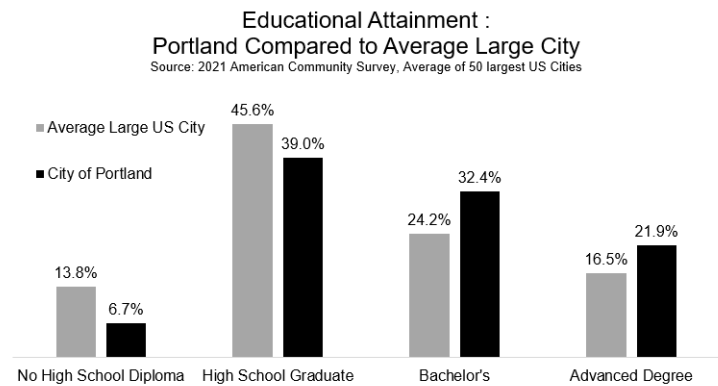


OBJECTIVE 4 DEEP DIVE: CONNECT PORTLANDERS TO HIGH-QUALITY JOBS IN FUTURE-READY SECTORS

Workforce's impact on inclusive economic growth is dependent on how well it is deployed: the degree to which workers are finding and being hired for jobs that fully leverage their skills and knowledge. This requires aligning the supply of skills with the ones employers are seeking, both for current roles and for those on the horizon. The Portland MSA has a highly educated population, particularly concentrated in the City of Portland.

Compared to the fifty largest cities, Portlanders hold a much higher percentage of bachelor's and advanced degrees than average. Employment of Portland's residents has grown substantially over the last 10 years, and the share of occupations requiring higher skills is growing faster than most major U.S. cities.



However, workers deployed into those high-barrier occupations are disproportionately white (while BIPOC are over-represented in lower-barrier jobs). While the region has more workers than average to support the city's five priority industry clusters – Athletic & Outdoor, Green Cities & Clean Tech, Food & Beverage Manufacturing, Metals & Machinery, and Software – the higher barrier to entry industries, it has challenges efficiently matching this workforce - particularly Black, Indigenous and all employees of color -- with high-growth jobs, particularly those in the green economy. **The actions in this section focus on improving labor market efficiency and inclusion by increasing sector-specific employer-led consortia, employers adapting more inclusive hiring, training and promotion practices, and improving the alignment of employer and trainer/educator.**

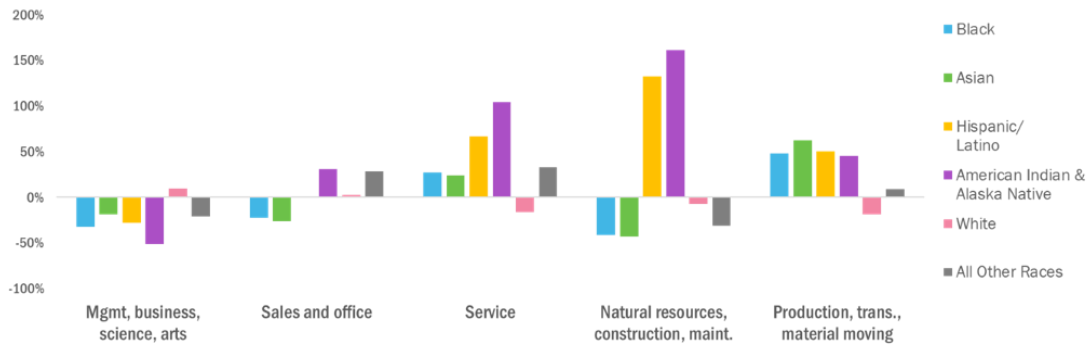
OVERVIEW

Inequitable access to higher paying sectors

The changes in occupational distributions from 2010-2020 by demographic groups almost uniformly show that all of Portland's workers moved into jobs requiring more educational credentials, regardless of race or ethnicity. In fact, most BIPOC groups showed larger shifts into those occupations than white workers; Black workers had a 44% increase in their presence in management, business, science, and the arts positions, and Hispanic/Latinx/e employment in those jobs grew by 53%, compared to a 17% growth rate for white workers in the same period. However, Black, Indigenous and all Portlanders of Color remain under-represented in management and over-represented in service and production industries.

