

Redlining in Duluth

Kathy Wilson, AICP

Pronouns: she/her

City of Duluth

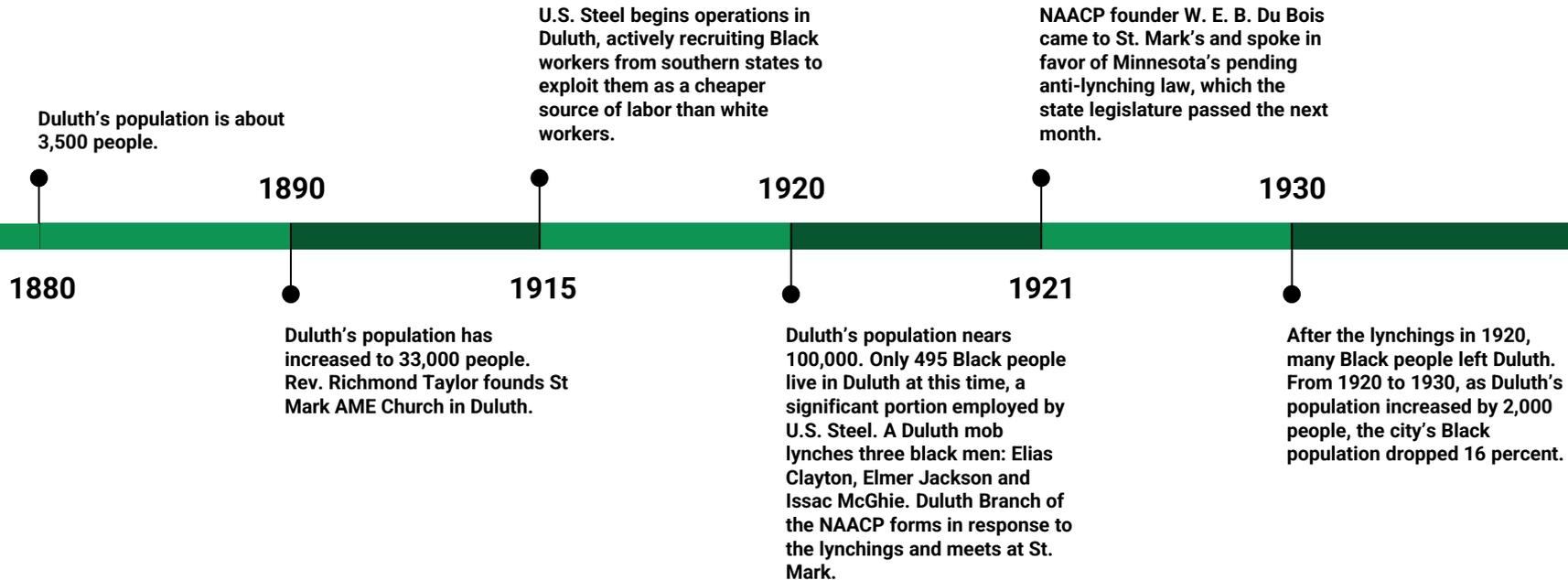
kwilson@duluthmn.gov



“[Duluth] is located on the traditional, ancestral, and contemporary lands of Indigenous people. The [City] resides on land that was cared for and called home by the Ojibwe people, before them the Dakota and Northern Cheyenne people, and other Native peoples from time immemorial. Ceded by the Ojibwe in an 1854 treaty, this land holds great historical, spiritual, and personal significance for its original stewards, the Native nations and peoples of this region.” - University of Minnesota, Duluth Land Acknowledgement



Mural: Moira Villiard & Michelle Waabanangokwe Defoe; Photo: [Moira Villiard](#)



“On the evening of June 15, 1920, three black men, wrongly accused of raping a white woman, were abducted from the Duluth, MN, City Jail. A mob numbering between five and ten thousand people savagely beat and tortured these three young men, then hung them from a lamppost in the middle of Duluth's downtown. The grim spectacle of the mob posing with the lynched men was then captured by a photographer, and then circulated as a postcard. At a time in America when the lynching of black men was all too common, it was widely agreed to be the most heinous lynching of 1920. Until recently, this event has been largely forgotten. The names of the three men, Elias Clayton, Elmer Jackson and Isaac McGhie were almost forgotten as well.”

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The lynching in Duluth will have a wholesome effect on the class of help carried by ordinary circus and the carnival troupes. The chances are that no colored help with a carnival attraction or circus in the county will be tolerated hereafter.
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Image and narrative from claytonjacksonmcghie.org

The Homeowners Loan Corporation (HOLC) evaluated Duluth neighborhoods for the Federal Housing Administration and produced what we now call a redlining map of Duluth.

1940

Duluth's total population still hovers around 100,000 with 309 Black residents counted in the 1940 Census.

Duluth's population peaks at 106,000.

1960

1990

Duluth's population has declined to about 85,000 people and has remained stagnant since.

2010

Just over 8,500 BIPOC now make up about 10% of Duluth's population.

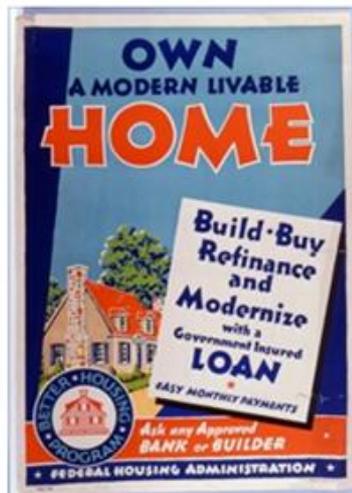
1936

Policy created racial inequity:

