Office of Comprehensive Planning

October
2026

NORTH

DISTRICT PROFILE



North

District Profile

ACS 5-Year Estimates (2024)

Compiled August 2026

NORTH DISTRICT AT A GLANCE

Total Population	Median Age	Median Income	Poverty Rate
28,180	37	$41,169	22%

District Boundaries



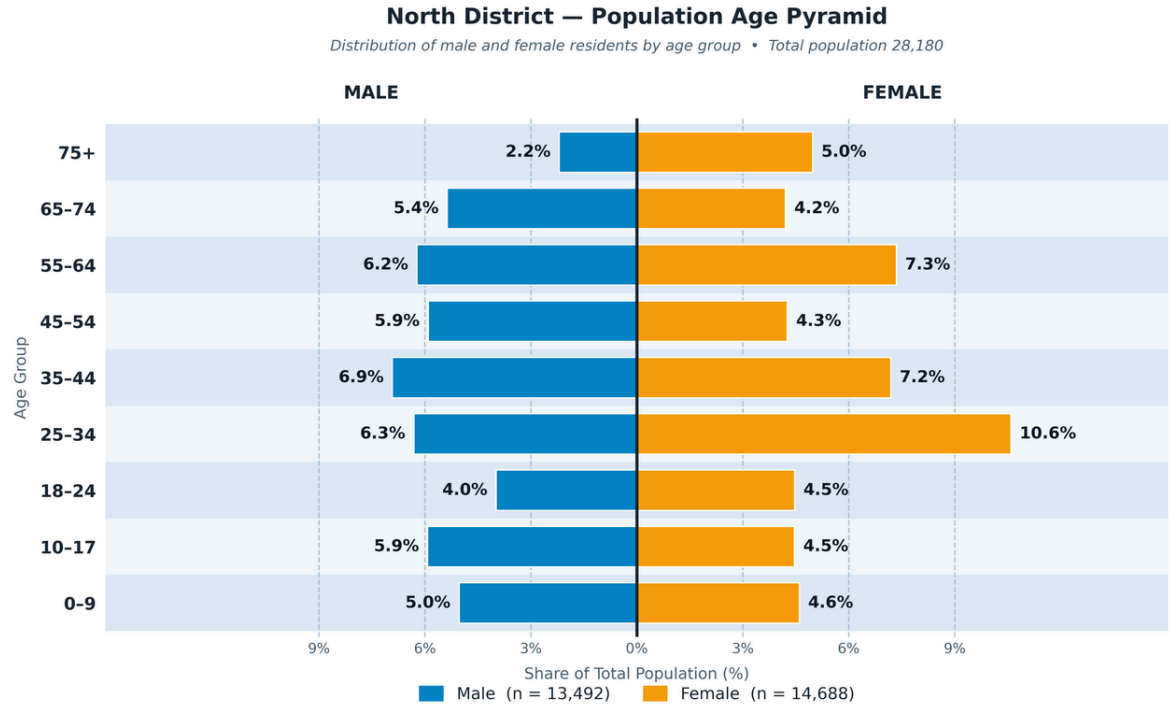
The North Planning District is bound by the Wolf River to the North, Jackson Avenue to the Southeast, and the Mississippi River to the West.

Population & Age Breakdown

Population and age data provide a snapshot of who lives in the North District, capturing both the overall size of the community and how residents are distributed across different stages of life. North is a district of small households, mostly built around individuals or couples rather than larger families, giving it a residential character closer to the urban core than districts at the city's edges. Its population has thinned significantly over the past fifteen years, leaving the district smaller than it was in 2009.

