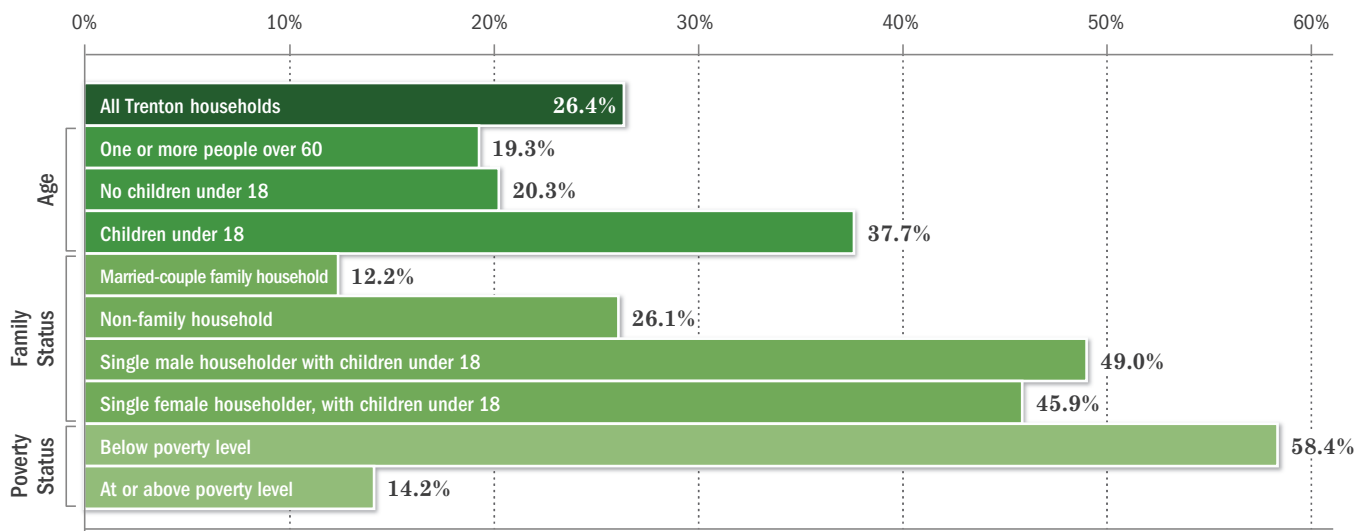
Percentage of residents **receiving...**

	Supplemental Security Income	Cash Assistance Income	Food Stamp/ SNAP Benefits
Trenton City	9.0%	12.8%	26.4%
Mercer County Average	3.8%	4.3%	8.3%
New Jersey State Average	4.3%	2.8%	8.0%

SOURCE: U.S. CENSUS 1-YEAR ESTIMATES AMERICAN COMMUNITY SURVEY, 2011

A greater percentage of Trenton Residents receive public assistance in comparison to Mercer County and New Jersey as whole. Cash assistance income and SNAP benefits exceed Mercer County averages by threefold while the percentage of residents receiving Supplemental Security Income is two-and-a-half times greater.

## SNAP Funding Rates in Trenton, 2011



SOURCE: U.S. CENSUS 1-YEAR ESTIMATES AMERICAN COMMUNITY SURVEY, 2011

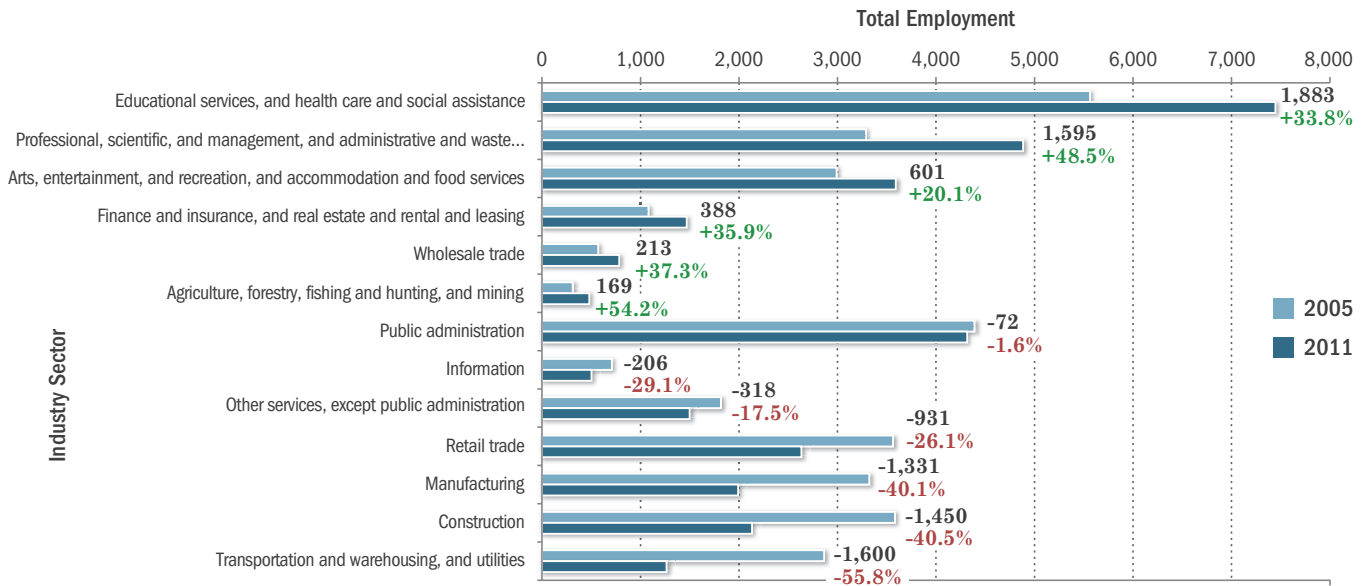
Over twenty six (26.4%) percent of all Trenton residents receive SNAP funding, including 58.4% of all Trenton residents who are living below the poverty line. Nearly half of all single parent households and over a third of all children under 18 in Trenton receive SNAP funding





## JOBS AND EMPLOYMENT

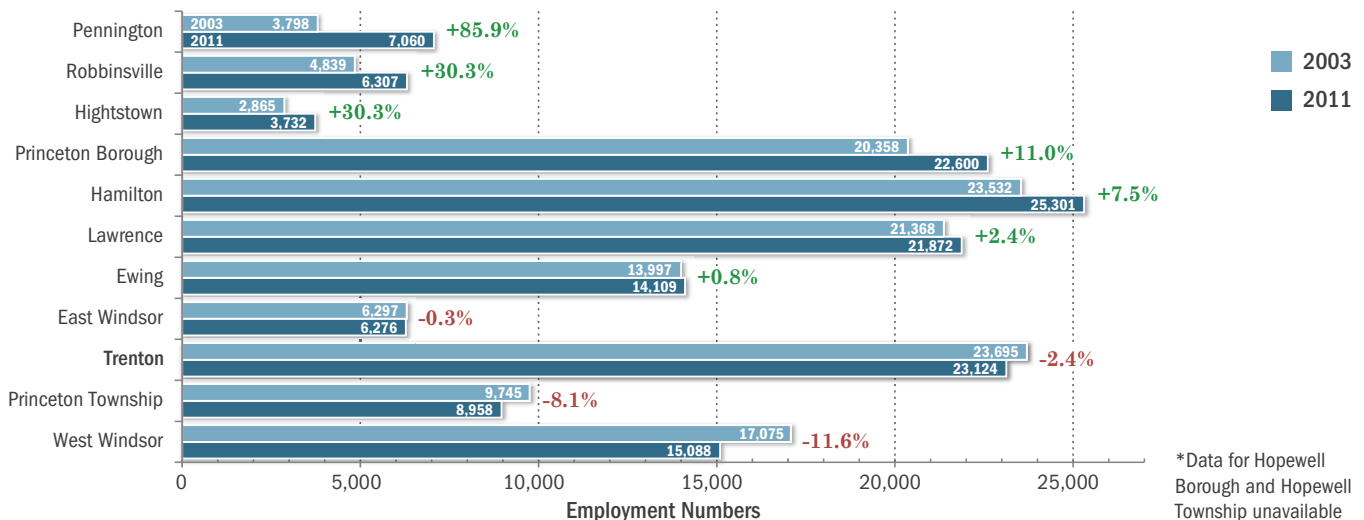
### Changes in Trenton Job Numbers by Industry Sector, 2005 – 2011