New Deal

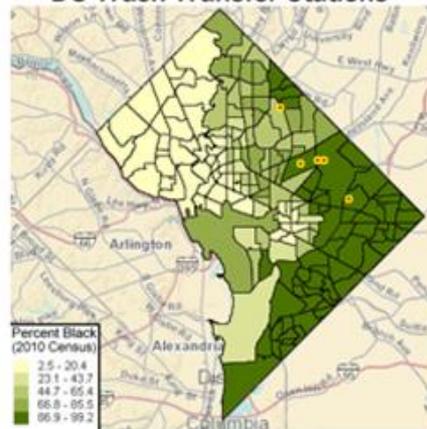


Federal Housing Administration



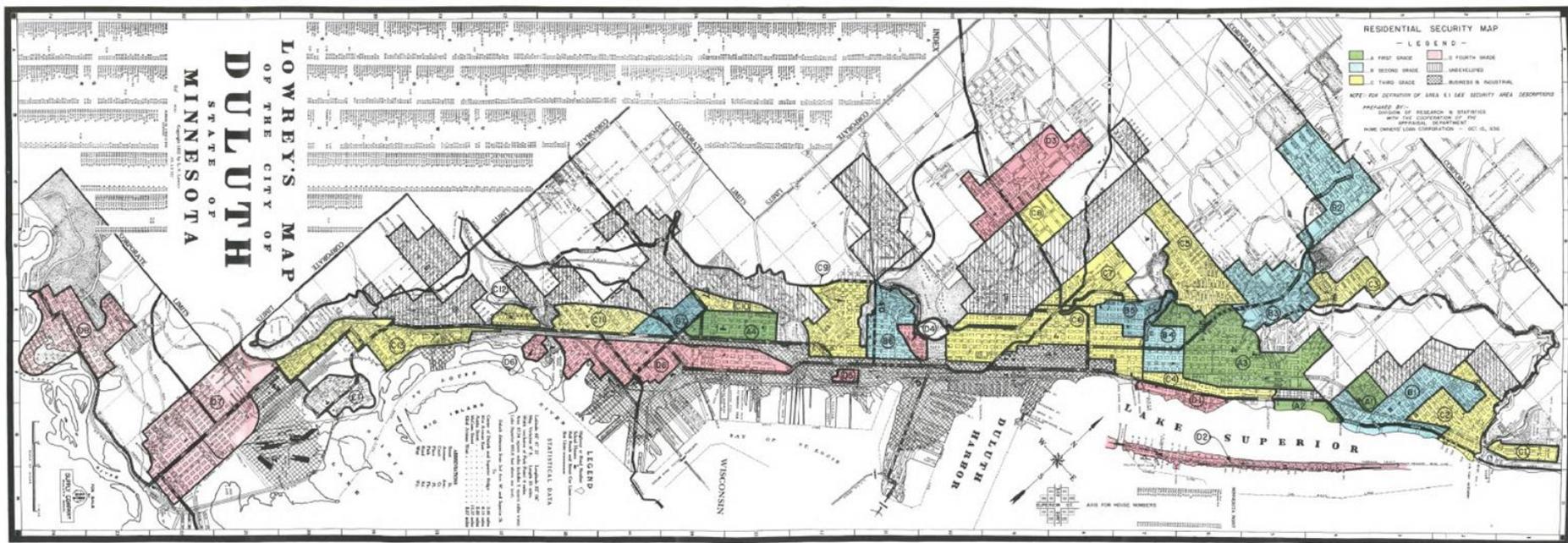
Environmental Impacts

DC Trash Transfer Stations

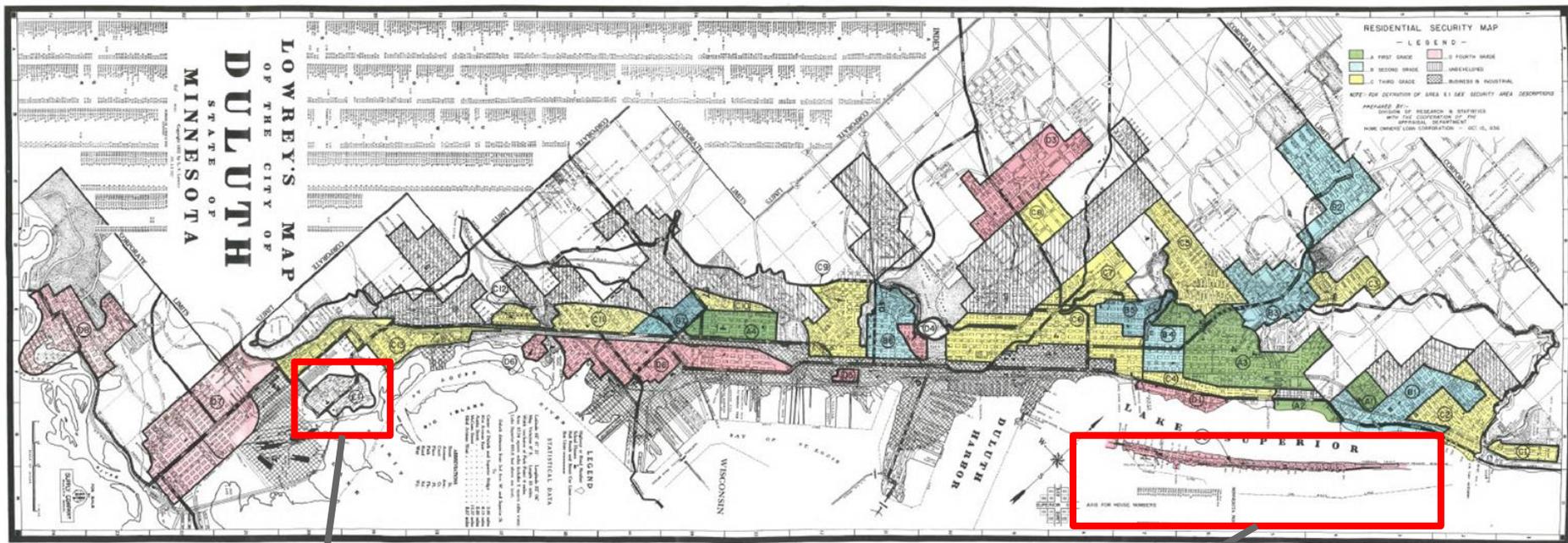




<https://youtu.be/ETR9qrVS17g>

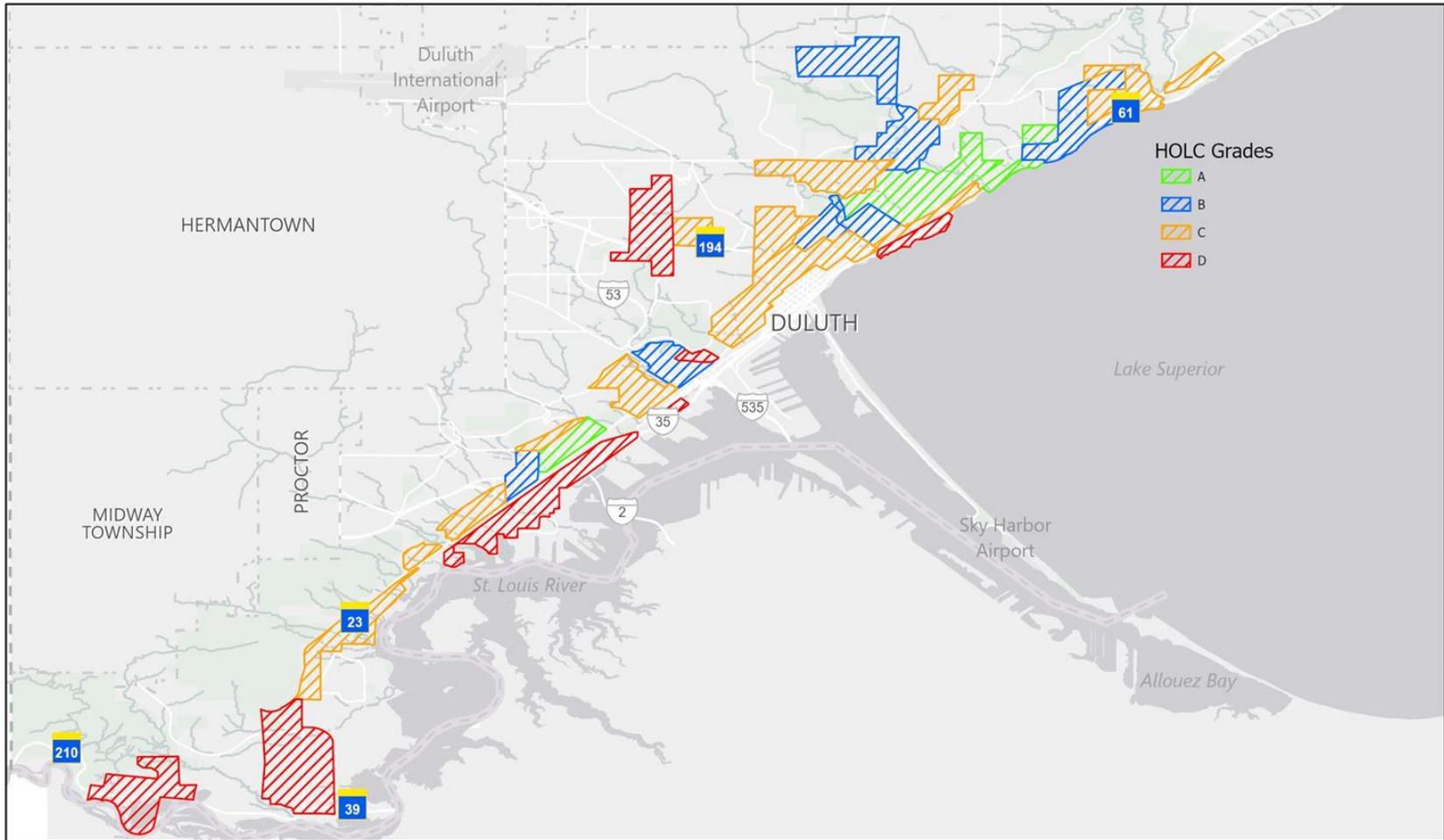


HOLC maps, evaluation text, and GIS shapefile download for all cities that were evaluated:
<https://dsl.richmond.edu/panorama/redlining/>



Morgan Park was a company town all owned by U.S. Steel so was excluded from the HOLC evaluation.

Minnesota Point/Park Point was redlined because it was mainly seasonal housing at the time and there wasn't much infrastructure. The HOLC description alludes to the potential future advantages of "extensive government developments" that were beginning in the neighborhood at the time.



This large area is typical of those blighted by encroachments of principal business district of the city. It is now the cheaper rental district of Duluth and occupied by many nationalities of the low income class, including negroes. There will be no further development in this district and virtually no sale for property.

This is Morley Heights, a post war development by Marshall-Wells Company, which was a great disappointment. The houses were moved from Michigan and replaced in this district. The security ranges in value from \$1500 to \$3500. A good class of moderate income people live in the area.

St. Mark AME Church 1890 meeting place on 4th St & 4th Ave W and location of church on 6th St & 5th Ave E, it's location since 1900.

