

DEC 2023

New Census Data Show St. Petersburg's Black Population Shrinking as African Americans Leave in Record Numbers



About this Report

Urban Market Analytics (UMA) shared a version of this report with local equity leaders in May 2023 to alert them to the finding that St. Petersburg appeared to be shedding Black residents at a rapid pace.

The newest Census data, released December 7, 2023, not only confirmed the trend, but showed it gaining speed.

This updated report punctuates the important but little-known facts, that:

- 1.The trend is unique to St. Pete (the rest of Pinellas County and Florida have seen nearly uninterrupted Black population growth over the past decade);
- 2.African Americans are the only racial or ethnic group in St. Pete that is shrinking; and
- 3.Outmigration appears to be driving the trend.

Power Broker Magazine is sponsoring an opinion survey to explore the reasons African Americans are leaving St. Pete. A January 2024 report will feature survey results and insights on the causes and consequences of the shift.

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All graphs and tables in this report use Decennial Census data or American Community Survey (ACS) 5-year estimates, unless otherwise noted. See page 22 for the Black population difference shown by the ACS 5-year and 1-year data sets; and page 25 for data sources used in this analysis.

What is the "Black" Population?

Throughout this report, the terms "Black" and "Black population" refer to all people who self-identify as Black or African American to the U.S. Census, including single-race and multi-racial African Americans (unless otherwise indicated).

The Census calls this group **"Black or African American alone or in combination with one or more races."** It is different from but encompasses the **"Black or African American alone"** group often featured in local Census-based reporting.

The Census shows that St. Petersburg had 58,075 Black residents in 2022, including 52,156 Black alone residents.

More and more, Black Americans are choosing to identify their mixed-racial heritage. This is true across the U.S., as well as in St. Pete and Pinellas County.

In 2000, only 3% of St. Pete's Black residents were Black in combination

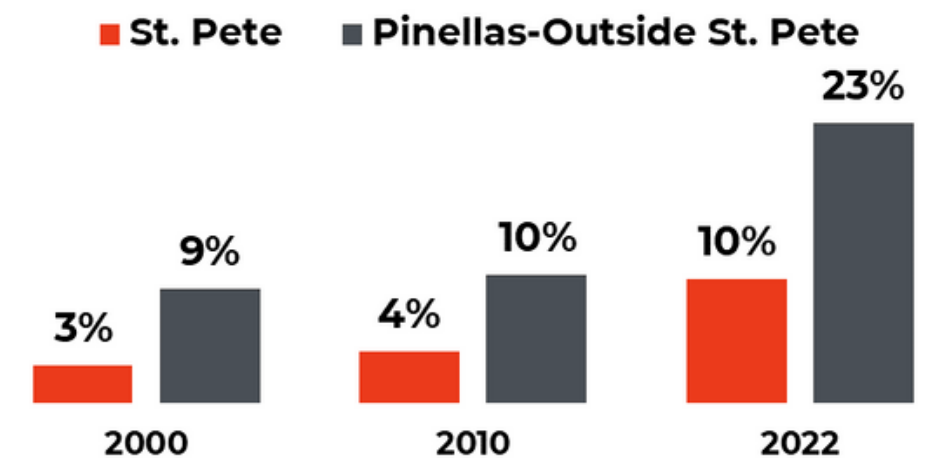
with one or more other races. The figure was 10% in 2022. The shift is even larger in other parts of Pinellas, where 23% or nearly one in four Black residents has mixed-racial heritage.

See page 24 for more on the rapid growth of Pinellas County's mixed-race Black population.

IMPORTANT DATA NOTE

A few graphs and tables in this report use data for the Black alone group. Where this is the case, it is noted above or below the graph or table.

Black Residents Who Identify as Multi-Racial



6 Big Takeaways from the New Data

St. Petersburg's Black population is shrinking at a rapid pace, according to newly released Census data. Here are six key findings about the trend.

1. St. Pete lost 10% of its Black residents over the past four years

The city's Black population shrank for a fourth consecutive year in 2022. From 2018 to 2022, St. Pete lost 10% of its Black residents.

2. An opposite trend is happening across the rest of Pinellas & Florida

While St. Pete lost Black residents over the past four years, the Black population grew by 16% across the rest of Pinellas County and by 7% across Florida.

3. An opposite trend is happening for other groups in St. Pete

African Americans are the only racial & ethnic group in St. Pete with a net population loss over the past decade.

4. Outmigration is driving the losses

More Black residents are moving out of St. Pete than moving in. Data indicate

that younger, college-educated, and self-employed African Americans are leaving in the largest numbers. The city had negative net migration of African Americans in 10 of the last 11 years of Census data (2012-2022). Exodus rates reached record-highs in the past three years (2020-2022).

5. St. Pete no longer claims a majority of Pinellas County's Black residents

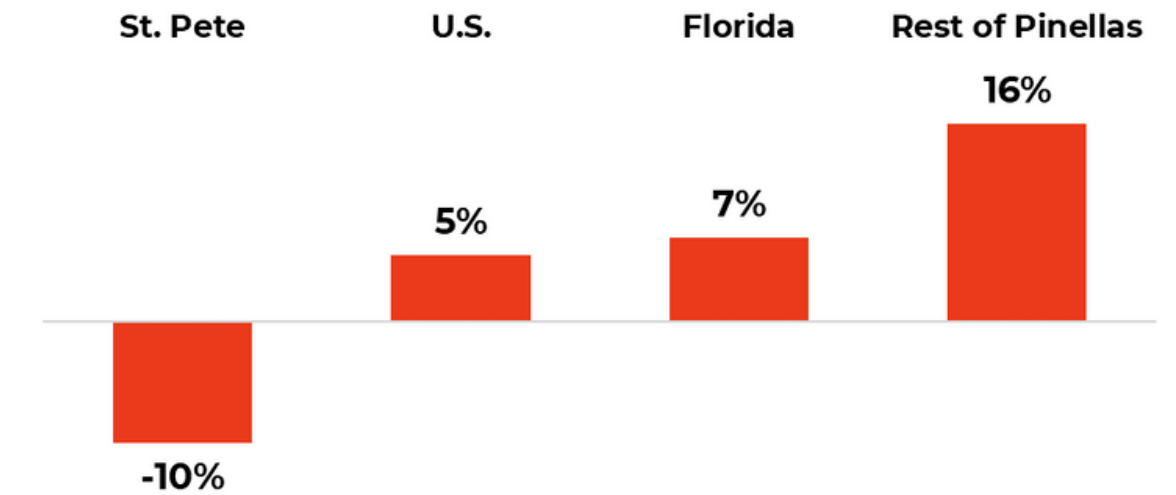
For 100 years, St. Pete was home to a two-thirds majority of the county's Black residents. Today, the ratio is barely 50%.

6. The shift has major implications

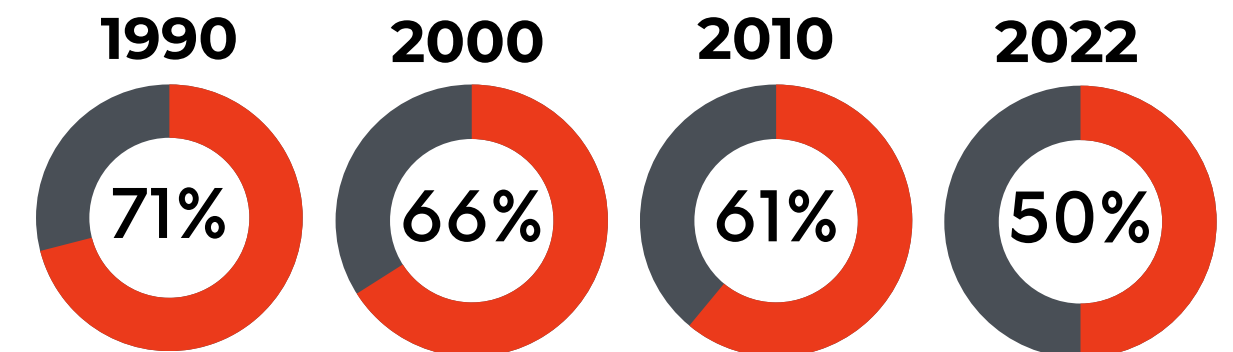
St. Pete's Black population losses have social, economic, political, cultural, and other consequences for the community and city. For example, the loss of Black workers and business owners could limit the equity outcomes of the Historic Gas Plant redevelopment project.

See page 20 for next steps toward identifying the causes and implications of the trend.