SOURCE: U.S. CENSUS 1-YEAR ESTIMATES AMERICAN COMMUNITY SURVEY 2005, 2011

Trenton saw increases in most job sectors from 2005 to 2011. The largest job gains were in the educational services, health care, social assistance, professional, scientific, and management and administrative subsectors. Trenton saw a decrease in several sectors including transportation, warehousing, utilities, retail trade, manufacturing and construction subsectors.

### Changes in Employment Numbers by Municipality, 2003 – 2011



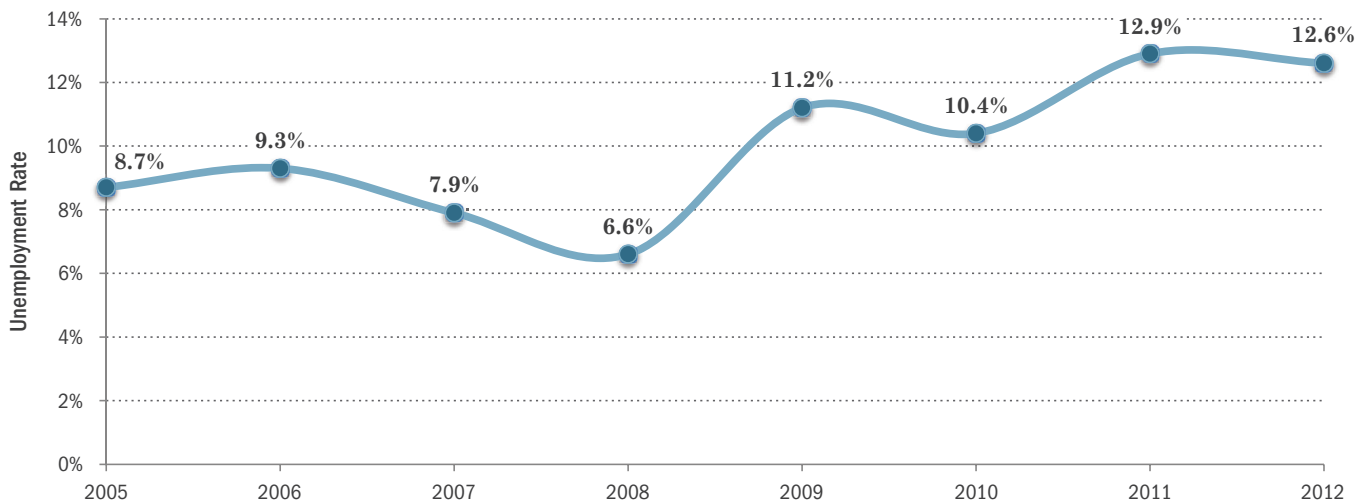
\*Data for Hopewell Borough and Hopewell Township unavailable

SOURCE: QUARTERLY CENSUS OF EMPLOYMENT AND WAGES (QCEW), 1944 - 2011, NEW JERSEY DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

While the majority of Mercer County municipalities gained jobs, Trenton saw a small decline (2.4%) in available jobs between 2003 and 2011. Trenton has the second highest number of jobs in the county after Hamilton Township, which saw a 7.5% increase during the same period.

# JOBS AND EMPLOYMENT

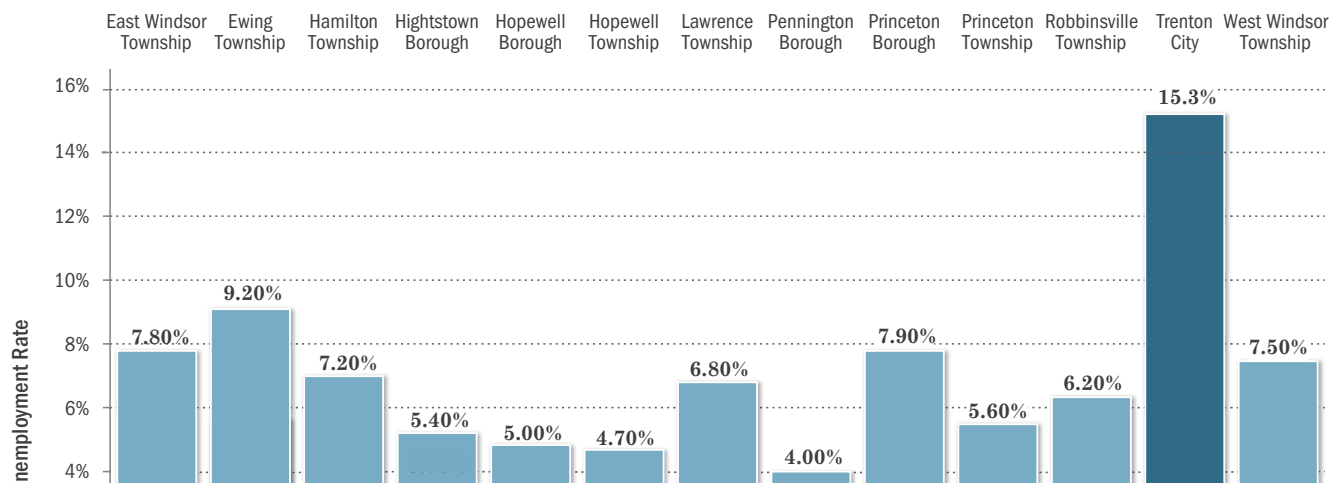
## City of Trenton Unemployment Rate



SOURCE: NEW JERSEY DEPARTMENT OF LABOR

In 2008, the unemployment rate in Trenton dropped to 6.6%, the lowest point in a decade. Since 2008, the unemployment rate has risen and was at 12.6% as of 2012.

