



DATE: September 29, 2026
TO: Mayor and Members of the City Council
FROM: Kristin Pollot, AICP, Planning and Development Services Director
Hector Rojas, Long-Range Planning Manager
**SUBJECT: STUDY SESSION ON RENTER PROTECTION AND HOUSING STABILITY MEASURES
AND DIRECTION ON NEXT STEPS**

RECOMMENDATION

Receive a presentation regarding rent stabilization, just cause for eviction, tenant anti-harassment protections, a tenant right to counsel, and the potential administrative and fiscal implications of these policies; direct staff to proceed with the Market and Feasibility Study identified in Housing Element Program F 1.1.3; and direct staff to return to the City Council with findings, policy options, legal considerations, and preliminary staffing and fiscal implications for Council consideration and direction before completion of draft ordinance(s).

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION

Housing Element Program F 1.1.3 directs the City Council to consider rent stabilization, just cause for eviction, tenant anti-harassment protections, and tenant right to counsel policies through a phased process beginning with a Market and Feasibility Study. The City's Housing Element data shows that renters comprise a substantial share of Vallejo households and experience significant housing-cost burdens. Although the data establishes a preliminary baseline for need, it does not identify the number of rental units that would be covered under a specific ordinance. The July 2026 memorandum sent to Council by staff introduced the policy approaches used by other jurisdictions, and the Vallejo Housing Justice Coalition (VHJC) has since submitted a requested framework for rent stabilization and just cause protections (see Attachment 5).

Local renter-protection programs can require substantial staffing, technology, legal support, hearings, enforcement, and ongoing administration. The extent of these obligations depends on the policy framework, number of covered units, anticipated workload, and desired service level. Completing the Market and Feasibility Study before drafting an ordinance would allow the City Council to evaluate Vallejo-specific market conditions, available community input, policy options, legal considerations, and likely staffing and fiscal impacts before selecting a policy framework and directing preparation of any ordinance(s).

BACKGROUND AND DISCUSSION

The City Council adopted Vallejo's 2023-2031 Housing Element on December 30, 2024, and the California Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) certified it on December 31, 2024. Housing Element Program F 1.1.3 (Renter Protection and Housing Stability) directs the City Council to consider local regulations in four policy areas that would provide protections beyond those established by state law, with the objective of protecting residents from displacement without unnecessarily constraining new housing development.

**Subject: STUDY SESSION ON RENTER PROTECTION AND HOUSING STABILITY MEASURES
AND DIRECTION ON NEXT STEPS**

The four policy areas are distinct but related. Rent stabilization limits the amount and frequency of rent increases for covered rental units. Just-cause protections limit tenancy terminations to specified at-fault and no-fault grounds and may require relocation assistance for certain no-fault evictions. Tenant anti-harassment protections prohibit specified coercive, retaliatory, or intimidating conduct that interferes with a tenant's lawful occupancy or exercise of their rights. A tenant right-to-counsel program provides eligible tenants with resources relating to legal advice or representation in eviction proceedings or other covered housing disputes.

Housing Element Program F 1.1.3 identifies the four related actions and timeframes:

Table 1: Housing Element Program F 1.1.3 Actions and Timeframes

Actions:	Timeframe:
Market and Feasibility Study	June 2025
Rent Stabilization and Just Cause for Eviction Ordinances	Council consideration by September 2025
Tenant Anti-Harassment and Right to Counsel Ordinances	Council consideration by June 2026
Program Evaluation and Additional Measures	Early 2028 through January 2029

The Housing Element's initial target dates for completing the Market and Feasibility Study and presenting the four policy areas for Council consideration have passed. At the time the Housing Element was adopted, the Planning and Development Services Department did not have identified funding available to complete the Market and Feasibility Study. Staff subsequently incorporated the study into the consultant scope and budget for the grant-funded Downtown Vallejo Specific Plan (DVSP) Update. On September 8, 2026, the City Council authorized the consultant agreement for the DVSP Update, which should allow work to begin in October 2026.

July 2026 Memorandum

On July 24, 2026, staff transmitted a memorandum (Attachment 1) to the City Council summarizing California's renter-protection framework and comparing rent stabilization and just cause programs in Hayward, Concord, Richmond, Novato, and Antioch. The memorandum and its two comparison matrices were informational and did not recommend a particular ordinance. They summarized the protections established under state law and compared key provisions of selected local ordinances, including coverage, allowable rent increases, eviction standards, relocation assistance, notice requirements, and administrative procedures. This staff report builds on that work by adding Vallejo housing data, the VHJC tenant survey and September 10th policy request, and information regarding the staffing and cost of operating local programs.

State and Local Tenant Protections

California law establishes statewide protections and also defines the extent of local authority. The main components relevant to the Council's discussion are summarized below.

Table 2: State and Local Renter-Protection Laws and Programs

Law or Policy Level:	General Function:	Relevance to Vallejo:
California Tenant Protection Act (AB 1482)	For many covered units, generally limits annual rent increases to 5% plus the applicable change in the cost of living or 10%, whichever is lower, and requires just cause after the applicable occupancy period.	Provides the statewide baseline. Statutory exemptions include qualifying newer housing, certain affordable housing, specified owner-occupied duplexes, and certain single-family homes and condominiums when ownership and notice requirements are met.

Subject: STUDY SESSION ON RENTER PROTECTION AND HOUSING STABILITY MEASURES AND DIRECTION ON NEXT STEPS

Costa-Hawkins Rental Housing Act	Limits which units and rental rates may be subject to local rent stabilization and generally permits an owner to establish an initial rent following a lawful vacancy.	Any Vallejo rent-stabilization ordinance must operate within these limits unless state law changes.
Ellis Act	Preserves an owner's right to withdraw residential accommodations from the rental market while allowing local regulation of specified procedures and tenant protections.	A local ordinance may establish notices, relocation requirements, re-occupancy rights, and related procedures within state-law limits.
Local Renter-Protection Programs	May establish protections beyond the state baseline where authorized, including lower rent limits, earlier or broader just-cause coverage, relocation assistance, notice filing, registration, petitions, hearings, and enforcement within limitations.	The City can determine the local policy design and must fund and administer any local functions it creates.
Note: These are simplified summaries for policy discussion and are not complete statements of state law.		

Vallejo Rental Housing Conditions

The Housing Element provides a citywide baseline that can be considered alongside the experiences documented by VHJC. Because the data sources use different years, the figures should be treated as preliminary conditions rather than a current 2026 rental inventory.

Table 3: Selected Vallejo Housing Indicators

Indicator:	Housing Element Data:	Source:
Total Housing Stock	44,832 units	2021 California Department of Finance (DOF)
Renter-Occupied Households	18,709 households (44.5% of occupied households)	2015-2019 American Community Survey (ACS)
Single-Family Housing	31,470 units (70.2% of housing stock)	2021 California DOF
Multifamily Housing (2-4 units)	4,863 units (10.8% of housing stock)	2021 California DOF
Multifamily Housing (5 or more units)	7,141 units (15.9% of housing stock)	2021 California DOF
Mobile Homes	1,358 units (3.0% of housing stock)	2021 California DOF
Cost-Burdened Renter Households	10,463 households; 55.9% of renters	2015-2019 ACS
Severely Cost-Burdened Renter Households	5,875 households; 31.4% of renters	2015-2019 ACS
Housing More than 30 Years Old	36,897 units; 81.7% of housing stock	2015-2019 ACS
Housing More than 50 Years Old	19,922 units; 44.1% of housing stock	2015-2019 ACS
Source: Vallejo Housing Element, Housing Needs Assessment Tables 2-11, 2-17, 2-18, and 2-21.		

More recent data suggests that renter cost burdens remain significant and may have increased. A September 2025 San Francisco Chronicle analysis of 2024 U.S. Census Bureau estimates reported that approximately 71% of Vallejo renter households paid at least 30% of their income toward housing costs. This was the highest reported share among Bay Area cities with at least 10,000 rental homes for which data was available, compared with approximately 66% in Solano County and 56% across the Bay Area. These annual estimates are not directly comparable to the Housing Element's 2015-2019 five-year ACS estimates and are subject to margins of error and year-to-year sampling variability. Nevertheless, they indicate that renter cost burden remains an important local condition that should be updated and evaluated through the Market and Feasibility Study.

