

6-28-2022

Increasing Affordable Housing in the City of Oakland

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INCREASING AFFORDABLE HOUSING IN THE CITY OF OAKLAND

Increasing Affordable Housing in the City of Oakland

Submitted by

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for

EMPA 396 Graduate Research Project in Public Management

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June 28, 2022

INCREASING AFFORDABLE HOUSING IN THE CITY OF OAKLAND

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INCREASING AFFORDABLE HOUSING IN THE CITY OF OAKLAND

Abstract

The growing San Francisco Bay Area economy and the increasing cost of living has exacerbated the region's housing crisis placing Oakland at the center of the housing shortage, with a growing number of high-wage earners flocking to Oakland. The city's housing shortage affects minorities, low-income residents, essential workers, and long-time residents leaving low-income residents and essential workers, displaced and unable to compete in the housing market. This research study explored how the City of Oakland can improve affordable housing accessibility to mitigate some of the current housing crisis.

Three specific themes of scholarly literature and practitioner studies were examined and analyzed: (1) reforming land use and zoning policies, (2) redevelopment of vacant infrastructure, and (3) updating planning standards in accordance with SB-35. SB 35 is an accelerated approval and construction process of affordable housing in to meet city and county affordable housing goals.

A quantitative and qualitative research design was used for this study. Quantitative and quantitative data was collected from respondents using a survey questionnaire. Qualitative data was collected via key informant interviews. The potential impact of this research could help the City of Oakland increase affordable housing, improve housing accessibility to decrease the displacement of longtime, low-income, elderly residents, and essential workers, and mitigate some of its housing crisis.

Chapter 1: Introduction

Background of the Problem:

Affordable housing in the United States has been a constant problem since the 1930s. The economic growth within the United States in the past 22 years has produced a severe housing shortage leaving states without adequate affordable housing. Many extremely low and very low-income households can't afford a place to live, and the private housing market continues to fail to meet the housing needs.

Over the last 20 years, California has struggled with its ability to provide affordable housing for its residents. California will need to build 180,000 homes each year until 2025 to meet the demand (Palm & Niemeier, 2017). California's high cost-of-living, societal shifts, and business development incentives has had much effect on the affordability of housing. People in the San Francisco Bay Area know this all too well.

With the 1990 tech boom, the Bay Area housing market has been in an upward push resulting in long-time residents and low-income residents being displaced and pushed out of their neighborhoods in search of more affordable living. The region's extremely low and very low-income households must compete with high wage-earning households for the limited amount of affordable housing units (National Low Income Housing Coalition, 2020).

The blustering housing market has had a trickling effect on the City of Oakland. Oakland has become the city of over-spill. The tech industry in the Bay Area has created an influx of "techies" or "more affluent" population presence in Oakland looking for an urban utopia without the extreme price tags of San Francisco and the Silicon Valley. This influx of affluent/techie population has accelerated rental and real estate prices throughout the East Bay (Florida, 2017).

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Creating a high demand for housing with an outpaced supply to meet the demand, which makes housing affordability non-existent and displacement more of a reality for many low-income and long-time residents. The COVID-19 pandemic shed light on how the absence of quality, affordable housing intensifies issues like homelessness, education, health, and equitability.

California Governor Jerry Brown signed Senate Bill 35 (SB 35) in 2017. The intention of SB 35 is to expedite and facilitate the construction of affordable housing. The adoption of SB 35 requires cities and counties to streamline its procedural process in order to meet city affordable housing goals under Regional Housing Needs Assessment (RHNA). SB 35 also requires development projects to have allocate at minimum fifty percent of the units as affordable housing (SB 35, Accessed 2022).

Statement of the Problem:

There is a lack of affordable housing in the City of Oakland. The city's current affordable housing need is impacted by land use polices which do not incentivize affordable housing, vacant infrastructure is underutilized, and city planning standards are not in accordance with SB 35. Lack of affordable housing in the City of Oakland accelerates population displacement, limits access to housing for low-income residents, and reduces the city's housing supply.

Purpose of the Study:

This study will add to prior research conducted on affordable housing production remedies. This study will help the region identify creative possibilities for increasing affordable housing and provide some relief to the current housing crisis. Finally, this study would be useful to the private market leaders to identify new avenues and develop affordable housing.

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Significance of the Study:

This study is important due to the increasing housing demands and the lack of affordable housing impacting minorities, long-time residents, low-income households, and essential workers. This study will provide further insight, remedies, and potentially improve land use policies to help reduce the housing crisis and displacement in the City of Oakland.

Research Question:

The main research question examined in this study is: how can affordable housing in the City of Oakland be improved? The research sub-questions examined in this study include:

- (1) Would reformed adopted land use policies enhance affordable housing production in the City of Oakland?
- (2) Would redeveloping vacant infrastructure reduce the City's housing demands? and
- (3) Would updated planning standards improve the City's housing supply?

The focus of this study was to determine if changing the City of Oakland's current approaches to land, planning standards and vacant infrastructure would increase the affordable housing supply.

Theory of Change and Assumptions:

The theory of change: IF land use policies in Oakland were reformed to increase affordable housing, IF Oakland redeveloped vacant infrastructure for affordable housing and IF Oakland planning standards were updated in accordance with SB-35 to meet the city's allocation needs, THEN the City of Oakland could mitigate its housing crisis.

Assumption 1 (A1): If land use policies in Oakland were reformed to increase affordable housing

Assumption 2 (A2): If Oakland redeveloped vacant infrastructure for affordable housing

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Assumption 3 (A3): If Oakland planning standards were updated in accordance with SB-35 to meet the city's allocation needs

THEN the City of Oakland could mitigate its housing crisis.

Limitations:

This study will be limited to all residents in the targeted area of Oakland, with potential affects due to the large reach and accessibility to social media for surveying residents, timeframe, and key informant interview availability and responses.

Definition of Terms:

Affordable housing: Housing that doesn't cost more than 30 percent of your income

Mitigate: Make less severe or harsh

Land use: how land in Oakland is used for various uses such as housing, jobs, commercial, schools, community uses, public buildings and facilities, parks, and open space and promotes equitable distribution of different land uses.

Vacant Infrastructure: Empty buildings multi-story office and commercial space

Allocation: The amount of housing needed in the City of Oakland

Incentivizing: motivates or provoke a determination or action

SB-35: Dedicating 50 percent of total units for affordable housing for residents making below 80 percent of the area average income

Housing Crisis: Shortage of housing

Planning Standard: Codes or regulations that determine specific design requirements like height, space, land

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Housing Supply: Amount of housing in a specific area

Repurposing: To use or give another purpose or use

Expected Impact of Research:

This research will impact new land use policies at the local and state level to improve housing affordability for the many residents gravely affected by the housing crisis. This research will convey how important land policies and the lack of collaboration has resulted in many low-income populations pushed out and displaced from Oakland. This research would also shed light on the importance of Oakland and other parts of the region to meet their housing allocation needs.