## Average Unemployment Rate by Municipality, Mercer County

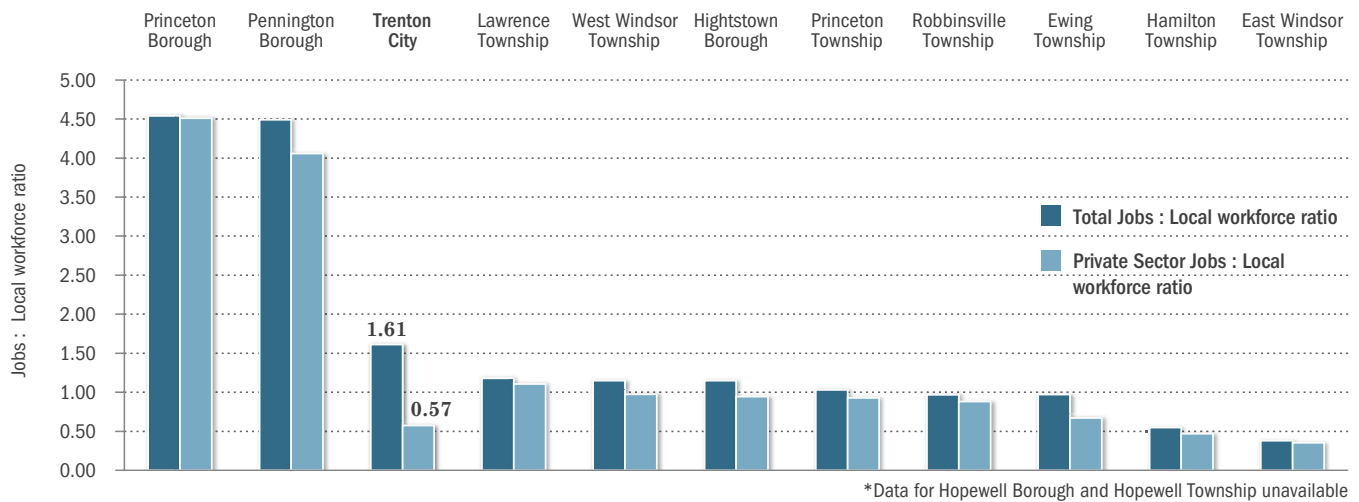


SOURCE: U.S. CENSUS 5-YEAR ESTIMATE AMERICAN COMMUNITY SURVEY 2007 - 2011

The City of Trenton's recent 5-year average unemployment rate has been significantly higher than that of all other Mercer County municipalities.

# JOBS AND EMPLOYMENT

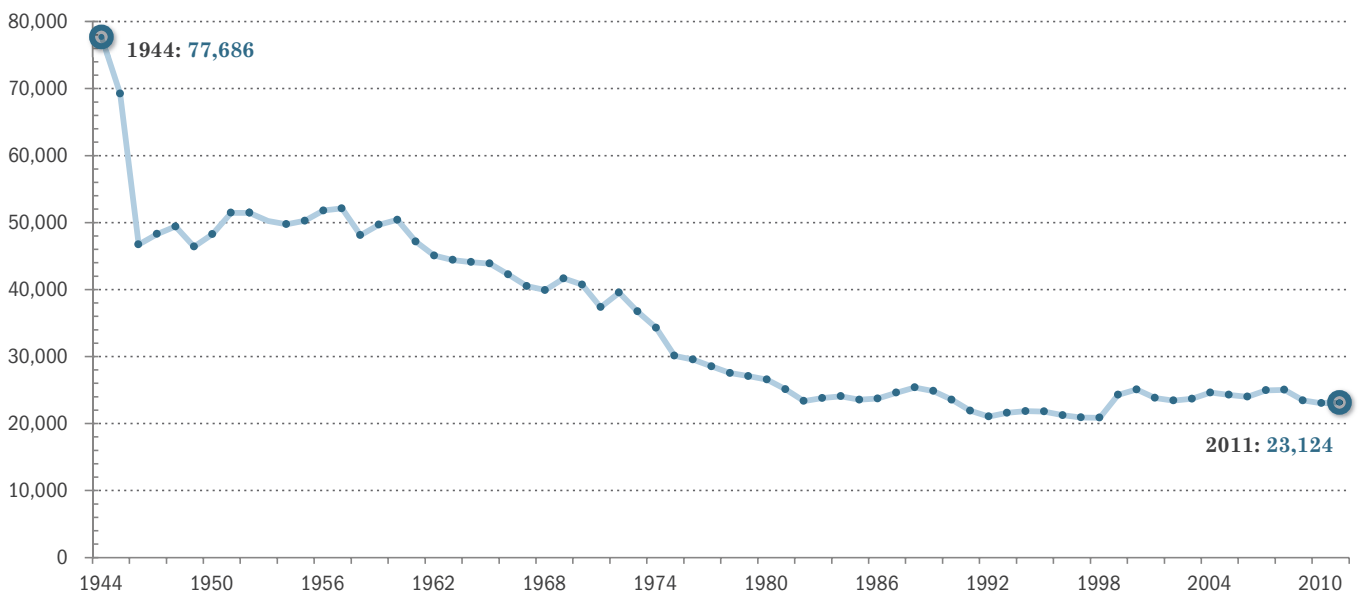
## Ratios of Total and Private Sector Jobs to Local Workforce Population, Mercer County, 2011



SOURCE: NEW JERSEY DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT, BUREAU OF LABOR STATISTICS

This chart shows the ratio of the actual number of jobs available, both total and private sector, to the local workforce population for each municipality. A ratio of 1 would signify an even balance. The City of Trenton's private sector workforce is only a third of the total number of jobs available, highlighting the public sector's central role in Trenton's economy.

## Private Sector Annual Employment Levels, City of Trenton, 1944 - 2011

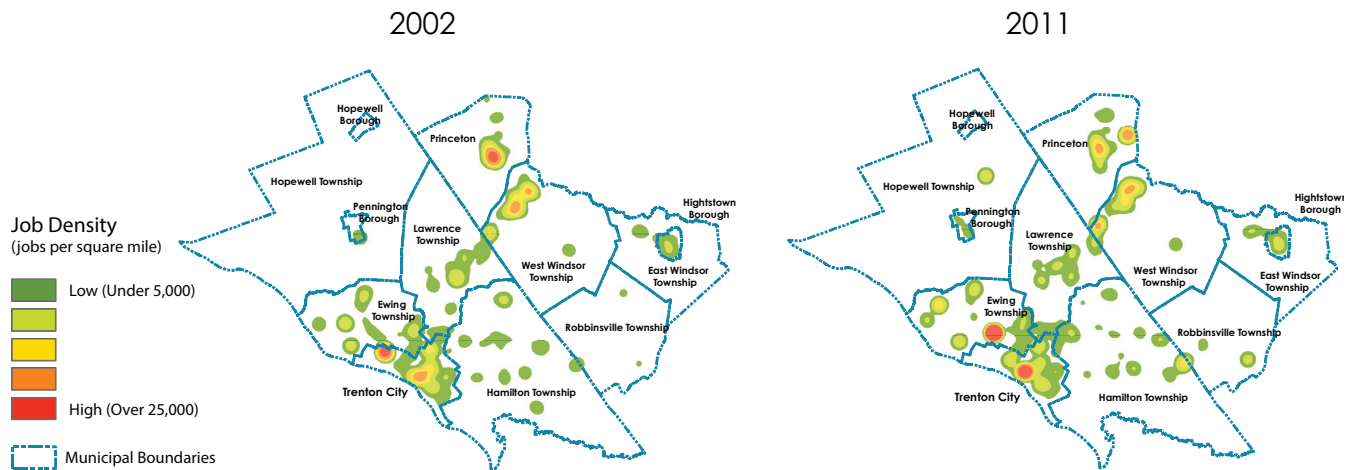


SOURCE: QUARTERLY CENSUS OF EMPLOYMENT AND WAGES (QCEW), 1944 - 2011, NEW JERSEY DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

Private sector annual employment levels have declined 70% since 1944, to 23,124 in 2011.

# JOBS AND EMPLOYMENT

## Job Distribution Across Mercer County 2002 - 2011



SOURCE: U.S. CENSUS BUREAU, QUARTERLY WORKFORCE INDICATORS

These maps show how clustering of jobs has changed over a recent ten year period. The past decade has seen two trends in the migration of jobs across Greater Trenton: there has been a consolidation of jobs within the City's downtown district, and there has been an outmigration of jobs from the City to neighboring municipalities in Mercer County.