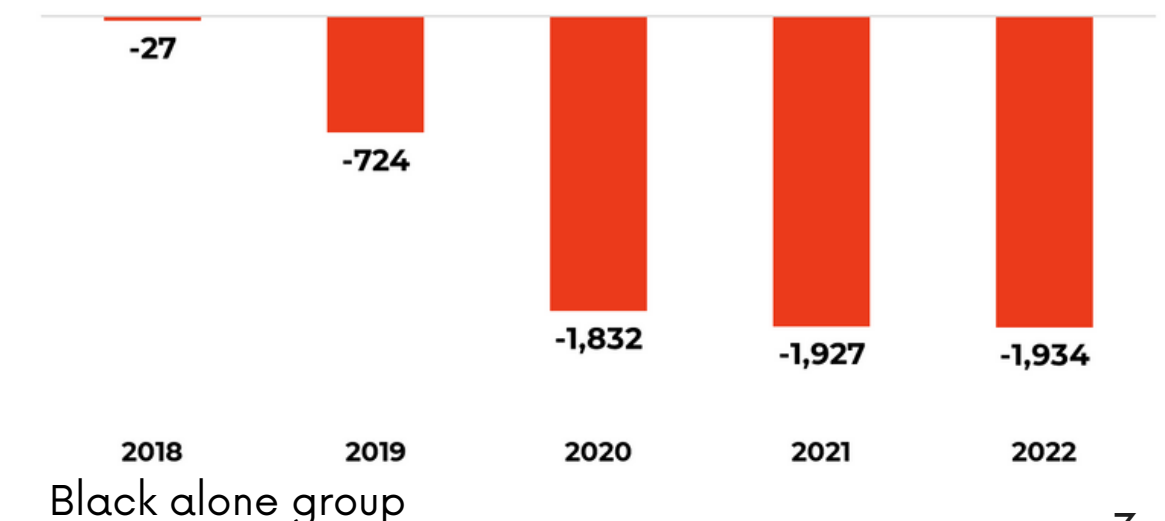
Black Population Growth 2018 to 2022



St. Pete's Share of County's Black Population



Net Migration of Black Residents of St. Pete

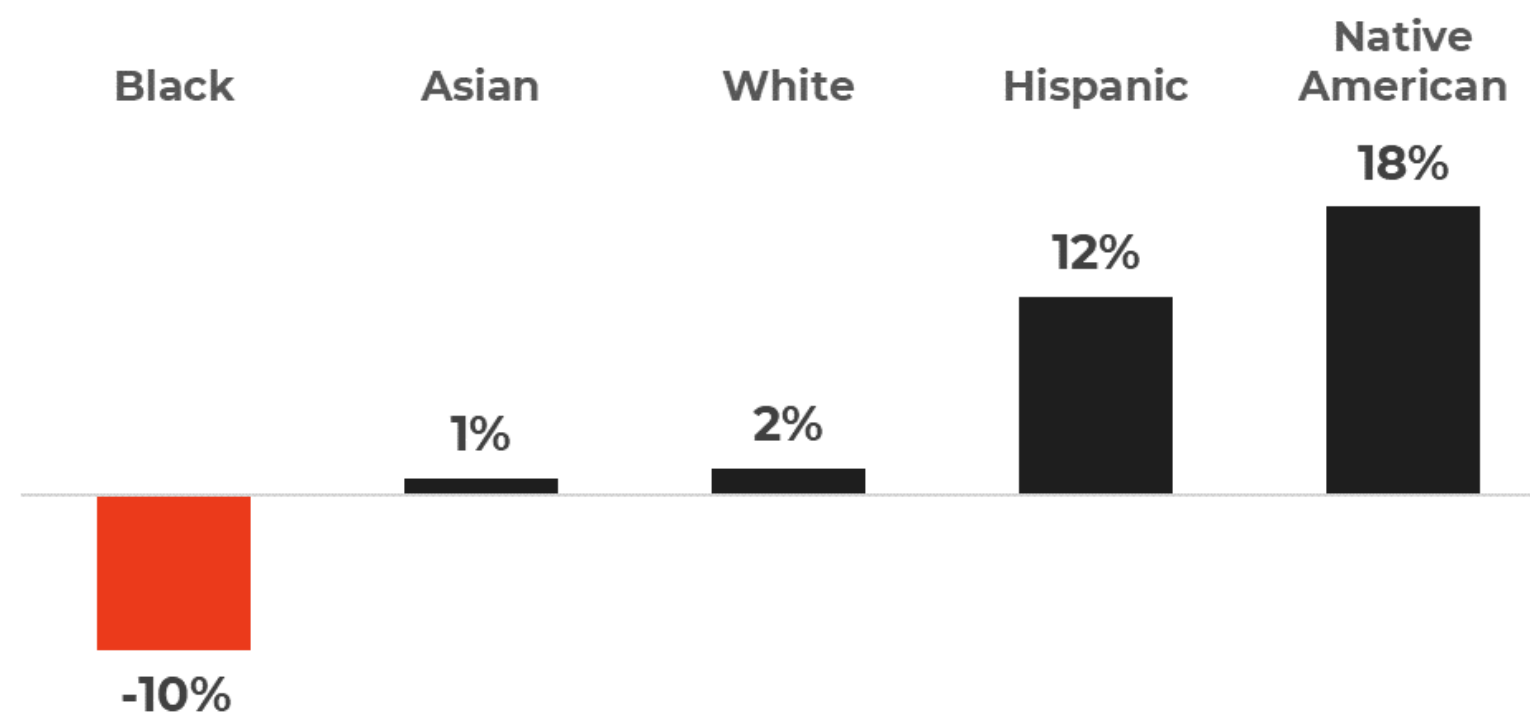


African Americans Are the **Only Group** with Population Losses

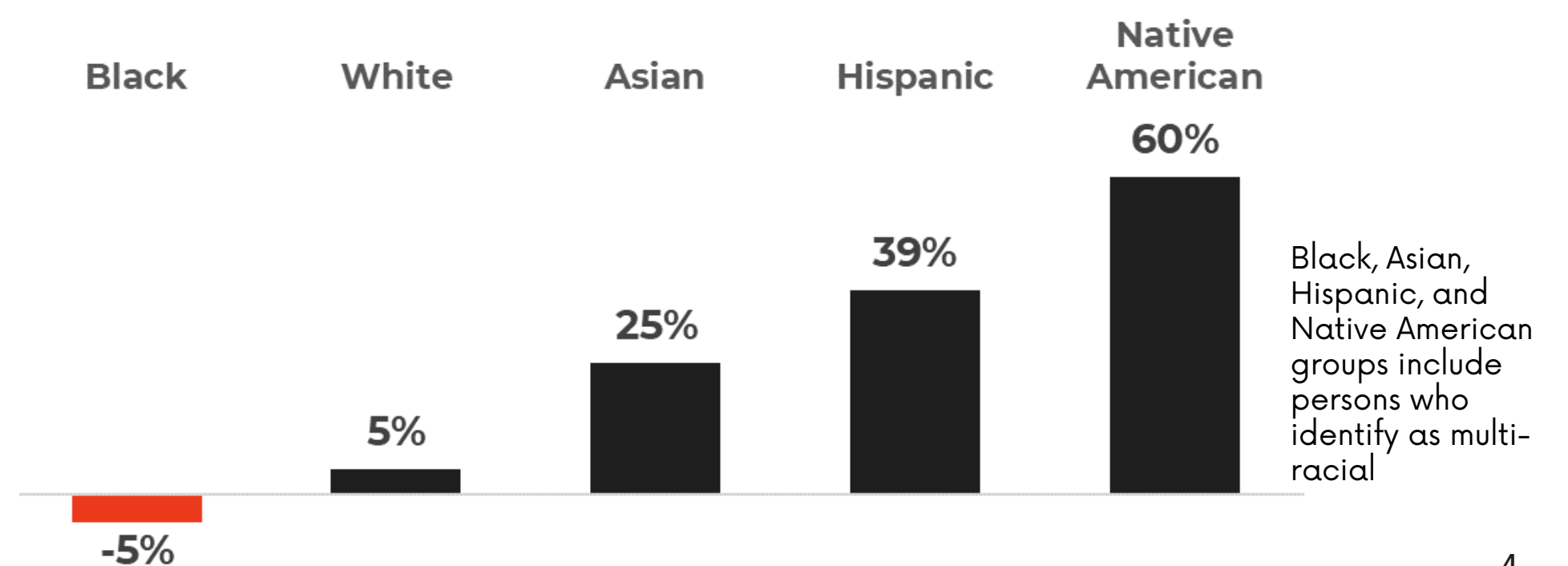
These graphs show population changes in St. Petersburg over the past four years (left) and the past 10 years (right). African Americans were the only racial & ethnic group with population losses over both timeframes.



Population Growth in St. Pete 2018 to 2022



Population Growth in St. Pete 2012 to 2022



By Number, **Black Americans** in Pinellas County & St. Pete

Pinellas County has over 115,000 Black residents. St. Petersburg has roughly 58,000 Black residents.

Black Alone

	Pinellas	St. Pete
2000	82,384	55,260
2010	93,342	58,403
2011	93,459	58,978
2012	94,304	58,600
2013	94,925	60,203
2014	95,649	59,479
2015	96,133	59,700
2016	96,224	59,554
2017	97,162	58,494
2018	98,432	58,646
2019	98,942	57,944
2020	99,798	56,130
2021	98,447	54,181
2022	96,357	52,156

Black Alone or in Combination

	Pinellas	St. Pete
2000	86,915	56,999
2010	99,996	60,980
2011	100,983	61,792
2012	102,661	61,388
2013	104,144	63,235
2014	105,903	63,095
2015	107,743	63,562
2016	108,959	63,495
2017	111,737	63,550
2018	113,875	64,253
2019	115,755	63,451
2020	117,804	61,813
2021	115,363	59,692
2022	115,451	58,075





Part 1: COUNTY PERSPECTIVE

As St. Pete Loses Black Residents, the Rest of Pinellas Sees Growth

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Outside of St. Pete, Pinellas Booms with Black Growth

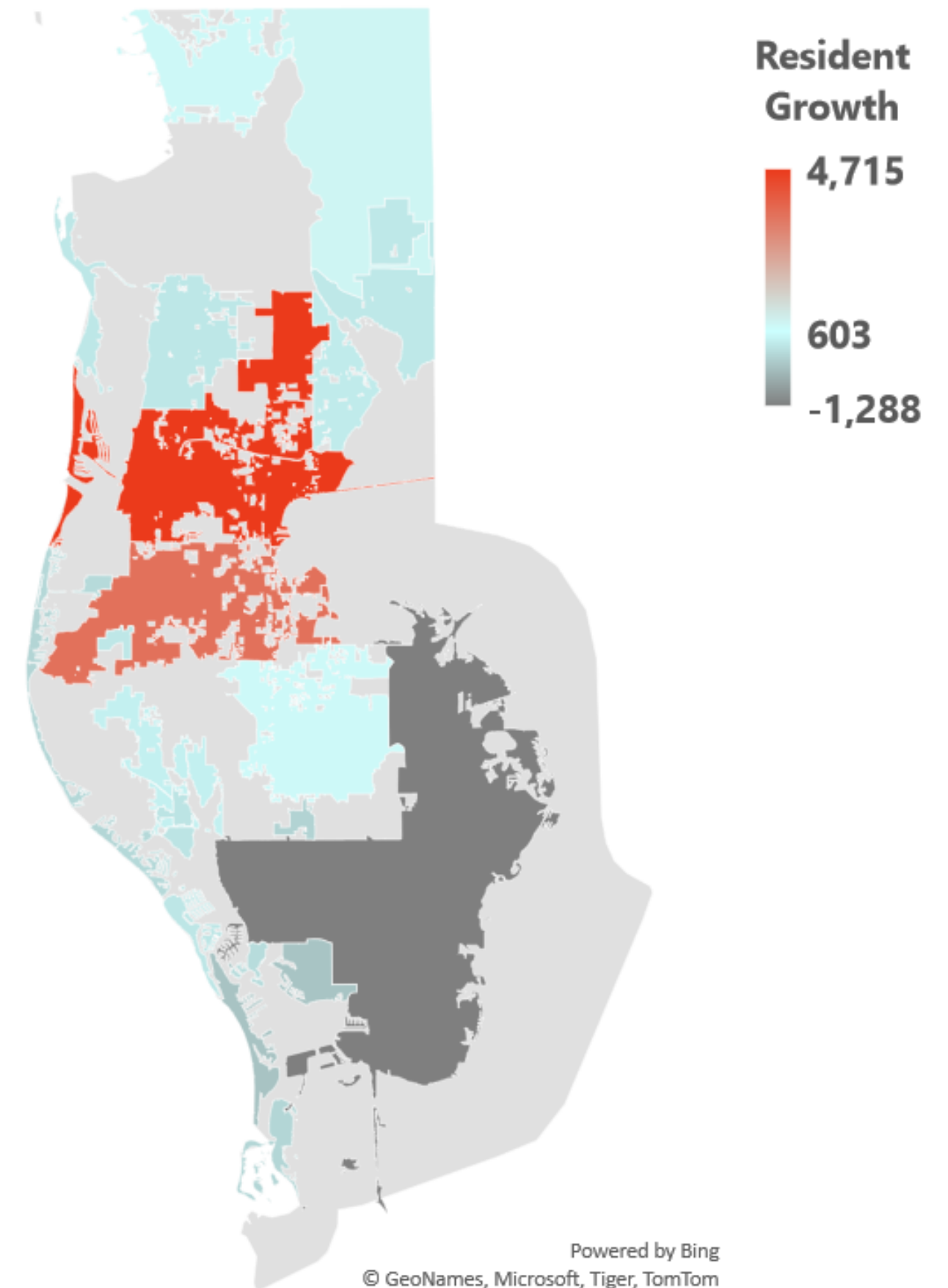
From 2010 to 2021, the Black population shrank by 2% in St. Pete but grew by 43% across the rest of Pinellas, which was 1.9 times faster than statewide Black population growth of 23%.

