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# Race, Racial Segregation, and Restrictive Zoning in the SF Bay Area: New Research Findings

**DATE**  
April 19, 2025

**PRESENTER**  
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**AUTHORIAL SUPPORT**  
N/A

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## Overview – The Latest Research!

1. Racial Demographics and Change
2. Patterns of Racial Residential Segregation & Segregated Cities
3. Restrictive Zoning in California and the Bay Area

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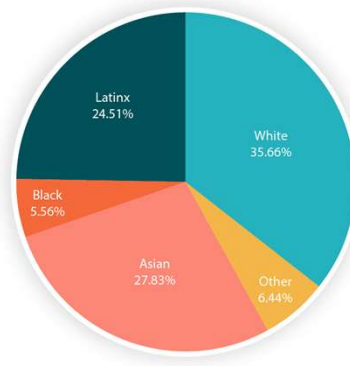
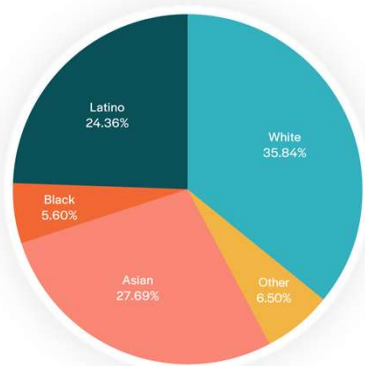
# I. Racial Demographics in the Bay Area

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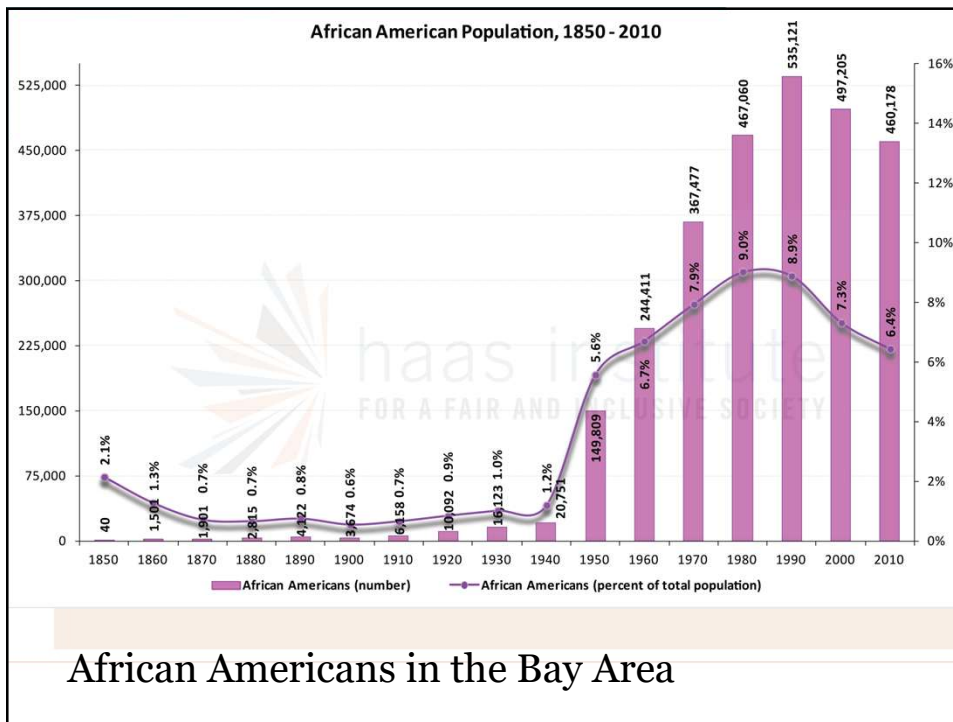
## Racial Composition of the Bay Area