Chapter 2: Review of Literature

Introduction:

Affordable housing across the country has become very stagnant in many major metropolitan cities like Oakland, California. This study includes a review of journal articles, city documents and a case study regarding land use policies, utilization of vacant infrastructure, and planning standards needed to improve affordable housing. The literature presented in this study specifically focuses on these themes: (1) reforming land use and zoning policies; (2) redeveloping vacant infrastructure, and (3) planning standards and Senate Bill-35.

Reforming Land Use and Zoning Policies

In the 2019 article, *The New State Zoning: Land Use Preemption Amid a Housing Crisis*, John Infranca writes about issues with affordable housing over the past ten years within many communities across the country. Infranca points out that housing advocates have called for more action and state intervention, as zoning and land use policies are a quintessential municipal power. The author affirms that restrictive land use policies affect not only the housing supply and housing affordability but also the economic growth, social mobility, economic equality, and the environment. Infranca states that new forms of land use policies and any potential state interventions should preempt additional planning requirements and procedure approval steps. This articles also provides insight into the historical implications of restrictive local land use policies and potential state land use interventions.

O'Neill, M., Gualco-Nelson, G., and Biber, E. wrote the 2018 case study “*Getting it Right: Examining the Local Land Use Entitlement Process in California to Inform Policy and Process*”. The researchers examined five Bay Area cities, including Oakland. In the study the

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researchers provided insight on how local land use policies drive how residential development projects are put through a redundant discretionary review process. The researchers also examined how local land use regulations play a significant role in the housing crisis, as well as the mandated California Environment Quality Act (CEQA) review. In the study San Francisco and Oakland local processes and local planning practices were compared. The comparison revealed that Oakland's codes were like San Francisco, but Oakland's appeared more inflexible. The researchers suggested that any proposed reform should consider standardizing planning processes and should be tailored to address the power imbalances with cities and the region.

As noted in the *Plan Bay Area 2050*, zoning has been a major contributor to the housing crisis and racial inequity throughout the region. Zoning reforms are essential in changing the housing landscape by allowing for more housing to be constructed. Housing for all income levels is a crucial part of the Bay Area's housing development plan. Zoning reform and collaborative affordable housing production efforts can prioritize and ensure long-time residents can remain in their neighborhoods (Plan Bay Area 2050).

In *Building a More Equitable Land Use Regulatory System: Toward a Twenty-First-Century Zoning Enabling Act*, the researchers provide an overview of the first Standard State Zoning Enabling Act and the need for a land use planning and zoning law focused on high housing cost, racial inequities, and accessibility to deal with our current social crisis. The researchers also assert that the incorporation of these concepts into the Standard State Zoning Enabling Act could potentially address the unevenness in housing processes and policies. Current exclusionary zoning practices throughout the country has exacerbated the social and economic inequities. An updated Standard State Zoning Enabling Act would provide the original

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foundation that could effectively address today's wealth and housing inequality (Connolly, B. J., & Brewster, D. A., 2021)

An article by Reid, C. K., Galante, C., & Weinstein-Cames, A. F., *Addressing California's Housing Shortage: Lessons from Massachusetts Chapter 40B* examines how using efforts from Massachusetts Chapter 40B could address California's housing crisis. Reforming California land use regulations would significantly increase the housing production and supply. The researchers conveyed that the limited housing supply has negative repercussion on the economy, equity, and environment. The article examined the possibility of "enacting statewide legislation that would create an expedited permitting process for affordable housing developments similar to Massachusetts Chapter 40B" (Reid, C. K., Galante, C., & Weinstein-Cames, A. F., 2017). Chapter 40B streamlines and simplifies affordable housing approval processes and requires local governments to expand the housing supply of very low, low- and moderate-income household regardless of existing zoning law. The article highlights the benefit that Chapter 40B provides California with a framework that could significantly improve the housing supply throughout the state with minimal cost to the state and potential developers.

According to *The Takings Are Coming: How Federal Courts Can Protect Regulatory Efforts to Address California's Housing Crisis*, R. Winston provides an overview of the California housing crisis, the causes, and the needed efforts to address the crisis. The state's lack of housing has created detrimental impacts over half of California families cannot afford the cost of housing. Winston asserts that the core of the problem is illustrated by the San Francisco Bay Area in 2012, a household wage of \$100,000 per year could afford 72 percent of the median rent (Winston, R., 2020). The article emphasizes that as the housing affordability continues to decline while impacting the socio-economic wellbeing of residents, it is critical that state and local

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government have policy flexibility to evaluate measures intended to preserve and increase affordable housing (Winston, R., 2020).

In *“From Smart Cities to Co-Cities: Emerging Legal and Policy Responses to Urban Vacancy”*, Dan Wu and Shelia Foster articulate the benefits of cities incentivizing developments like Community Land Trust (CLTs) to ultimately build more affordable housing. Boulder, Colorado suspended a tax incentive for most developers, except developers that met community needs. Boulder took it a step further by suspending tax incentive application expect for projects that would directly provide benefit to underserved residents. These incentive strategies can lack political feasibility. CLTs can also capture increasing land values and circle them back into sustaining land uses and ensuring accessibility and affordability. The overall idea supports longtime residents to be in control of community development that address their needs and promotes “self-gentrification” (Wu, D. & Foster, S., 2020).

In *“Community Land Trusts: Releasing Possible Selves Through Stable Affordable Housing,”* the researcher examines the quantitative and qualitative data collected by a Minneapolis-based CLT, while addressing the advantages of cities using Community Land Trusts (CLTs) to ensure more affordable housing units are built. The affordability decline is the result of pressure on the rental market as high wage earners continue to prefer renting. CLTs can function as a “intervention against the ontological insecurity generated by the private market and shifting housing policies to benefit low-income households (Hackett, 2019). CLTs governance provides opportunities, promotes inclusiveness to those normally disadvantaged, and controls the land use and resource distributions.

Redevelopment of Vacant Infrastructure

Julie Gilgoff in *Pandemic-Related Vacant Property Initiatives* provided insight on how pandemic related vacant infrastructure were used to answer the immediate housing needs of homeless populations, by local and state government temporarily repurposing hotels left vacant due to the COVID-19 pandemic. With the temporary implementation, Gilgoff examines how going a step further with using vacant infrastructure could be beneficial in addressing the affordable housing crisis. The researcher emphasizes that instead of imposing penalties for vacant properties, cities should repurpose property for low-income affordable housing. In cities, like Oakland, vacant infrastructures are often left vacant intentionally to wait until the values goes up to sell or rent at a higher price (Gilgoff, 2020).