Subject: STUDY SESSION ON RENTER PROTECTION AND HOUSING STABILITY MEASURES AND DIRECTION ON NEXT STEPS

Based on the data above, the 18,709 renter-occupied households provide an initial indication of the potential scale of a broadly applicable just-cause or rental-registration program. This figure does not include vacant rental units and may not capture informal, hotel, or unpermitted tenancies. Vallejo also has approximately 12,004 units in multifamily structures containing two or more units. This is a gross structural estimate that counts all units based solely on the type of building in which they are located, without accounting for whether individual units are rented or owner-occupied, when they were constructed, or whether a legal exemption applies. It therefore should not be treated as the number of units that would be subject to rent stabilization.

The Housing Element also identifies conditions relevant to renter stability. Renters account for a disproportionate share of overcrowded households (55.9% of renters compared to 31.8% of homeowners), and areas of elevated overcrowding and displacement vulnerability are concentrated in portions of central and western Vallejo, including areas near the Ferry Terminal and White Slough. Vallejo also has the oldest housing stock among incorporated Solano County jurisdictions. These conditions are relevant both to tenant habitability concerns and to the need for procedures that allow necessary maintenance, rehabilitation, and a constitutionally adequate return for affected property owners.

VHJC Tenant Survey and Report

In July 2026, VHJC and Urban Habitat published “The Right to Thrive: Tenant-Led Housing Justice in Vallejo, California” (Attachment 4). The report presents a community-based tenant survey, resident testimony, and recommendations for rent stabilization, just cause for eviction, tenant anti-harassment protections, a tenant right to counsel, and related housing strategies, including community land trusts. The survey collected 319 responses between November 2023 and July 2024, including 279 responses submitted online and 40 collected in person. Respondents came from Vallejo’s four ZIP codes; 277 identified as renters and 29 identified as homeowners.

Table 4: Selected Findings from the VHJC Survey

Survey Topic:	Finding Reported by VHJC:
Support for Renter Protections	Approximately 75% to 95% overall support for the policies presented, with support generally highest among renters.
Housing Conditions	53.6% of respondents reported that issues such as pests, rodents, or illegal activity were “a big problem” or “a little bit of a problem”. Respondents also discussed mold, plumbing, broken appliances, maintenance, and safety.
Reported Rents	Among 268 respondents answering the question, the average reported monthly rent was \$1,385.22. VHJC cautions that the survey did not collect household size or number of earners and could not establish household rent burden.
Reported Rent Increases	Among 61 respondents providing a percentage, online respondents reported an average annual increase of 12% and in-person respondents reported 6%. Other respondents reported dollar increases or no increase, making responses difficult to compare.
Supportive Services	The most frequently selected priorities were safety (74.6%), affordable housing and alternative housing models (69.9%), and tenant associations (54.9%).

The report provides important information about the experiences and priorities of participating residents but should not be treated as a statistically representative survey of all Vallejo renters. VHJC identifies several limitations, including a largely online, self-selected sample recruited through its networks, social media, events, food distribution, and apartment outreach; incomplete responses to some questions and differing response formats for reported rent increases; possible response bias and limited information for evaluating certain findings by race, ethnicity, household size, or household composition; and insufficient household information to calculate rent burden from the survey’s reported rent and income responses.

**Subject: STUDY SESSION ON RENTER PROTECTION AND HOUSING STABILITY MEASURES
AND DIRECTION ON NEXT STEPS**

The Housing Element data and VHJC survey serve different but complementary purposes. The Housing Element provides a broader citywide baseline, while the VHJC report documents the experiences and priorities of participating tenants. The Market and Feasibility Study that is called for by Housing Element Program F 1.1.3 can update the citywide data, test preliminary coverage estimates, and incorporate available community information into the policy analysis.

Issues Requiring Additional Analysis

The policy decisions related to just-cause and rent stabilization are interconnected. Coverage affects the fee base and administrative workload; the rent formula affects petition activity; and enforcement expectations affect staffing, legal support, and cost. The principal questions for the Market and Feasibility Study called for in Housing Element Program F 1.1.3 include:

- Covered Units: How many units would be fully covered, partially covered, or exempt under each policy option based on tenure, structure type, construction date, ownership, affordability restrictions, and state law?
- Legal Authority: How would the proposed policies interact with the Tenant Protection Act, Costa-Hawkins, the Ellis Act, mobile-home law, hotel regulations, due-process requirements, and other applicable laws?
- Rent Regulation: What are the implications of alternative rent formulas, a December 2024 base-rent date, regulation of utilities and fees, fair-return requirements, and tenant rent-reduction petitions?
- Eviction Protections: What eviction grounds, cure periods, relocation benefits, notice requirements, tenant safeguards, re-occupancy rights, and remedies are legally and operationally supportable?
- Administration and Enforcement: Would the City use staff, contractors, hearing officers, a rent board, the City Council, a combination or private enforcement? Would enforcement be complaint based or proactive?
- Fiscal Sustainability: What start-up and ongoing costs would result, what fee base could legally support the program, and what General Fund exposure or subsidy could remain?
- Housing-Market Effects: How could policy options affect tenants, property owners, maintenance, rehabilitation, rental investment, conversion, and new housing production?
- Related Protections: How should anti-harassment and right-to-counsel programs relate to rent stabilization and just cause, and what services, eligibility, providers, and funding would they require?

Administrative and Fiscal Considerations

The administrative demands of renter-protection programs vary considerably. A limited program may emphasize education, referrals, mediation, and complaint-based enforcement. A more comprehensive program may include:

- Annual rental registration, billing, fee collection, data management, and compliance review.
- Review and retention of eviction, relocation, withdrawal, buyout, and rent-increase notices.

**Subject: STUDY SESSION ON RENTER PROTECTION AND HOUSING STABILITY MEASURES
AND DIRECTION ON NEXT STEPS**

- Landlord fair-return petitions, tenant rent-reduction petitions, administrative hearings, and appeals.
- Investigation and enforcement of rent, eviction, harassment, registration, and notice requirements.
- Public information, counseling, language access, forms, workshops, and dedicated phone or email assistance.
- Legal support, hearing officers, software, consultants, and contracts for tenant legal services or mediation.

The City of San Pablo's July 2024 "Fiscal Analysis of a Rent Stabilization and Tenant Protections Ordinance" (Attachment 6) provides a useful comparison. In the analysis, RSG, Inc. evaluated staffing, budgets, units, fees, and program responsibilities in five operating programs and estimated the cost of a potential program that was contemplated through a ballot measure, but failed to gather enough signatures for the November 2024 election. The analysis classified programs by regulatory capacity: low-capacity programs rely more heavily on limited or reactive services; moderate-capacity programs provide moderately proactive enforcement and outreach; and high-capacity programs provide more comprehensive services and enforcement.

Table 5: Selected Local Renter-Protection Program Staffing and Cost

Jurisdiction:	Capacity:	FTEs:	Units Administered:	Annual Budget:	Cost Per Unit:
East Palo Alto	Low	2+ temporary staff	2,500	\$615,000	\$246
Hayward	Low	3.5	11,580	\$642,000	\$55
San Pablo estimate	Moderate	5	5,608	\$1.21 million	\$215
Alameda	Moderate	7.5	16,579	\$1.99 million	\$120
Richmond	High	14	18,000	\$3.00 million	\$167
Berkeley	High	26	25,000	\$7.51 million	\$300

Source: City of San Pablo Fiscal Analysis, Tables 1 and 12. Operating-program budgets generally reflect fiscal year 2023-24; the San Pablo figures are estimates. Unit counts are approximate and include different categories of fully and partially covered or registered units. Costs are not directly comparable because responsibilities and service levels differ.

For San Pablo, RSG estimated approximately five FTEs and \$1.21 million in annual costs to administer a moderate-capacity program serving approximately 5,608 rental units. The estimate included program management, analysts, administrative support, City Attorney and Finance time, registry software, hearing officers, consultants, translation, outreach, and other operations. RSG also reported that Concord anticipated approximately \$700,000 in start-up costs and \$850,000 in annual operating costs, excluding inflation.

Richmond provides a relevant preliminary comparison for Vallejo. Vallejo's approximately 18,709 renter-occupied households are similar in scale to Richmond's approximately 18,000 registered rental units. Richmond's program also includes a 60% of CPI rent formula and a broad combination of rent stabilization, just cause, registration, petitions, hearings, counseling or legal assistance, and proactive enforcement. RSG reported approximately 14 FTEs and a \$3 million annual budget, or approximately \$167 per registered unit, for Richmond's high-capacity program.