• 2020 Decennial Census

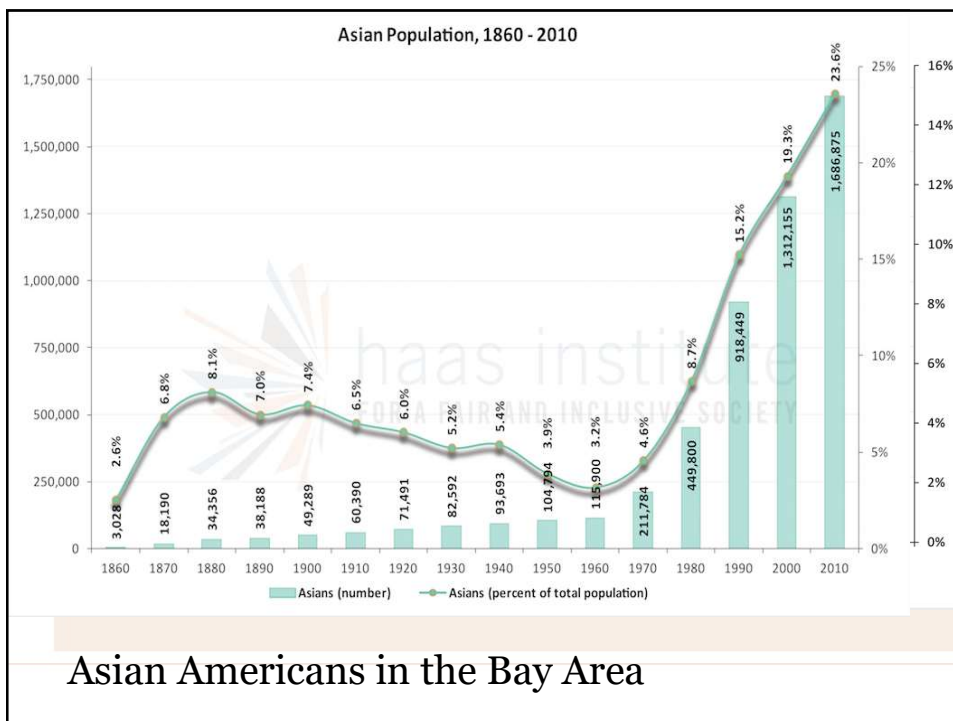
• 2023 ACS 5 Year Estimate



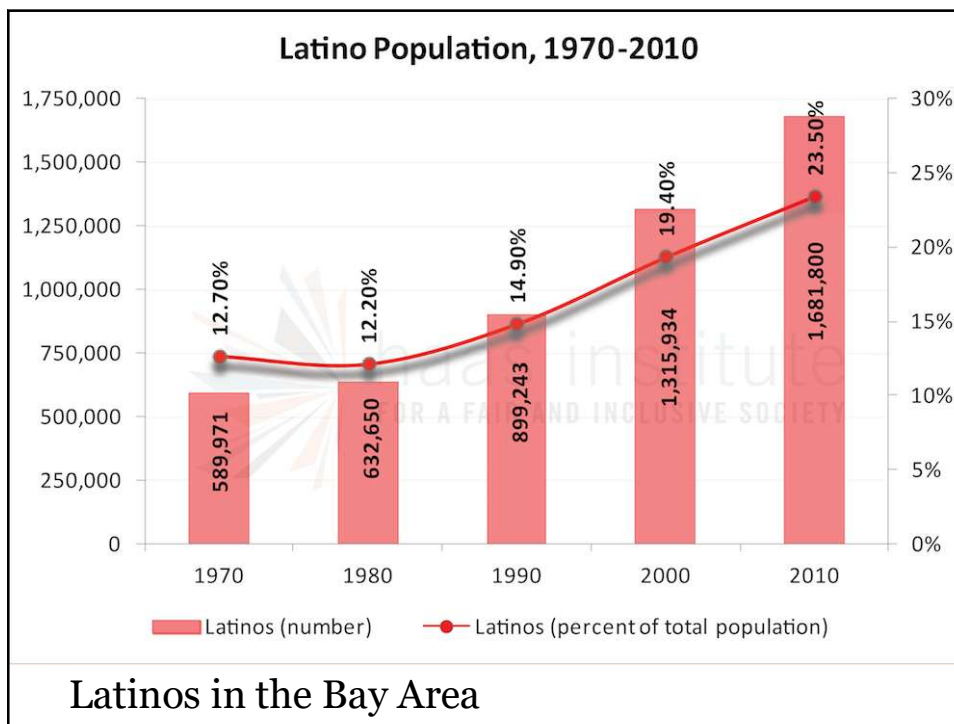
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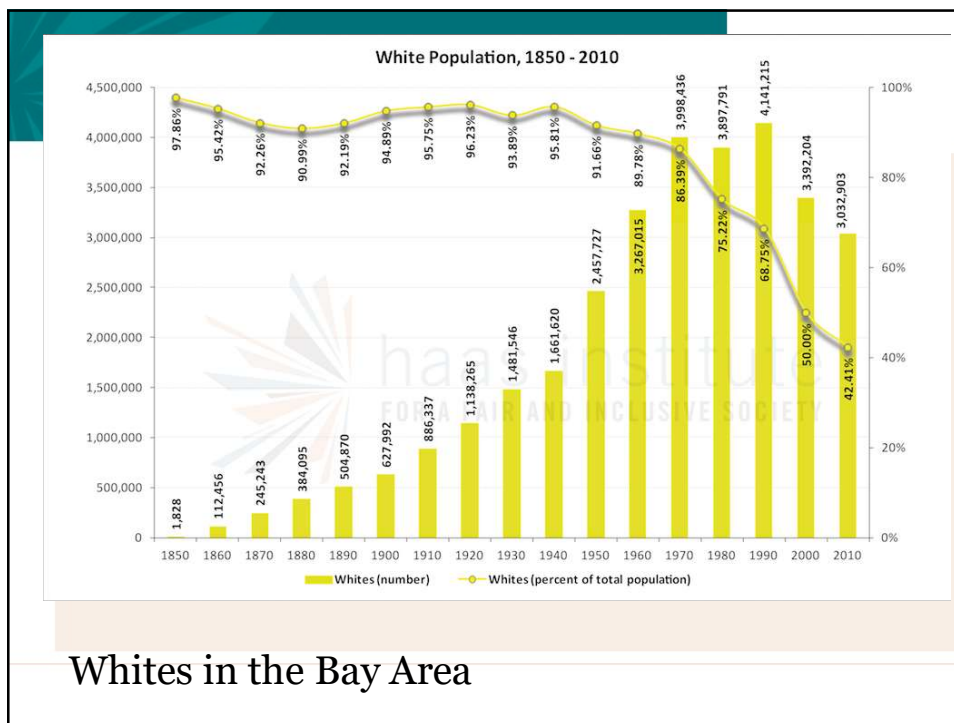