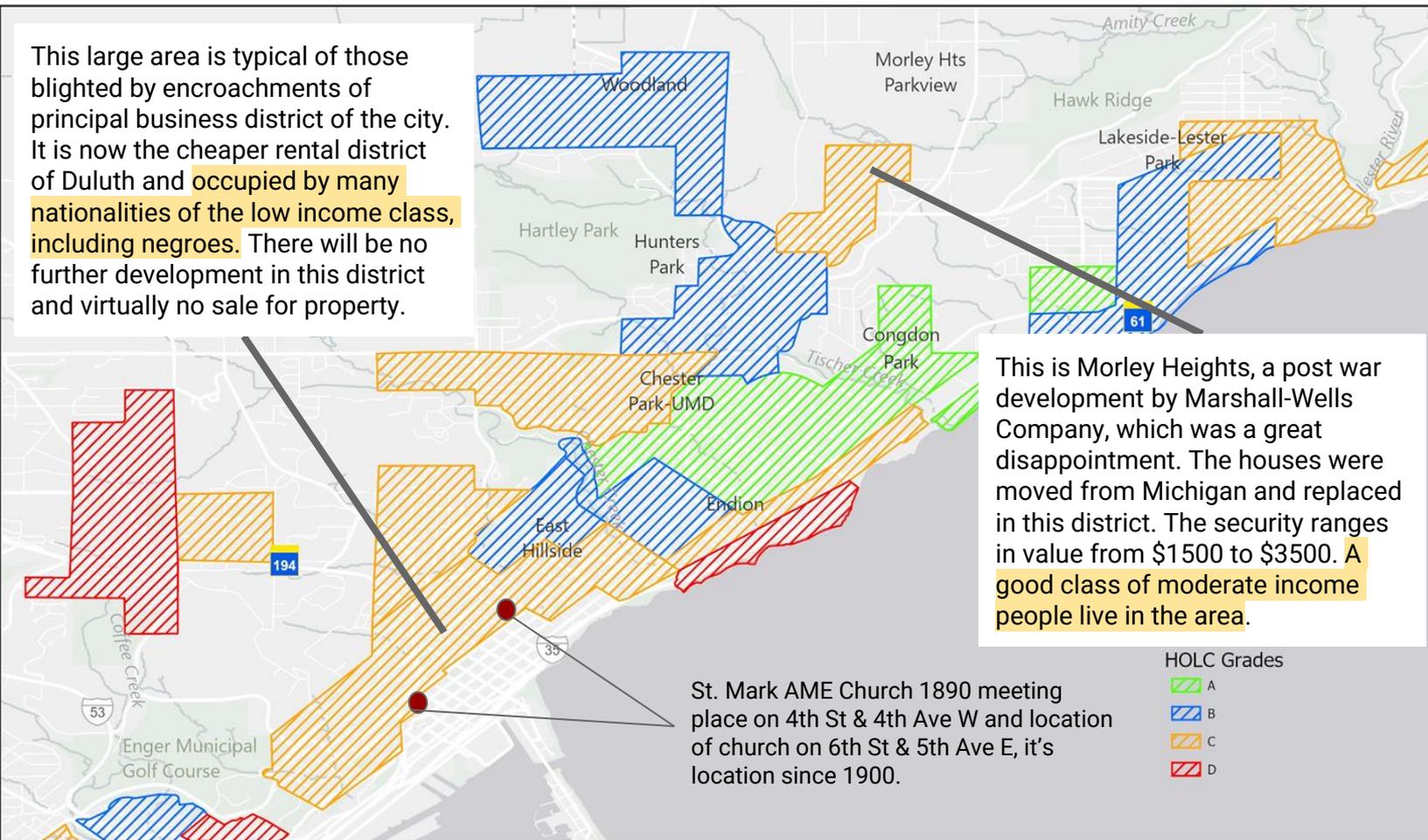
HOLC Grades

 A

 B

 C

 D



This is an old section situated on a steep incline. Foreign industrial workers occupy the area, Italians predominating. Most of the constructions is old and shabby.

The northeast portion of this area is largely undeveloped, but the southern portion is rather heavily built up. The entire area, between railroads and industrial plants along the waterfront, is occupied by laborers from these industrial enterprises. Most of the houses are nearly 50 years in age. Foreigners predominate in this section.

This area is considered the best residential section in the western section of Duluth, which portion is occupied almost entirely by the industrial working class. The district compares favorably with A-1 as to the type of security and the general character of the people living therein. Residing in A-4 are salaried persons from nearby industrial plants, business and professional men of the west end of the city. Virtually all houses in this area have been built within the last 30 years and in value range from \$3,000 to \$6,000. This is considered a very choice lending territory, due not only to the type of security, but the integrity displayed, generally, by the class of people living therein.