These numbers do not mean a Vallejo program would cost \$3 million. Vallejo's approximately 12,004 multifamily units (the gross starting point for estimating rent-stabilization coverage) are closer to

**Subject: STUDY SESSION ON RENTER PROTECTION AND HOUSING STABILITY MEASURES
AND DIRECTION ON NEXT STEPS**

Hayward's 11,580 administered units. Hayward's low-capacity program was reported at 3.5 FTEs and \$642,000 annually. The substantial difference between Hayward and Richmond demonstrates that policy coverage, program responsibilities, and service and enforcement levels can be more important cost drivers than unit count alone.

Many jurisdictions use annual per-unit regulatory fees to recover eligible program costs. Among the operating programs reviewed in the San Pablo analysis, annual fees for fully covered units ranged from \$66 in Hayward to \$290 in Berkeley, equivalent to approximately \$5.50 to \$24.17 per unit per month. Alameda and Hayward allowed landlords to pass through up to 50% of the fee to tenants as a surcharge prorated over 12 months. Based on the fees reported in the analysis, the maximum monthly tenant pass-through would be approximately \$6.75 for a fully covered unit in Alameda and \$2.75 for a covered unit in Hayward. Berkeley, Richmond, and East Palo Alto did not allow a tenant pass-through, while the proposed San Pablo measure did not specify whether one would be permitted.

These peer-jurisdiction fees do not establish what a Vallejo program would cost landlords or tenants. The number of fee-paying units may be smaller than the number of registered units because some units may be partially covered or exempt. Program responsibilities, fee compliance, unit estimates, and service demand can also affect whether fee revenue is sufficient, potentially creating General Fund exposure. A formal fee study would be most useful after the Council identifies a preferred policy framework and the City's responsibilities can be defined.

Table 6: Annual Per-Unit Regulatory Fees Reported in the San Pablo Analysis

Jurisdiction:	Annual Fee Reported per Unit:	Tenant Pass-Through Reported:
East Palo Alto	Covered Unit: \$234	Not allowed
Hayward	Covered Unit: \$66 Non-Covered Unit: \$32	Up to 50%
San Pablo proposal	Controlled Unit: \$120 Partially Exempt Unit: \$84	Not specified
Alameda	Fully Covered Unit: \$162 Partially Covered Unit: \$109	Up to 50%
Richmond	Fully Covered Unit: \$220 Partially Covered or Subsidized Unit: \$125	Not allowed
Berkeley	Fully Covered Unit: \$290 Partially Covered Unit: \$178	Not allowed
Source: City of San Pablo Fiscal Analysis, Tables 1, 9, and 12. The operating-program fees reflect amounts reported in the July 2024 analysis and may have changed. The San Pablo amounts were proposed fees and were not being collected.		

Finally, the City Council has also requested staff to explore the establishment of an ordinance permitting short term rentals in the City. Short term rentals are currently not legally authorized as a property use in the City. Short term rental programs in other jurisdictions have been found to have an impact on the availability of long term rental housing. In addressing a market and feasibility study, staff believes that it would be wise to perhaps also include any market and feasibility impacts that could occur based upon the combination of renter protection provisions, the contemplated affordable housing ordinance, and any possible short term rental ordinance.

Recommended Market and Feasibility Study

**Subject: STUDY SESSION ON RENTER PROTECTION AND HOUSING STABILITY MEASURES
AND DIRECTION ON NEXT STEPS**

Staff recommends following the “study-first” sequence described in Housing Element Program F 1.1.3. The study would evaluate all four renter-protection measures, (and perhaps the contemplated short term rental provisions) while initially prioritizing the analysis needed for Council direction on rent stabilization and just cause. The scope should include:

- Updated rental-market conditions, rents, vacancy, affordability, cost burden, eviction and displacement indicators, and property and ownership characteristics.
- Property-level estimates of units that would be fully covered, partially covered, registered, or exempt under alternative policy frameworks.
- Evaluation of the VHJC requested framework and other approaches identified in the July comparison matrices.
- Legal and operational feasibility, including interaction with state law and required fair-return and due-process procedures.
- Potential effects on tenants, property owners, housing maintenance and rehabilitation, rental investment, conversions, and housing production.
- Administrative structure, organizational placement, staffing, technology, contracts, enforcement level, start-up costs, ongoing costs, fee options, and potential General Fund exposure.
- Potential models, demand, providers, eligibility, and costs for tenant anti-harassment and right-to-counsel programs.
- Consideration of available community information, including the VHJC report (Attachment 4) and September 10, 2026 letter (Attachment 5).

An added take of consideration of any potential impact of the combination of renter provisions and short term rental ordinance options may also be advisable.

Based on this scope, staff anticipates the following phased process and target schedule for completing the study, returning to the City Council for policy direction, and, if directed, preparing and implementing an ordinance or ordinances.

Table 7: Proposed Renter-Protection Policy Development Process and Schedule

Step:	Work Product:	Target:
1. Market and Feasibility Study	Complete the Vallejo-specific market, coverage, legal, administrative, fiscal, and policy analysis described above.	Kickoff in October 2026; draft analysis by February 2027 and final study by approximately March 2027.
2. Council Consideration and Direction	Return with study findings, available community input, policy options, legal considerations, and preliminary staffing and fiscal implications. Council determines whether to proceed and identifies the preferred policy framework and sequencing.	March-April 2027.

**Subject: STUDY SESSION ON RENTER PROTECTION AND HOUSING STABILITY MEASURES
AND DIRECTION ON NEXT STEPS**

3. Ordinance Preparation and Consideration	If directed, prepare ordinance provisions, complete detailed legal review, refine costs, evaluate a regulatory fee, and develop preliminary implementation procedures. Return the proposed ordinance or ordinances through the required public review and adoption process.	Preparation during spring–summer 2027; Final Council consideration in fall 2027.
4. Implementation Planning	If an ordinance is adopted, recruit and train staff, procure systems and services, adopt administrative rules and forms, establish fees and billing, and conduct public education before launching the program.	Approximately 6-12 months following ordinance adoption, depending on the program selected.

Direction Requested

Staff is not requesting that the Council select a rent limit, or direct immediate preparation of an ordinance at this time. Rather, staff would like for the Council to confirm the recommended approach to proceed with the Market and Feasibility Study before ordinance drafting, consistent with Housing Element Program F 1.1.3, and provide any additional comments or feedback, as applicable, for staff consideration.

FISCAL IMPACT

Receiving the presentation and providing direction would not establish a renter-protection program or create the staffing obligations as described in the San Pablo analysis. The Market and Feasibility Study and related policy work are included within the previously approved Downtown and Waterfront Specific Plan consultant work program and budget. If Council direction requires work beyond the approved scope, staff would identify the additional cost and return for authorization as appropriate.

The cost of administering a future renter-protection program cannot be determined until its coverage, services, administrative structure, enforcement responsibilities, and implementation schedule are defined. Based on the San Pablo analysis, peer programs range from approximately \$615,000 to \$7.51 million annually and from approximately 2 to 26 FTEs.

Potential costs for Vallejo could include dedicated staff, City Attorney and Finance Department support, registry or case-management systems, hearing officers, legal or mediation services, translation, public information, and other contracts. A per-unit regulatory fee may offset eligible costs, but the fee base and amount would require analysis based on the policy framework ultimately selected. Any future ordinance would return to the Council with more detailed start-up, ongoing, revenue, and General Fund information.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

Receiving this report, conducting a study session, and directing staff to undertake further analysis would not commit the City to adopting a particular policy or ordinance and would not result in a direct or reasonably foreseeable indirect physical change in the environment. These activities are therefore not a project under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15378. Any future ordinance would be evaluated for compliance with CEQA when its provisions are sufficiently defined.

ATTACHMENTS

1.	Renter Protections Memorandum, July 24, 2026
----	--

**Subject: STUDY SESSION ON RENTER PROTECTION AND HOUSING STABILITY MEASURES
AND DIRECTION ON NEXT STEPS**

2.	Rent Stabilization Comparison Matrix
3.	Just Cause for Eviction Ordinance Comparison Matrix
4.	The Right to Thrive: Tenant-Led Housing Justice in Vallejo, California, July 2026
5.	VHJC Tenant Protections Policy Priorities, September 10, 2026
6.	City of San Pablo Fiscal Analysis of a Rent Stabilization and Tenant Protections Ordinance, July 2024

CONTACT

Kristin Pollot, AICP, Planning & Development Services Director, (707) 648-4326

kristin.pollot@cityofvallejo.net

Hector Rojas, Long-Range Planning Manager, (707) 553-7283

hector.rojas@cityofvallejo.net



MEMORANDUM

To: Mayor and Members of the City Council

From: Harry Black, Interim City Manager
Kristin Pollot, AICP, Planning and Development Services Director
Hector Rojas, Long-Range Planning Manager

Date: July 24, 2026

Subject: Overview of Rent Stabilization and Just Cause for Eviction Policies in Selected California Jurisdictions

Purpose and Summary

This memorandum provides the City Council with an executive summary of California's existing renter protection framework and the approaches used by selected California jurisdictions to regulate rent increases and require just cause for eviction. It accompanies the attached detailed comparison matrices and is intended to establish a common understanding of what state law already requires and how comparable jurisdictions have adopted additional local protections.