COURTESY OF ARTWORKS TRENTON

Trenton Art All Night organized by Artworks Trenton, 2013

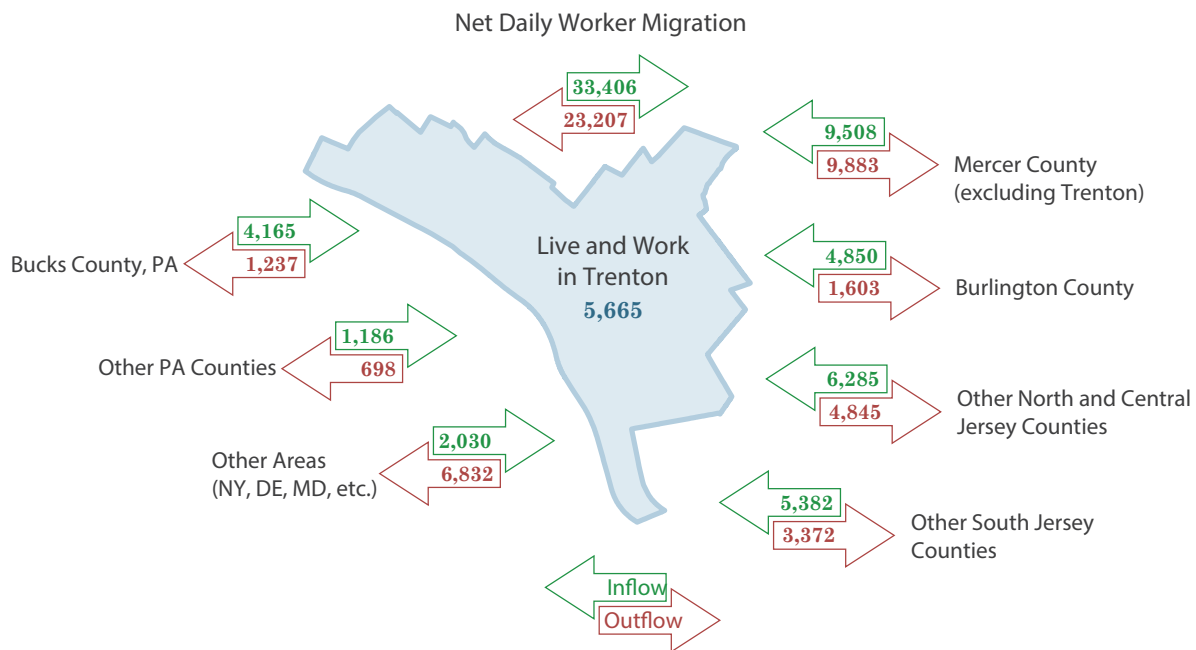
### Destination City

The Beautiful Trenton "Campaign for Trenton" identified the goal of branding Trenton as a destination. In this vision for a destination city, Trenton "is a hub of cultural and governmental affairs. The Downtown is a vibrant mixed-use center, with well-situated visitor services, excellent signage, and well-communicated historical, cultural, entertainment and dining options attracting residents and visitors. History and the arts are celebrated regularly and used as assets to be developed."

SOURCE: 2012 BEAUTIFUL TRENTON "CAMPAIGN FOR TRENTON",

# JOBS AND EMPLOYMENT

## Daily Worker Migration, by County (2011)



SOURCE: U.S. CENSUS BUREAU, ONTHEMAP

Of the nearly 29,000 members of Trenton's workforce, only about 20% live and work in the city while only 14.5% of jobs available in Trenton are filled by residents. The biggest destinations for Trenton residents are Ewing township (3,300 jobs), Hamilton township (2,880 jobs) and Lawrence township (1,257 jobs). Trenton receives over 33,000 daily commuters who travel in for work from neighboring counties.

## City of Trenton's Largest Private Employers (as of 2011)

Company	Industry Sector	Employment Figures (2011)
Capital Health Systems	Health Care	2500 (Combined Total)
St. Francis Medical Center	Health Care	1,250
Hibbert Group	Direct Mail Services	480
Hutchinson Industries	Manufacturing	330 (7 locations)
Mercer Unit ARC	Community Services	221
Water's Edge Convalescent Center	Health Care	219
Mercer Street Friends Center	Community Services	203
Marshall Industrial Technologies	Manufacturing	162
Trentonian	News/Media	140
Wells Fargo (Regional Center)	Banking	140

SOURCE: CITY OF TRENTON, DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

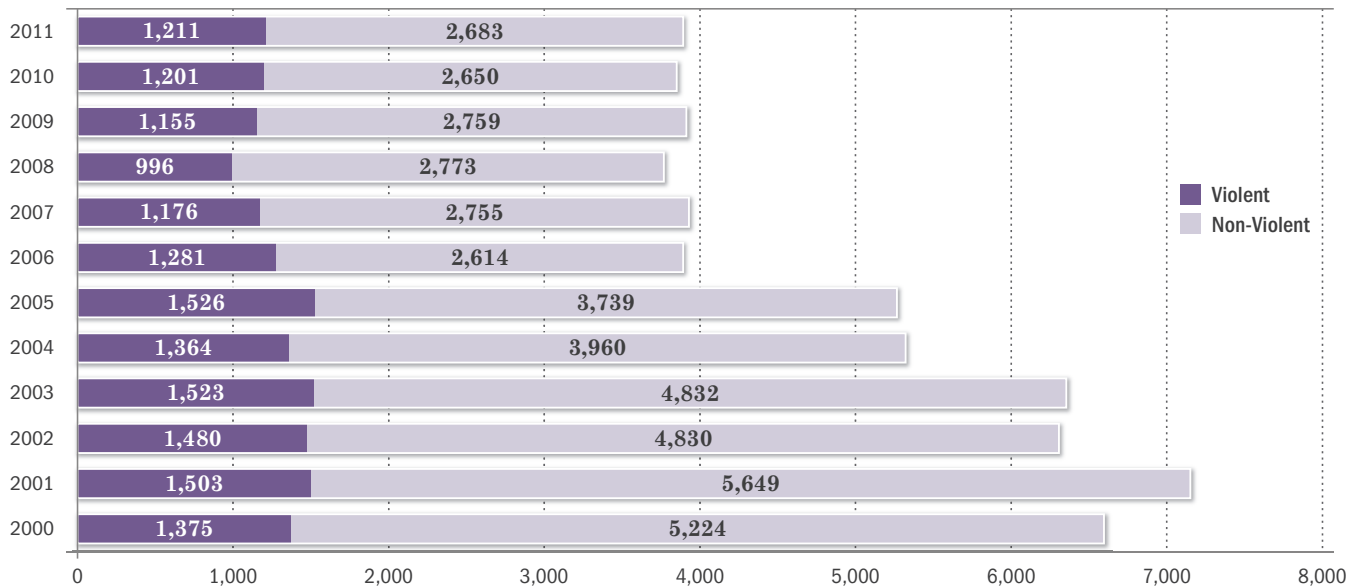
Trenton's largest private employers are in the healthcare sector with a total combined employment figure of nearly 4,000. Manufacturing and community services are other larger private employment sectors.