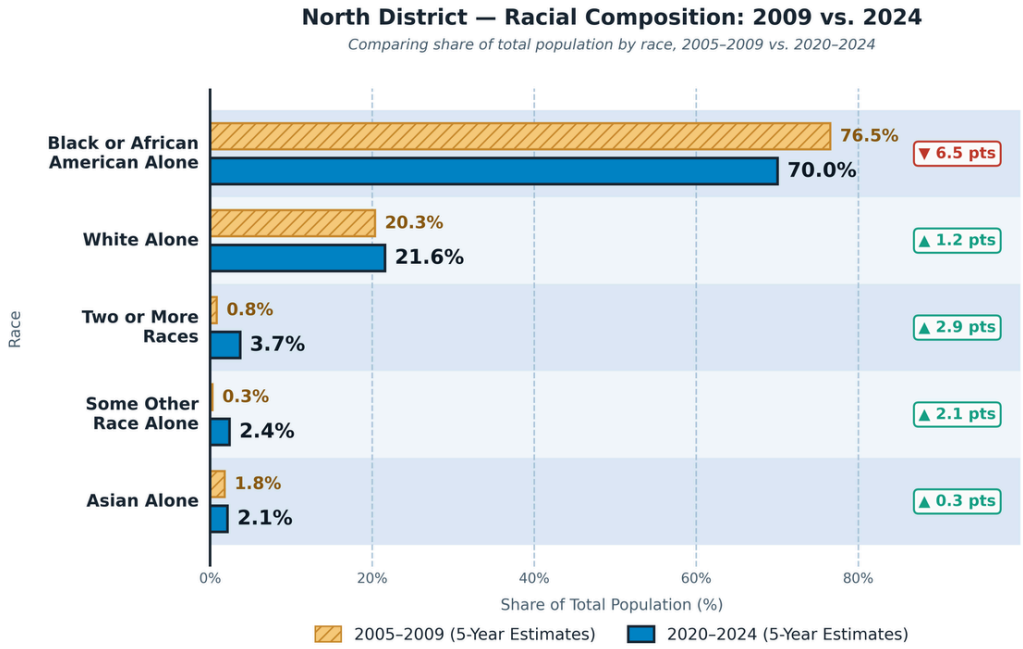
Total Population Change Since 2009	**-18.4%**
Total Households	**14,407**
Average Household Size	**1.95**

Distribution By Age Group, Sex, & Racial Composition



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, ACS 2020-2024 (5-Year Estimates) Compiled by the Office of Comprehsnive Planning

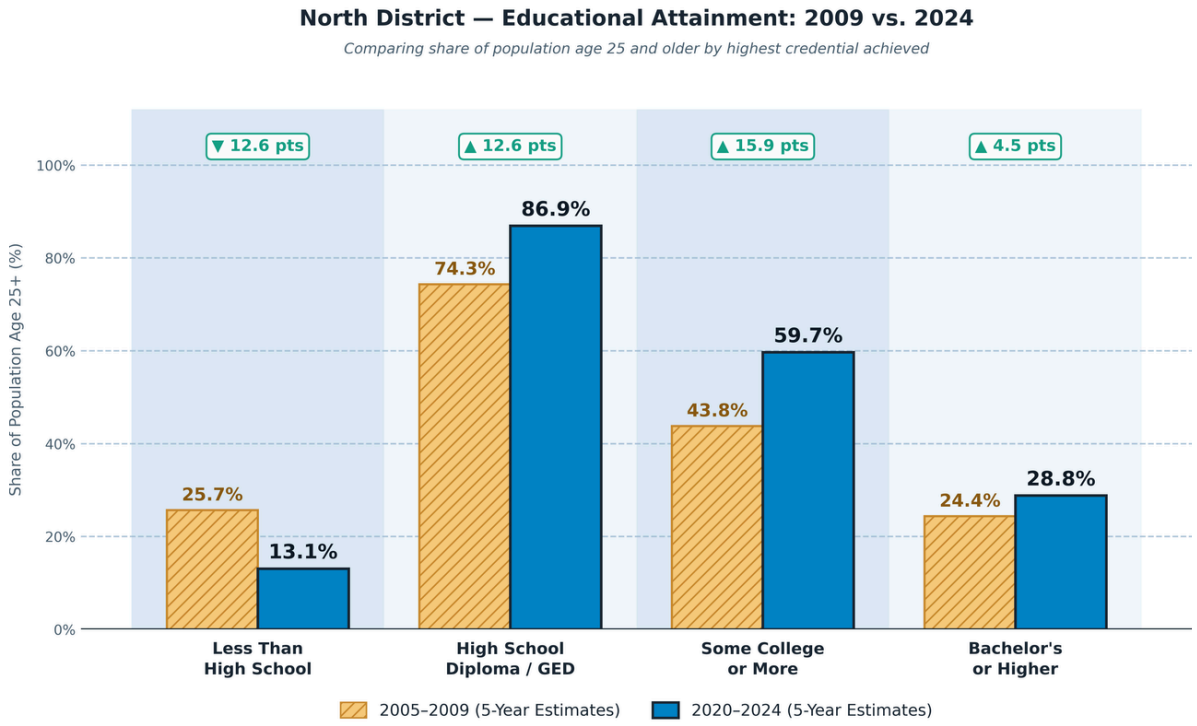
Population pyramids show how a community is distributed across age groups and by sex, making generational patterns easier to see. North Memphis's age structure is strikingly uniform across age groups. The single largest share belongs to the 25-34 group, followed closely by the 35-44 group. Both groups sit upon a slightly more narrow base of children and young adults.