This memorandum is informational and does not recommend adoption of a particular ordinance or policy model. It identifies questions that may inform the scope of engagement, market and feasibility analysis, legal review, and policy development contemplated through the upcoming Downtown Vallejo Specific Plan Update. As previously shared, the Specific Plan process will provide the administrative structure and funding for this work. The renter-protection analysis, however, will examine conditions and potential policies citywide rather than being limited to the Specific Plan Area.

Housing Element and Project Background

Vallejo's adopted Housing Element includes Program F 1.1.3, Renter Protection and Housing Stability. The program directs the City Council to consider ordinances addressing rent stabilization, just cause for eviction, tenant anti-harassment protections, and a tenant right to counsel. The purpose is to reduce displacement, increase household stability, and preserve housing that remains affordable to lower-income households, while avoiding unnecessary constraints on new housing development.

Program F 1.1.3 established target dates for completing the market and feasibility study by June 2025; presenting initial rent stabilization and just-cause protections for Council consideration by September 2025; and considering anti-harassment and right-to-counsel measures by June 2026. These milestones have passed; however, work is in progress.

Program F 1.1.3 also calls for a market and feasibility study before ordinance adoption and outreach to residents, property owners, legal and fair housing organizations, community groups, and neighborhoods facing elevated displacement risk.

Program F 1.1.3 established earlier milestones for rent stabilization and just-cause protections than for anti-harassment and right-to-counsel measures. Accordingly, this summary and the attached matrices provide baseline research and an educational foundation for the City Council's further consideration of rent stabilization and just-cause protections.

Existing State-Law Framework

State Policy Purpose and Local Role: The California Tenant Protection Act, commonly referred to as AB 1482, was enacted as a temporary statewide response to the housing crisis, with the rent cap specifically intended to address rent gouging. It provides a baseline level of stability by limiting large rent increases and requiring a lawful reason for many evictions, while retaining significant exemptions, allowing rent resets between lawful tenancies, and requiring only limited relocation assistance. State law also preserves local authority to adopt more protective measures. Local ordinances may therefore lower rent limits, apply protections earlier or more broadly where permitted, provide greater relocation and re-occupancy rights, and establish local administration and enforcement.

Rent Increases: AB 1482 generally limits annual rent increases for covered units to 5 percent plus the applicable change in the cost of living, generally measured by the regional Consumer Price Index (CPI), or 10 percent, whichever is lower. When the same tenant remains in a unit, an owner generally may not impose more than two increases during a 12-month period. The law permits an owner to establish a new initial rent following a lawful vacancy, after which the statutory cap applies. This rent reset between lawful tenancies is commonly called vacancy decontrol.

The statewide rent cap does not cover all rental housing. Major exemptions include certain deed-restricted or subsidized affordable housing, qualifying housing constructed within the preceding 15 years, specified owner-occupied duplexes, and certain separately alienable units such as single-family homes and condominiums when ownership and tenant-notice requirements are satisfied. State law does not establish a statewide rent registry, rent board, local-style petition process, or dedicated administrative program.

Just Cause for Eviction: AB 1482 generally requires an at-fault or no-fault just cause before terminating a covered tenancy after the applicable occupancy period, typically 12 months. At-fault grounds are based on tenant conduct and include nonpayment of rent, material lease violations, nuisance, waste, unlawful activity, and refusal of lawful access. No-fault grounds are not based on tenant misconduct and include owner or qualifying family move-in, withdrawal from

the rental market, government orders, and qualifying demolition or substantial remodeling. Substantial remodeling generally requires permitted structural, building-system, or hazardous-material work that cannot safely be completed with the tenant in place and requires a vacancy of at least 30 days; cosmetic work alone does not qualify.

For a qualifying no-fault termination, state law generally requires the landlord to provide one month's rent as relocation assistance or waive the final month's rent. AB 1482 does not create a dedicated administrative program, temporary-relocation requirements, or statewide filing or registration procedures. It does, however, provide limited re-rental rights when an intended owner or qualifying family member does not occupy the unit as required or when proposed demolition or substantial-remodel work is not commenced or completed. The statute is scheduled to sunset on January 1, 2030, unless extended.

Summary Table of State and Common Local Approaches

California law establishes rent-increase limits and just-cause eviction protections for many unit types but includes significant exemptions and limited administrative procedures. The jurisdictions reviewed combine broader coverage, earlier applicability, lower or differently structured rent limits, relocation assistance, re-occupancy rights, notice and filing requirements, petitions, registries, and local enforcement in different ways. Program scope and administrative structure vary substantially.

Below is a summary table of some important state baseline requirements, with common local enhancements identified for reference.

Policy Area	State Baseline	Common Local Enhancements
Rent increases	5% plus CPI, capped at 10%.	Lower CPI-based limits; fixed percentage limits; carryforward ("banking") rules; petitions for fair return or capital improvements.
Applicability	State exemptions and occupancy thresholds apply.	Earlier just-cause coverage; broader local coverage where permitted; local notice requirements.
No-fault displacement	One month's rent or final-month waiver.	Higher permanent relocation payments; temporary relocation; moving costs; enhanced benefits for qualifying households.
Tenant procedures	Primarily court-based rights, defenses, and remedies, with limited re-rental rights in specified circumstances.	City filing requirements; rights of return; buyout disclosures; minimum lease offers; replacement-tenant rights.
Administration	No dedicated statewide rent board or registry.	Rent registries, hearing officers, rent boards, annual fees, petitions, penalties, and local enforcement.

Rent Stabilization Approaches in Selected Jurisdictions

The jurisdictions discussed below and in the attached matrices were selected because they are Bay Area or nearby communities that share some combination of regional housing pressures, rental-market characteristics, or municipal context with Vallejo and, collectively, illustrate a range of local policy and administrative models. The local rent stabilization programs reviewed by staff illustrate a spectrum from a relatively limited dispute-resolution model to a comprehensive rent-board structure. All remain subject to state-law limitations, including the Costa-Hawkins Rental Housing Act, which restricts local regulation of certain units and generally permits establishment of an initial rent for a new tenancy.

Hayward uses a 5 percent rent-increase threshold rather than a simple across-the-board 5 percent cap. Increases of 5 percent or less generally may be imposed once in a 12-month period without rent-dispute review, while increases above that threshold may be challenged. The Hayward ordinance also permits limited banking, meaning carryforward of an unused allowable increase; capital-improvement petitions to recover qualifying major improvement costs; review of reductions in housing services, such as previously included parking or utilities; and fair-return petitions for an increase above the standard limit when constitutionally required. Administration is handled by a Rent Review Officer and supported by an annual program fee; Hayward does not use a comprehensive rent registry.

Concord currently limits annual increases for covered units to no more than 5 percent of lawful rent. Its program includes a rent registry (a City-maintained database of covered units and rent information), annual fees, formal petition procedures through which tenants and landlords may request an adjustment or review, hearing officers, and local enforcement. Compared with Hayward's more limited dispute-resolution model, Concord uses a more formal administrative structure centered on registration, petitions, and hearings.

Richmond operates the most institutionalized rent stabilization program among the jurisdictions reviewed. Its annual general adjustment (the standard increase available without an individualized petition) is 60 percent of the applicable CPI increase or 3 percent, whichever is lower, and cannot be less than zero. A Rent Board sets the adjustment, administers petitions, collects fees, adopts regulations, receives notices, and enforces the program. Richmond's model provides substantial administrative infrastructure but also requires dedicated staffing, governance, fee collection, and administrative hearings and decisions.

The takeaway here is that the headline annual rent limit is only one component of a local program. Coverage and exemptions, rules governing when rents may reset between tenancies, banking, treatment of capital improvements, reductions in housing services, petition rights, registration, fees, and enforcement determine how the policy operates in practice and how much City administration is required.

Just Cause for Eviction Approaches in Selected Jurisdictions

The just-cause ordinances reviewed by staff generally retain at-fault and no-fault categories similar to state law but add local procedural and displacement protections. Several jurisdictions

apply just-cause protections from the beginning of the tenancy or without AB 1482's minimum occupancy period, subject to local exemptions and controlling state law.