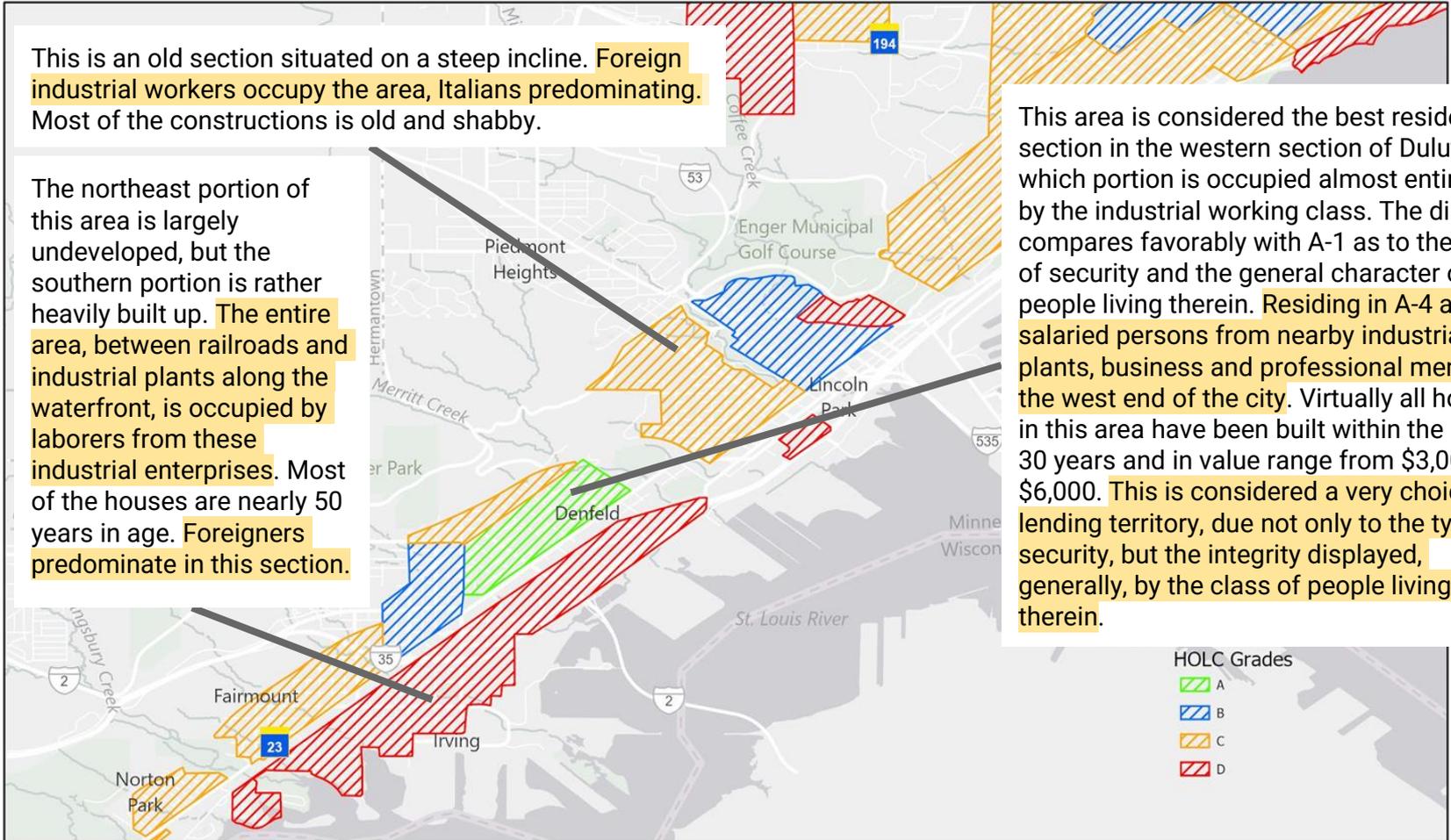
HOLC Grades

A

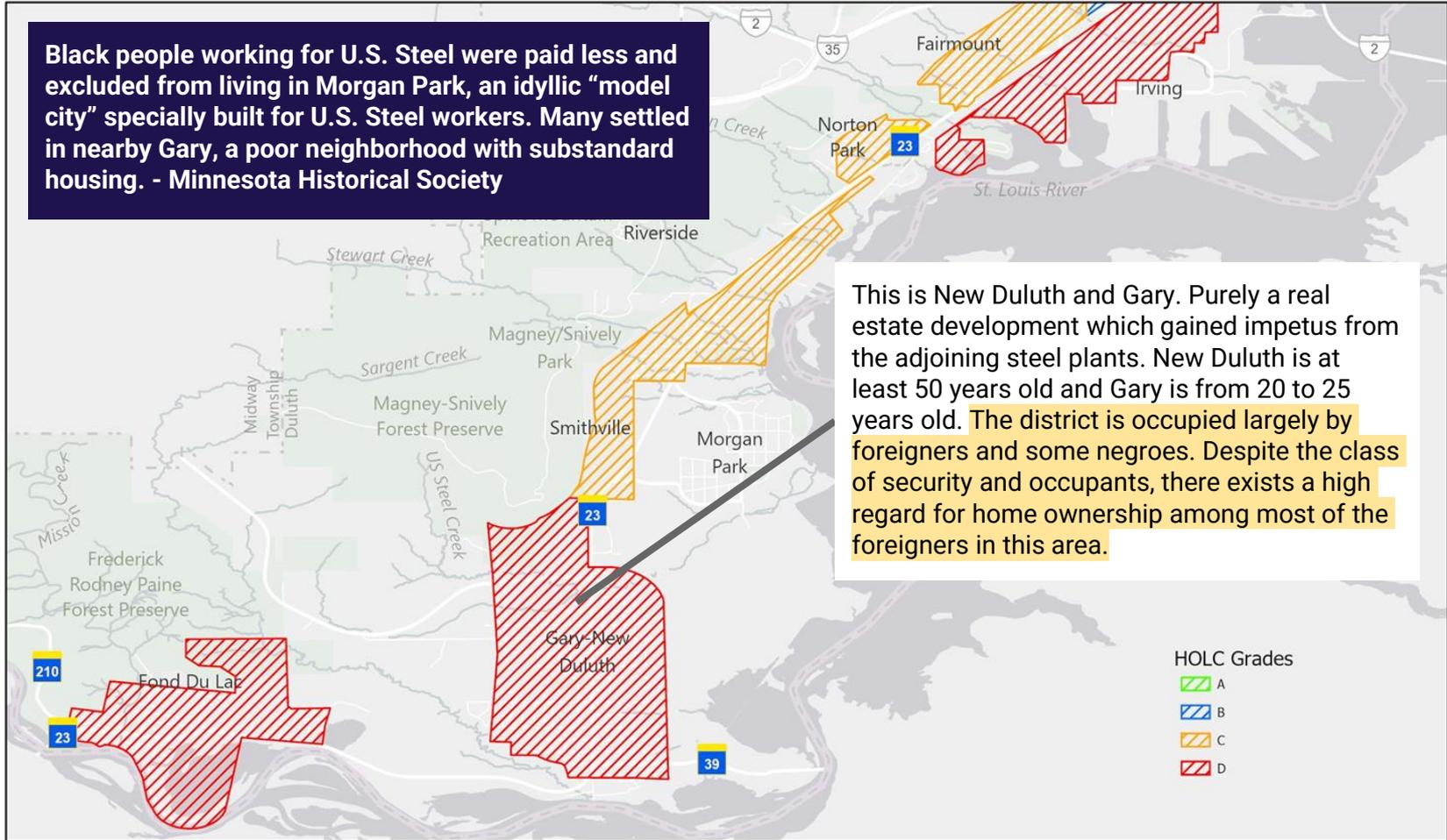
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C

