

# Building Racial Equity

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“It’s a disgrace that the richest state in the richest nation, succeeding across so many sectors, is falling so far behind to properly house, heal and humanely treat so many of its own people.”

— Gov. Gavin Newsom, 2020

"California is 49th out of 50 in the United States in per capita housing units. Only Utah can lay claim to being lowest in per capita production."

— Gov. Gavin Newsom, 2018

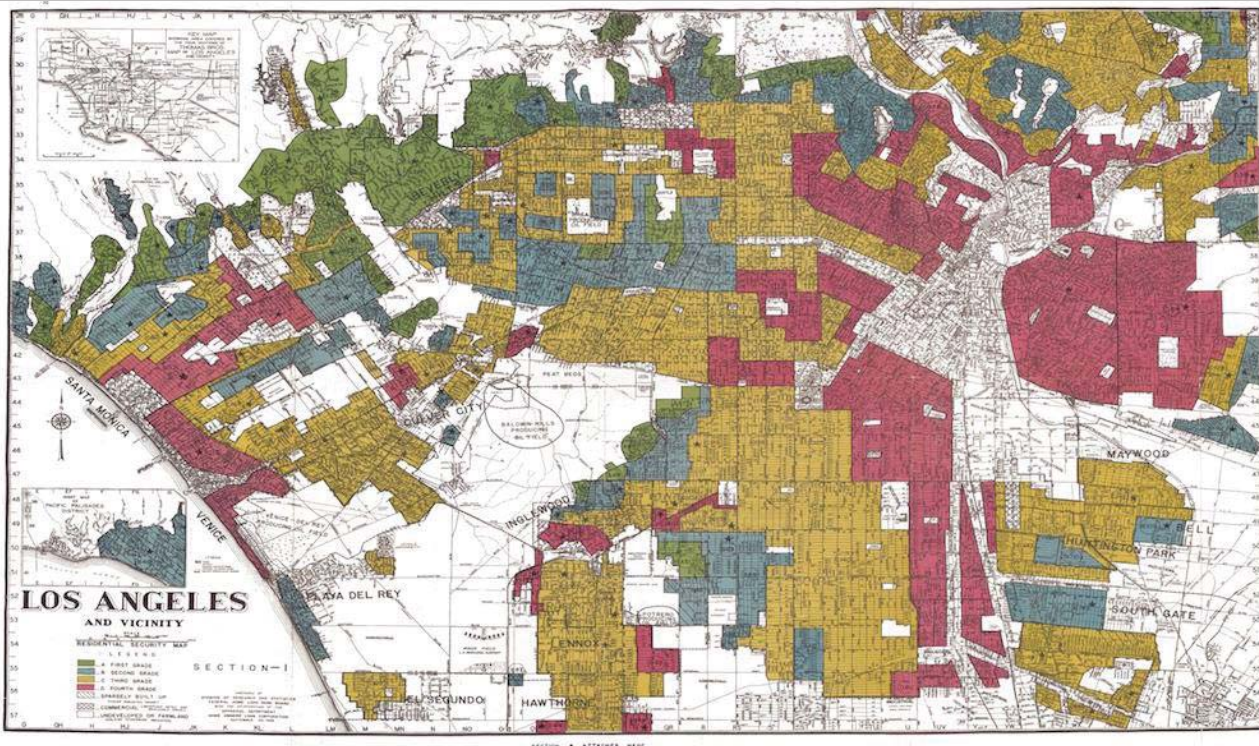


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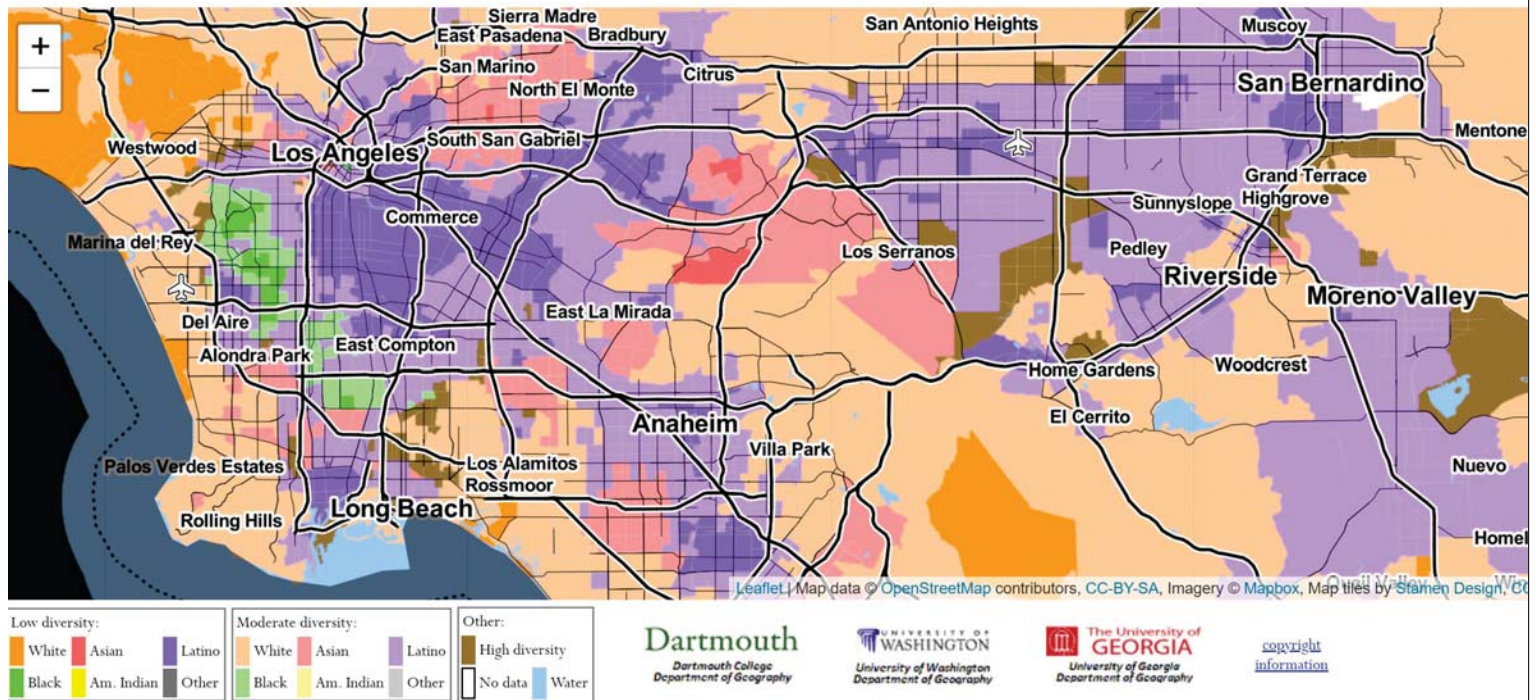
- America has more than half a million homeless people, and nearly 1 in 4 live in California
- Black people make up 9 percent of the LA County population, and 40 percent of its homeless population

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## Why do these segregation patterns persist?

- Land use regulations come in many forms, for many reasons (good, bad, unintended consequences)
  - Specify land uses for sensible urban form, environmental protection, historic preservation, etc.
- But many land use regulations have exclusionary intent: once racial covenants, redlining, etc. no longer ok, land use regulations increasingly utilized to segregate people.
- The simplest versions are minimum lot sizes, parking requirements, floor-to-area ratios, single-family zoning.