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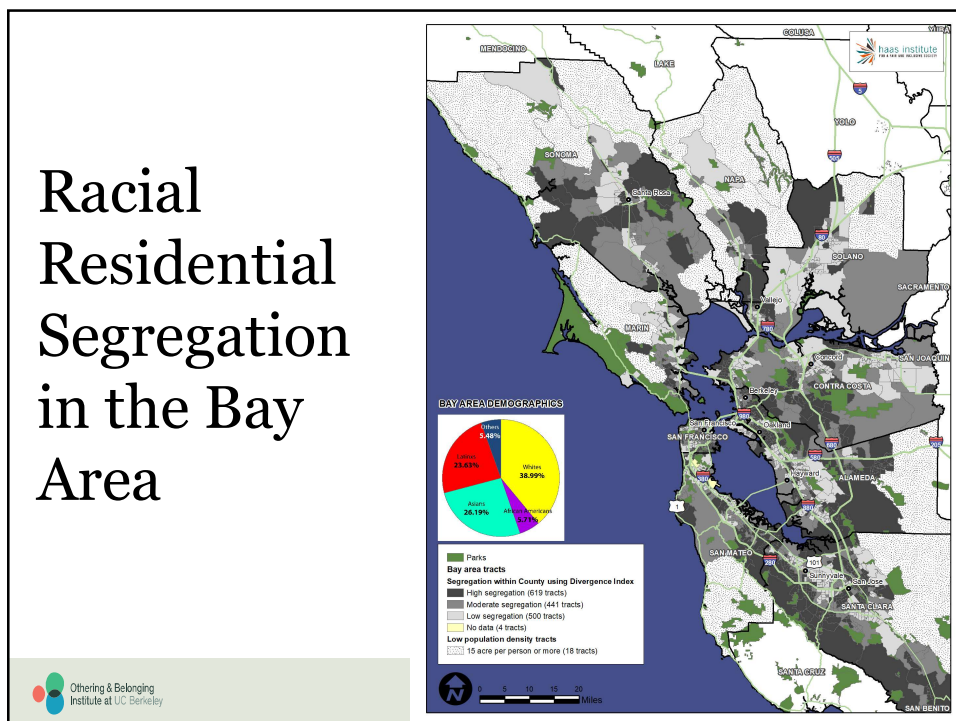
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# Racial Residential Segregation in the Bay Area