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, ACS 2020-2024 (5-Year Estimates), A03001, Compiled by the Office of Comprehensive Planning

Racial data offers a window into who makes up our communities and helps identify disparities across Memphis. The North District is one of Memphis's historically Black communities, and it remains predominantly so, with Black or African American residents making up about seven in ten residents. Its composition has broadened modestly over the past fifteen years by roughly seven points as White, multiracial, and other-race residents each grew by smaller individual amounts. The change has been gradual and leaves the district's overall makeup largely the same as it was in 2009.

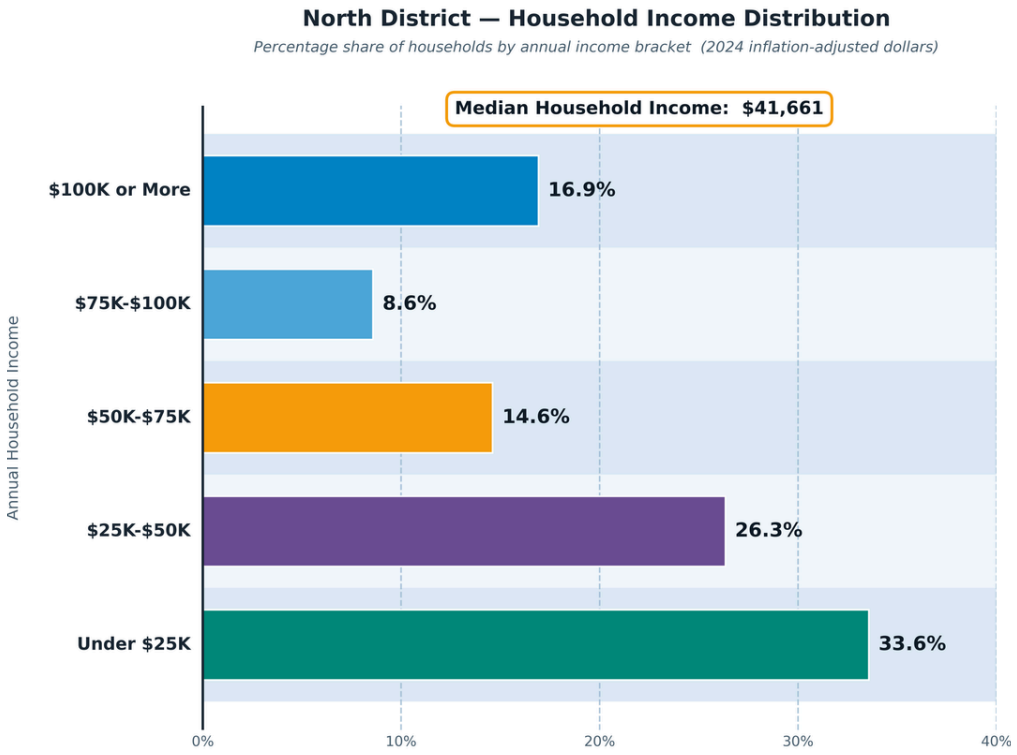
Educational Attainment



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, ACS 2020-2024 (5-Year Estimates), A12001, Compiled by the Office of Comprehensive Planning

Educational attainment is a key indicator of long-term economic mobility, as it shapes a community's workforce competitiveness, influences the local tax base, and plays a central role in breaking generational cycles of poverty. In the North District, educational attainment has risen at every level over the past fifteen years, and the sharpest movement has come at the bottom of the scale, where the share of adults without a high school diploma was nearly halved. Gains in college exposure followed a similar path, with residents who have completed some college or more up 16%, and those with a bachelor's degree or higher up by 4.5%.