Local ordinances commonly require termination notices to identify the authorized ground and provide supporting facts, tenant-rights information, and relocation information. Hayward, Novato, Concord, and Antioch also require copies of certain termination notices to be filed with the City within specified timeframes. These filing requirements allow local monitoring and may make compliance a prerequisite to a valid termination.

The largest differences from state law concern no-fault displacement. Local ordinances provide more detailed rules for owner or family move-in, withdrawal from the rental market, demolition, substantial rehabilitation, government orders, and temporary displacement for repairs. Some protect elderly, disabled, terminally ill, low-income, or school-aged households from specified no-fault terminations or provide enhanced relocation benefits.

Permanent relocation benefits vary considerably. State law generally provides one month's rent. Local programs may instead use multiple months of actual rent; HUD fair market rent, a federal benchmark for modest local rental costs by unit size; moving stipends; documented costs; or enhanced payments for qualifying households. Temporary relocation programs may require daily lodging payments, the difference between existing rent and temporary housing costs, comparable housing, or permanent assistance when repairs extend beyond a specified period.

Most reviewed ordinances also provide re-occupancy protections. A right to return allows a displaced tenant to reoccupy the unit after temporary work, while a right of first refusal gives a former tenant the first opportunity to rent the unit if it is later offered again. Novato and Antioch also regulate tenant buyout agreements (voluntary agreements to accept compensation or another benefit to vacate) including disclosures and periods during which the tenant may cancel. Richmond and Antioch address replacement of departing tenants, while Concord requires a minimum-term written lease offer in specified circumstances.

These provisions demonstrate that a local just-cause ordinance can be considerably broader than requiring a landlord to state a reason for eviction. The ordinances regulate the process, documentation, financial assistance, rights to return or receive a new rental offer, and remedies associated with displacement. They also vary in whether implementation relies primarily on tenant civil actions, City enforcement, a hearing officer, or a rent board.

Key Considerations for Future Vallejo Evaluation

The comparison shows that there is not a single standard model. Each jurisdiction combines protections and administrative procedures differently based on local housing conditions, policy objectives, staffing, and fiscal capacity. The following questions may be useful in any future evaluation:

- **Coverage and Exemptions:** Which properties and tenancies should receive local protections, and how would the ordinance interact with AB 1482 and Costa-Hawkins?

- **Level and Type of Protection:** Should the City retain the state rent cap, adopt a lower or different local formula, focus on procedural protections, or combine these approaches?
- **Displacement Assistance:** What permanent and temporary relocation benefits, enhanced household protections, and rights of return would be appropriate and financially supportable?
- **Administrative Model:** Could the program be implemented by existing staff, or would it require a registry, hearing officer, dedicated program staff, or a rent board?
- **Fiscal and Market Effects:** What would the policy cost to administer, how should it be funded, and how might different options affect tenants, small property owners, rental investment, maintenance, and new housing production?
- **Citywide Application and Local Conditions:** How should citywide policies account for differences in rental housing stock, landlord types, tenant needs, and displacement risk across Vallejo neighborhoods?

Potential Next Steps

Next steps will include a study session with the full City Council to review this material in more detail and request direction related to some of the key decision points. Staff is working to schedule this study session during the month of September 2026.

Staff also anticipates bringing the Specific Plan consultant agreements to the City Council in September 2026. If approved, the consultants would begin work under their respective scopes, which include market and housing analysis, early anti-displacement public engagement, an Anti-Displacement Feasibility Study, additional comparable-practice research, required policy and legal analysis, and ordinance-drafting support.

Attachments

1. Rent Stabilization Ordinance Comparison Matrix
2. Just Cause for Eviction Ordinance Comparison Matrix

	State Law (AB 1482)	City of Hayward	City of Concord	City of Richmond
Codification Where the rent stabilization legislation is codified	Civil Code Sections 1947.12 and 1947.13.	Hayward Municipal Code Chapter 12, Article 1, Residential Rent Stabilization and Tenant Protection Ordinance.	Concord Municipal Code Chapter 19.40, Residential Tenant Protection Program; including Sections 19.40.030 through 19.40.060 and Section 19.40.120.	Richmond Municipal Code Chapter 11.100, Fair Rent, Just Cause for Eviction and Homeowner Protection.
Adoption/Effective/Sunset Date Date the rent stabilization legislation was adopted, became effective, or expires	Tenant Protection Act enacted in 2019; rent cap provisions took effect 1/1/2020. Current Civil Code Section 1947.12 became operative 4/1/2024 and sunsets 1/1/2030 unless extended.	Current Article 1 ordinance effective 7/25/2019; amended by Ordinance No. 20-14 on 7/21/2020 and Ordinance No. 26-03 on 2/17/2026.	Adopted by Ordinance No. 24-3; effective 5/22/2025.	Fair Rent/Just Cause ordinance adopted 12/20/2016.
Covered Units Types of rental housing subject to rent stabilization	Residential real property, including dwelling units intended for human habitation and certain mobilehome tenancies, unless exempt.	Covered rental units located in Hayward and used or occupied by payment of rent, excluding units not deemed covered rental units under the ordinance.	Covered rental units within the City that are not fully exempt and not exempt from rent stabilization.	Richmond residential rental units classified as controlled rental units, unless exempt.
Exemptions Types of rental housing exempt from rent stabilization	Deed-restricted or subsidized affordable housing; higher education and K-12 dormitories; housing already subject to local rent or price control with annual increases lower than AB 1482; housing issued a certificate of occupancy within the previous 15 years, except mobilehomes; certain separately alienable units, including single-family homes, condominiums, and mobilehomes, if ownership and tenant notice requirements are met; owner-occupied duplexes; and mobilehome homeowners.	Mobilehomes; nonprofit cooperatives; units whose rents are controlled, regulated, or subsidized by a governmental unit, agency, or authority; lawful ADUs where primary unit is owner-occupied; units in structures with a certificate of occupancy first issued after 7/1/1979; separately alienable residential real property; certain condominium units sold separately by the subdivider; and units exempt from rent control under Costa-Hawkins.	Hotels/motels; institutional facilities; dormitories; government-owned or legally exempt housing; owner-occupied shared housing; emergency shelters and homeless shelters; residential facilities; ADUs; owner-occupied duplexes; dwelling units expressly exempt under state or federal law, including units with a certificate of occupancy or equivalent residential occupancy permit issued after February 1, 1995; and rented single-family homes or condominiums, subject to applicable registration requirements.	Hotels, motels, inns, tourist homes, rooming houses, and boarding houses rented primarily to transient guests for fewer than 14 days; hospitals, convents, monasteries, extended medical care facilities, asylums, nonprofit homes for the aged, and higher-education dormitories; certain government-owned or government-regulated units; units exempt under Costa-Hawkins; permitted small second units; temporary single-family home tenancies; and owner-occupied shared kitchen or bathroom arrangements.
Base Rent/Initial Rent How the regulated rent baseline is established	Uses the lowest gross rental rate charged for the unit at any time during the 12 months before the effective date of the rent increase. For a new tenancy where no prior tenant remains, the owner may establish the initial rental rate, with subsequent increases subject to the cap.	Initial rent is the rent in effect on 7/25/2019. If no rent was in effect on that date, initial rent is the first rent charged after that date. For tenancies beginning after 7/25/2019, initial rent is the rent charged at the beginning of the tenancy.	Base rent depends on tenancy start date: for tenancies commenced on or before 4/4/2023, base rent is the rent in effect on 4/4/2023 plus the initial allowable annual rent increase. For tenancies commenced after 4/4/2023 but before ordinance effectiveness, base rent is the rent charged upon initial occupancy plus the initial allowable annual rent increase. For tenancies commenced after ordinance effectiveness, base rent is the rent charged upon initial occupancy.	Base rent is the rent in effect on 7/21/2015. If no rent was in effect on that date, base rent is the first rent charged after that date. For tenancies commencing after adoption of the chapter, base rent is the initial rental rate in effect when the tenancy begins.
Annual Allowable Rent Increase/Frequency Maximum allowable rent increase and how often rent may be increased	Annual rent increase may not exceed 5% plus the percentage change in cost of living, or 10%, whichever is lower. If the same tenant remains in occupancy over a 12-month period, rent may not be increased in more than two increments during that 12-month period.	Rent increases of 5% or less may be imposed once every 12 months and are not subject to rent dispute review. Rent increases above 5% are subject to the rent dispute resolution process if challenged.	From 4/1/2023 to 3/31/2025, annual increases were limited to 60% of CPI, capped at 3%, rounded to the nearest one-quarter percent. Beginning 4/1/2025, annual allowable rent increases are limited to no more than 5% of lawful rent for the preceding 12-month period. Only one allowable annual rent increase and one approved fair return rent increase may be imposed in any 12-month period, unless otherwise permitted by the chapter.	Annual general adjustment equals 60% of the percentage increase in CPI, or 3%, whichever is lower, and cannot be less than 0%. The Rent Board announces the annual general adjustment each year, effective September 1st. Individual rent adjustments may be approved through petition.