At least 15 cities and CDPs (Census Designated Places) in Pinellas had double-digit Black population growth. Clearwater, Largo, and East Lake had the largest growth in Black residents (by number).

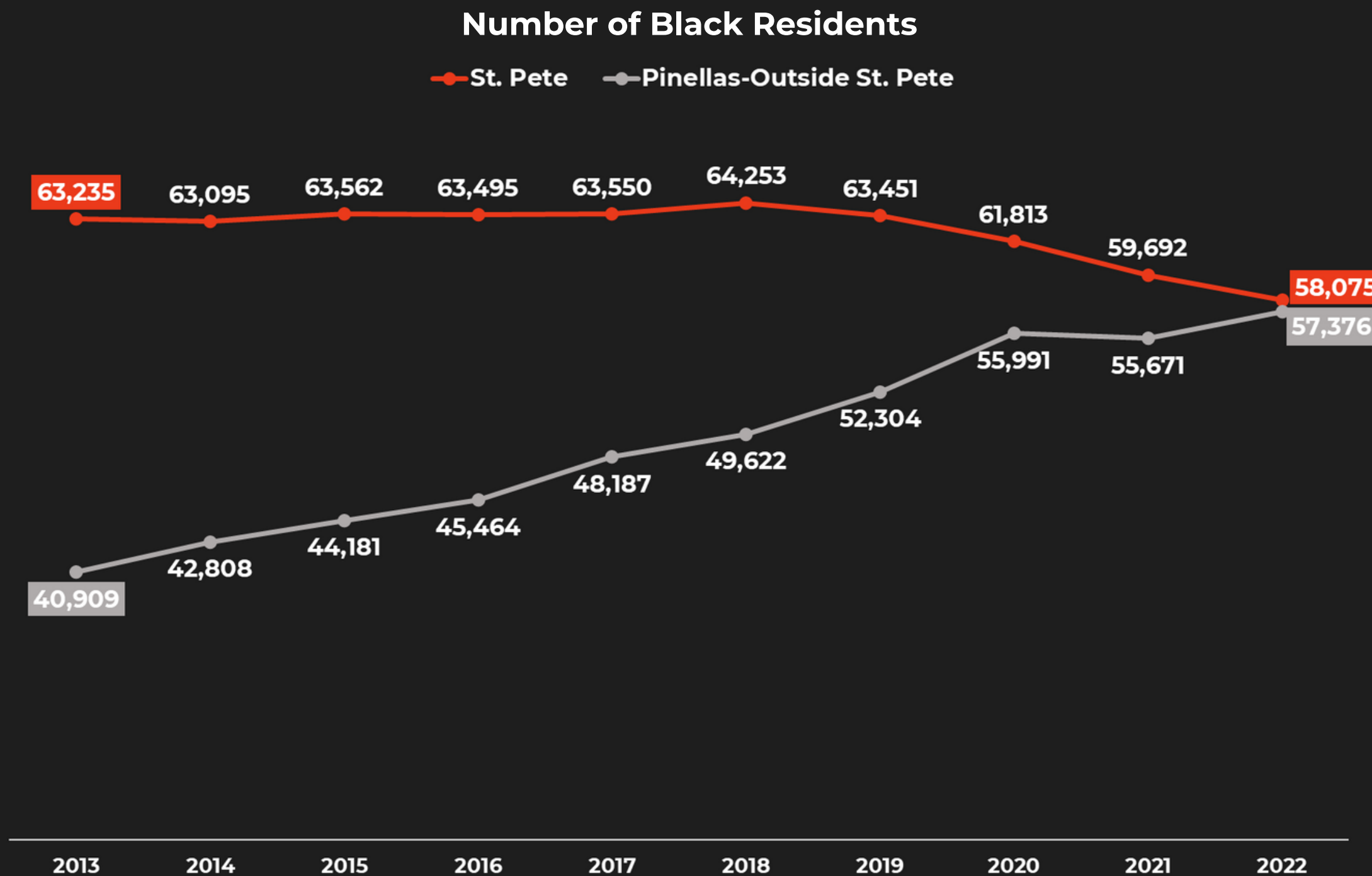
This heat map illustrates numeric growth in Black residents from 2010 to 2021. St. Pete had a net loss of about 1,300 African American residents, while Clearwater's Black population grew by 4,715; Largo's grew by 3,566; and East Lake gained about 820 Black residents.

Some places that had tiny Black populations in 2010 saw triple-digit growth. As examples, data showed only five Black residents in Treasure Island in 2010 and 233 in 2021. Bay Pines grew from 10 to 221 Black residents, and South Pasadena grew from 50 to 139 Black residents.

**Black Population Growth in Pinellas County
2010 to 2021**



A Contrast: Slow Growth & Decline in St. Pete vs Rapid Rise Elsewhere in Pinellas



This graph charts Black population changes in St. Pete, the county's largest city (red line) compared to other parts of Pinellas County (gray line), from 2013 to 2022.

Notice the steady climb in African Americans living outside of St. Pete.

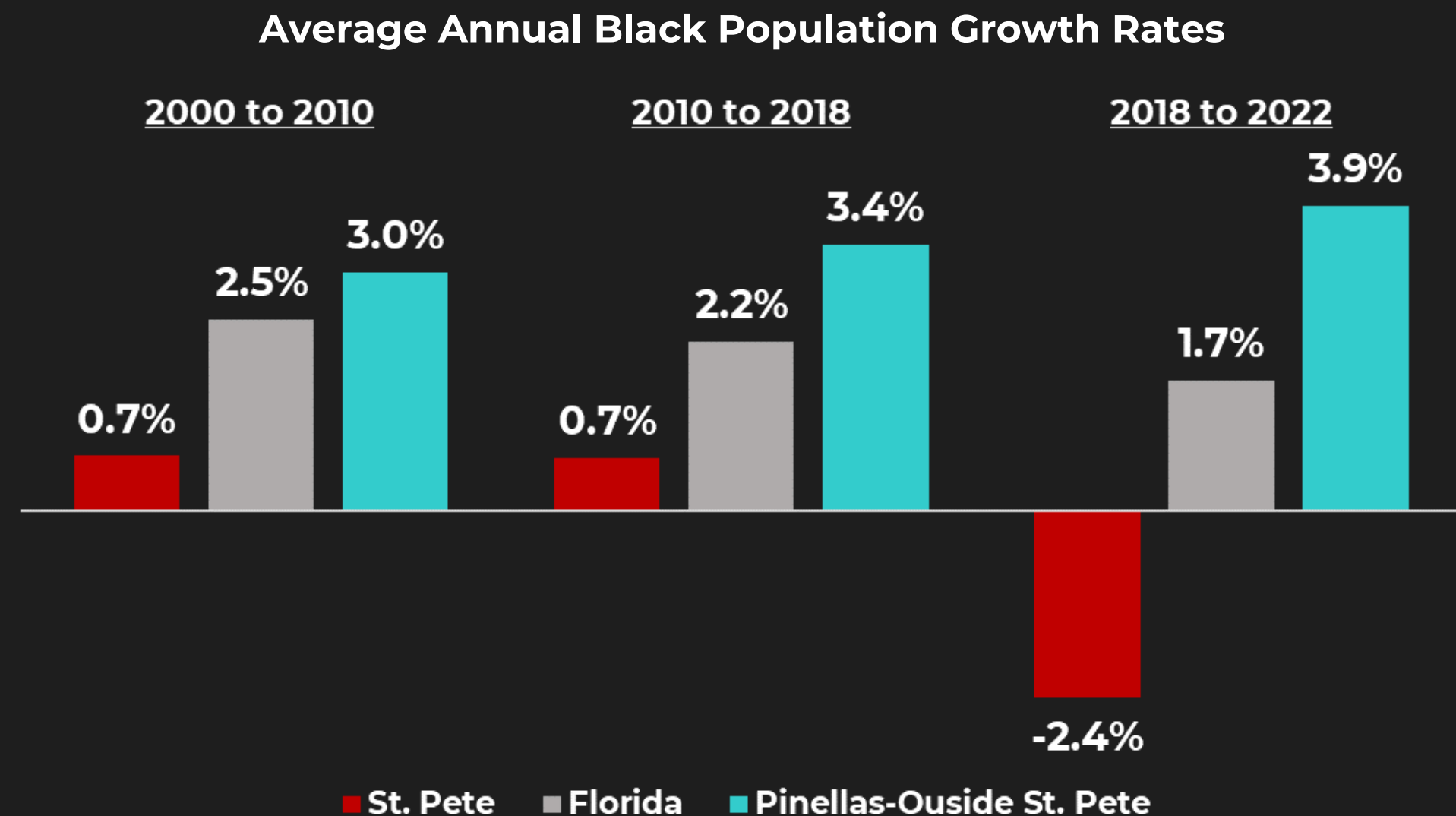
As a result, in 2022, for the first time since Pinellas County was incorporated in 1912, St. Pete does not house a 51% majority of its Black residents.

From Slow Growth for 18 Years to Rapid Decline Since 2018

Outside of St. Petersburg, the rest of Pinellas County experienced a gradual upward climb in average annual Black population growth. Meanwhile, the growth pattern was uneven in St. Pete.

From 2000 to 2018, St. Pete's average annual Black population growth lagged the rest of the county and state, but was still positive (0.7%).

But from 2018 to 2022, St. Pete's Black population shrank by an average 2.4% per year, while the rest of Pinellas saw nearly 4% annual growth.

