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HAAS INSTITUTE PUBLISHES REPORT ANALYZING CHANGING DEMOGRAPHICS AND HOUSING IN RICHMOND, CALIFORNIA

UC Berkeley's Haas Institute finds patterns of gentrification in some Richmond neighborhoods, and an overall drop in the city's African American population.

BERKELEY CA – The new research, conducted by the Haas Institute for a Fair and Inclusive Society, finds that gentrification is in its early and middle stages in some areas of Richmond, raising the susceptibility to displacement of vulnerable residents. The report, *Belonging and Community Health in Richmond; An Analysis of Changing Demographics and Housing*, also notes that the city's African American population fell by 12,500 people between 2000 and 2013, while the Latino and Asian American populations increased and white populations have remained stable. Thirty-seven percent of total renters in Richmond earn less than \$35,000 annually and spend more than 30% of their earnings on housing. The authors, Eli Moore, Samir Gambhir, and Phuong Tseng, conclude that “these facts raise concern that if regional trends of accelerating housing prices and persistent inequality hit Richmond, a substantial part of the city could be vulnerable”.

The Haas Institute held a housing summit in Richmond on February 20, 2015, to present the research and host discussion with community leaders, housing experts, city staff, advocates, and 100 attendees. Representatives from the City of Richmond, the City of Oakland, Tenants Together, Causa Justa/Just Cause, The Safe Return Project, and UC Berkeley presented data, findings, and testimonies about the rapidly changing housing market and demographic composition of Richmond, and local policy options. The presentations were designed to inform and educate both community members and officials on what can be done to alleviate the housing burden. Topics included the historic role of public policy in perpetuating segregation, eviction and foreclosures, tenants rights, gentrification, belonging and community, and community health.

Maurice Weeks, of the community group ACCE, presented a plan the city is considering to partner with Community Development Financial Institutions to buy distressed mortgages and refinance them to allow families at risk of foreclosure stay in their home. Leah Simon-Weisberg, of Tenants Together, supported the city council's recent decision to develop a Just Cause policy and said “some cities have [a] majority of renters, but they have little protection from rent increases.” Anne



Omura, an attorney who defends tenants from unjust evictions, summarized the goal of the summit this way: “We shouldn’t wait, we should work to get a law passed now to preserve the Richmond community.”

Link: <http://diversity.berkeley.edu/richmondhousingsummit>

[Download the report here.](#)

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