	State Law (AB 1482)	City of Hayward	City of Concord	City of Richmond
CPI Method/Adjustment Formula How CPI is used to calculate allowable increases	Uses the applicable regional CPI where the property is located, or California CPI if no applicable regional index is available. Percentage change is generally based on April-to-April CPI, with March fallback if April data are unavailable, and is rounded to the nearest one-tenth of 1%.	No CPI-based formula applies to the basic 5% threshold.	Uses CPI for the San Francisco-Oakland-Hayward area, with calculation determined by the City and set forth in procedures and guidelines.	Rent Board uses the San Francisco-Oakland-San Jose CPI, or successor index, for the 12-month period ending in March of the current year.
Vacancy Decontrol/New Tenancy Whether rent can reset when a unit becomes vacant	Yes. For a new tenancy where no prior tenant remains in lawful possession, the owner may establish the initial rental rate; subsequent increases are subject to the state cap.	Yes. Initial rent may generally be reset after a voluntary vacancy or lawful eviction, subject to exceptions for nonvoluntary vacancies, certain terminated rent-restricted contracts, unresolved serious code violations, or landlord conduct causing the vacancy. After voluntary vacancy or lawful eviction, subsequent increases remain subject to the rent increase threshold.	Yes. When a tenant voluntarily vacates, abandons, or is legally evicted from a covered rental unit, the landlord may set initial rent for the next tenant without restriction at the commencement of the new tenancy.	For new tenancies, base rent is the initial rental rate in effect when the tenancy commences. That base rent becomes the reference point for future maximum allowable rent adjustments under the ordinance. Vacancy decontrol is limited because the unit remains subject to Richmond rent control after the new base rent is established, unless otherwise exempt under Costa-Hawkins or another exemption.
Banking of Unused Increases Whether unused annual rent increases may be carried forward	Not addressed.	Allowed. A landlord may bank all or part of an unused annual permissible rent increase up to 5%. Banked increases expire after 10 years. No more than 5% of banked increase may be added to a current-year rent increase, and total annual increase may not exceed 10%.	Prohibited. A landlord who does not impose an allowable annual rent increase during the applicable 12-month period waives that increase or the unused portion for the remainder of the tenancy.	Not addressed.
Capital Improvement Pass-Throughs Whether capital improvement costs may be passed through to tenants	Not addressed, but rent increases must remain within the applicable state cap unless another applicable law allows otherwise.	Allowed through an approved landlord capital improvement petition. Total costs passed through may not exceed 50% of total amount paid by the landlord. Costs are generally amortized over 60 months unless an extended amortization period is required. The capital improvement charge must be removed after the amortization period.	Not addressed, but capital improvements and rehabilitation-related costs may be considered in the fair return petition analysis if relevant to net operating income or fair return.	Addressed through individual rent adjustment petitions. The Rent Board or hearing examiner may consider planned or completed capital improvements that are necessary to bring the property into compliance or maintain compliance with health and safety code requirements and are properly amortized over the life of the improvement.
Utility/Housing Service Pass-Throughs Whether utility costs or housing service changes are regulated	No separate utility pass-through process, but rent increases are evaluated as increases to the gross rental rate subject to Civil Code Section 1947.12.	Landlords may pass through governmental-utility service costs through a ratio utility billing system (RUBS) or similar unmetered allocation arrangement if authorized by written lease. Utility pass-throughs are not treated as rent for purposes of the 5% threshold. Tenants may petition for review if the required documentation is not provided or if the increase exceeds 1% of existing rent.	A decrease in housing services without a corresponding rent reduction is treated as an increase in rent and may be challenged by tenant petition. Utility costs may be considered as operating expenses in fair return proceedings to the extent they are not paid by tenants.	Landlords may not charge for utilities unless the utility is separately or individually metered. Decreases in housing services may support downward adjustment of maximum allowable rent.

	<u>State Law (AB 1482)</u>	<u>City of Hayward</u>	<u>City of Concord</u>	<u>City of Richmond</u>
Notice Requirements for Rent Increases Tenant and City notice requirements	Not addressed, but notice of rent increase must be provided in accordance with Civil Code Section 827.	Landlord must serve a rent increase notice with required information, including current rent, amount of increase in dollars and percentage, petition rights, Rent Review Officer contact information, and supporting basis for increases above applicable thresholds. Landlord must provide the City with a copy of rent increase notices within 30 days after service.	Landlord must provide prior written notice of rent increases pursuant to Civil Code Section 827. Additional notice applies to fair return petitions, including service of the petition on affected tenants and proof of service to the City.	Landlords must file copies of rental increase notices and changes in terms of tenancy with the Rent Board before serving the tenant. Landlords must also provide the Rent Board brochure at commencement of tenancy and with each rent increase.
Tenant Petition Process Whether tenants may challenge rent increases or seek rent reductions	No administrative petition process. Tenants may bring civil actions for rent collected above the state cap.	Tenants may file petitions to review rent increases above the 5% threshold; contest banked increases; review utility increases; request rent reductions for decreased housing services; contest unauthorized or excessive capital improvement pass-throughs; review rent increases where units have uncured health, safety, fire, or building violations; and assert violations of Civil Code Section 1947.12.	Tenants may file petitions to adjust rent to the lawful level if the landlord demands or retains unlawful rent. Tenants may also petition based on decreased housing services after giving the landlord prior written notice and a reasonable opportunity to correct.	Tenants may file petitions for individual adjustment of maximum allowable rent, including downward adjustments based on decreased housing services, deterioration, failure to comply with habitability standards, or other relevant grounds. Tenants may also file administrative complaints for excess rent.
Landlord Fair Return Petition Process Whether landlords may seek rent increases above ordinary limits	No state administrative fair return petition process.	Landlords may petition for rent increases above the 5% threshold or above 10% inclusive of banking and capital improvement costs to obtain a fair return. Landlords may also petition for capital improvement pass-throughs.	Landlords may file fair return petitions to request rent increases beyond the annual allowable increase. A fair return increase cannot authorize a rent increase in a 12-month period above Civil Code Section 1947.12; excess approved amounts may be carried forward to future years until fully imposed.	Landlords may petition for individual upward adjustment of rent ceilings when necessary to provide a fair return on investment. The Board or hearing examiner may consider operating expenses, property taxes, capital improvements, housing services, recent rent patterns, and other relevant factors.
Rent Registry/Registration Requirement Whether landlords must register units or report rent information	No state rent registry.	No, but landlords must provide City copies of rent increase and termination notices, and annual business tax declarations apply to rental units.	Landlords must register covered rental units, including rented single-family homes and condominiums, through the City's designated rent registry portal; provide required information; pay registry fees; and submit annual reports.	Landlords must pay rental housing fees and file required notices with the Rent Board. The Rent Board may collect and receive copies of notices of termination and changes in terms of tenancy and maintain searchable records.
Program Fee/Funding How administration is funded	No state program fee.	Annual rent stabilization administration fee applies to landlords for all rental units, including covered rental units, subject to the ordinance. For covered rental units, landlords may pass through up to 50% of the fee to tenants. A landlord that fails to pay required fees may not collect otherwise authorized rent increases, and fee nonpayment may be asserted as a defense in actions to recover possession or collect a rent increase.	Landlords must pay rent registry fees established by City Council resolution. Fees fund the rent registry and implementation, administration, and enforcement of the chapter. Late fees, interest, fines, penalties, and municipal tax lien procedures may apply.	Rent Board is funded through annual registration fees/rental housing fees charged to landlords in amounts deemed reasonable by the Board and adopted through the ordinance process.
Administrative Body Agency or official responsible for administering the program	No dedicated state rent board. Enforcement may occur through courts and public enforcement by the Attorney General, city attorney, or county counsel.	Rent Review Officer designated by the City Manager administers rent dispute resolution, notices, petitions, mediation/arbitration, fees, and related procedures.	City administers the rent registry, appoints hearing officers, and implements procedures, regulations, and guidelines through the City Manager or designee.	Richmond Rent Board administers the ordinance, establishes base rents, sets annual adjustments, conducts hearings, adopts rules and regulations, collects fees, subpoenas witnesses, and seeks civil relief.