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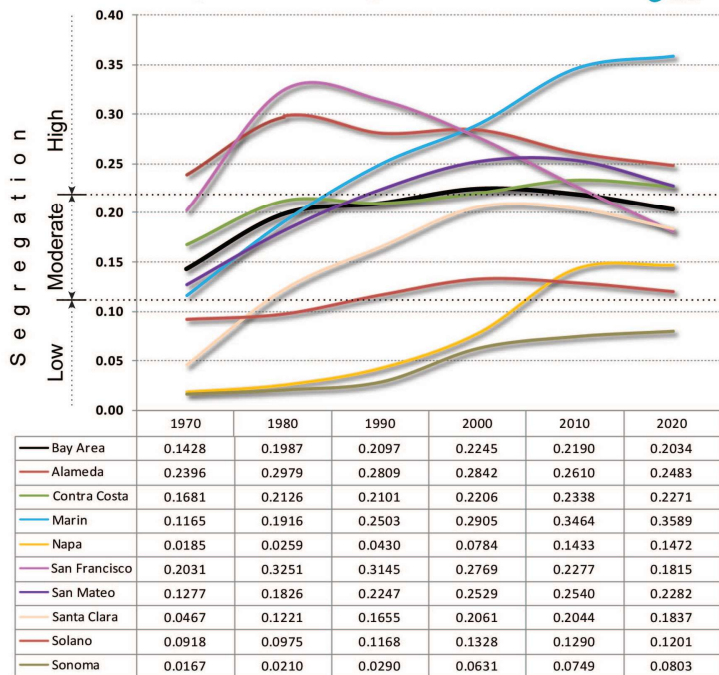
## Key Terms

- **Segregation** – the separation of people in any particular domain (housing, education, public accommodations, employment, occupation, etc.).
- **Racial Segregation** – the separation of people on the basis of race.
- **Racial Residential Segregation** – the spatial separation of people in terms of residence (housing) on the basis of race.
- **Fair Housing** – Derives from the Open Housing Movement/Ordinances, but is principally concerned with racial discrimination and racial segregation in housing.



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Divergence Index: Bay Area and Counties



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**2020 Census**  
**Table 2: Cities with the Highest Levels of Neighborhood Segregation in the Bay Area**


Cities/Towns	Intra-municipal Divergence	Population	Asian (%)	Black (%)	Latino (%)	White (%)	Other (%)	Level of Segregation
Oakland	0.2193	442,444	15.92%	20.69%	28.71%	27.39%	7.30%	High
San Rafael	0.1820	61,712	6.45%	1.57%	33.50%	52.50%	5.99%	High
San Jose	0.1754	1,018,075	38.02%	2.71%	31.04%	23.60%	4.63%	High
Menlo Park	0.1625	32,863	17.00%	2.92%	17.65%	55.02%	7.41%	High
Redwood City	0.1588	84,051	15.96%	1.66%	35.85%	40.34%	6.20%	High
San Francisco	0.1575	873,759	33.67%	5.16%	15.65%	39.05%	6.48%	High
Richmond	0.1434	121,064	14.20%	17.26%	44.73%	17.44%	6.37%	High
South San Francisco	0.0931	65,970	40.64%	1.80%	32.80%	18.10%	6.66%	High
Union City	0.0859	69,624	57.72%	4.27%	21.23%	10.95%	5.83%	High
Dublin	0.0832	73,366	53.23%	3.75%	11.55%	25.26%	6.21%	High
Danville	0.0814	55,877	22.42%	1.00%	8.29%	61.92%	6.38%	High