The researcher also examined the vacant infrastructure initiatives in Spain. In 2016, Barcelona, Spain passed a measure that allowed municipalities to take control of rental properties that had sat vacant for more than two years. The units left empty could then be used as affordable housing for the duration of four to ten years before returning the property back to the owner. In 2019, Barcelona updated the measure to instead of returning the property to the owner, the property owner would be required to sell. The vacant property would sell for 50 percent of the market rate to preserve housing affordability. Gilgoff asserts that with severe penalties will help decrease the housing crisis (Gilgoff, 2020).

The case study in *ICMA and CCLR's Case Experiences* the researchers examined redevelopment projects spanning from New Jersey to California. In Aurora, Colorado, a former airport and aircraft manufacturing facility was redeveloped into a mixed-use community. Developers recognized the site opportunity and potential to reuse the land. “Developers also worked with the City of Aurora to redevelop the land that would add great value to the

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community residents” (Henry, C., McGalliard, T. & Dayrit, I., 2021). The former airport parking lot was planned for a multifamily development with over 170 rental units.

Since the 1990s, Emeryville, California has utilized Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) grants to push affordable housing and community efforts. This approach has allowed Emeryville to facilitate hundreds of brownfield redevelopments with gentrifying the community (Henry, C., McGalliard, T. & Dayrit, I., 2021).

According to Kemp *City Governments and Brownfields Development*, brownfield sites can be vacant land or previously developed not in current use. These brownfield sites can be potentially contaminated depending on the previous use of the site. If a site is declared a brownfield site, the location can have redevelopment conditions. When potential contaminated sites are cleaned, redeveloped. The state and local governments would benefit from the redeveloped land through property taxes and state income taxes (Kemp, R., 2021).

In *Reuses of Brownfields*, McGalliard articulates that even with the complications and cost of brownfield redevelopment, repurposing land provides opportunities and support for new housing, open space, and transportation. Reusing brownfields requires diligence due to the regulatory standards and are often redeveloped into open greenspace, parks, and natural habitats. Institutional controls can be a “effective means” to convert a brownfield into a community asset. Brownfields have also been used to help in renewable energy efforts. Overall, brownfield redevelopment takes on many shapes and challenges to transition into housing and public facilities (McGalliard, T., 2021).

In another article, *Remediation Planning, Reuse Planning and Site Design*, McGalliard breaks down remediation, reuse planning, site design and the direct influence on each other. Brownfield redevelopment involves reuse of existing infrastructure and buildings with potential

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contamination that must be remediated before the redevelopment (McGalliard, 2021). Local governments use Brownfield Area Wide Planning to develop brownfield sites. The development approach is for neighborhoods impacted by brownfields to better serve the community (McGalliard, T., 2021).

In the As Cities Look at Options for Financing Infrastructure, They Keep an Eye Out for Low-Income Residents, Paul examines cities that are working to identify financing models for reusing aging or vacant infrastructure to better serve low-income communities. Each city worked together on a team for 18 months to find ways to balance the competing demands for financing and large infrastructure projects. Increasing investment in the well-being of low-income residents. The City of San Francisco, worked with St. Paul to address their challenges preparing for the seismic reinforcement of its sea wall and daunting \$5 billion bill associated with the reinforcement. The collaborative effort would better meet community and resident needs without sacrificing the quality of life and urban services (Paul, T. W., 2021).

Planning Standards and SB-35

Senate Bill 35 requires localities to streamline the approval process for housing developments if the jurisdiction hasn't provided sufficient building permits to satisfy the area regional housing need by income categories. It also ensures access to affordable housing and declare statewide concern for housing affordability. Development projects are required to have at least 50 percent of the units reserved for affordable housing units and must be consistent with city general plans (SB 35, Accessed 2022).

The *City of Oakland Housing Element* identifies both the existing and projected housing needs and establishes a housing program that includes housing policies, objectives, and financial resources for developing and improving housing. An essential part of the Housing Element is the

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city's existing and projected new housing needs based on the Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA). Cities are required to accommodate the housing needs by providing adequate zoning and infrastructure to develop housing for income of all levels. According to Oakland's 2014-2022 housing element, the city has fallen short of meeting the housing requirements (City of Oakland Housing Element, 2014).

According to Jeff Clare, the streamline approval process within SB-35 removes discretionary control. Streamlining may not apply to projects that require demolition of affordable housing units. This plays an essential role in ensuring that cities don't demolish the limited amount of affordable housing. Clare asserts that SB-35 has shown some limited success in Berkeley and Cupertino for advancing affordable housing projects. The efforts in Berkeley and Cupertino show how SB-35 can be used to avoid a development-hostile local government and how it can be used for various sized projects (Clare, J., 2019).

In the *Getting it Right: Examining the Local Land Use Entitlement Process in California to Inform Policy and Process* article, the researchers provide insight on SB-35 attempts to remove the Conditional Use Permit requirement for projects and how the entitlement process can prevent SB-35 from accomplishing what is intended. The article also notes that without prior knowledge of municipal zoning nuances, lawmakers can't draft legislation to deal with the problems and provide guidance for stakeholders. SB-35 might not prevent city downzoning or enacting additional inflexible design to push approvals through a rezoning process that is not subject to state streamlining (O'Neill, M., Gualco-Nelson, G., & Biber, E., 2018).

In *Unfair Shares: Racial Disparities and the Regional Housing Needs Allocation Process in the Bay Area*, the researchers provide insight on Bay Area housing allocation imbalances. According to Broomfield and Moore, the development of new housing in the Bay Area has been

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dominated by production of units for wealthier residents. Producing 99% of the housing needed for Above Moderate-income households in the region. City Housing Elements support the number of allocated housing units needed, although cities have discretion frequently regarding whether they will permit the proposed developments (Bromfield, H., & Moore, E. 2017). From 2007-2014 the Bay Area permitted twice as many above moderate income units than the other income categories combined. Broomfield and Moore also asserts revising the Regional Housing Need Allocations strategy and tightening enforcement on cities to increase permitting for higher allocation needs especially for areas with the greatest need. (Bromfield, H., & Moore, E., 2017).

According to Palm (2017), it is possible for regional planning agencies encourage local government to provide affordable housing, especially in areas with greater job opportunities. California can strengthen its local housing penalties and incentives for housing allocation. Palm recommends that regional and local planning agencies implement a job-housing balance in their affordable housing efforts. Fiscal impacts outweigh social objections and state rarely addresses the true financial burdens communities potentially face with affordable housing. The increasing development cost of affordable housing and the procedural delays can impact the financial feasibility. A policy change can provide more housing opportunities for low-income household and further reduce the mismatch between housing accessibility and employment (Palm, M., & Niemeier, D., 2017).

Conclusion

The literature reviewed provides substantial support and potential solutions for increasing affordable housing in the City of Oakland. These findings strengthen the assumptions that reforming land use policies, redeveloped vacant infrastructure, and updating planning standards in accordance with SB-35 is needed.