	State Law (AB 1482)	City of Hayward	City of Concord	City of Richmond
Enforcement and Remedies Administrative enforcement, civil actions, penalties, damages, attorney's fees, or defenses	Owners who demand, accept, receive, or retain rent above the state cap may be liable for injunctive relief, overcharge damages, attorney's fees and costs in the court's discretion, and up to treble damages for willful, oppressive, fraudulent, or malicious conduct. The Attorney General, city attorney, or county counsel may enforce the section and seek injunctive relief.	Landlord noncompliance with notice, fee, utility pass-through, capital improvement, or rent increase procedures may bar collection of increases and may be asserted as a defense. Tenants may petition for administrative review. City may issue citations and administer hearings.	Remedies may include injunctive relief, actual/statutory/direct money damages, civil penalties of \$2,000 to \$5,000 per violation, additional penalties for senior or disabled tenants, treble damages or \$1,000 minimum damages, punitive damages, attorney's fees and costs for prevailing tenants, City Attorney enforcement, and administrative remedies.	Landlords who demand, accept, receive, or retain rent above maximum allowable rent may be liable for attorney's fees and costs, overcharge damages, and treble damages upon a showing of willful conduct, oppression, fraud, or malice. Tenants may file civil actions or administrative complaints. Violations may also be misdemeanors, and the Board, tenants, and landlords may seek injunctive or other civil relief.
Relationship to State Law/Costa-Hawkins How local authority interacts with state law	Civil Code Section 1947.12 does not expand or limit local authority to regulate rents consistent with Costa-Hawkins and does not authorize local rent limits otherwise prohibited by Costa-Hawkins.	Hayward exempts units exempt from rent control under Costa-Hawkins and incorporates Civil Code Section 1947.12 violations into the tenant petition process.	Concord states that covered units are not subject to Civil Code Sections 1946.2 and 1947.12 to the extent covered by the local chapter. Fair return increases remain limited by Civil Code Section 1947.12 in any 12-month period.	Richmond exempts units exempt from rent control under Costa-Hawkins and regulates controlled rental units to the greatest extent allowable under state law.
Note: Information current as of July 2026. The descriptions in this table are simplified summaries intended to facilitate comparison of state and local rent stabilization policies. They are not intended to be legal interpretations or complete descriptions of any statute or ordinance.				

	State Law (AB 1482)	City of Hayward	City of Novato	City of Richmond
Codification Where the just-cause legislation is codified	Civil Code Section 1946.2.	Hayward Municipal Code Chapter 12, Article 1, Residential Rent Stabilization and Tenant Protection Ordinance; and Article 2, Tenant Relocation Assistance	Novato Municipal Code Section 4-17, Tenant Protections.	Richmond Municipal Code Chapter 11.100, Fair Rent, Just Cause for Eviction and Homeowner Protection; Chapter 11.102, Relocation Requirements.
Adoption Date Date the just-cause legislation was adopted	Signed by Governor 10/8/2019; effective 1/1/2020; sunsets 1/1/2030 unless extended.	Current Article 1 ordinance effective 7/25/2019; amended by Ordinance No. 20-14 on 7/21/2020 and Ordinance No. 26-03 on 2/17/2026. Article 2 Tenant Relocation Assistance was repealed and replaced by Ordinance No. 24-08, adopted 12/17/2024.	Adopted 4/28/2026 by Ordinance No. 1731	Fair Rent/Just Cause ordinance adopted 12/20/2016; Relocation Ordinance effective 1/19/2017.
Covered Units Types of rental housing subject to the just-cause legislation	Residential rental units not exempt under AB 1482.	Covered rental units located in Hayward and used or occupied by payment of rent, excluding units not deemed covered rental units under the ordinance.	Multifamily or multipurpose dwelling structures with separate bathroom, kitchen, and living area; SROs; and residential rental units, including some units not legally permitted for residential use.	Residential rental units in the City unless exempt.
Exemptions Types of rental housing exempted from the just-cause protections	Transient/tourist hotels; certain institutional housing; dormitories; owner-occupied shared housing; single-family owner-occupied residences; owner-occupied duplexes; housing issued a certificate of occupancy within previous 15 years; separately alienable units, such as single-family homes and condominiums, if statutory ownership and tenant notice requirements are met; deed-restricted affordable housing.	Nonprofit cooperatives; certain nonprofit substance abuse treatment or recovery facilities; certain nonprofit transitional housing facilities for homeless persons with occupancy limited to no more than 24 months; and owner-occupied shared housing.	Transient lodging; institutional housing; dormitories; on-site property manager units; owner-occupied shared housing; temporary tenancies; owner-occupied single-family residences; owner-occupied duplexes; and separately alienable units, including single-family homes, condominiums, and mobilehomes, if ownership conditions are met.	Hotels, motels, inns, tourist homes, rooming houses, and boarding houses rented primarily to transient guests for fewer than 14 days; hospitals, convents, monasteries, extended medical care facilities, asylums, nonprofit homes for the aged, and higher-education dormitories; certain government-owned or government-regulated units; Costa-Hawkins-exempt rent-controlled units; lawful ADUs; temporary single-family home tenancies; and owner-occupied shared kitchen or bathroom arrangements.
Tenant Duration Before Protections Apply Length of occupancy required before just-cause protections apply	Protections apply after 12 months of continuous lawful occupancy; in certain multi-tenant situations, protections apply when all tenants have occupied for 12 months or one tenant has occupied for 24 months.	Protections apply to applicable rental units without a stated minimum occupancy period.	Protections apply on the first day of the rental agreement.	Protections apply to applicable rental units without a stated minimum occupancy period.
Notice of Tenant Rights Whether landlords must provide written notice of tenant protections	Landlord must provide statutory notice regarding AB 1482 rent cap and just-cause protections.	Yes. Landlord must notify tenant of rights prior to new or renewed tenancies. For existing tenancies, notice must be provided within 30 days of ordinance effectiveness. Landlord must execute and retain document acknowledging tenant's receipt of information, documents, or notices required by the ordinance.	Yes. Landlord must provide a current written notice of rights within 90 days of ordinance effectiveness or amendment; at lease signing; at renewal; with rent increases or tenancy changes; when listing the property for sale; and within 30 days of acquiring title. Notice must be in English and Spanish, with additional translations when required.	Rent Board must prepare a brochure describing landlord and tenant rights and duties under the Fair Rent, Just Cause for Eviction and Homeowner Protection Ordinance. Landlords must provide the brochure at commencement of tenancy and with each notice of rent increase.

	State Law (AB 1482)	City of Hayward	City of Novato	City of Richmond
Right to Written Lease & Minimum Lease Terms Whether tenants have a right to written leases and minimum lease terms	Not addressed by AB 1482.	Not addressed.	Not addressed.	Not addressed.
At-Fault Eviction Grounds Tenant actions that may justify eviction	Nonpayment; lease violation; nuisance; waste; criminal activity; unlawful use; refusal of lawful entry; unauthorized assignment/subletting; refusal to renew lease; employee/licensee holdover; failure to vacate after tenant notice or accepted surrender offer.	Nonpayment; substantial lease violation after written notice to cease; substantial damage after notice; refusal to agree to substantially identical new rental agreement; disorderly conduct after notice; refusal of lawful access after notice; illegal use conviction; controlled substance activity; violation of reasonable written rules after notice; employee tenancy termination; threat of death or great bodily harm reported to police.	Nonpayment; lease violation; nuisance; refusal of reasonable access; waste; unauthorized assignment/subletting; refusal to renew lease; employee/licensee holdover; criminal activity; unlawful use; failure to deliver possession after tenant notice or accepted surrender offer.	Failure to pay rent; breach of lease after written notice to cease; nuisance or substantial damage after written notice to cease; or refusal of lawful access after written notice.
No-Fault Eviction Grounds Circumstances allowing eviction even when the tenant has not violated the lease	Owner/family move-in; withdrawal from rental market; government/court/local order requiring vacancy; intent to demolish or substantially remodel.	Substantial repairs; demolition; owner/family move-in; and owner recovery under existing rental agreement.	Temporary vacancy for substantial renovation; owner/family move-in; withdrawal from rental market, including demolition.	Temporary vacancy for substantial repairs; owner move-in (with exceptions for seniors, disabled, and terminally ill); withdrawal from rental market; or temporary tenancy recovery.
Notice of Termination Required contents, language, delivery, and filing requirements for notices terminating a tenancy	Must state the applicable at-fault or no-fault just cause. No-fault notices must inform tenants of relocation assistance or rent waiver rights.	Must state the reasons for termination or temporary termination, with specific facts sufficient to determine the date, place, and circumstances. Notice must be served in the manner prescribed by Code of Civil Procedure Section 1162 and may be combined with or separate from the termination notice. Notice must be provided to City within 30 days after it has been served. Failure to state authorized grounds is a defense to possession.	Must include landlord/agent information, unit address, service date, current monthly rent, tenancy start date, initial monthly rent, asserted just cause, and relocation rights for no-fault terminations. Notice must be in English and Spanish, with additional translations when required. Copy must be provided to the City within 10 days.	Notice must state the cause for termination. For breach of lease, nuisance/substantial damage, and refusal of access, required written warning notices must be attached to the termination notice. Owner move-in notices must identify the intended occupant and relationship to the landlord. Substantial repair and withdrawal notices have additional requirements.