## PUBLIC SAFETY

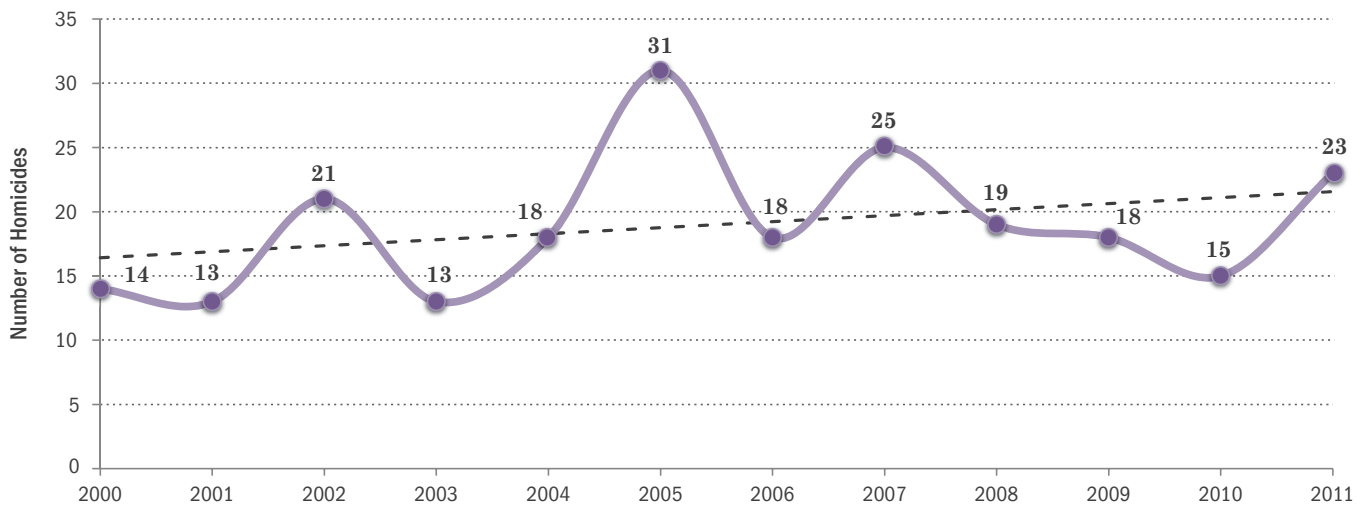
### Incidence of Major Crimes in Trenton



SOURCE: NEW JERSEY STATE POLICE, NEW JERSEY DEPARTMENT OF LAW AND SAFETY

The overall incidence of major non-violent crimes in Trenton has declined sharply since 2000. Violent crimes have fallen as well, though not as significantly.

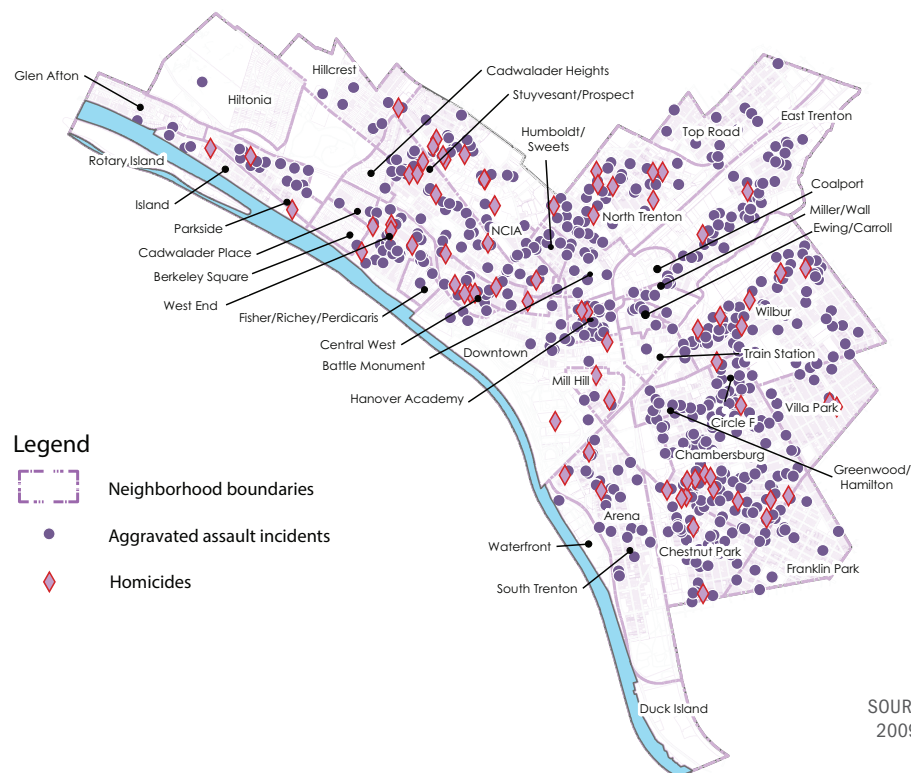
### Number of Homicides in Trenton



SOURCE: NEW JERSEY STATE POLICE, NEW JERSEY DEPARTMENT OF LAW AND SAFETY

Since 2005, the number of homicides in Trenton had been declining, albeit unsteadily. However, since 2010, homicides have begun to rise again in the city. In 2013 (not noted on chart) Trenton experienced its highest number of homicides in history at 37.

## Locations of Aggravated Assaults in Trenton (late 2008 - mid 2013)



SOURCE: CITY OF TRENTON POLICE DEPARTMENT, CRIME DATA 2009-2013 NEW JERSEY DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION, CITY OF TRENTON, DIVISION OF PLANNING

Violent crime incidents over the past several years have been broadly dispersed across Trenton. Unsurprisingly, homicides largely correlate with concentrations of aggravated assault incidents.



SOURCE: CITY OF TRENTON, 2013

Trenton's police officers on patrol.

## Economic Disadvantage

According to the 2011 Economic Development Summit Survey Results, the top five economic disadvantages of the City of Trenton are:

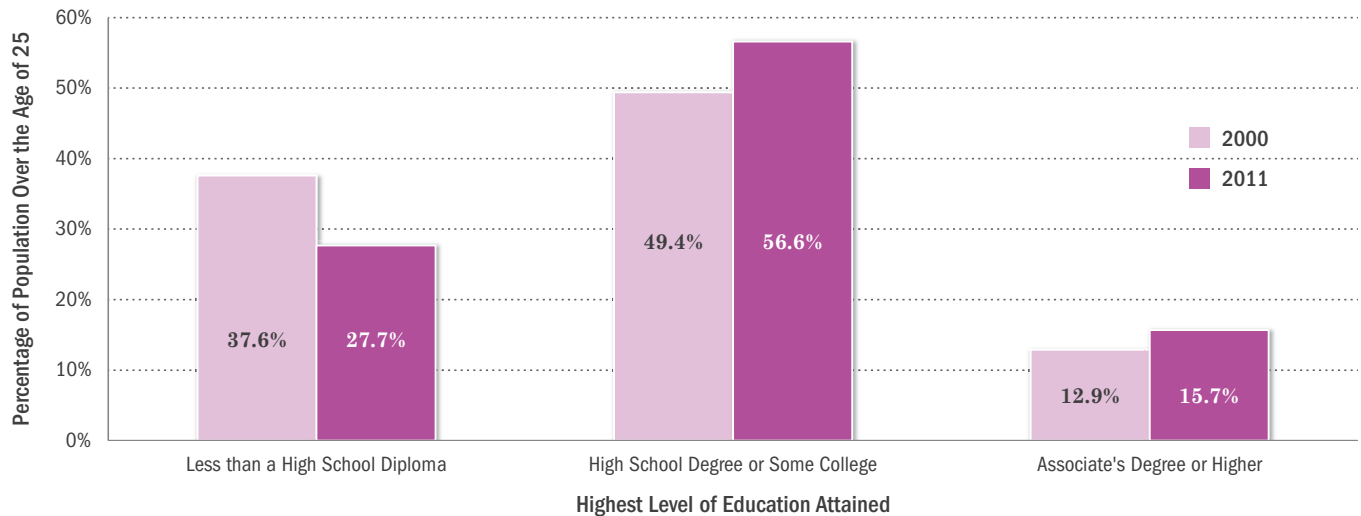
1. Crime Rate
2. Property Taxes
3. Quality of Schools (K-12)
4. Physical Appearance (Tied)
4. Availability and Cost of Parking (Tied)
5. Access to Parks and Public Space

SOURCE: MAYOR'S ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT SUMMIT, MARCH 31, 2011, TRENTON, NJ