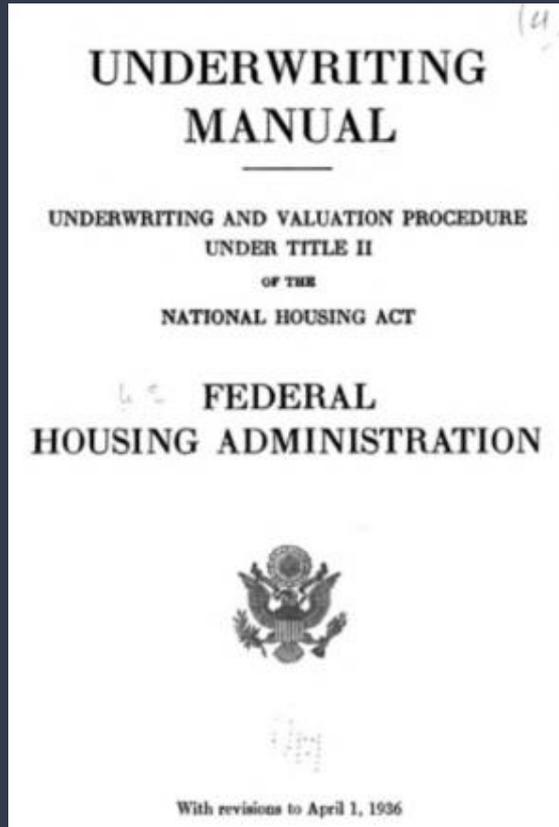
D



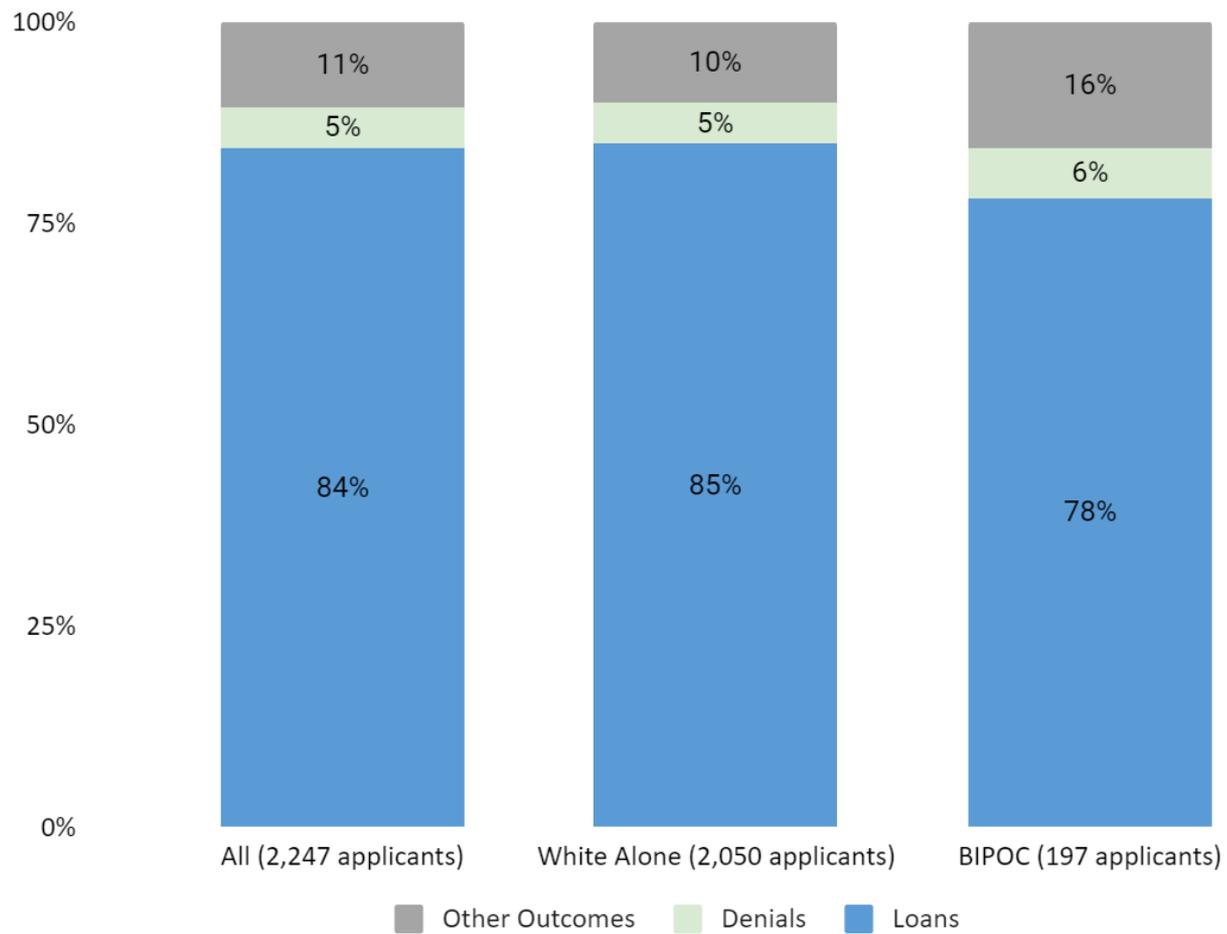
Black people working for U.S. Steel were paid less and excluded from living in Morgan Park, an idyllic “model city” specially built for U.S. Steel workers. Many settled in nearby Gary, a poor neighborhood with substandard housing. - Minnesota Historical Society



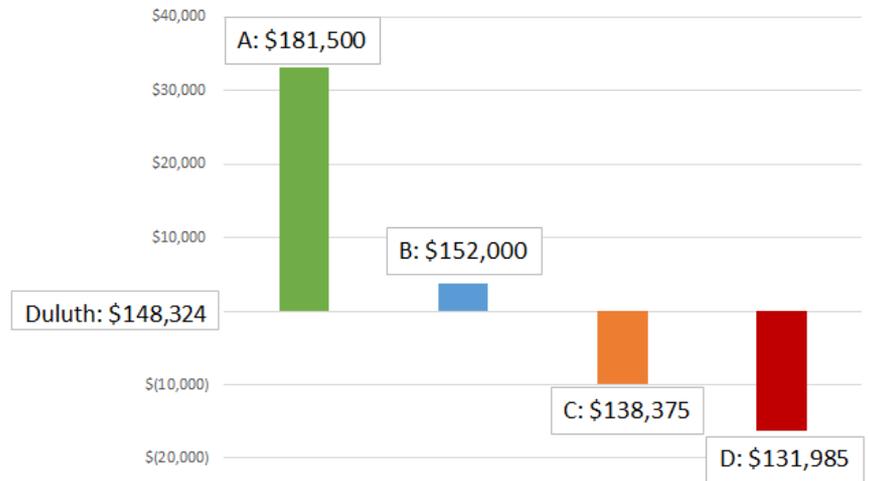
This is New Duluth and Gary. Purely a real estate development which gained impetus from the adjoining steel plants. New Duluth is at least 50 years old and Gary is from 20 to 25 years old. The district is occupied largely by foreigners and some negroes. Despite the class of security and occupants, there exists a high regard for home ownership among most of the foreigners in this area.