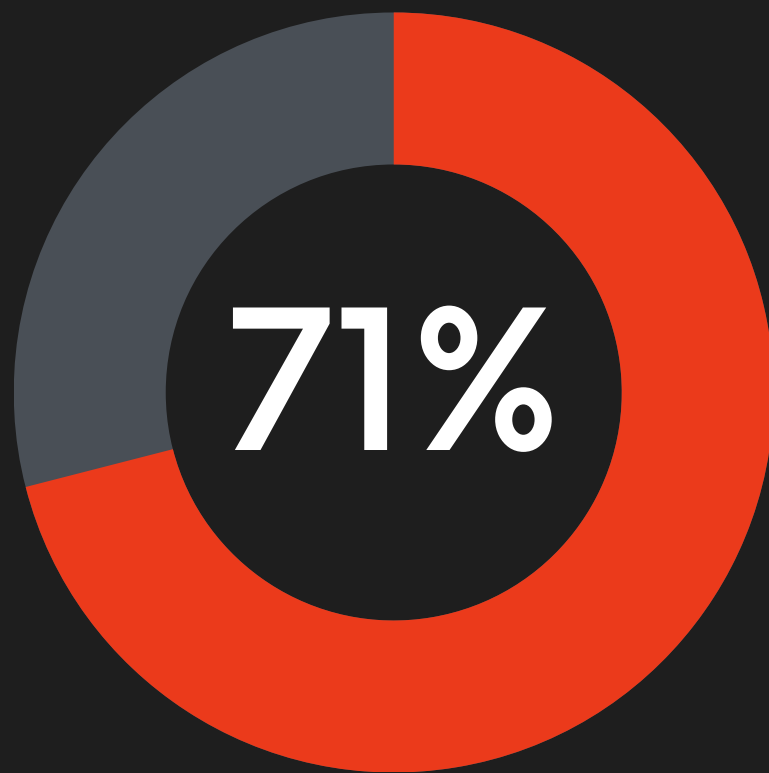


St. Pete No Longer Home to Two-Thirds Majority of Pinellas County's Black Population

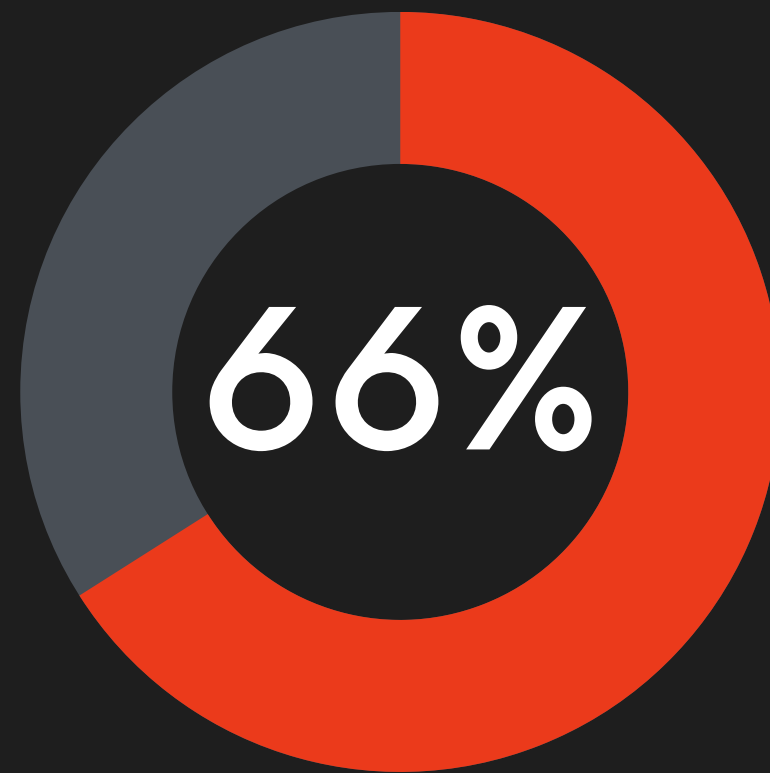
In 1990, St. Petersburg was home to seven out of every 10 African Americans in Pinellas County (71%). As of 2022, St. Pete claimed only half of the county's Black population (50%).

St. Pete's Share of Pinellas County's Black Population

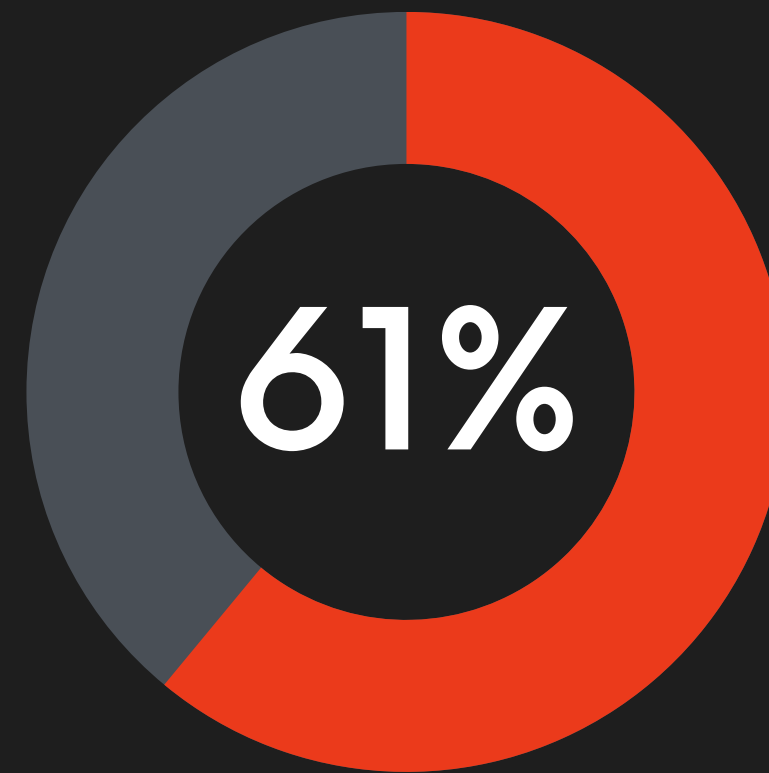
1990



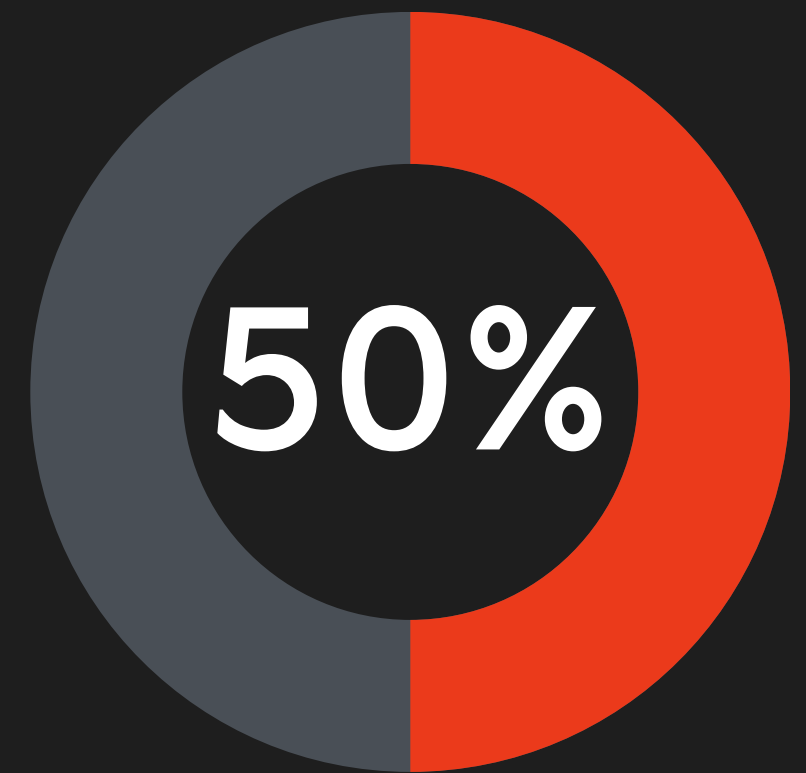
2000



2010



2022



Black Population Growth in Other Cities* in Pinellas

Since 2010, the cities of Clearwater and Largo along with the East Lake CDP and Tarpon Springs had the most Black population growth (by number of added residents).

From 2018 to 2021, Largo had the most Black population growth, followed by Clearwater, East Lake, and Oldsmar.

St. Pete had negative Black resident growth during both timeframes.

*Cities and CDPs (Census Designated Places)