## EDUCATION

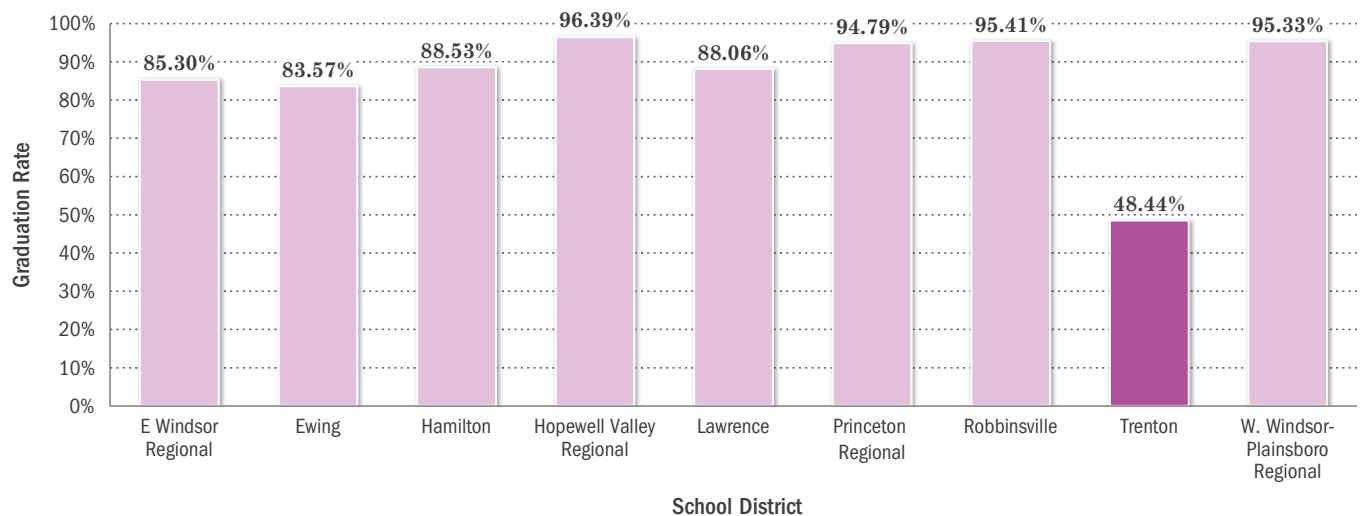
### City of Trenton Level of Educational Attainment



SOURCE: US CENSUS 1-YEAR ESTIMATES AMERICAN COMMUNITY SURVEY 2000, 2011

The percentages of residents with a high school degree, some level of college work, and an Associates Degree or higher have increased since 2000 while the percentage of residents who have completed their education with less than a high school diploma has decreased.

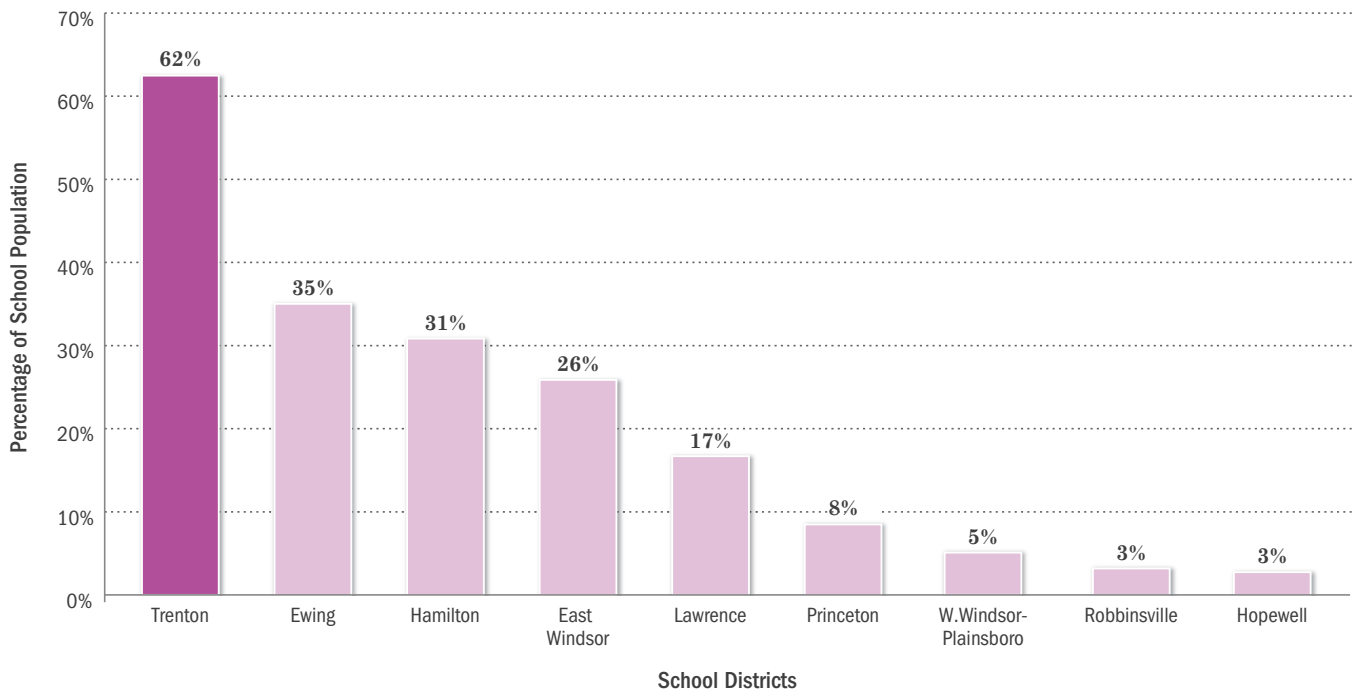
### High School Graduation Rates, Mercer School Districts, 2012



SOURCE: NEW JERSEY DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

The Trenton public school district has the lowest high school graduation rates in Mercer County highlighting a staggering gap in educational attainment between the city and its surrounding communities.

## Percentage of Students Receiving Free or Reduced Lunch, Mercer County



SOURCE: NEW JERSEY DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

With the largest concentration of poverty of any school district in the County, Sixty-two (62) percent of Trenton students receive free or reduced lunch.



COURTESY OF TOM O'NEILL AND TRENTON CHILDRENS CHORUS, 2014

Members of the Trenton Children's Chorus look on during a performance.

## Partnering

A strategy proposed out of the first Creative Trenton Call to Collaboration Meeting for improving Trenton public schools is for Trenton area businesses and nonprofits to partner with the school system to help schools meet their goals

SOURCE: CREATIVE TRENTON "CALL TO COLLABORATION"  
JANUARY 23-24, 2014, TRENTON, NJ



## PUBLIC HEALTH

### Community Health Profile

Percentage of residents **suffering from...**

	Diabetes	Obesity	Hypertension
Trenton City	<b>16.0%</b>	<b>39.0%</b>	<b>31.0%</b>
Mercer County Average	<b>6.8%</b>	<b>19.7%</b>	<b>27.2%</b>

SOURCE: CITY OF TRENTON, HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES DEPARTMENT

Higher percentages of Trenton residents suffer from diabetes, obesity and hypertension than residents within Mercer County as a whole. Incidences of diabetes are 250% higher, and obesity rates run nearly 200% higher.