Chapter 3: Research Methods

Introduction:

The lack of affordable housing affects many Oakland residents especially essential workers, people of color, and low-income households. Many residents find it difficult to balance their housing cost and basic needs. It is imperative to address the need for change in affordable housing. Increasing affordable housing will not only provide more housing opportunities, but it will also increase the quality of life and equitability within the community.

This study examined how affordable housing in the City of Oakland can be improved. The use of qualitative and quantitative data collection from residents and key informants. Online resident surveys were deployed using social media platforms like Facebook, Instagram, and LinkedIn. Key informant interviews conducted were email based with housing specialist and field experts. Using these mixed methods will produce well-rounded results by allowing for a wide collection of data from the public and people with key knowledge.

Research Question and Sub Question:

The main research question examined in this study was: how can affordable housing in the City of Oakland be improved? The research sub-questions examined in this study include:

- (1) Would reformed adopted land use policies enhance affordable housing production in the City of Oakland?
- (2) Would redeveloping vacant infrastructure reduce the City's housing demands? and
- (3) Would updated planning standards improve the City's housing supply?

The focus of this study was to determine if changing the City of Oakland's current approaches to land, planning and vacant infrastructure would increase the affordable housing supply.

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Theory of Change and Assumptions:

A1 - IF land use policies in Oakland were reformed to increase affordable housing;
THEN the City of Oakland could mitigate its housing crisis.

A2 - IF Oakland redeveloped vacant infrastructure for affordable housing; THEN the
City of Oakland could mitigate its housing crisis.

A3 - IF Oakland planning standards were updated in accordance with SB-35 to meet the
city's allocation needs;

THEN the City of Oakland could mitigate its housing crisis.

Operational Definitions:

Reformed land use: For this study, reformed land use is defined as changes to Oakland's 1998 General Plan Land Use and Transportation Element.

Redeveloped vacant infrastructure: For this study, redeveloped vacant infrastructure is defined as vacant piece of land or vacant buildings that can be constructed into affordable housing units.

Updated planning standards: For this study, adjustments to Oakland's 2014 Housing Element.

Oakland's Housing Element is determined by the Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA) process. The RHNA process establishes the amount of housing needed for all income groups for each region, by examining the current needs with anticipated population growth.

Brownfield: A site previously used for industrial or commercial purposes. This land can be contaminated with hazardous waste or pollution.

Population Sampling Strategy

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Respondents in the research population were residents of the City of Oakland. It was important for the population sampling to have lived in Oakland. There was no set maximum limit. Key informant interviews were achieved using questions to demonstrate the expert's knowledge and experience. In order for the sampling to result in sufficient data, there needed to be 50 to 100 surveys collected. The key informants interviewed were experts and field specialist from city executive directors, public administrator specialists, developers, and professors.

Procedure:

The 76 resident surveys were evaluated using online tool Google Forms. The surveys were distributed through social media platforms like Facebook, Instagram, and LinkedIn. Key informant interviews were conducted via email with specialists and field experts.

Data Processing and Analysis:

The data received from both the resident surveys and key informant interviews provided beneficial insight on improving affordable housing in the City of Oakland. The data collected were both qualitative and quantitative methods. The key informant interviews provided expert experience and knowledge regarding the needs, concerns, and potential changes. The transcribed interview data identified similarities, differences, and area trends consistent with theory of change and resident surveys.

Internal and External Validity:

The threats to internal validity within this study are residents not being affected or aware of the affordable housing crisis. Evaluating the data, results and internal validity of this study will determine the independent variables and the effects of change in the dependent variables. Changing the City of Oakland's current approaches to land use, zoning, planning and use of

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vacant infrastructure will increase affordable housing. *Independent variable (IV)*: Changes to land use, zoning, updated planning, and use of redeveloped vacant infrastructure. *Dependent variables (DV)*: Affordable housing in Oakland will increase.

Limitations:

Limitations on the survey data collected was the target respondent's population of Oakland residents. Resident surveys were conducted via social media platforms reaching respondents beyond the City of Oakland. The key informant interviews were done via email. Adding an additional limitation. The limited amount of time for the research to be conducted, the established deadline for completed surveys and key informant interviews were essential.

Conclusion:

The research study used both qualitative and quantitative data approaches. This research also attempted to determine how imperative it is for the City of Oakland to improve affordable housing for marginalized communities, essential workers, people of color, and low-income households.

Chapter 4: Results and Findings

Research Question & Sub-Questions:

Main Question: The main research question examined in this study is: how can affordable housing in the City of Oakland be improved?

Research Sub-Questions

1. Would reformed adopted land use policies enhance affordable housing production in the City of Oakland?
2. Would redeveloping vacant infrastructure reduce the City's housing demands?
3. Would updated planning standards improve the City's housing supply?

Theory of Change and Assumptions:

The theory of change is: The theory of change: IF land use policies in Oakland were reformed to increase affordable housing, IF Oakland redeveloped vacant infrastructure for affordable housing and IF Oakland planning standards were updated in accordance with SB-35 to meet the city's allocation needs, THEN the City of Oakland could mitigate its housing crisis.

Assumption 1: If land use policies in Oakland were reformed to increase affordable housing.

Assumption 2: If Oakland redeveloped vacant infrastructure for affordable housing.

Assumption 3: If Oakland planning standards were updated in accordance with SB-35 to meet the city's allocation needs.

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The following data was collected from respondent's survey questions and key informant interviews. For the objectivity of this study responses were not altered by the researcher.

A total of 76 respondents completed the survey questionnaire, with a minimum of respondents 64 respondents answering question 8.

Quantitative Analysis

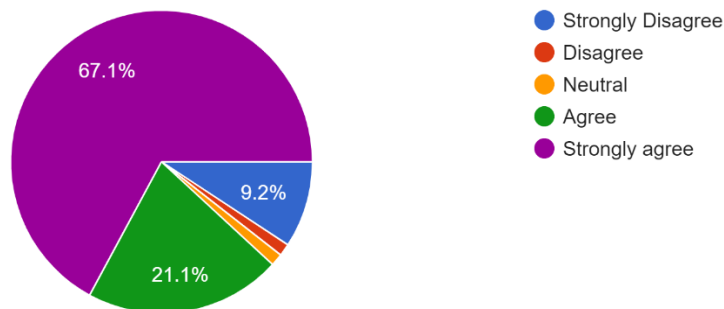
Survey Questions

Assumption 1 Land use policies in Oakland were reformed to increase affordable housing.

The quantitative analysis determined that 70 percent of the respondent in the following four questions correlate to Assumption one.

Question 1: The City of Oakland needs more affordable housing?

76 responses



Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
9.2%	1.3%	1.3%	21.1%	67.1%

This question examined whether respondents were familiar with the topic of affordable housing.