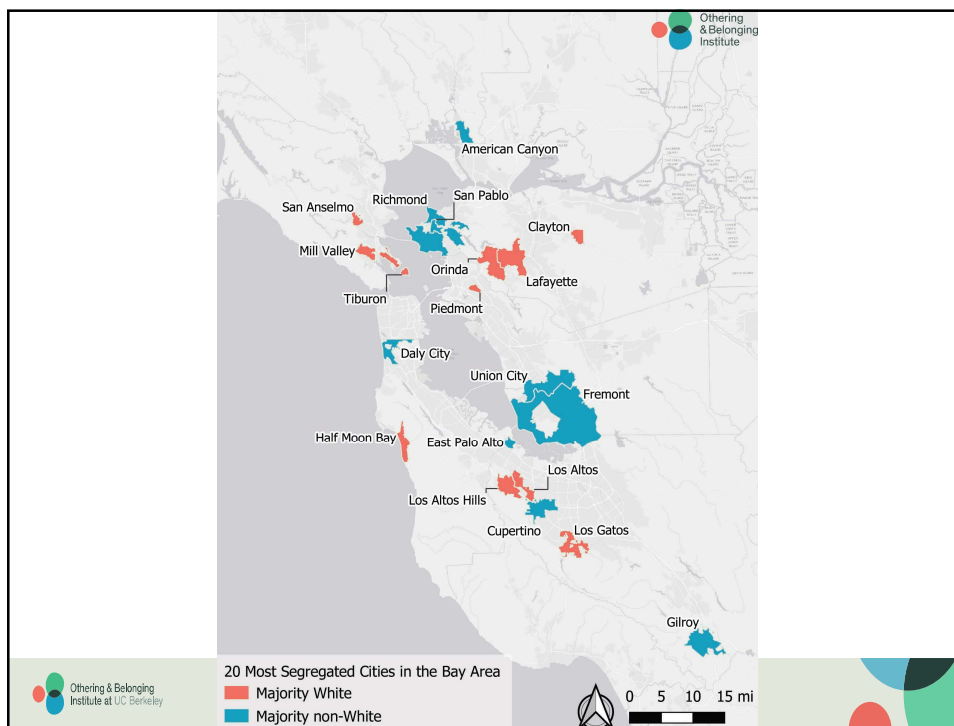
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**Most Regionally Segregated Cities in the Bay Area**

Cities/Towns	2020 Divergence Score	2023 ACS Divergence Score	Asian (%)	Black (%)	Latino (%)	White (%)	Other (%)
East Palo Alto	0.6345	0.5906	5.46%	10.33%	64.74%	9.48%	9.99%
San Anselmo	0.4892	0.4611	3.45%	0.69%	8.79%	79.59%	7.49%
Mill Valley	0.4749	0.5384	5.86%	0.83%	6.22%	80.15%	6.94%
San Pablo	0.4279	0.4831	13.92%	11.38%	61.50%	9.14%	4.06%
Tiburon	0.4248	0.4704	7.55%	0.99%	6.43%	77.73%	7.30%
American Canyon	0.3127	0.4020	33.72%	6.40%	30.65%	21.98%	7.26%
Los Gatos	0.3093	0.3772	19.58%	0.78%	9.03%	63.95%	6.67%
Gilroy	0.3025	0.4286	9.64%	1.97%	57.50%	26.14%	4.75%
Lafayette	0.2899	0.3582	13.04%	0.86%	8.44%	69.45%	8.21%
Orinda	0.2809	0.3451	16.68%	0.90%	6.38%	68.40%	7.64%
Fremont	0.2759	0.3371	63.73%	2.22%	12.59%	16.55%	4.92%
Los Altos Hills	0.2677	0.2824	33.28%	0.29%	4.15%	55.96%	6.31%
Half Moon Bay	0.2666	0.3523	5.48%	0.64%	34.35%	54.95%	4.58%
Clayton	0.2644	0.2942	9.61%	1.86%	12.30%	68.18%	8.04%
Cupertino	0.2467	0.3221	68.33%	0.56%	4.18%	23.04%	3.89%
Daly City	0.2443	0.3627	57.22%	2.27%	23.76%	11.69%	5.06%
Union City	0.2409	0.314	57.72%	4.27%	21.23%	10.95%	5.83%
Los Altos	0.2366	0.2381	34.83%	0.53%	4.65%	53.21%	6.78%
Richmond	0.2366	0.4691	14.20%	17.26%	44.73%	17.44%	6.37%
Piedmont	0.2326	0.2921	19.86%	1.13%	6.53%	62.60%	9.87%