Although BIPOC populations experienced these larger shifts into occupations that *generally* require more education and pay more, their income changes do not reflect their occupational changes. Median incomes for Asian, Black, and Hispanic/Latinx/e populations all had smaller increases than white residents from 2010-2020, despite the move into more management, business, science, and arts-related jobs. This could be due to unequal pay for the same positions as white workers, or because within the broadly higher-education occupation categories, BIPOC workers are being hired for the relatively lower-paying positions.²

Difference in City of Portland Workforce Demographics and Occupation Representation, 2020



Source: RW Ventures analysis of American Community Survey data

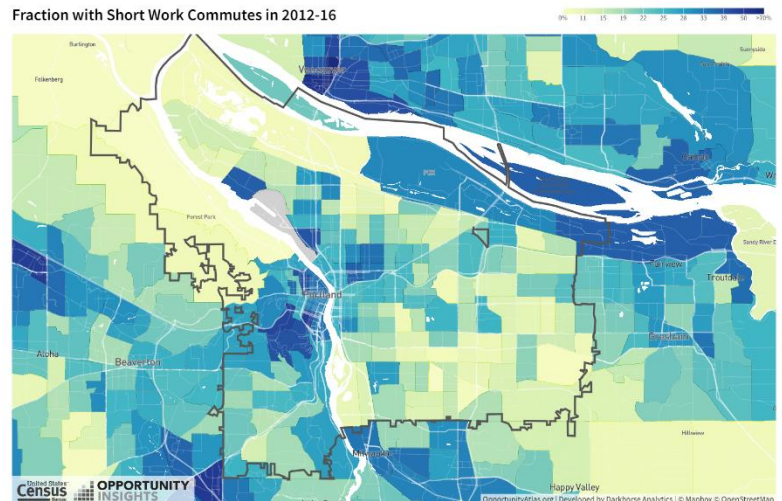
Jobs/Housing Mismatch Getting Worse for East Portlanders

Portland’s jobs-housing mismatch is worsening across the region. Job centers are shifting away from downtown Portland and in general are less accessible to historically underserved neighborhoods, in particular East Portland. While jobs are growing in the west side, poverty is concentrating in East Portland.

This increasing mismatch between employment and vulnerable populations is leading to increased commute times and barriers to quality employment. To address this growing concern, we must identify opportunities to locate major investments and target business growth near underserved areas, increase residential density and business growth near high-access locations, increase transportation options to existing employment centers, and re-assess zoning designations to bring jobs closer to people and talent closer to firms.

Capacity & Private Engagement

Portland’s talent development system includes higher education and university institutions, Worksystems, the Local Workforce Development Board for



Multnomah and Washington, nonprofit employment services, Registered Apprenticeship, and internal employer on-the-job training programs. Aligning and strengthening employer, job seeker, and workforce practices will support new labor market systems to connect job seekers more effectively with employment opportunities.

APPROACH

While this strategy focuses on equitably re-aligning workforce and academic infrastructure with high-growth employment opportunities, particularly those in the green economy, it is important to note that ongoing workforce investments must continue to support occupational opportunities that exist in other sectors. The healthcare, construction and transportation/warehousing industries offer middle-income wages to workers with less formal education.

A concerted, collaborative effort among the various actors in this system – workers, employers, educators, trainers, staffers, etc. – is needed to make aligned changes at scale in a way that truly changes how these markets function. Deeper collaboration with the private sector, unions and community-based not-for-profits will also address the challenge of worker shortages. Having these organizations at the forefront is imperative; these partners can often be the hardest to engage, given day-to-day demands, but when a critical mass is assembled and on board with a change in direction, action can accelerate quickly. The input, partnership, and investment on the skill-demand side of the equation with these partners is crucial to ensure that workers are being prepared in the ways that will most quickly place them in better-paying, more aligned job opportunities – and that BIPOC employees are able to stay and thrive once employed.

Portland's human capital is overall one of its strongest assets. Workforce programming that focuses on the production of local talent into future-ready and green jobs will more effectively address racial and ethnic disparities.