A majority (87.2%) of the respondents who answered question 1 strongly agreed or agreed that

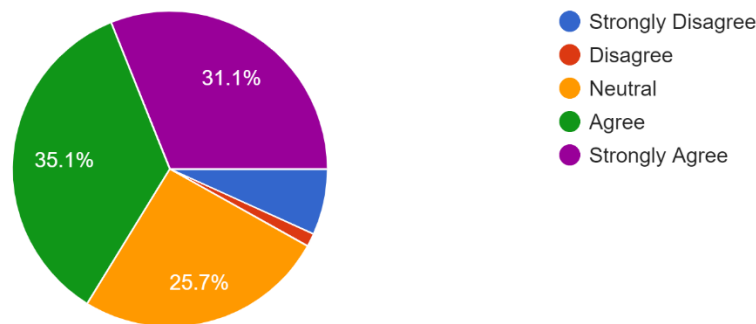
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the City of Oakland needs affordable housing. Over 10 percent of the survey respondents either strongly disagreed or disagreed that the City of Oakland needs more affordable housing.

Question 2: The City of Oakland's land use policies reduce access to affordable housing?

This question assessed respondent's perception of land use policies in the City of Oakland. For this question 74 residents provided an answer. Both questions 2 and 3 correlate to Infranca's discussion on how land use policies effect not only the housing supply and housing affordability but also the economic growth, social mobility, economic equality, and the environment.

74 responses



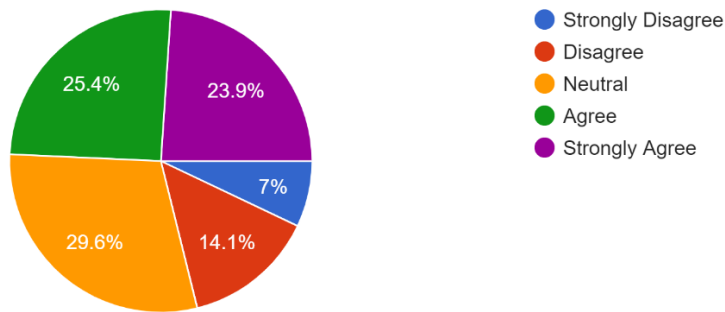
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
6.8%	1.4%	25.7%	35.1%	31.1%

Question 3: The lack of affordability in Oakland is due to the zoning classification in your area?

This question assessed the extent to which respondents perceived linkage of affordability and zoning classifications in their area.

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71 responses



Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
7%	14.1%	29.6%	25.4%	23.9%

Almost 50% of the respondents agreed that the lack of affordability in Oakland is due to the zoning classification. Significantly, almost 30 percent of the respondents answered Neutral, while over 20 percent strongly disagreed or disagreed with this question.

Question 4: Have you considered moving from your neighborhood in the past five years? Yes (Why?) or No

4. Have you considered moving from your neighborhood in the past five years? Yes (Why?) or No

74 responses

Yes	No	Other
48%	24%	2%

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This question assessed whether respondents have considered moving from their neighborhood, 48 percent said Yes, 24 percent answered No, and 2 percent of the respondents didn't answer the question. Overall, more respondents have considered moving in the past five years. Reasons noted for Yes – Cost, affordability, cleanliness, the homeless/unhoused, safety, noise, crime, and mental health. While 24 percent answered no because they loved where they lived or didn't care for the thought of moving.

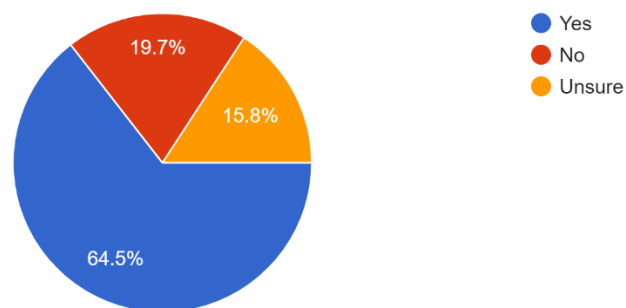
Assumption 2 Oakland redeveloped vacant infrastructure for affordable housing.

The quantitative analysis determined that 76 percent of the respondent in the following three questions correlate to Assumption 2. The responses to these three questions correlate to Gilgoff's claim that cities should repurpose property for affordable housing.

Question 5: Are there vacant buildings or lots in your neighborhood?

This question assesses the respondent's knowledge of vacant infrastructure in their neighborhood.

76 responses



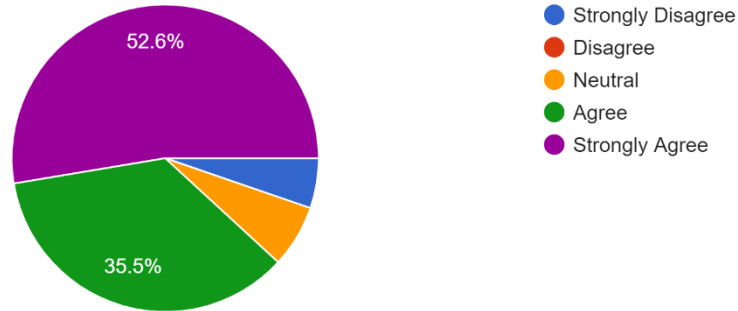
64.5 percent of the respondents answered Yes, to knowing of vacant buildings or lots in their neighborhoods. While 15.8 percent of the respondents were unsure of whether vacant infrastructure was in their current neighborhood.

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Question 6: Redeveloping vacant buildings or lots would be beneficial to your community?

This question assessed the respondents' thoughts on the benefits of community input on the redeveloped vacant buildings and lots.

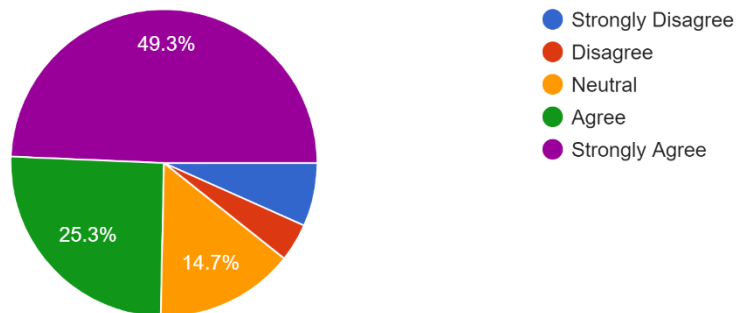
76 responses



Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
5.3%	0%	6.6%	35.5%	52.6%

Question 7: Community members should have more input on what is planned for vacant infrastructure redevelopment?

75 responses



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These three questions pertain to the use of vacant infrastructure for affordable housing in the City of Oakland. The respondent's responses demonstrate the potential benefit in redeveloped infrastructure and community input in the redevelopment process.

Assumption 3 Oakland planning standards were updated in accordance with SB-35 to meet the city's allocation needs.

Question 8: In what ways, if any can housing planning standards be improved in the City of Oakland?

This question assesses respondent's thoughts on ways housing planning standards can be improved in the City of Oakland.