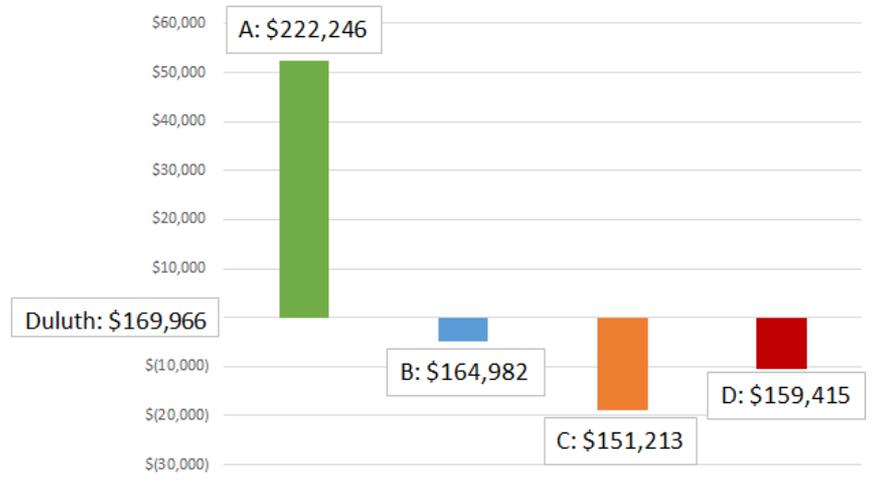
“The economic life estimate may be relatively high if the Rating of Property is high , although the Rating of Location may simultaneously be low . This is true because of the opposite effects produced on the economic life estimate and on the Location rating by threatening or possible encroachments of nonconforming land uses and **by threatening or possible infiltration of inharmonious racial groups**. The possibility or imminence of such encroachments or infiltrations will always result in low ratings of some of the features in the Location category.”