Income Distribution



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, ACS 2020-2024 (5-Year Estimates), A14001, Compiled by the Office of Comprehensive Planning

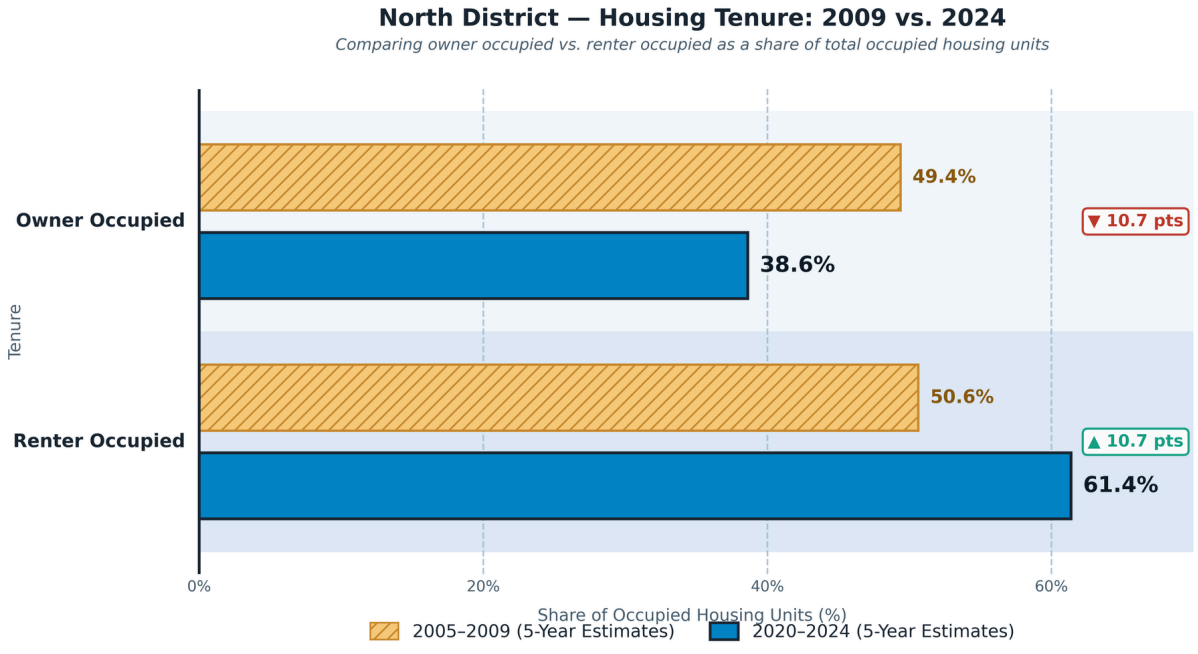
Income Distribution Continued

Household income distribution is one of the most direct indicators of a community's economic health, revealing not just average prosperity but how wealth is actually spread across residents at different financial levels. In North Memphis, the median household income rose about 13% since 2009, making it one of the few districts in the city to see purchasing power rise over the last fifteen years. However, these gains have not been experienced evenly. A third of households still earn under $25,000, while nearly another fifth now earn $100,000 or more. Overall, the district's income has grown at the top and held heavy at the bottom, painting a slightly more complicated picture than flat median gains would suggest.

Housing Characteristics

Total Housing Units	Median Rent	Total Occupancy Rate	Median Year Built
16,864	$1,154	85%	1955

Housing characteristics offer a broad snapshot of a district's residential landscape, encompassing the size, condition, cost, and availability of its housing stock. Since 2009, North Memphis has experienced a strong shift in tenure, moving from a once even split to a clear renter majority community. Interestingly, this shift has come when rents have only risen modestly by about 6.5%. This has left median rent costs in North Memphis to sit around $1,154, just below city-wide averages.