8. In what ways, if any can housing planning standards be improved in the City of Oakland?

64 responses

A total of 64 respondents answered and 12 respondents either didn't provide an answer or answered as unsure. The word cloud with this question's transcript noted below.

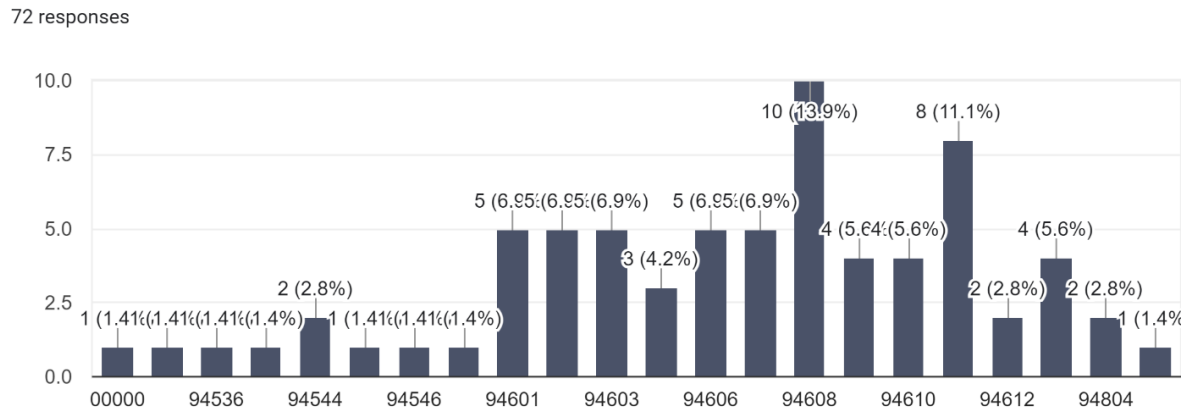


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Demographic Survey Analysis

Questions 9, 10 and 11 were asked for demographic purposes and to analyze the perspectives and opinions regarding affordable housing in the City of Oakland.

Question 9: Your Residence Zip Code

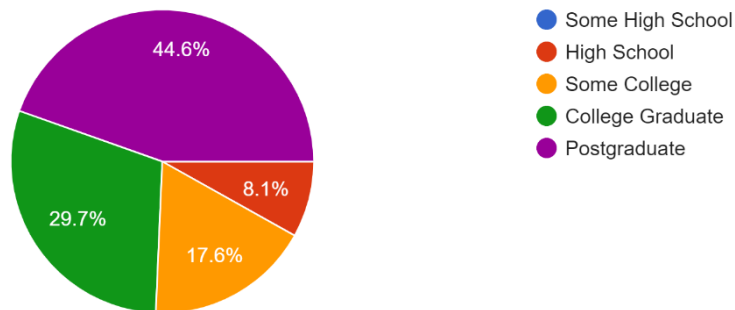


72 of 76 respondents provided their residence zip code. The majority of the survey respondents' zip codes were in the City of Oakland. 10 respondents reside outside of the Oakland area, it is important to include the perceptions of former Oakland residents and other San Francisco Bay Area residents. The zip codes provided perspective on which respondent areas were affected or aware of the affordable housing crisis.

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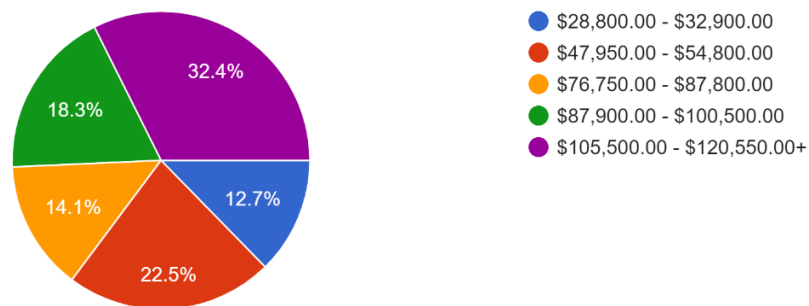
Question 10: Education Level

74 responses



Question 11: Income

71 responses



Qualitative Analysis

Key Informant Interviews

Key informant interview questionnaires were emailed to experts and field specialists: East Bay Housing Director, Non-Profit Developer, Public/Urban Affairs Professor, and City Services Consultant. The interviews were conducted via email with options for follow-up telephone or telecommunication calls. This interview method allowed the best responses with such a limited timeline and lasting pandemic challenges.

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Assumption 1

Question 1: How does the City of Oakland's land use and zoning policies impact affordable housing? Please explain your answer.

All four key informant responses to Q1 aligned with the assumption and literature presented for theme one.

Interviewee #1 - Changing zoning to allow different uses (apartments, backyard cottages, etc.) can encourage more economic and racial diversity.

Interviewee #2 - Working on land use policies to ensure that public land would be prioritized for affordable housing, if it is being developed as residential.

Interviewee's #3 and 4 – Provided similar perspectives on how Oakland's low-density zoning can be designed to keep out people of color.

The key informants agreed that land use and zoning policies impact affordable housing in the City of Oakland. Each interview response for Q1 correlated to Infranca's opinion that restrictive land use policies effect not only the housing supply and housing affordability but also the economic growth, social mobility, economic equality, and the environment (Infranca, 2019).

Question 2: How can affordable housing be increased in the City of Oakland?

The key informants were in agreeance for Q2. All the responses emphasized having more funding, non-profit developers and incentives is needed in order increase affordable housing.

Interviewee #1 - Need a lot more public money to help affordable housing happen. We don't have a lot of local money to pay for the labor, land, material and staff costs that go into an affordable housing properties (right now, a single apartment costs at least \$600,000 to build

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because land, labor and materials are so expensive). More money would create more homes. As well as preserve affordable housing that already existed by allowing community groups to acquire, fix up and stabilize older homes.

Interviewee #2 - Through supply-side incentives from government and we need more nonprofit developers.

Interviewee #3 – Simply more funding.

Interviewee #4 - There should be more use of density bonuses, tax incentives, tax increment financing and public private partnerships to stimulate the construction of taller and denser affordable housing, in particular along commercial corridors and intermodal transit hubs.

Question 3: What would you consider the intentional and unintentional consequences of increasing the amount of affordable housing in the City of Oakland?

For Q3 the key informants provided their perspective that aligned with the arguments presented in theme one. 3 out of 4 key informants agreed that the intentional consequence would be less gentrification, homelessness, and displacement. Interviewee # 3 provided additional perspective regarding the creation of more jobs for intentional consequence.

Interviewee #1 - Gentrification and displacement are slowed down considerably because people are living in more rent-stabilized apartments. We would see less homelessness because there was more housing available to the lowest-income households.

Interviewee #2 – Less homelessness (when we build enough)

Interviewee #3 - There is a need to look at the bigger picture and create more jobs—which may entail increasing zoned commercial spaces too.