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**Table 7: The Integrated Cities in the Bay Area**

Cities/Towns	Inter-municipal Divergence	Population	Asian (%)	Black (%)	Latino (%)	White (%)	Other (%)	Level of Segregation
Rohnert Park	0.0107	51,871	8.30%	2.04%	27.99%	54.43%	7.25%	Racially Integrated
Windsor	0.0124	27,913	2.71%	0.79%	33.26%	57.09%	6.14%	Racially Integrated
Petaluma	0.0160	62,147	4.63%	1.27%	22.58%	64.78%	6.74%	Racially Integrated
Pinole	0.0212	16,598	25.48%	10.75%	26.69%	29.27%	7.82%	Racially Integrated
Suisun City	0.0234	31,955	18.64%	17.55%	29.34%	24.54%	9.93%	Racially Integrated
Cloverdale	0.0413	10,394	0.98%	0.64%	37.58%	54.68%	6.12%	Racially Integrated


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### Restrictive Zoning - Terms

- There are many varying ways of characterizing the nature of the zoning
- problem. Among them are:
  - restrictive zoning,
  - snob zoning,
  - Exclusionary zoning,
  - low-density zoning,
  - stringent zoning,
  - anti-density zoning, and so on.

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## Major Critiques of Restrictive Zoning

1. They Inflate the Costs of Housing and Development
2. They Cause or Perpetuate Racial and Economic Segregation
3. They Impede Access to Opportunity, and Socioeconomic and Geographic Mobility
4. They Harm Macroeconomic Growth
5. They Cause GHG / Carbon Emissions and Sprawl

## Findings from the California Zoning Atlas

- We find that 95.80% of total residential land area in California is zoned as single-family-only, and 30 percent of all land (including commercial and park space) area is zoned single-family-only, severely constraining the spatial possibilities for denser and more affordable housing.
- When unincorporated regions (which include vast swathes of sparsely populated land) are removed from the calculation, we find that 82% of total residential land area in the state is reserved for single-family housing.

### **Single-Family Zoning in California: A Statewide Analysis**

A California Zoning Atlas Report

PUBLICATION | MAY 22, 2024 |  
BY STEPHEN MENENDIAN, SHAHAN SHAHID NAWAZ & SAMIR GAMBHIR

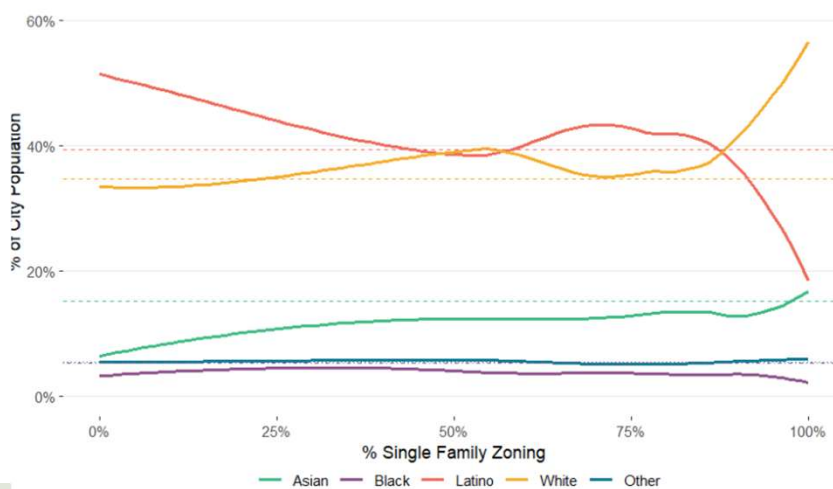
## Findings from the California Zoning Atlas

- Single-family-only zoning averages 77.82% of residential land across 519 municipal and county jurisdictions, with a median of 83.93%.
- A total of 91 (51 incorporated and 40 unincorporated) jurisdictions in California have reserved 95% or more of their residential areas for single-family only housing units, effectively barring multi-family housing throughout those jurisdictions.
- The racial impacts are exclusionary: Jurisdictions with more restrictive zoning have fewer non-white residents. Although California is only 35 percent white, cities above 96 percent single-family-only zoning are nearly 55 percent white.