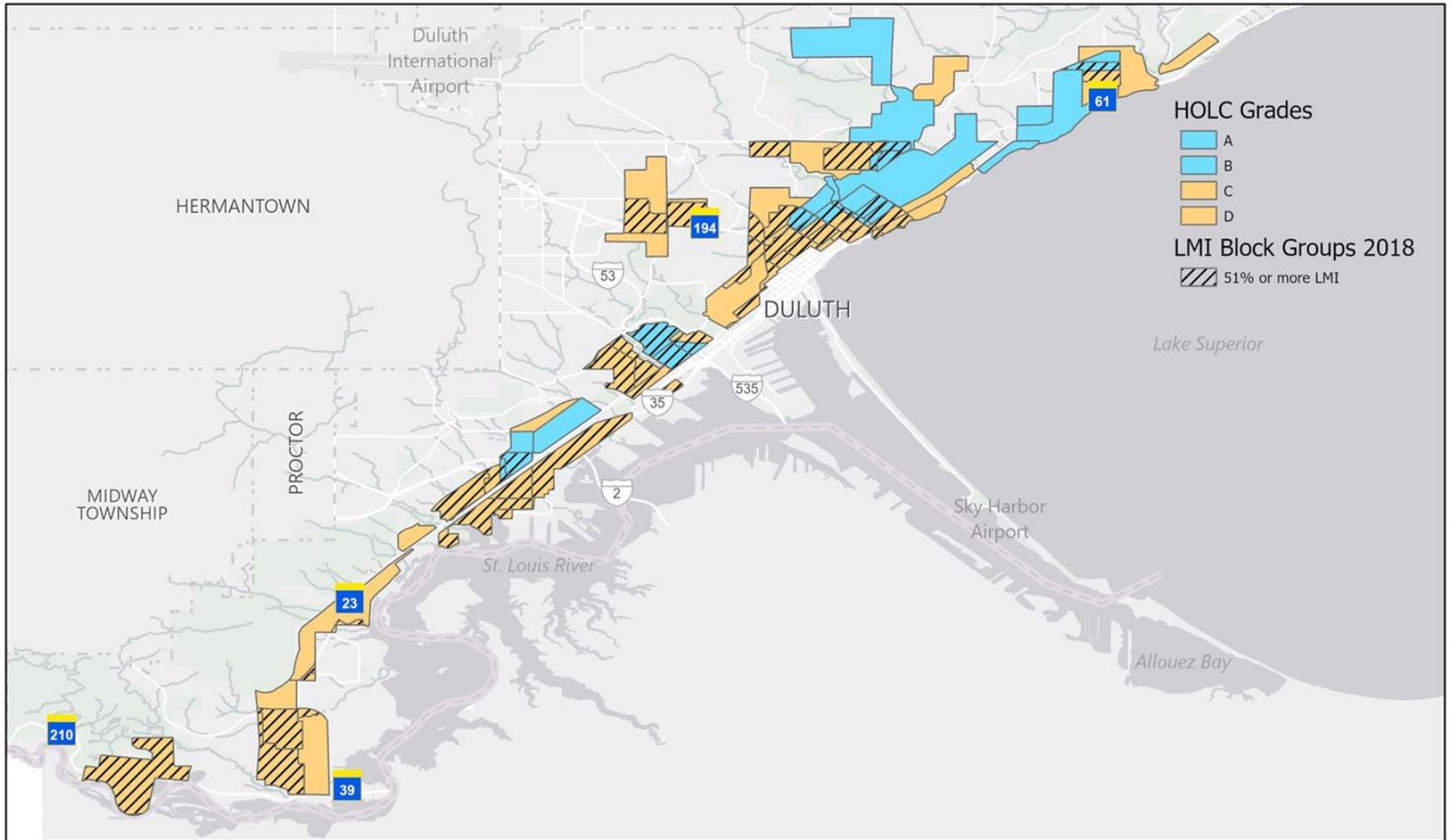


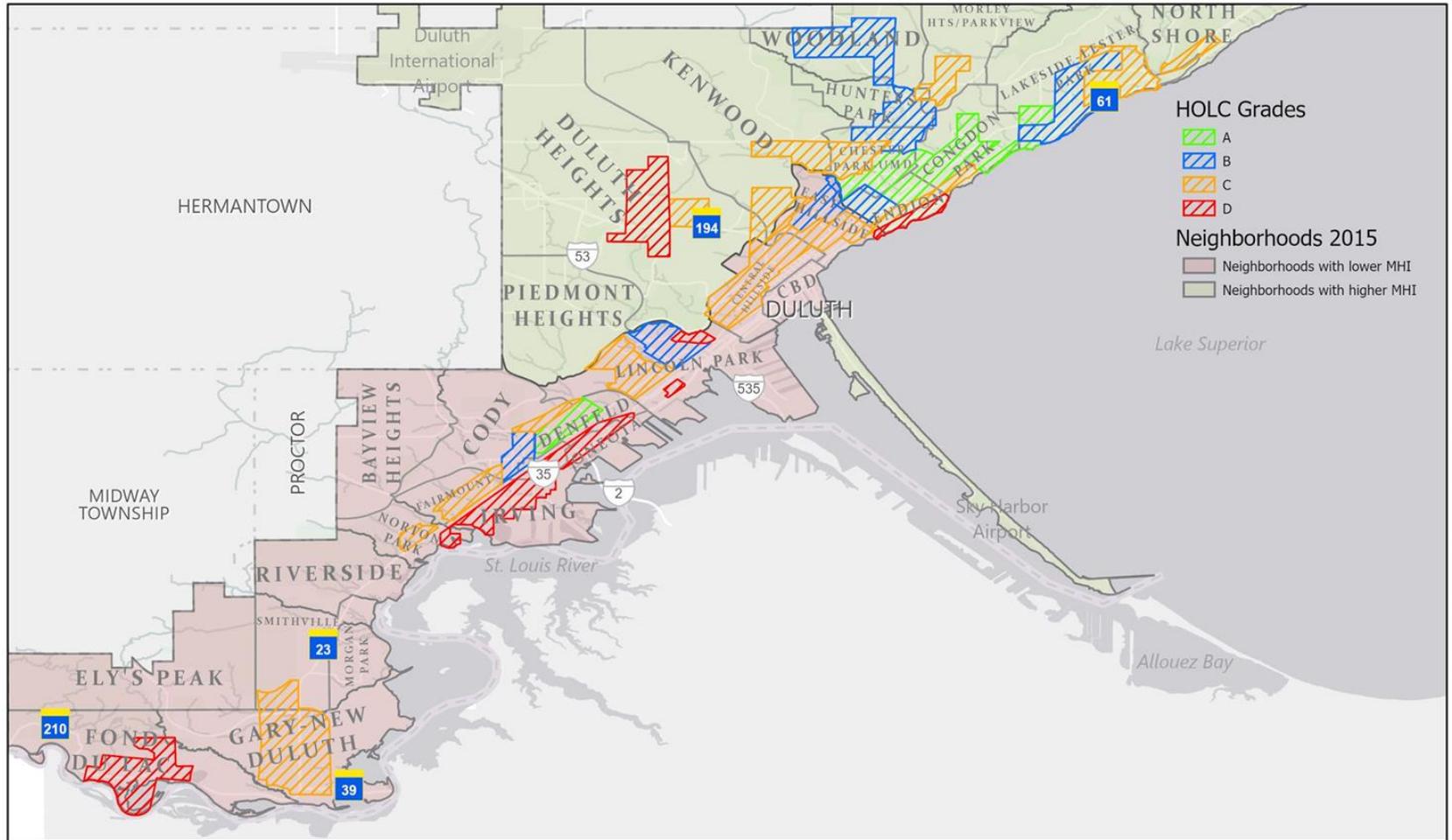
2016 Home Sales: Median Sale Price

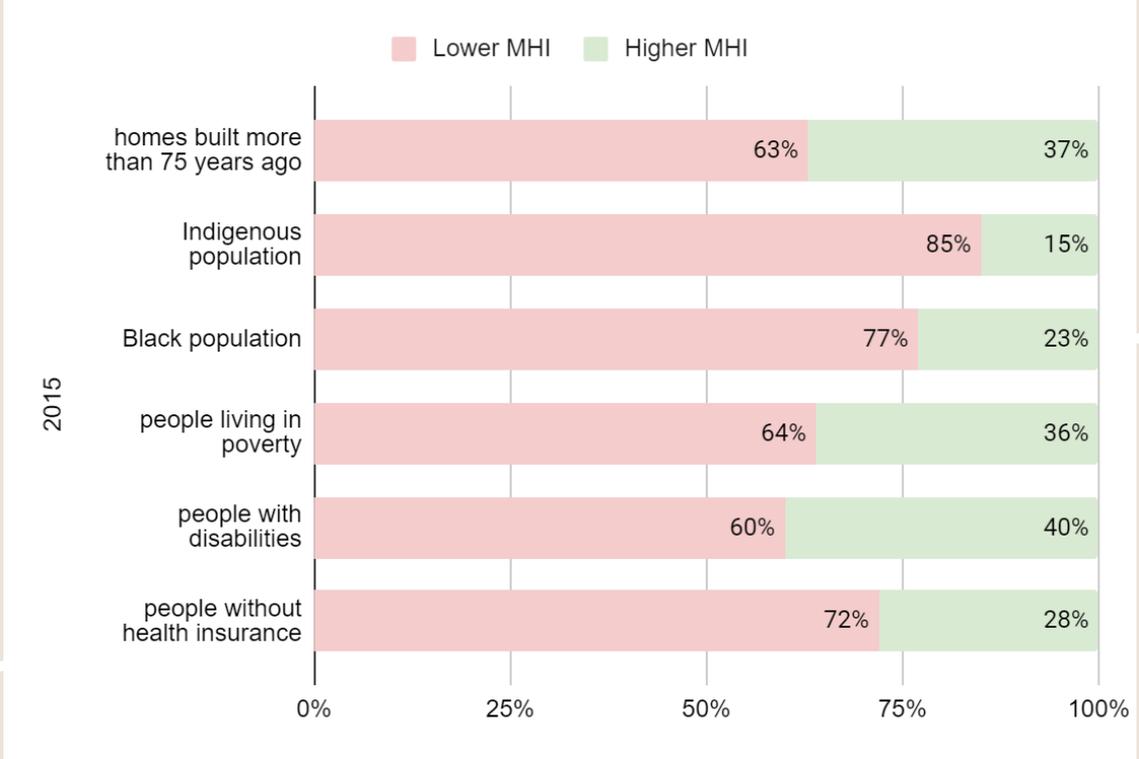


2016 Home Sales: Average Sale Price









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Sources

claytonjacksonmcghie.org

IPUMS NHGIS, University of Minnesota

American Community Survey 2011-2015 5-year estimates

1940, 2010 Census counts

St. Louis County Assessor's Office

Minnesota Historical Society

Reveal Modern Day Redlining: revealnews.org/redlining

Mnopedia.org

Mapping Inequality: Redlining in New Deal America - University of Richmond