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Interviewee #4 - Less homelessness, higher quality of life, greater density and positive impacts associated with density such as greater local business economic competitiveness, walkability, tax revenue, impact on greenhouse gasses (denser development if done right are generally considered a positive on a per capita basis).

Assumption 2

For questions 4 and 5 the key informant responses aligned with arguments presented in theme two, but also acknowledged the potential difficulty with potential use of brownfields, infrastructure not suitable for housing, and potential penalties needed for vacant infrastructure.

Question 4: How could the redevelopment of vacant infrastructure reduce the housing supply demand in the City of Oakland?

Q4 had mixed responses on how vacant infrastructure redevelopment could reduce the housing demands.

Interviewee #1 - Using more vacant land for interim housing is a good idea, though very complicated. We could definitely be trying to create more tiny homes and other temporary housing solutions on vacant lots, and perhaps converting vacant storefronts and offices into service centers (most of those commercial spaces aren't well suited to housing, but that could be explored).

Interviewee #2 – Difficult considering the difference elements like cost and land like brownfields.

Interviewee #3 - Any redevelopment program/project must create housing stock but also create jobs.

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Interviewee #4 - Policies should make it more difficult through fines and penalties to leave vacant lots undeveloped and existing homes vacant.

Question 5: In what ways, if any, does lack of resident input impact the redevelopment of vacant infrastructure in the City of Oakland?

Q5 had mixed opinions on community input. There is an agreeance among the key informants that more community is needed but there are things to consider like community member and NIMBY push back.

Interviewee #1 - We need more community and resident engagement in general, so we have a sense of what uses people think are appropriate – but we also have to be careful not to give too much weight to people who just don't want unhoused or low-income people in their communities.

Interviewee #2 - It lessens political will to approve sensible development on public land. Unfortunately, resident input can have unintended effects – the limit the feasibility of constructing new housing.

Interviewee #3 - If you are able to know who the residents will be then it is good to consult them. However, most of the City's "community consultations" is done with the neighboring residents and businesses who will be impacted by a development since they do not really know who the actual resident/occupants will be.

Interviewee #4 - I don't think it is lack of input; the loudest and most oppositional input is through NIMBYism.

Assumption 3

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For questions 6, 7, and 8 the key informant responses aligned with findings presented in theme three of Chapter 2. Updating planning standards and a streamlined process is needed to improve and meet allocations needs.

Question 6: How can updating the City of Oakland’s building and planning standards improve the affordable housing supply?

For Q6 the key informants provided a variety of perspectives on how updating building and planning standards can improve the supply of affordable housing and address the allocation imbalances in the City of Oakland.

Interviewee #1 - We need more proactive code enforcement, so people are living in safe and sound buildings. I think gradually improved seismic, energy efficiency, and other habitability aspects will help with climate resiliency over the long term.

Interviewee #2 - The standards help a little – makes the process more rational and predictable in cost and timing for developers. By right entitlement for affordable would reduce much more uncertainty and cost.

Interviewee #3 - Making sure that affordable housing is a cross-cutting land use policy concern/theme that is addressed in every development project.

Interviewee #4 - Assuming Oakland follows the California Building Code, Oakland should consider amendments to the Code that incentivize denser affordable housing development, such as reducing height and bulk limits, set back requirements, parking requirements. The same with Zoning.

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Question 7: What concerns, if any, do you have regarding SB-35 in order to meet the City of Oakland's affordable housing allocation needs?

All key informants for Q7 had no concerns regarding the usage of SB-35 to meet the affordable housing allocation needs in the City of Oakland. One key informant noted concern for land and funding needed to build sufficient housing.

Interviewee #1 - I don't think I have concerns about SB-35 really, since it's designed to make it easier to build affordable housing in some cases. I do have concerns that Oakland will not find enough land, money and public will to build its new regional affordable housing allocation.

Interviewee #2 – None

Interviewee #3 - No concern. I am for streamlining local review processes.

Interviewee #4 - No concerns other than thinking through mitigation measures identified in the EIR process.

Question 8: What suggestions would you like to share on how the City of Oakland can solve its housing crisis?

For Q8 there were mixed responses, the key informants provided suggestions for solving Oakland's housing crisis.

Interviewee #1 - I would encourage the City Council and Administration to look where things can be simplified, and to prioritize the programs that are going to have the biggest impact rather than always funding the next trendy thing. I think the City can also benefit from pulling together different stakeholders for in-depth, nuanced discussion about solutions as it did in the past with the Housing Equity Road Map and the Mayor's Housing Cabinet. And we should get another

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bond on the city ballot to pay for infrastructure and affordable housing – that might happen in November 2022.

Interviewee #2 – By right entitlement and more funding. More willingness to accept housing at any income level.

Interviewee #3 - No other suggestions.

Interviewee #4 - Use stakeholder consensus building planning processes to bring in the voices of the entire community, not just those in the minority that go to all the public meetings and shout the loudest to advocate for a more narrow, parochial, set of needs based exclusively on self-interest.

Conclusions

The data collection was through a mixed-method research design, which resulted by obtaining thorough results to develop primary findings and supportive suggestions. The surveying questionnaire responses reaching 76 respondents and interviewing 4 key informants were essential in validating the assumptions in the Theory of Change.

Chapter 5: Conclusions and Recommendations

The research question examined in this study is how can affordable housing in the City of Oakland be improved? This study evaluated how changes to land use policies, use of vacant infrastructure, and updating planning standards would mitigate some of the housing crisis in the City of Oakland.

Conclusions

Theory of Change and Assumptions

The theory of change is: The theory of change: IF land use policies in Oakland were reformed to increase affordable housing, IF Oakland redeveloped vacant infrastructure for affordable housing and IF Oakland planning standards were updated in accordance with SB-35 to meet the city's allocation needs, THEN the City of Oakland could mitigate its housing crisis. The conclusions made regarding these assumptions:

Assumption 1: If land use policies in Oakland were reformed to increase affordable housing.

Conclusion:

The majority of the public agreed that reforming land use policies would increase affordable housing in the City of Oakland, but there were neutral feelings regarding to land use reform.

Assumption 2: If Oakland redeveloped vacant infrastructure for affordable housing.

Conclusion:

The research demonstrates that the use of redeveloped vacant infrastructure and community input on vacant infrastructure would be beneficial to increase affordable housing.

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Assumption 3: If Oakland planning standards were updated in accordance with SB-35 to meet the city's allocation needs.

Conclusion:

Lastly, the public expressed mixed thoughts on the impact of updated planning standards to better meet housing allocation needs in the City of Oakland.

The sub-questions for this research study were evaluated and found that the reformed land use policies could increase the affordable housing production in the City of Oakland. The mixed responses from the public regarding the affordability Oakland were in part of the zoning classifications. Vacant infrastructure would decrease the excessive housing demands and would be of better use with more community input. Although, there was a decrease in responses and confidence in ways the City of Oakland housing planning standards could be improved to increase the housing supply.