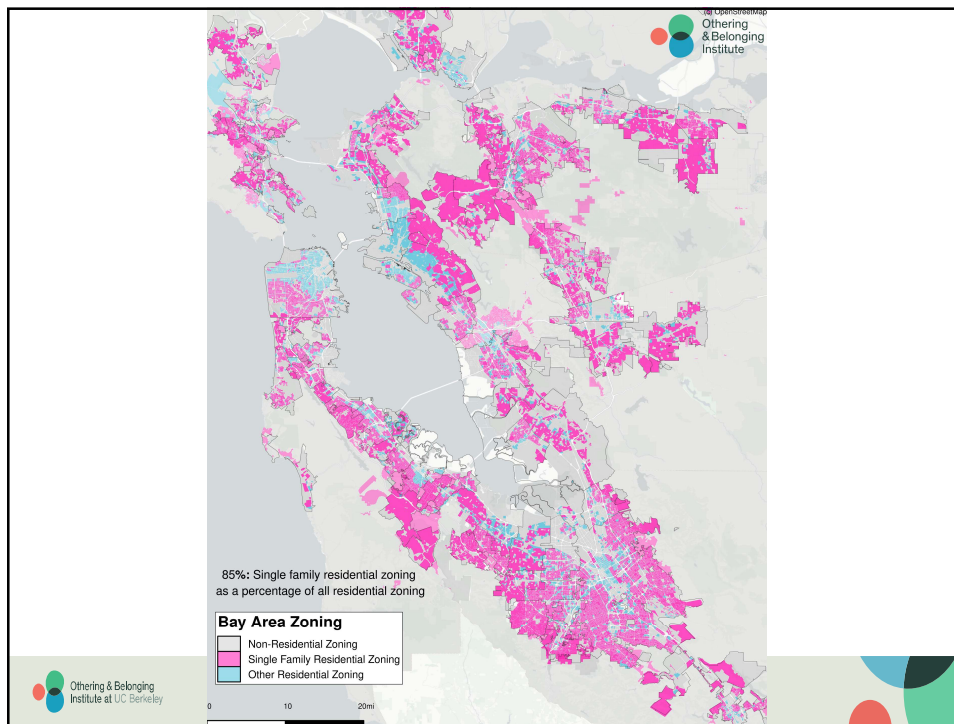


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Figure 3: Single-Family Zoning and Racial Composition (Horizontal lines show statewide racial percentage)



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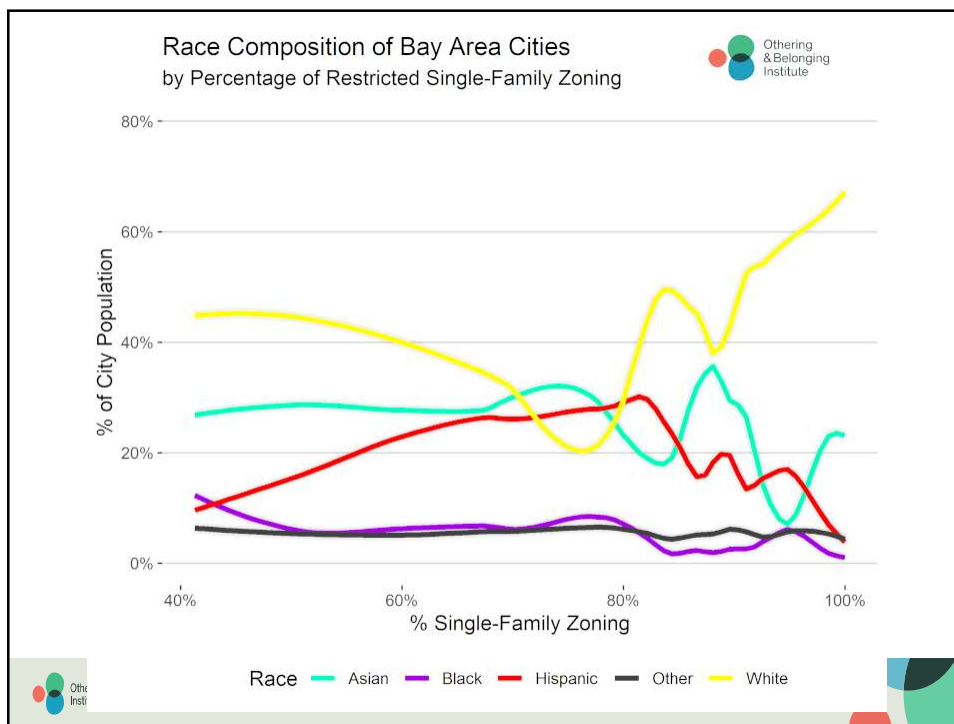
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### Restrictive Zoning