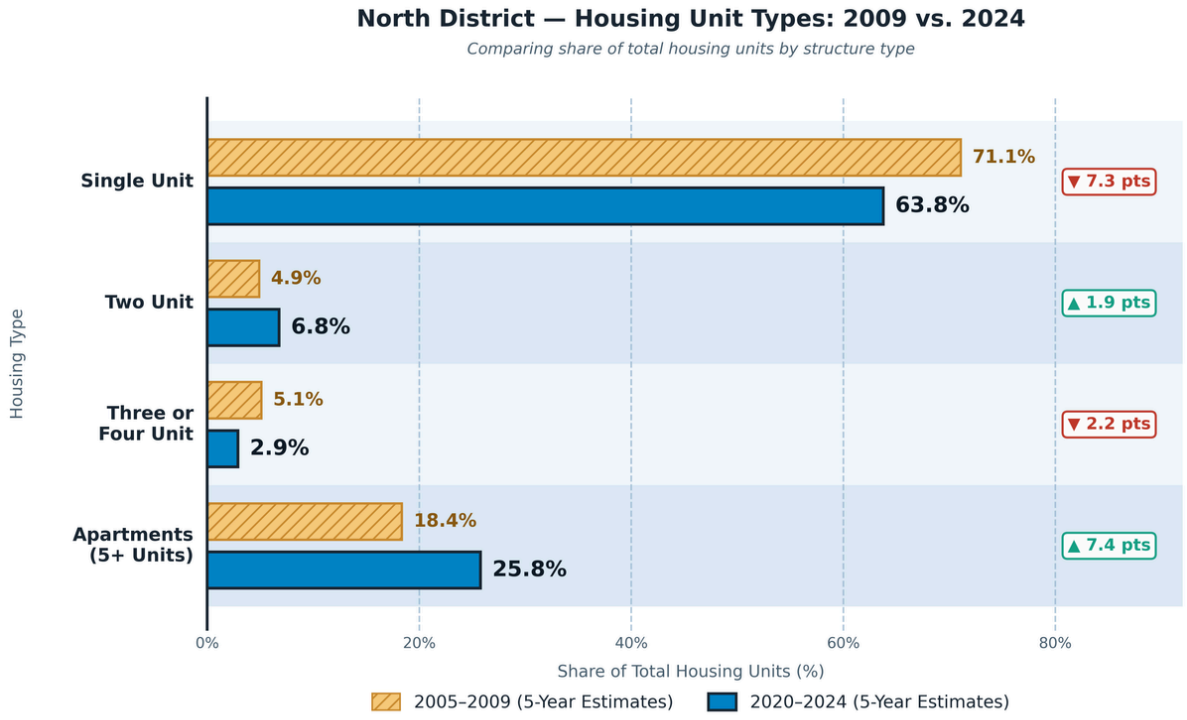


Source: U.S. Census Bureau, ACS 2020-2024 (5-Year Estimates), A10060, Compiled by the Office of Comprehensive Planning

Housing Characteristics Continued

Percentage of Off-Market Vacancies	Homeowners with a Mortgage or Similar Debt	Cost-Burdened Renters (>30% of Income)	Cost-Burdened Homeowners (>30% of Income)
63%	44%	55%	27%

Housing cost burden and vacancy data offer a deeper look into the financial pressures residents face and the availability of housing within the market. In North Memphis, housing costs weigh far more heavily on renters than owners. More than half of renters spend over 30% of their income on housing, and about a third pay at least half. Among homeowners, the rate is 26.7%. Since most of the district rents, this burden touches the majority of households. Additionally, 63% of vacant units sit off-market, meaning they're neither for rent nor sale, significantly limiting housing options for residents.



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, ACS 2020-2024 (5-Year Estimates), A10032, Compiled by the Office of Comprehensive Planning