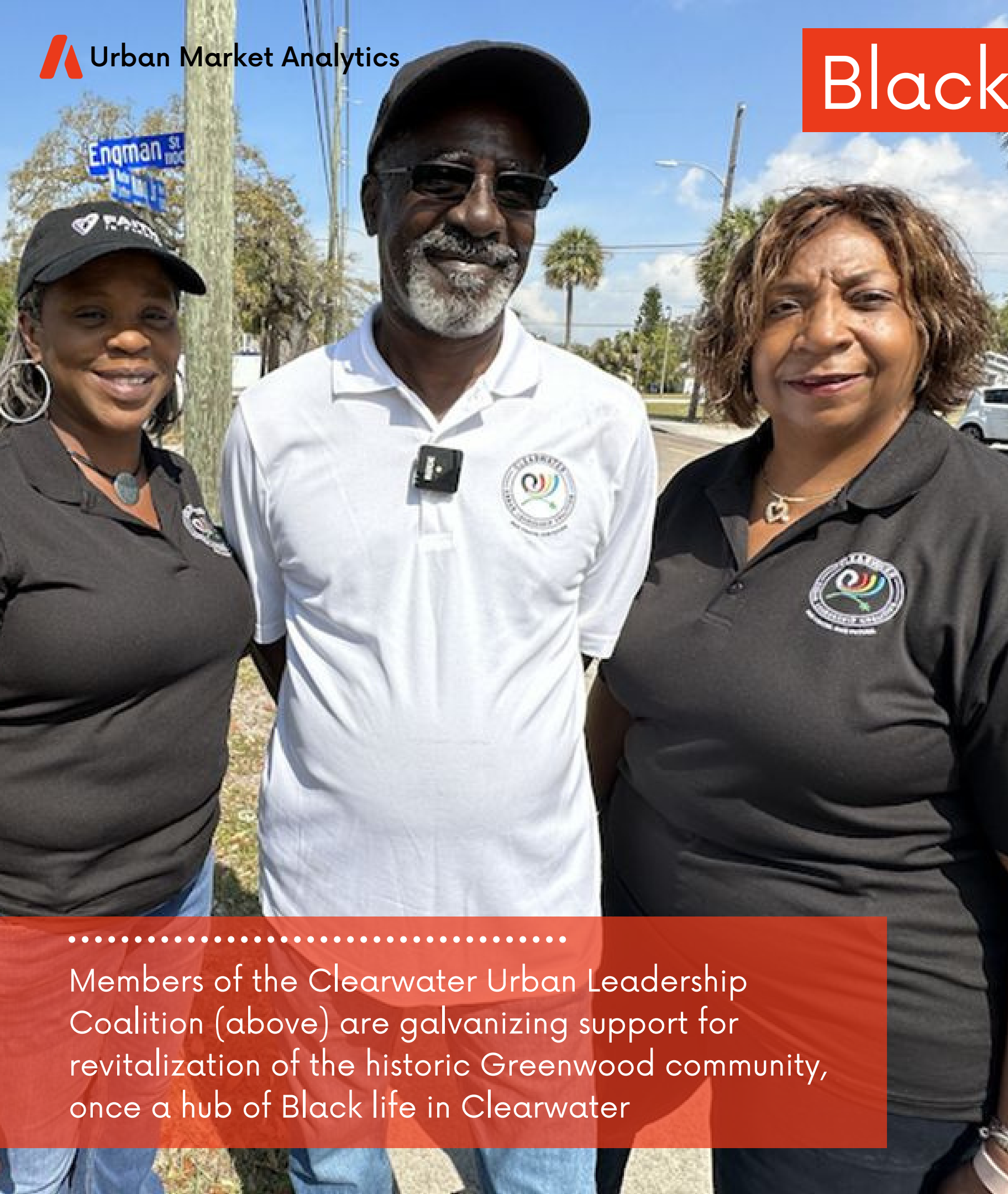
Black Population Change 2010 to 2021



Black Population Change 2018 to 2021



Black Population of Pinellas Cities



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Members of the Clearwater Urban Leadership Coalition (above) are galvanizing support for revitalization of the historic Greenwood community, once a hub of Black life in Clearwater

Growth 2010 to 2021

Cities & CDPs	2010	2021	No. Δ	% Δ	Ranked by 2021 Population
Pinellas County	99,996	115,363	15,367	15.4%	
St. Petersburg	60,980	59,692	-1,288	-2.1%	CDP= Census Designated Place
Clearwater	11,874	16,589	4,715	39.7%	
Largo	5,002	8,568	3,566	71.3%	
Pinellas Park	3,234	3,963	729	22.5%	
Tarpon Springs	1,496	2,247	751	50.2%	
Ridgecrest CDP	1,685	1,934	249	14.8%	
Oldsmar	1,087	1,345	258	23.7%	
Dunedin	1,021	1,264	243	23.8%	
East Lake CDP	359	1,175	816	227.3%	
Safety Harbor	805	1,114	309	38.4%	
Gulfport	1,352	1,085	-267	-19.7%	

Growth 2018 to 2021

Cities & CDPs	2018	2021	No. Δ	% Δ
Pinellas County	113,875	115,363	1,488	1.3%
St. Petersburg	64,253	59,692	-4,561	-7.1%
Clearwater	15,735	16,589	854	5.4%
Largo	5,632	8,568	2,936	52.1%
Pinellas Park	3,899	3,963	64	1.6%
Tarpon Springs	2,190	2,247	57	2.6%
Ridgecrest CDP	2,029	1,934	-95	-4.7%
Oldsmar	1,000	1,345	345	34.5%
Dunedin	1,836	1,264	-572	-31.2%
East Lake CDP	812	1,175	363	44.7%
Safety Harbor	989	1,114	125	12.6%
Gulfport	1,003	1,085	82	8.2%

Part 2: STATE PERSPECTIVE

St. Pete Also Lags the Rest of Florida in Black Population Growth

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St. Pete Lags Other Florida Cities* in Black Population Growth

These tables rank 30 Florida cities with the largest Black populations. The cities are ranked by 1) number of Black residents in 2021; 2) numeric growth in Black residents, from 2010 to 2021; and 3) their Black population growth rate, from 2010 to 2021.

While most of the cities had double-digit Black population growth, St. Pete ranks near the bottom of this line-up and is one of only four cities where the Black population shrank.

St. Pete ranks #28 for growth in number of Black residents (-1,288), and in the same #28 spot for growth rate (-2.1%).

Meanwhile, Florida's Black population grew by 23%, and across the U.S., the Black population grew by 16%.

*Including CDPs (Census Designated Places)

Black Residents		
Geography	2010	2021
U.S.	40,633,114	47,030,856
Florida	3,061,685	3,774,605
1 Jacksonville	256,425	309,285
2 Tampa	91,214	97,012
3 Orlando	68,270	78,750
4 Miami Gardens	82,423	77,534
5 Tallahassee	63,019	74,356
6 Miami	84,966	72,450
7 Miramar	52,943	67,716
8 Pine Hills CDP	46,315	64,300
9 Lauderhill	52,124	61,530
10 St. Petersburg	60,980	59,692
11 Fort Lauderdale	55,122	58,209
12 Pembroke Pines	32,757	43,865
13 Port St. Lucie	25,041	42,044
14 West Palm Beach	30,550	41,610
15 Sunrise	28,717	36,271
16 Pompano Beach	27,959	36,260
17 Coral Springs	19,951	35,493
18 North Miami	35,933	35,301
19 Gainesville	28,940	32,951
20 Hollywood	24,318	32,605
21 Lauderdale Lakes	26,656	31,024
22 Boynton Beach	20,875	28,322
23 Palm Bay	19,116	27,119
24 Lehigh Acres CDP	15,339	26,528
25 North Lauderdale	21,751	26,332
26 Riviera Beach	21,982	25,548
27 Golden Glades CDP	24,555	25,464
28 Daytona Beach	23,490	25,179
29 Deerfield Beach	17,752	24,688
30 Plantation	19,233	24,371

Growth in Number	
Geography	No. Δ
U.S.	6,397,742
Florida	712,920
1 Jacksonville	52,860
2 Pine Hills CDP	17,985
3 Port St. Lucie	17,003
4 Coral Springs	15,542
5 Miramar	14,773
6 Tallahassee	11,337
7 Lehigh Acres CDP	11,189
8 Pembroke Pines	11,108
9 West Palm Beach	11,060
10 Orlando	10,480
11 Lauderhill	9,406
12 Pompano Beach	8,301
13 Hollywood	8,287
14 Palm Bay	8,003
15 Sunrise	7,554
16 Boynton Beach	7,447
17 Deerfield Beach	6,936
18 Tampa	5,798
19 Plantation	5,138
20 North Lauderdale	4,581
21 Lauderdale Lakes	4,368
22 Gainesville	4,011
23 Riviera Beach	3,566
24 Fort Lauderdale	3,087
25 Daytona Beach	1,689
26 Golden Glades CDP	909
27 North Miami	-632
28 St. Petersburg	-1,288
29 Miami Gardens	-4,889
30 Miami	-12,516

Growth Rate	
Geography	% Δ
U.S.	16%
Florida	23%
1 Coral Springs	78%
2 Lehigh Acres CDP	73%
3 Port St. Lucie	68%
4 Palm Bay	42%
5 Deerfield Beach	39%
6 Pine Hills CDP	39%
7 West Palm Beach	36%
8 Boynton Beach	36%
9 Hollywood	34%
10 Pembroke Pines	34%
11 Pompano Beach	30%
12 Miramar	28%
13 Plantation	27%
14 Sunrise	26%
15 North Lauderdale	21%
16 Jacksonville	21%
17 Lauderhill	18%
18 Tallahassee	18%
19 Lauderdale Lakes	16%
20 Riviera Beach	16%
21 Orlando	15%
22 Gainesville	14%
23 Daytona Beach	7%
24 Tampa	6%
25 Fort Lauderdale	6%
26 Golden Glades CDP	4%
27 North Miami	-1.8%
28 St. Petersburg	-2.1%
29 Miami Gardens	-5.9%
30 Miami	-15%

St. Pete Has Slipped to 10th Place Among Florida Cities with the Largest Black Populations

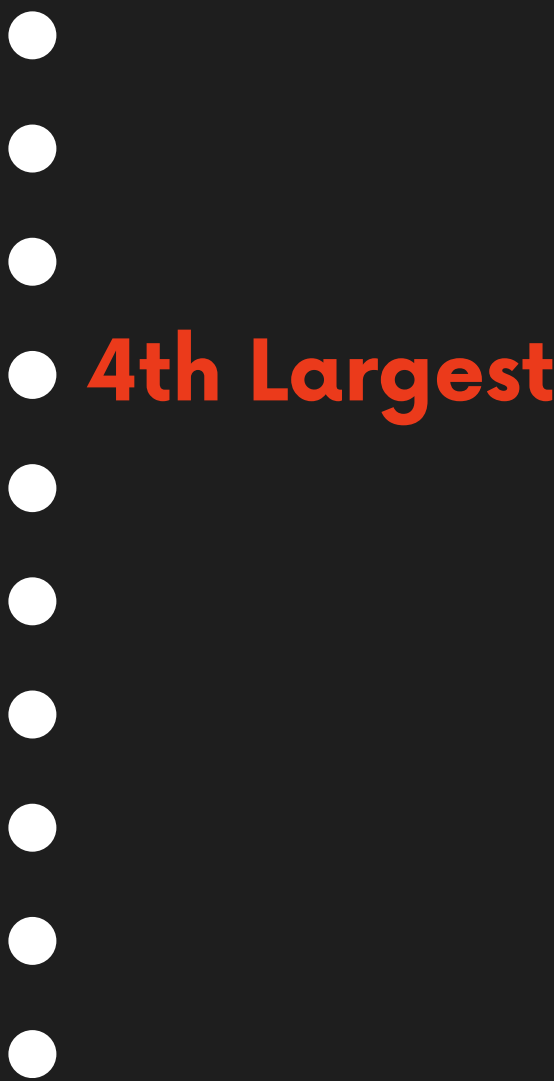
St. Pete’s Rank Among Florida Cities for Black Population Size

For many years, St. Petersburg had one of Florida's largest African American populations.

The Decennial Censuses of 1980, 1990, and 2000 show St. Petersburg as having the 4th largest Black population among Florida cities.

Today, St. Pete ranks 10th in Florida for its Black population and 11th for its Black alone population.

