

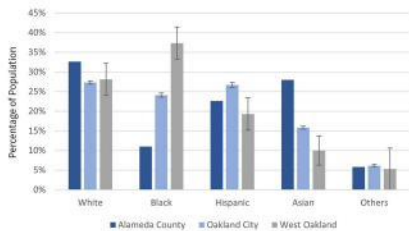
HOMELESS ENCAMPMENTS, SPATIAL STUDY - WEST OAKLAND

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CP201(A) - Fall 2022

The latest 2022 Point-in-Time Count reports that more than half of Alameda County's unhoused population live in Oakland. Homelessness jumped 24% in Oakland over the past three years - from 4,071 in 2019 to 5,055 in 2022. With two-third of the unhoused population being unsheltered, Oakland is now known to be a 'tent city', witnessing high concentration of homeless encampments.

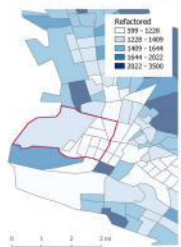
With histories of red-lining and targeted subprime lending, the historically black neighborhoods in West Oakland are home to many large long-standing homeless encampments. The Encampment Management Policy is sweeping away these encampments, such as the Wood Street Encampment, to the outskirts of the city. These encampment were strategically located to minimise visibility and maximise access to services. This study thus aims to examine the spatial dynamics of encampments - where they are located, the characteristics of neighborhoods where there are high concentrations of encampments and how location of the encampments is influenced by neighborhood factors.

Race and Ethnicity



Source: American Community Survey (ACS) 2016, 5-year estimates, Table B03002 (Race and Ethnicity)

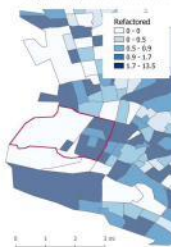
Low Median Gross Rent



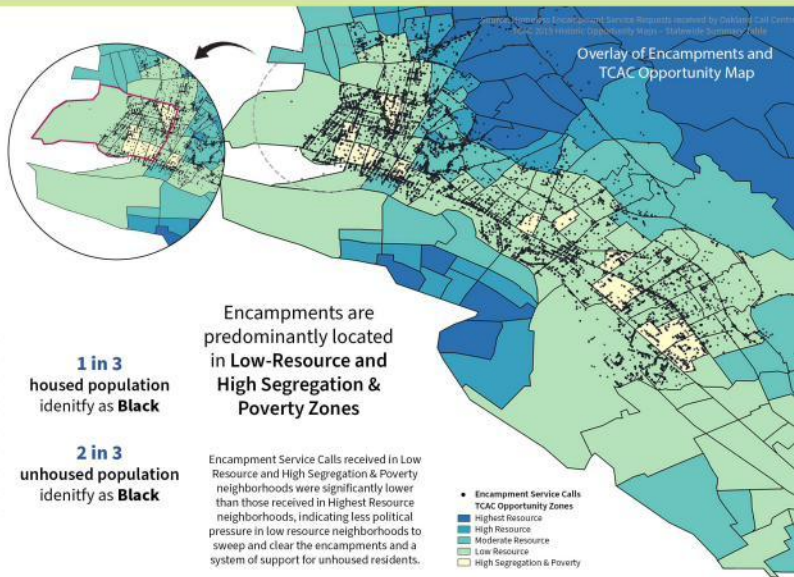
Low Median Income



High Negative Income



Source: ACS 2016, 5-year estimates, Table B25064 (Median Gross Rent), Table S1903 (Median Income), Table S2503 (Negative Income)



Encampments are predominantly located in **Low-Resource and High Segregation & Poverty Zones**

1 in 3 housed population identify as **Black**
2 in 3 unhoused population identify as **Black**

Encampment Service Calls received in Low Resource and High Segregation & Poverty neighborhoods were significantly lower than those received in Highest Resource neighborhoods, indicating less political pressure in low resource neighborhoods to sweep and clear the encampments and a system of support for unhoused residents.

CONCLUSION

Researchers have claimed that at a regional scale, encampments are most prominent in areas with high housing costs. But within a city, encampments can be found in neighborhoods of low rents, low incomes and high rate of evictions. West Oakland depicts a range of neighborhood characteristics that impact the location of encampments.

Continuing legacy of racial segregation of neighborhoods

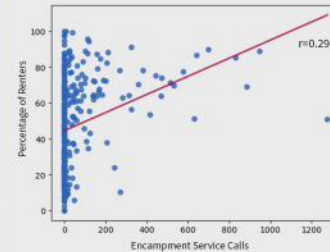
Over the years, majority of the unhoused population identify themselves as black and thus location of encampments is a good indicator to observe contemporary patterns of spatial segregation. Significantly higher concentration of encampments in high segregation and poverty neighborhoods, compared to negligible concentration in the highest resource neighborhoods (that are observed to be predominantly white single-family neighborhoods), indicates multiple layers of socio-spatial segregation.

Residence Prior to Homelessness

Low-income residents of West Oakland are constantly exposed to the threat of eviction. Post eviction they tend to reside close to their prior neighborhoods. It has been observed that housed residents tend to criminalize encampments in the perception that the unhoused population is coming from other cities. It is important to spread awareness that not only are most unhoused residents from the Alameda County but may even belong to neighborhoods around.