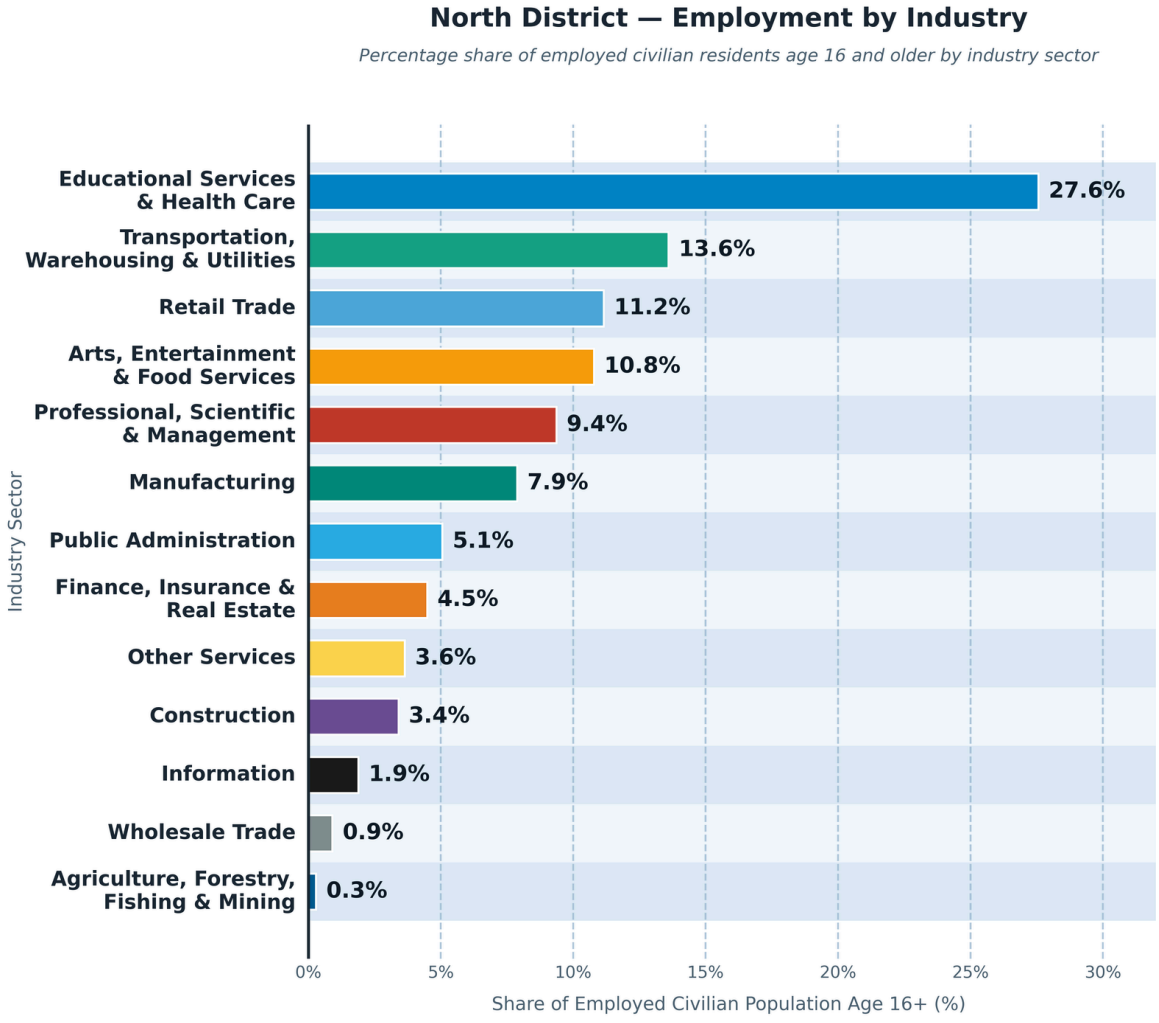
Housing unit type data describes the physical composition of a district's residential stock, offering insight into the character and variety of housing available to residents. North's housing remains predominantly single-family, though its stock has diversified modestly over the past fifteen years, with apartments rising from about a fifth of units to roughly a quarter as single-family homes edged down. Despite some modest change, this growth is likely not the main driver of the district's move toward renting. The shift in tenure has been likely shaped more by economic conditions than by what has been built, as households facing tighter finances have moved into renting whether the homes around them changed or not. The modest growth in apartments has added some variety to North's housing base, but the larger story remains one of residents renting the homes that were already there, driven by economic pressure rather than by a genuine transformation of the stock.

Poverty Rates

Total District Poverty Rate	Seniors Living in Poverty	Children Living in Poverty
21% (-14.4%)	24.8% (-3.2%)	39% (-20.9%)

North Memphis's poverty declined substantially across the board, with a particularly notable drop among children — from nearly 60% to under 39%. Family poverty also fell sharply, cut from over a third to about a fifth. Senior poverty eased more modestly by 3.2%. While poverty has worsened in most districts across Memphis, North Memphis has made tremendous strides.