2000



2010



2022





Part 3: BEHIND THE TREND

Outmigration is Driving the Trend

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Pace of Black Outmigration Quickened in the Past 4 Years

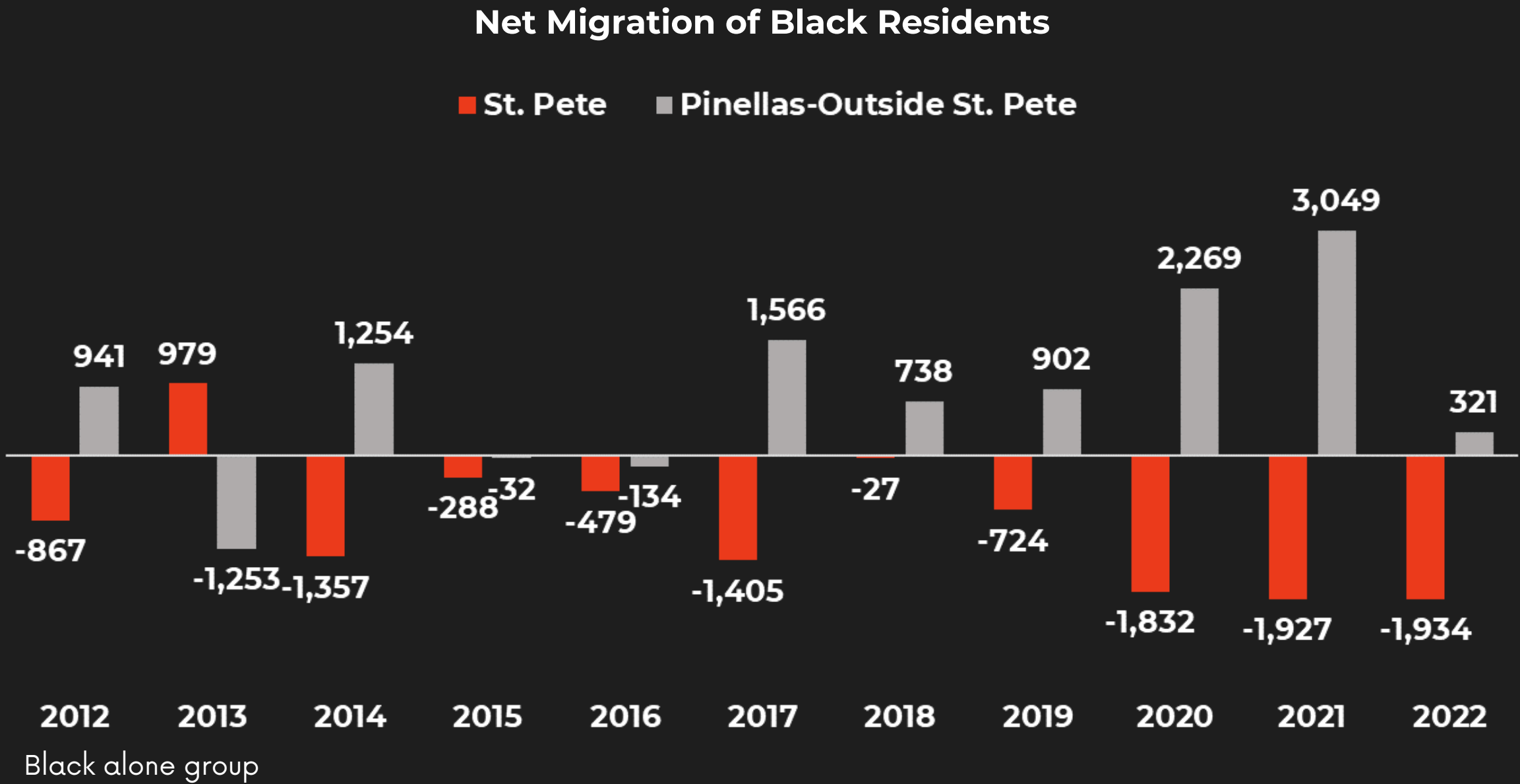
More African Americans are moving out of St. Petersburg than the number moving in.

St. Pete had negative net migration of African Americans in 10 of the 11 years reflected in this graph.

By contrast, the rest of Pinellas had positive net migration of Black residents in eight of the 11 years, including the last six years.

Note that the most extreme losses in St. Pete were in the most recent three years (while the inverse is true for the rest of Pinellas County in 2020 and 2021)

See page 23 for a comparison of migration patterns for the Black and Black alone populations.



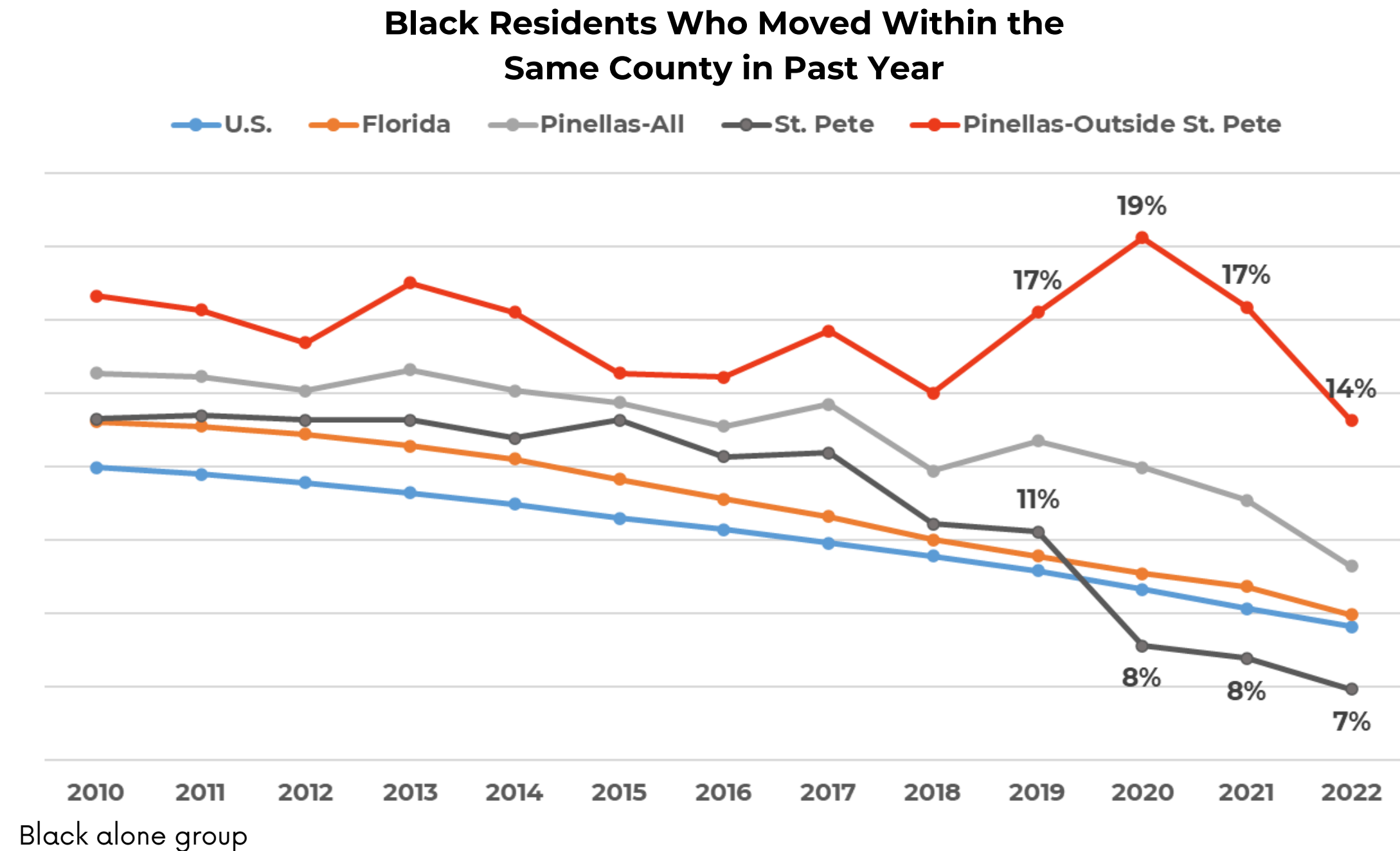
Higher In-County Move Rates for African Americans in Other Parts of Pinellas

This graph charts the percentage of Black residents who moved within the same county during the prior year.

It illustrates that a much larger number of African Americans is moving to or within parts of Pinellas County that are outside of St. Petersburg.

St. Pete's in-county move rate for African Americans (dark gray line) is lower than the rate for Black residents in other parts of Pinellas (red line) for the entire span shown (2010 through 2022).

In 2020, St. Pete's in-county move rate for African Americans fell below the comparable rate across Florida (orange line) and the U.S. (blue line).





In-County **Moves Rates** for Black Residents

	U.S.	Florida	Pinellas- All	St. Pete	Pinellas- Outside St. Pete
2010	13%	14%	16%	14%	18%
2011	13%	14%	15%	14%	17%
2012	13%	14%	15%	14%	16%
2013	12%	14%	16%	14%	18%
2014	12%	13%	15%	14%	17%
2015	12%	13%	15%	14%	16%
2016	11%	12%	14%	13%	15%
2017	11%	12%	15%	13%	17%
2018	11%	11%	13%	11%	15%
2019	10%	11%	14%	11%	17%
2020	10%	10%	13%	8%	19%
2021	9%	10%	12%	8%	17%
2022	9%	9%	10%	7%	14%

Black alone group

New Survey Seeks Reasons for the **Black Exodus** from St. Pete

Why are Black residents leaving St. Petersburg in record-high numbers?

The Power Broker Magazine is sponsoring an African American opinion survey to identify the factors fueling the trend.

If you are an African American adult who currently lives or works in St. Petersburg, Florida, or previously lived or worked there, please take the survey to share your insights and opinions.

[Click here to complete the survey!](#)

Results will be reported in January 2024, along with insights on the consequences of St. Pete's Black population losses. Visit us to sign-up for e-newsletters: www.powerbrokermagazine.com.