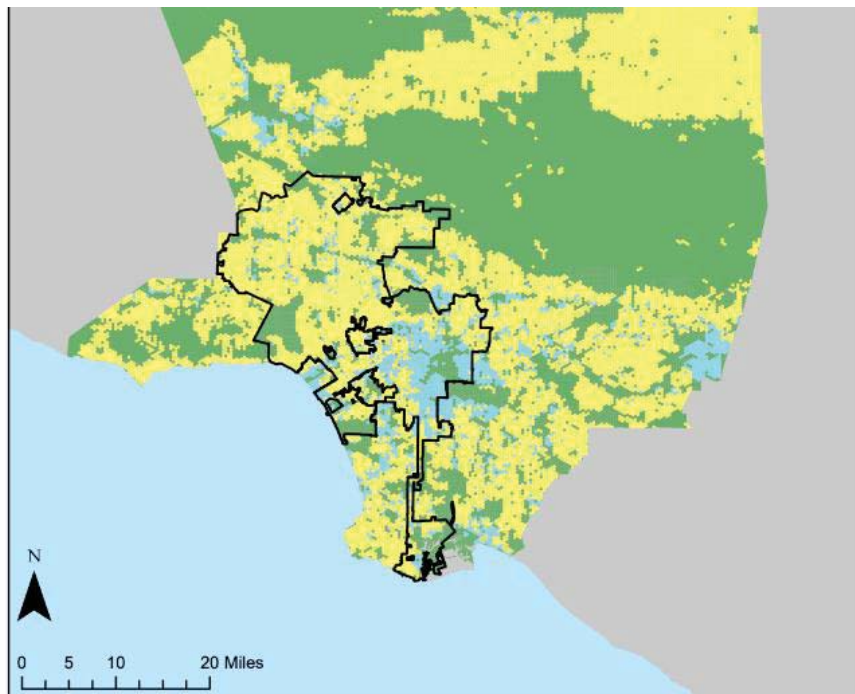
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# Why does it matter?

- The research on segregation suggests that concentrated poverty and racial segregation have tangible, negative effects on people's lives
- Further evidence suggests that neighborhood characteristics such as crime and violence, job accessibility, and school quality are additionally vital in affecting household outcomes
- Also evidence that racially diverse schools are good for everyone – reproducing all-White schools is bad for the White kids too!

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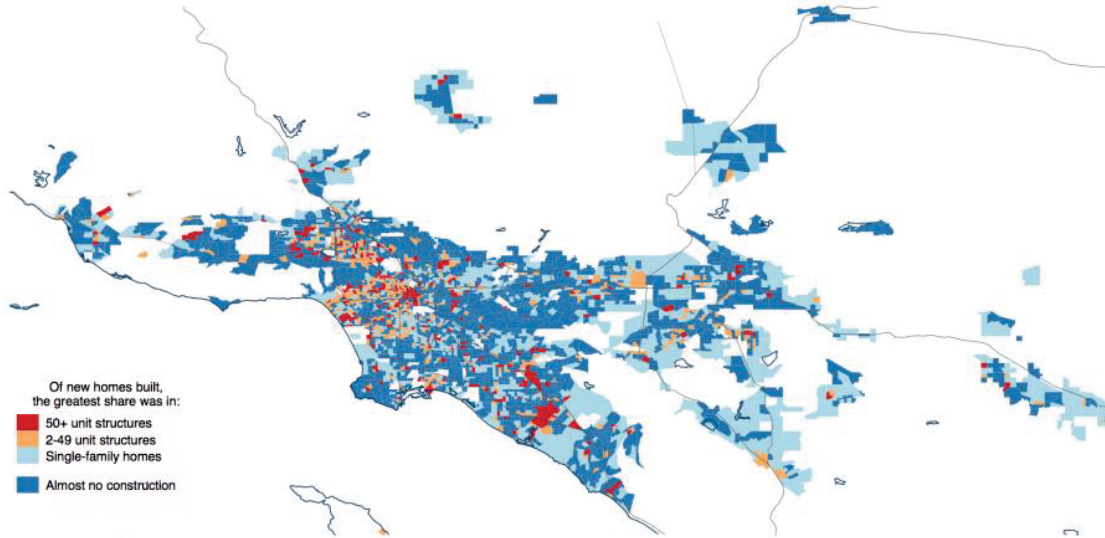
- City of Los Angeles
- Single Family Home Zoning
- Multifamily Home Zoning
- Non-Residential Zoning

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## Dominant Type of New Housing Built 2000-2016

Los Angeles-Long Beach, CA CSA



Of new homes built,  
the greatest share was in:

- 50+ unit structures
- 2-49 unit structures
- Single-family homes
- Almost no construction

Source: BuildZoom; Census (2012-2016 5-year ACS).