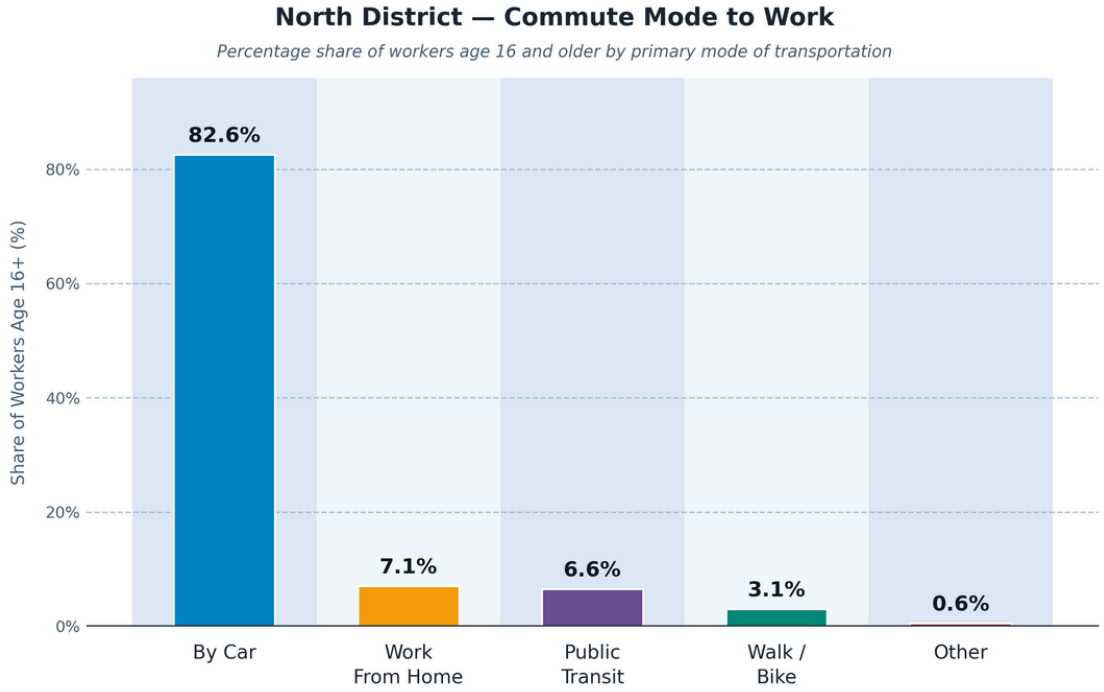
Employment by Industry



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, ACS 2020-2024 (5-Year Estimates), A17004, Compiled by the Office of Comprehensive Planning

In the North District, Educational Services and Health Care employs more than a quarter of all working residents at 27.6%, nearly double the share of the closest industry. Transportation and warehousing is next at 13.6%, followed by retail and food service. The concentration in health care and education reflects the hospitals, schools, and social-service institutions that anchor employment in the area. Below those, work is spread across manufacturing, professional services, and the trades in smaller, fairly even shares. This heavy reliance on a single sector ties the district's fortunes closely to the health of those institutions.

Commute Data



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, ACS 2020-2024 (5-Year Estimates), A09005, Compiled by the Office of Comprehensive Planning

Commute mode data captures how residents travel to and from work, serving as a key indicator of transportation infrastructure demand, transit accessibility, and the degree to which a district's land use patterns support alternatives to personal vehicle travel. In North Memphis, 82.6% of workers age 16 and older commute by car, an auto-oriented pattern seen across most of the city. Public transit carries a larger share here than in most districts, even at a small rate of 6.6%. Still, transit and other alternatives together move only a small minority of workers, leaving a car the effective requirement for reaching most jobs. For a district where many households are stretched by housing costs, the fixed expense of owning and maintaining a vehicle adds a further claim on already tight budgets, and for those without reliable access to a car, the limits of the transit network narrow the range of work within reach.

District Summary

North Memphis is a storied district of roughly 28,000 residents, defined by its cultural legacy and resiliency. Despite losing nearly 18% of its population since 2009, North Memphis has made strides seldom seen across the City. While most districts have lost buying power in recent years, North Memphis households have seen average incomes rise by roughly 13%. These gains likely laid the groundwork for the massive improvements in poverty across the board, with youth poverty alone dropping by over 20%. Educational attainment rates also followed a similar story, with substantial improvements across every major category. Of course, some economic pressures still exist, most notably in housing where a majority of renters are considered cost burdened. Rising costs have also likely contributed to a shift in tenure, favoring renting instead of owning. Commute data also reveals the degree to which the district remains car dependent, placing an additional layer of economic stress on working residents. Regardless, North Memphis has made significant strides over the last 15 years and is paving the way for a bright future.