Table 1: Cities by Single-Family Zoning Percentage

40-75%	75-90%	90-100%
Albany	Belmont	Antioch
Berkeley	Burlingame	Brentwood
Campbell	Concord	Clayton
Dublin	Daly City	Cupertino
Emeryville	East Palo Alto	Danville
Foster City	El Cerrito	Hillsborough
Hayward	Fremont	Lafayette
Hercules	Gilroy	Livermore
Larkspur	Half Moon Bay	Los Altos
Milpitas	Menlo Park	Los Gatos
Mountain View	Millbrae	Martinez
Oakland	Morgan Hill	Mill Valley
Pittsburg	Newark	Monte Sereno
Redwood City	Novato	Moraga
Richmond	Palo Alto	Oakley
San Mateo	Pleasant Hill	Orinda
San Francisco	San Bruno	Pacifica
San Pablo	San Carlos	Piedmont
Santa Clara	San Jose	Pinole
South San Francisco	San Leandro	Pleasanton
Sunnyvale	San Rafael	San Anselmo
	San Ramon	Saratoga
	Union City	
	Walnut Creek	

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### Single-Family Zoning & Racial Residential Segregation


Table 2: City Composition by Single-Family Zoning Percentage


	40-75%	75-90%	90-100%	All cities with measured zoning	Bay Area Total
Within-City Segregation	0.15	0.13	0.04	0.13	NA
Divergence from Bay Area	0.11	0.13	0.21	0.13	NA
% White	34%	33%	53%	36%	40%
% Black	8%	3%	5%	6%	6%
% Hispanic	22%	26%	16%	23%	24%
% Asian	30%	33%	21%	30%	26%
% Other	6%	5%	5%	5%	5%
Population	2,679,078	2,421,052	803,597	5,903,727	7,675,798
Number	21	24	22	67	NA

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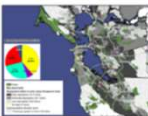


## Racial Segregation in the San Francisco Bay Area

PUBLICATIONS   


Segregation is one of our nation's most enduring and intractable problems. More than 60 years since the Supreme Court's landmark *Brown v. Board of Education* decision denounced racial segregation in primary and secondary public schools, and 50 years since the enactment of the federal Fair Housing Act, our neighborhoods and schools have yet to reflect the rich diversity of our nation as a whole. Given the seriousness of the problem of racial segregation as a cause of racial inequality and the complexities in understanding the nature of this problem, the Haas Institute is launching a series of briefs that will attempt to illuminate these patterns and demystify the reality of segregation in the San Francisco Bay Area.

[Part 1: Segregation](#)



In the first brief, we present a series of detailed maps illustrating segregation across the region, within each of the nine Bay Area counties, and in its major metropolitan areas. Our goal is that readers in the Bay Area, for the first time, will have a clear portrait of the reality and extent of the racial segregation in their communities. We highlight and discuss the varying levels of residential racial segregation within the region and show which communities and neighborhoods are the most segregated, and the most integrated.

[Part 2: Demographics](#)



In our second brief we disaggregate and untangle patterns of segregation into specific patterns of racial demographics. We examine the unique patterns of racial distribution in the San Francisco Bay region, and across major metropolitan areas. In particular, part two of this series illustrates the distribution of white,