Based on the qualitative and quantitative data for this study, the impacts of changing current land use policies, uses of vacant infrastructure and planning standards would greatly increase affordable housing, reduce the housing demands, and improve the housing supply in the City of Oakland. Policy changes at the local and state level are critical to meeting allocation needs and solving the housing crisis.

Recommendation 1

Based on the quantitative and qualitative data and findings, one recommendation is that the City of Oakland could update the land use and zoning policies in the drafting the General Plan for 2023-2031. Scholarly literature source reveals that land use and zoning has played a big role in racial inequity and housing crisis. Zoning reform is essential in changing the housing

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landscape (Plan Bay Area 2050). Residential development projects should prioritize affordable housing. City of Oakland should work with more non-profit developers and incentives developers to build affordable housing.

Recommendation 2

A second recommendation would be increasing the use of vacant infrastructure for affordable housing and implementing more financial responsibility for landowners to reduce the amount of dormant vacant infrastructure. In many cities like Oakland vacant infrastructure is left vacant for long periods for growth in land value. Gilgoff, examined the repurposing of vacant infrastructure and having severe penalties will be beneficial in addressing the housing crisis (Gilgoff, 2020). In addition, the City of Oakland should direct more financial responsibility to landowners for vacant infrastructure not being utilized in the best interest of the community.

Recommendation 3

A third recommendation is revising the outdated Housing Element Plan in accordance to SB-35. The City of Oakland Housing Element identifies the existing and anticipated housing need. The city is required to provide adequate zoning and infrastructure for all income levels. The City of Oakland continues to fall short of meeting their housing required need (City of Oakland Housing Element, 2014). Implementing a streamlined process for residential development projects geared toward affordable housing is needed to meet the yearly assessed Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA).

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	Recommendation 1	Recommendation 2	Recommendation 3
Specific	City of Oakland needs to update land use and zoning policies in drafting of the General Plan 2023-2031	City of Oakland needs to increase the use of vacant infrastructure	City of Oakland needs to revise the outdated Housing Element Plan in accordance with SB-35
Measurable	Residential development projects prioritizing affordable housing	Increasing financial responsibility to prevent long term vacant infrastructure	Meeting the yearly assessed Regional Housing Needs Allocation
Achievable	Working with more nonprofit developers and incentivized developers	Updating codes and policies	Implementing streamlined process for residential development projects for affordable housing needs
Realistic	Most area are zoning is for low-density homes resulting in the lack racial equitability	Vacant infrastructure will continue to sit for long duration of time with the growth of land value	The Oakland RHNA sits at roughly 30,000 units over the next 8-10 years
Time-Based	City Administration/Stakeholder support in evaluating current land use structure	Start directing more responsibility to landowners for vacant infrastructure not being utilized in the best interest of the community	Building a sufficient number of housing each year to meet the need

Areas of Further Research

Further research is needed to investigate the City of Oakland's funding pool, examine the use of nonprofit developers and community land trust (CLTs). CLTs can increase land value and redirect the sustaining land to the communities and ensure more affordable housing units are built. Another area is streamlining California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and Environmental Impact Report (EIR) processes. As development projects are put through unnecessary discretionary evaluation procedures. The last area for further research is the development and use of Mixed-Use infrastructure.

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Appendices

APPENDIX A - Survey: Increasing Affordable Housing in the City of Oakland

APPENDIX B - Key Informant Interview: Increasing Affordable Housing in the City of Oakland

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APPENDIX A

Survey: Increasing Affordable Housing in the City of Oakland

Informed Consent: Informed Consent: My name is Tiare' Womack. I am an Executive Master of Public Administration candidate at Golden Gate University. My capstone project is on "Increasing Affordable Housing in the City of Oakland". Your responses are secure, confidential, anonymous and will take less than 10 minutes. If you have further. Questions, please email me at: twomack@my.ggu.edu

Survey Questions:

1. The City of Oakland needs more affordable housing?

Strongly Disagree
Disagree
Neutral
Agree
Strongly Agree

2. The City of Oakland's land use policies reduce access to affordable housing?

Strongly Disagree
Disagree
Neutral
Agree
Strongly Agree

3. The lack of affordability in Oakland is due to the zoning classification in your area?

Strongly Disagree
Disagree
Neutral
Agree
Strongly Agree

4. Have you considered moving from your neighborhood in the past five years?

Yes (Why?)
No

5. Are there vacant buildings or lots in your neighborhood?

Yes
No
Unsure

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6. Redeveloping vacant buildings or lots would be beneficial to your community?

Strongly Disagree
Disagree
Neutral
Agree
Strongly Agree

7. Community members should have more input on what is planned for vacant infrastructure redevelopment?

Strongly Disagree
Disagree
Neutral
Agree
Strongly Agree

8. In what ways, if any can housing planning standards be improved in the City of Oakland?

9. Your Residence Zip Code:

a)

10. Education Level:

a) Some High School
b) High School
c) College Graduate
d) Some College
e) Postgraduate

11. Income:

a) \$28,800.00 - \$32,900.00
b) \$47,950.00 - \$54,800
c) \$76,750.00 - \$87,800
d) \$87,900.00 - \$100,500.00
e) \$105,500.00 - \$120,550.00+

Referral:

If you know a colleague who will be able to help me, kindly forward them this questionnaire or provide their name and contact information below. Thank you very much for your kind support!

APPENDIX B

Key Informant Interview: Increasing Affordable Housing in the City of Oakland

Informed Consent: My name is Tiare' Womack. I am an Executive Master of Public Administration candidate at Golden Gate University. My capstone project is on "Increasing Affordable Housing in the City of Oakland". Your responses are secure, confidential, anonymous and will take less than 20 minutes. If you have further. Questions, please email me at: twomack@my.ggu.edu

Would you please provide me with your:

- a. Education Level
 - b. Profession/Employment
 - c. Place of residence Zip Code
-
1. How does the City of Oakland's land use and zoning policies impact affordable housing? Please explain your answer.
 2. How can affordable housing be increased in the City of Oakland?
 3. What would you consider the intentional and unintentional consequences of increasing the amount of affordable housing in the City of Oakland?
 4. How could the redevelopment of vacant infrastructure reduce the housing supply demand in the City of Oakland?
 5. In what ways, if any, does lack of resident input impact the redevelopment of vacant infrastructure in the City of Oakland?
 6. How can updating the City of Oakland's building and planning standards improve the affordable housing supply?

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7. What concerns, if any, do you have regarding SB-35 in order to meet the City of Oakland's affordable housing allocation needs?

8. What suggestions would you like to share on how the City of Oakland can solve its housing crisis?

Referral:

If you know a colleague who will be able to help me, kindly forward them this questionnaire or provide their name and contact information below. Thank you very much for your kind support!