Notes: Residentially-developed areas include Census tracts with more than 200 currently existing homes per square mile at the end of the period. An area is defined as having "almost no construction" if its net addition of new homes is less than 0.1 new homes per acre per decade.

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<https://www.buildzoom.com/blog/pockets-of-dense-construction-in-a-dormant-suburban-interior>



## Banning multi-family housing often bans people of color

- Lots of research (Pendall 2000; Massey and Rothwell 2009; Quigley et al 2004; Rothstein 2017; Trounstein 2018) finds tighter land use restrictions exacerbate segregation by race.
- Same (Pendall 2000; Rothwell and Massey 2010; Lens and Monkkonen 2016) for segregation by income.

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## Black households are less likely to own their own homes or live in single-family homes

Racial/ethnic group	Homeownership rate		
	Los Angeles city	Los Angeles County	United States
Black (Hispanic and Non-Hispanic)	26.7%	33.3%	41.8%
Non-Hispanic White	47.3%	54.2%	71.8%
<i>All Households</i>	36.8%	45.8%	63.9%

● American Community Survey 5-year data, 2014-2018

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## Our failure to build homes also produces higher rents for Black households

Racial/ethnic group	Pay 30%+ of income on rent		Pay 50%+ of income on rent	
	Los Angeles city	Los Angeles County	Los Angeles city	Los Angeles County
Black (Hispanic and Non-Hispanic)	64.8%	63.7%	40.7%	38.5%
Non-Hispanic White	54.5%	52.9%	31.1%	30.3%
<i>All Households</i>	59.1%	57.4%	33.6%	31.9%

American Community Survey 5-year data, 2014-2018

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## Gentrification: MUCH bigger problem in SCAG region

- Most low-income people in US live in areas where the low-income population is concentrating, not being pushed out.
- But Southern CA is a big exception: it is the only region where more residents live in areas that have experienced low-income displacement than low-income concentration.
- Cities where more than 10 percent of the population lives in areas that have undergone strong low-income displacement: Atlanta, Austin, Baltimore, Boston, Denver, Hartford, Houston, **Long Beach**, **Los Angeles**, New Orleans, New York City, Norfolk, **Oakland**, Philadelphia, Portland, Providence, Saint Louis, **San Diego**, **San Francisco**, **Santa Ana**, Seattle, Virginia Beach, and Washington, D.C.

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**LA County lost over 120,000 Black residents from 1980 to 2014.**

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# What do we do?

- Legalize mid-sized multifamily housing in more places, especially in single-family home neighborhoods, in cities *and* suburbs
- SCAG can implement an aggressive AFFH policy through RHNA – no need to wait for HCD or HUD
  - Coastal Plan is a step in the right direction. But it is only a first step.

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# Zoning reform is necessary, insufficient on its own

- Housing markets are regional, and zoning reform is best done regionally – this is a place of clear impact for SCAG
- Also need subsidies and renter protections, but zoning reform is highly complementary to these policies:
  - Subsidy dollars go farther – both for vouchers and new construction of below market-rate units.
  - Renter protections need to be stronger when engaging in upzoning – but support for tenant protections should not be a reason not to upzone

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- <https://prrac.org/pdf/anti-racist-agenda-for-state-and-local-housing-agencies.pdf>



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## Affirmatively Further Fair Housing

Pulling from the PRRAC Anti-Racist Housing Agenda:

- 1) Eliminate barriers to and proactively provide for affordable housing in all communities and neighborhoods, by instituting “fair share” housing requirements and eliminating exclusionary zoning.
- 2) Fund the production and preservation of affordable housing for low- and very low-income households, with a geographic focus on highly-resourced areas and gentrifying areas.
- 5) Pass and enforce stronger fair housing protections, including source-of-income anti-discrimination laws that protect households receiving housing choice vouchers.
- 6) Provide for expanded tenants’ rights, including rent regulation and just cause requirements for evictions. And fully fund legal services for tenants to combat eviction.

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# THANK YOU!

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