Appendices & Sources

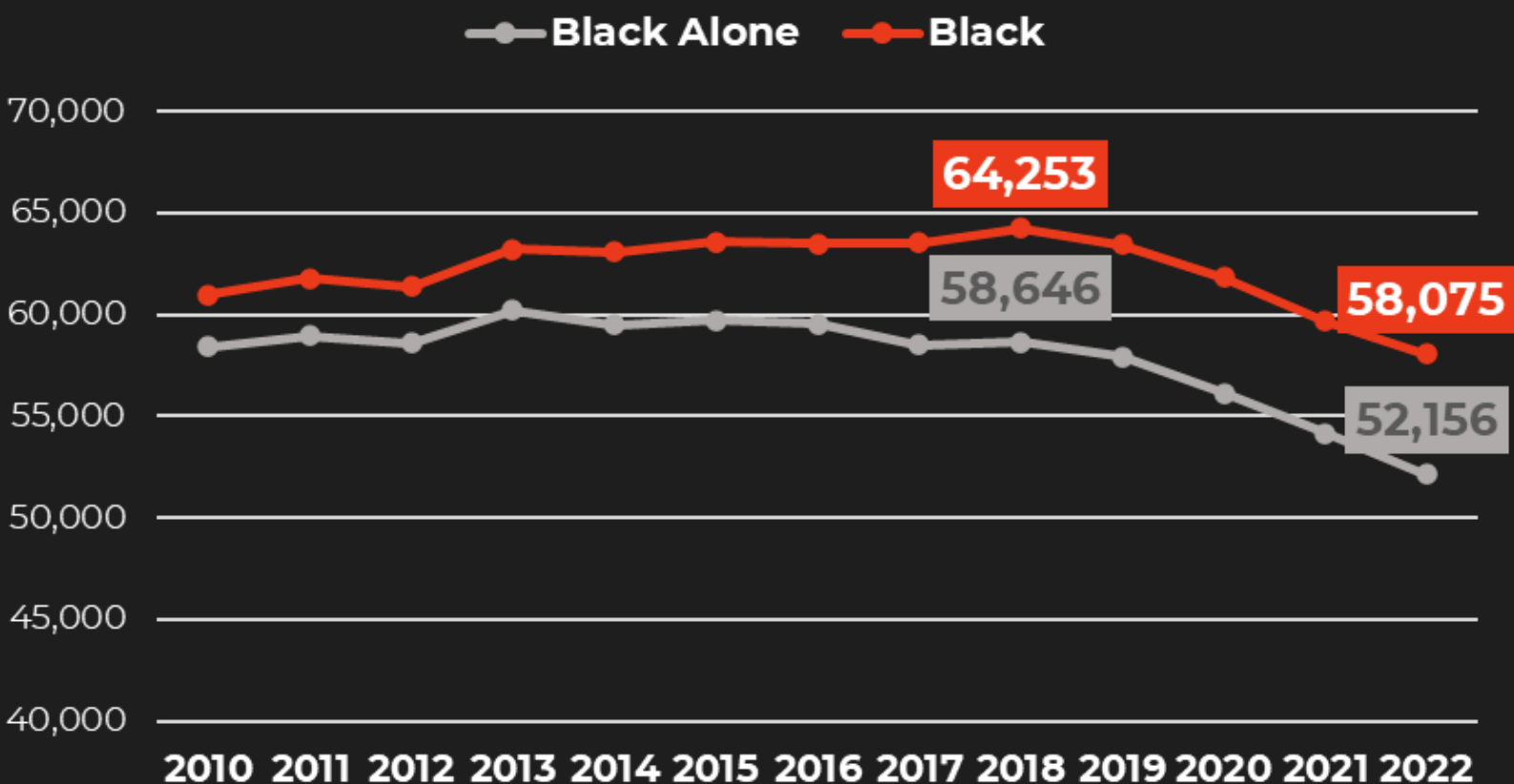
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Two Data Sets Show Same Trend for St. Pete's Black Population

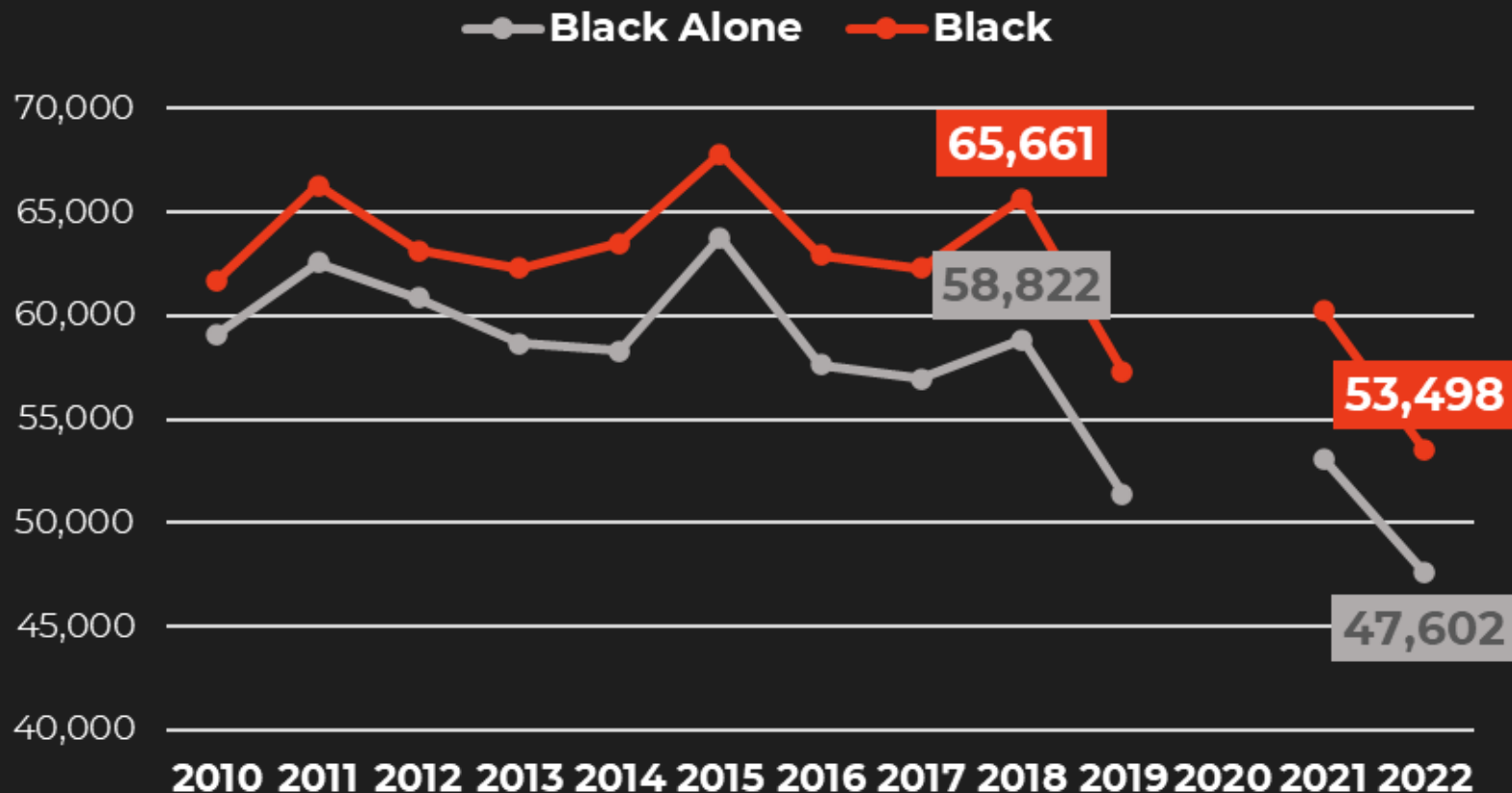
These graphs display population data for St. Pete from two American Community Survey (ACS) data sets - 1-year and 5-year estimates. The 1-year set offers a more current view but has wider margins of error and missing data for 2020.

The 5-year set is less current but more reliable as an indicator of overall trends. Both show Black population losses over the most recent four years of data (2018 to 2022).