### Health Insurance Coverage in Trenton, 2011

Percentage of **total uninstitutionalized residents...**

	With health insurance coverage	With private insurance	With public coverage	Under 18 with no health coverage
Trenton City	<b>79.0%</b>	<b>45.3%</b>	<b>40.1%</b>	<b>4.7%</b>
Mercer County Average	<b>89.1%</b>	<b>74.4%</b>	<b>25.4%</b>	<b>2.9%</b>
New Jersey State Average	<b>86.9%</b>	<b>71.0%</b>	<b>26.1%</b>	<b>5.2%</b>

SOURCE: U.S. CENSUS 1-YEAR ESTIMATES AMERICAN COMMUNITY SURVEY, 2011

A smaller percentage of non-insitutionalized Trenton residents have health coverage than those in Mercer County or the State of New Jersey. Among types of health coverage, Trenton residents are nearly twice as likely to have a public form of health coverage than County or State residents on average, while fewer than half of Trenton residents have private insurance coverage compared to over 70% for both County and State residents.

### Health Priorities

The City of Trenton, Isles, Inc. and a work group of local organizations established the following environmental health priorities: Abandoned Buildings, Litter, Open Space, Asthma, Lead, Water Pollution, Flooding, Brownfields, and Air Pollution.

SOURCE: 2010 TRENTON CARES GREEN INITIATIVE



"Healthy Kids" Mural

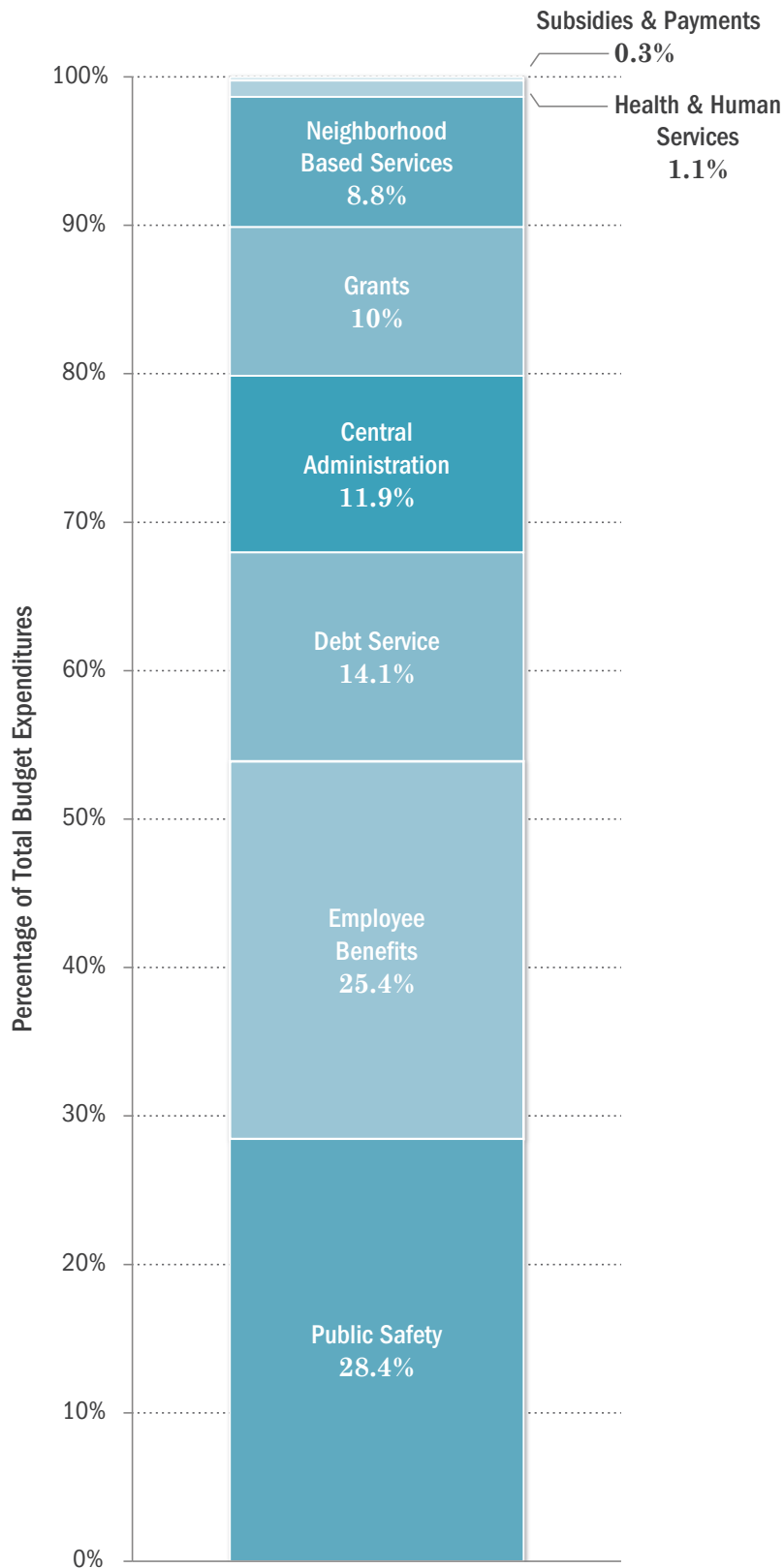
COURTESY OF WILL KASO, S.A.G.E. COLLECTIVE, 2013





# CITY GOVERNMENT

## City of Trenton Budget, Fiscal Year 2013



Total Budget 2013: \$199,725,452

### City Spending Categories

#### Subsidies & Payments

LYCDC Working Capital  
Grant Match

#### Health & Human Services

Health & Human Services

#### Neighborhood-Based Services

Deferred Charges  
Public Works  
Library  
Recreation, Natural Resources and Culture

#### Grants

#### Central Administration

Administration  
Finance  
Inspections  
Liability Insurance  
Reserve for Uncollected  
Tax  
Utilities & Central  
Accounts  
City Council & City Clerk  
Housing & Economic Development  
Law  
Mayor's Office  
Salary Increase & Sick Pay

#### Debt Service

Municipal Debt Service  
School Debt Service

#### Employee Benefits

Group Health, Prescription & Dental  
Unemployment Fund  
Other Employee Benefits  
Pension & Social Security  
Workers Compensation