**More Renters
More Evictions
More Encampments!**

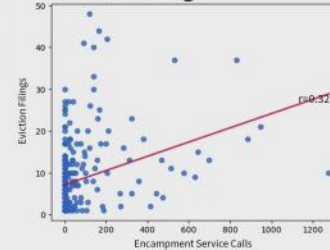
% of Renters



Source: Homeless Encampment Service Requests received by Oakland Call Center American Community Survey 2016, 5-year estimates, Table B25003

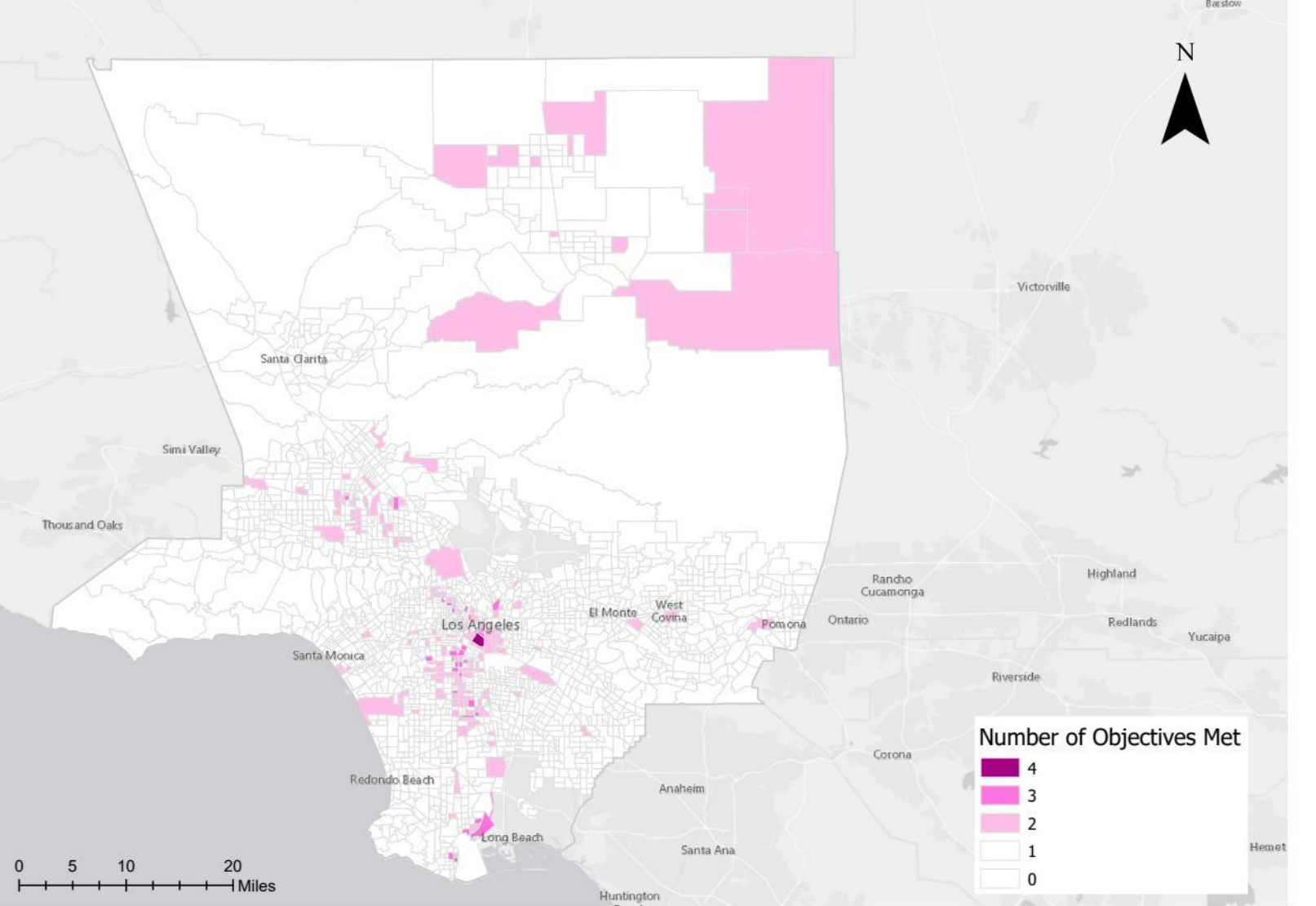
There is a positive correlation between high percentage of rented houses and presence of homeless encampments. Many advocates for home ownership have indicated the impact of ownership on maintaining the 'quality' of neighborhood and surroundings, and how renters are less likely to be involved in local politics.

Eviction Filings



Source: Homeless Encampment Service Requests received by Oakland Call Center Tract Proprietary Valid 2000-2016 Table - 2018 data (Eviction Statistics)

The positive correlation between location of encampments and eviction filings indicates that resident tend to live / set up temporary shelter in the same / nearby neighborhoods after eviction. This may also be due to the likelihood of unhoused residents living closer to family and friends for their assistance. Additionally, education on eviction laws and right to counsel to tenants in these neighborhoods needs to be strengthened.



Esri, HERE, NPS, Esri, HERE, Garmin, USGS, EPA, NPS

Best Locations for Investment in New Resources

Amba Gupta
2/24/2024