St. Pete's Black and Black Alone Populations
5-Year Data



St. Pete's Black and Black Alone Populations
1-Year Data

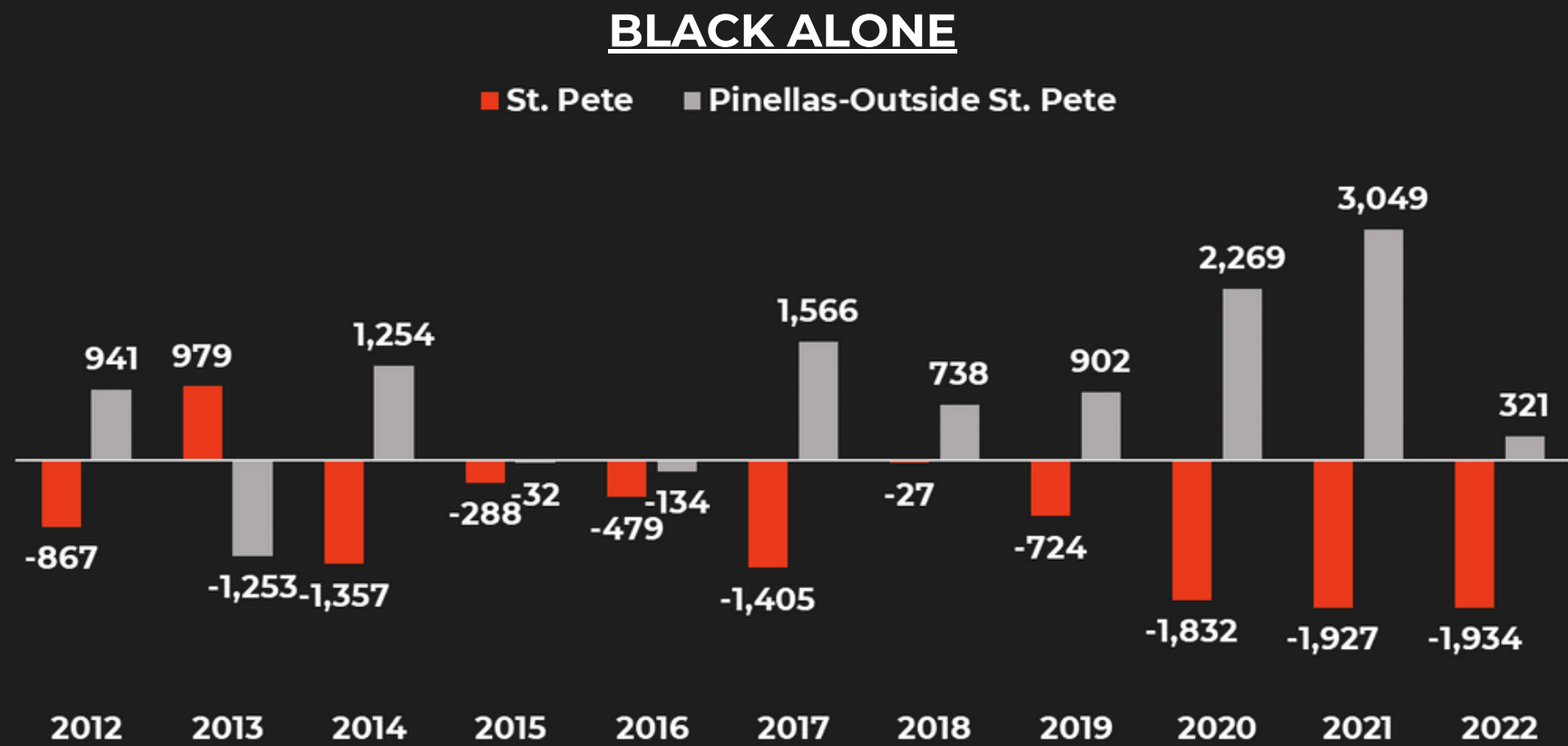
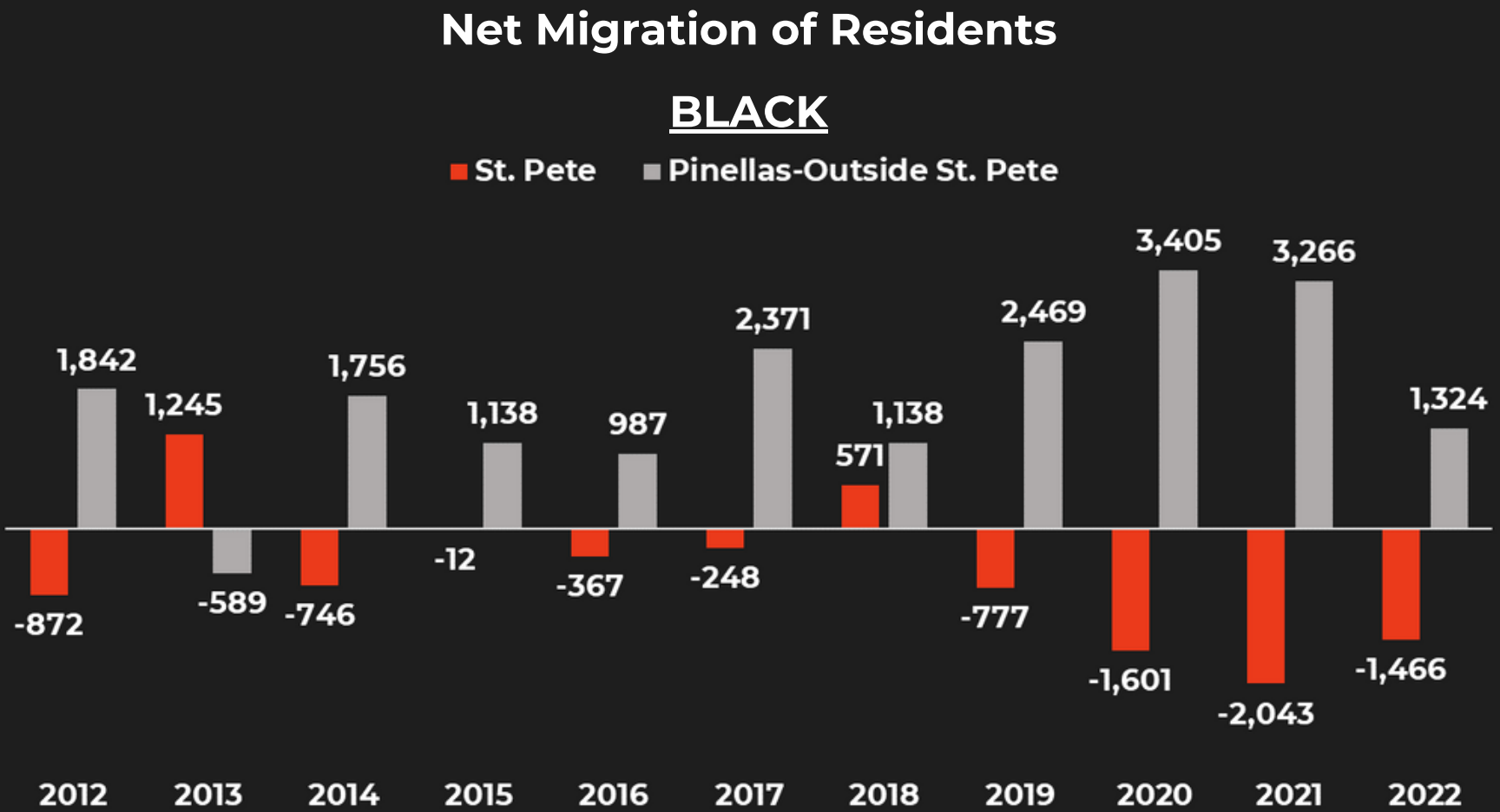


Outmigration Pattern is Similar for Both Black & Black Alone Residents

St. Pete had negative net migration of Black residents in nine of the 11 years reflected in the top graph; and negative net migration of Black alone residents in 10 of the 11 years (bottom graph).

By contrast, the rest of Pinellas County had positive net migration of Black residents in 10 of the 11 years, including the last nine years; and positive net migration for Black alone residents in eight of the 11 years, including the last six years.

Note that for both groups, the most extreme losses for St. Pete were in the most recent three years (while the inverse is true for the rest of Pinellas County in 2020 and 2021).



Growing Share of Black Residents **Self-Identify as "Black in Combination"**

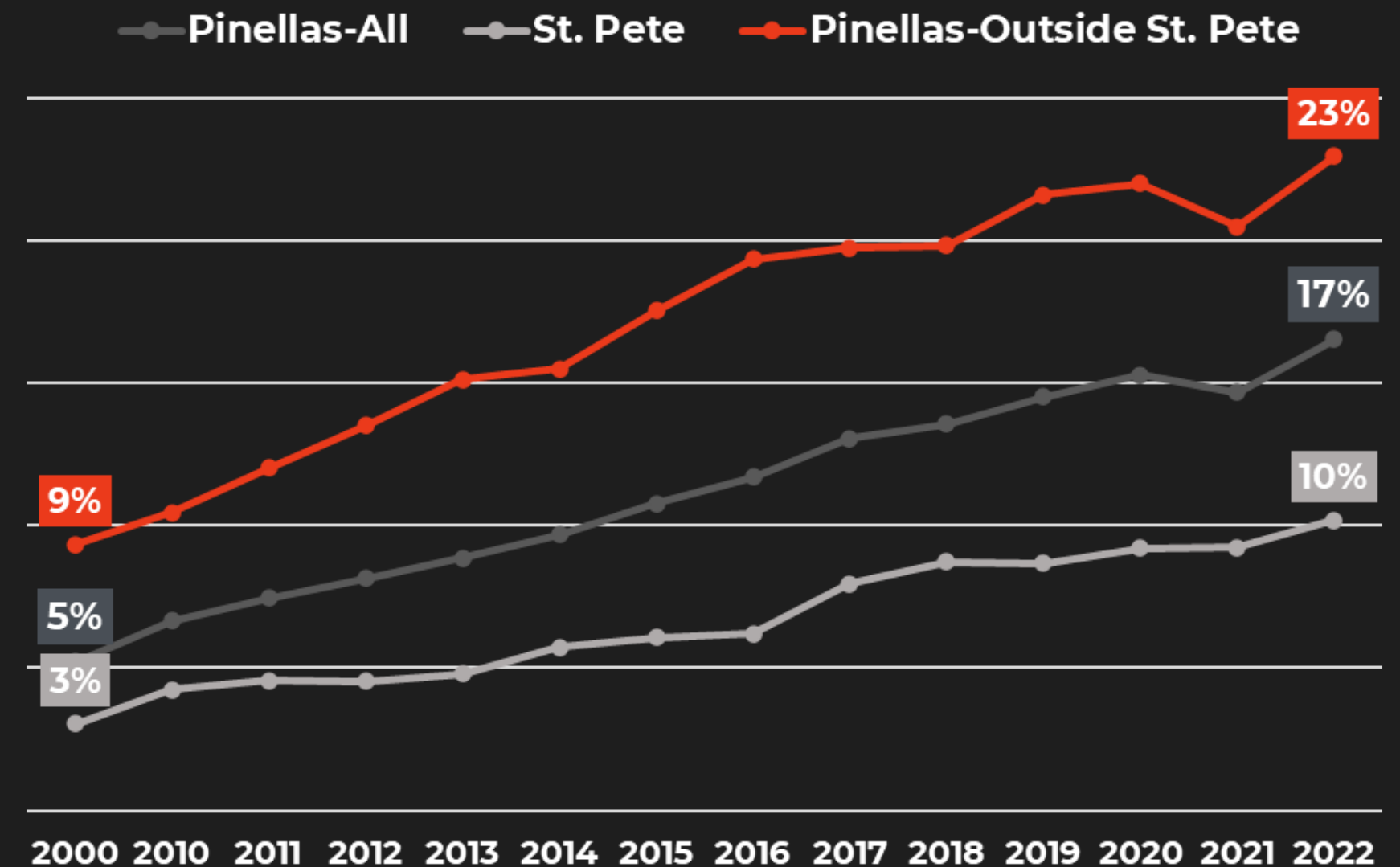
The share of Black Americans who identify as Black in combination with other races continues to climb, as the number of biracial and multi-racial Black Americans grows; and as more Black Americans, particularly those in Gen X and younger, choose to identify with their mixed heritage.

This graph illustrates the growing share of African Americans who say they are Black in combination with one or more other races, and the significant difference in the composition of the Black populations of St. Pete versus the rest of Pinellas.

In 2022, 10% of African Americans in St. Pete identified as having mixed racial heritage, while in other parts of Pinellas, nearly one-fourth of African Americans said they had mixed racial heritage (23%).

This large and unexplained gap could signal different cultural or lifestyle preferences for those who identify as multi-racial.

Share of Black Population That Identifies as Multi-Racial



Sources Cited

- 1980 U.S. Census General Social and Economic Characteristics Florida
- 1990 U.S. Census General Population Characteristics Florida
- 2000 U.S. Census DP1 Profile of General Demographic Characteristics SF4 (Black in Combination)
- Florida Department of Health, Division of Public Statistics and Performance Management, FLHealthCharts, Resident Crude Death Rates by Residence County by Year, 2010-2022 (Black)
- 2010-2021 U.S. Census American Community Survey (ACS), see list of tables below

American Community Survey Tables

- DP05 ACS Demographic and Housing Estimates, 5-year & 1-year (Black in Combination and Black Alone)
- B07004B Geographical Mobility in the Past Year for Current Residents in the U.S. (Black Alone) 5-year
- B13002B Women 15 to 50 Years Who Had a Birth in the Past 12 Months by Marital Status (Black Alone) 5-year
- B01001B Sex by Age (Black Alone) 5-year

Data Work-Arounds

Net migration calculations should be considered reliably indicative but not precise.

The calculations used death rates in Pinellas County as a proxy for death rates in St. Petersburg; and for births, the analysis used Census data on the number of women who gave birth, which enabled use of a consistent metric for both Pinellas County and St. Petersburg.