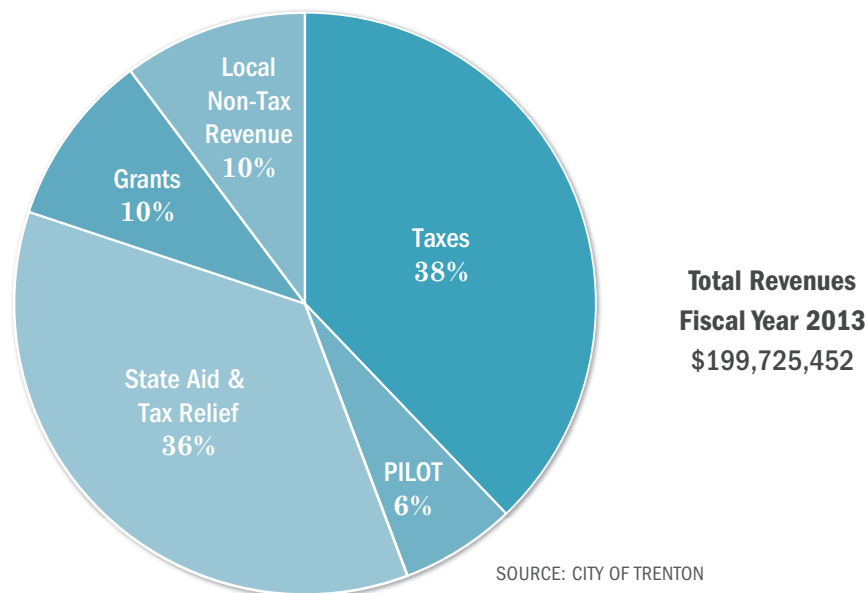
#### Public Safety

Fire  
Police

SOURCE: CITY OF TRENTON

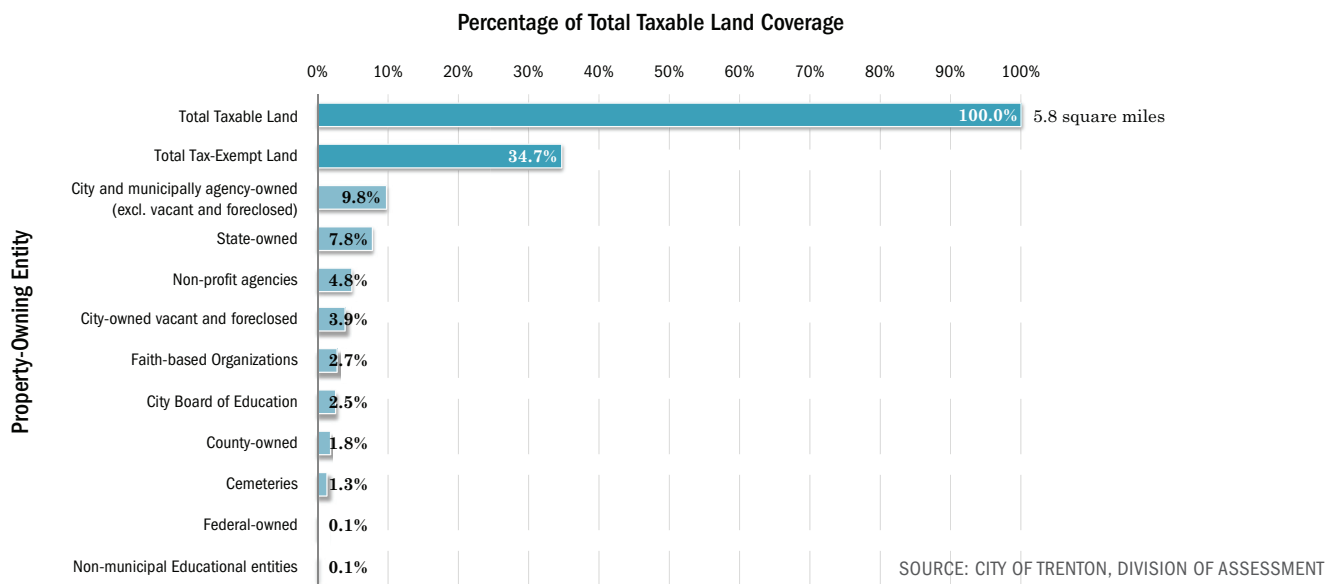
# CITY GOVERNMENT

## City of Trenton Revenues, Fiscal Year 2013



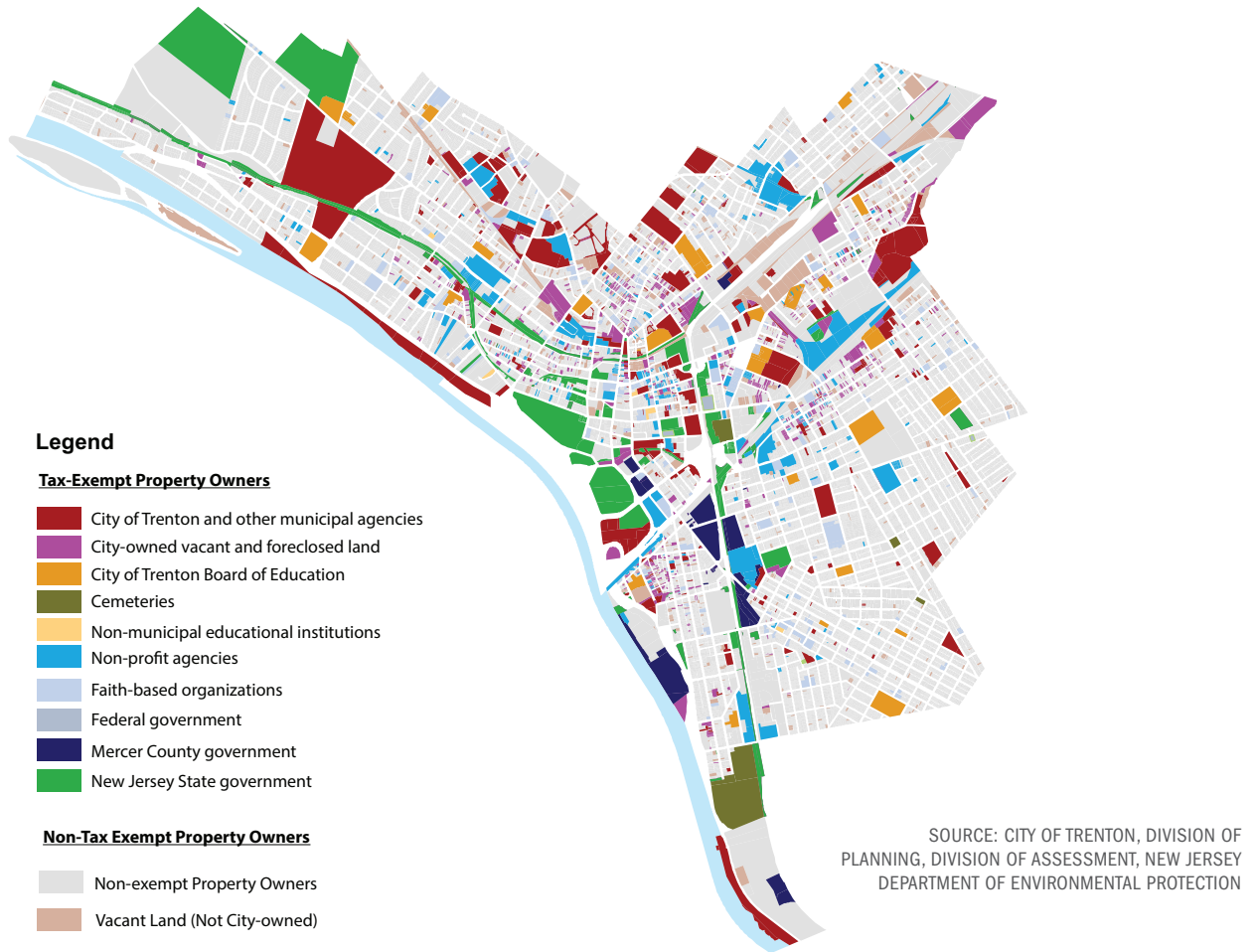
Just over a third of Trenton's municipal budget is comprised of state aid and tax relief, while another 38% is tax revenue collected on assessed municipal property. The remainder is made up of grants (10%), local non-tax revenue (10%), and payments in lieu of taxes (PILOT) (6%).

## Tax Exempt Property Owners by Percentage of Total Land Owned, 2011



Trenton contains a diverse range of property owners, many of whom are considered tax-exempt and are not required to pay the City property taxes on the land they own. In 2011, 34.7% of all developable City land was held by entities that were tax exempt and not paying property taxes. While the largest such property holders are the City of Trenton and other municipal agencies (including the Trenton Housing Authority, the Trenton Board of Education) which all together control approximately 16.2% of the total land area, the State of New Jersey controls 7.8% of the developable land area within the City's limits, while Mercer County controls nearly 2%.

## Property Ownership by Tax Exemption status. 2011



Aside from properties controlled by state government entities, which are concentrated in the Downtown and Capital neighborhoods and along the Canal systems, land owned by tax-exempt property owners is widely dispersed across the City. Combined with the large stock of privately-owned vacant property and the many vacant and foreclosed-upon land parcels and structures held by the City of Trenton, the large amount of tax-exempt land provides a major challenge for the City of Trenton.



Trenton City Hall along East State Street

SOURCE: CITY OF TRENTON, 2014

**NOTES:**

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