	State Law (AB 1482)	City of Hayward	City of Novato	City of Richmond
Termination Notice Period Minimum advance notice required before a tenancy may be terminated	Generally 30 days for tenants occupying less than one year and 60 days for tenants occupying one year or more pursuant to Civil Code Section 1946.1. Shorter or longer periods may apply for certain at-fault evictions or Ellis Act withdrawals.	Notice periods generally follow applicable state law.	No-fault terminations require at least 30 days' notice unless a longer period is required by state law, federal law, local law, rental agreement, or the ordinance.	Generally governed by applicable state law, except that withdrawal from the rental market requires 120 days' notice, or one year for senior or disabled tenants under Government Code Section 7060.4. Temporary repair and owner move-in notices are subject to applicable state and local notice requirements.
Relocation Assistance for Temporary Displacement Whether landlords must provide financial assistance to tenants that are temporarily displaced	Not addressed by AB 1482.	Yes. Required for temporary displacement due to substantial repairs and governmental orders to vacate due to health or safety conditions, except natural disasters and tenant caused conditions. Assistance equal to three times the current fair market rent for displacement of 30 days or more. For fewer than 30 days, payment is prorated. For displacement due to substantial repairs, if the tenant agrees to vacate, payment is due immediately upon acceptance to vacate; if the tenant does not agree, payment is due immediately upon the tenant vacating. Proof of payment must be filed with Rent Review Officer within 7 calendar days of payment. For governmental orders, payment is due within 10 days after order to vacate or at least 20 days prior to vacation date in order (whichever occurs later). In lieu of making temporary relocation payments, landlord may offer tenant comparable unit in city. Temporary relocation payments triggered if tenant has good cause to vacate comparable unit.	Yes. Required for substantial renovations and government orders to vacate. Assistance includes per diem (\$250/day) payments for displacement of 30 days or fewer; one month's rent plus rent differential payments for 31–179 days; two times HUD fair market rent at 180 days; comparable unit option; moving expenses; and right of return.	Yes. Required for temporary displacement due to substantial repairs and governmental orders to vacate due to health or safety conditions, except natural disasters and tenant-caused conditions. Landlord must make temporary relocation payments immediately after vacation of the unit. Tenant must continue paying lawful rent to receive relocation payments. Tenant is not obligated to pay lawful rent if relocation payments are rejected. After 120 days, landlord must make rent differential payments until the rental unit is reoccupied or tenant finds alternative, permanent housing. Tenant is not obligated to pay rent while receiving rent differential payments. Permanent relocation payment is required if tenant finds alternative, permanent housing. In lieu of temporary relocation or rent differential payments, landlord may offer a comparable unit in the City. Temporary relocation payments resume if tenant has good cause to vacate the comparable unit.

	State Law (AB 1482)	City of Hayward	City of Novato	City of Richmond
Relocation Assistance for Permanent Displacement Whether landlords must provide financial assistance to tenants that are permanently displaced	Required for no-fault evictions. Landlord must provide one month’s rent or waive final month’s rent.	Yes. Required for applicable no-fault terminations, including demolition/removal from the rental market, owner/family move-in, owner recovery under an existing rental agreement, and other state or federal no-fault grounds. Landlord must provide one month’s rent or waive the final month’s rent. Payment is due within 14 calendar days of service of notice. Proof of payment must be filed with the Rent Review Officer within 7 calendar days of payment. Assistance is recoverable if tenant fails to vacate.	Yes. Required for owner move-in and withdrawal from rental market. Owner move-in requires one month HUD fair market rent, but not less than one month’s rent, plus reasonable documented moving expenses. Withdrawal requires two months HUD fair market rent, but not less than one month’s rent, plus reasonable documented moving expenses. Payment due within 15 calendar days of service of notice.	Yes. Required for owner move-in and withdrawal from rental market, and in certain government order or health/safety displacement situations (except natural disasters and tenant caused conditions). Amounts are determined by City Council resolution. For owner move-in and withdrawal, one-half is due within three business days after the tenant gives written notice of intent to vacate, and the remaining half is due within three business days after the tenant vacates and removes personal property
Right of Return Whether displaced tenants have the right to reoccupy the unit after displacement	Limited re-rental/re-offer rights. If an intended owner or qualifying family member does not move in within 90 days or does not maintain the unit as a primary residence for at least 12 months, the owner generally must offer the unit to the displaced tenant at the same rent and lease terms. If a stated demolition or substantial remodel is not commenced or completed, the owner must offer the displaced tenant an opportunity to re-rent at the prior rent and terms.	Yes. Provided after substantial repairs. Tenant must be given right of first refusal to reoccupy upon completion of required work.	Yes. Provided after substantial renovations, government orders to vacate, owner move-in violations, and some withdrawal-from-market situations. Tenant generally returns at prior rent plus lawful annual adjustments.	Yes. Provided for substantial repairs, owner move-in, and withdrawal from rental market. Tenant returns to the same covered rental unit at prior rent.
Tenant Buy-Out Agreements Whether landlords and tenants can enter into a buyout agreement where the landlord provides a tenant money or other consideration to vacate the rental unit	Not addressed by AB 1482.	Not addressed.	Yes. Landlord must provide disclosures at least 10 days before making a buyout offer: tenant has right not to enter agreement; may consult an attorney; may consult Legal Aid of Marin; and may rescind within 30 days after full execution. Landlord must retain disclosures and agreements for at least five years.	Not addressed.

	State Law (AB 1482)	City of Hayward	City of Novato	City of Richmond
Right to Replace Departing Tenant Whether remaining tenant or tenants have the right to replace the departing tenant on a one-for-one basis	Not addressed by AB 1482.	Not addressed.	Not addressed.	Yes. Landlord cannot terminate tenancy based on a tenant's sublease of the unit if the sublease replaces one or more departed tenants under the rental housing agreement on a one-for-one basis.
Enforcement and Remedies Whether the law provides for administrative enforcement, civil actions, affirmative defenses, damages, penalties, attorney's fees, injunctive relief, or other remedies	No dedicated statewide administrative, registration, or filing program. However, noncompliance renders the termination notice void, and a material violation may support a tenant civil action for actual damages, discretionary attorney's fees and costs, enhanced damages under specified circumstances, and punitive damages. The Attorney General, city attorney, or county counsel may seek injunctive relief.	Rent Review Officer administers the ordinance, including notices, forms, appeals, relocation payment documentation, and implementation regulations. Civil actions are available for relocation violations, including injunctive relief and damages. Remedies may include damages, costs, reasonable attorney's fees, treble damages for willful failure to pay required relocation assistance, City restitution, enforcement costs, and lien or special assessment recovery. For permanent relocation assistance, strict noncompliance renders the termination notice void.	City may enforce the ordinance through administrative remedies, citations, fines, and injunctive relief. Tenants may bring civil actions for violations, relocation assistance claims, and ordinance applicability determinations. Remedies may include injunctive relief, actual damages, attorney's fees and costs in the court's discretion, treble damages for willful, oppressive, fraudulent, or malicious conduct, punitive damages, and affirmative defense in unlawful detainer actions.	Richmond Rent Board administers the ordinance, including rules and regulations, hearings, fees, termination notices, withdrawal procedures, subpoenas, referrals, and civil enforcement. Tenants and the Rent Board may seek injunctive relief and money damages for wrongful eviction. Failure to comply may be asserted as an affirmative defense in an unlawful detainer action. Attempts to recover possession in violation of the ordinance may result in liability for actual damages, including emotional distress, injunctive relief, money damages, and costs and reasonable attorney's fees for a prevailing tenant.
Note: Information current as of July 2026. The descriptions in this table are simplified summaries intended to facilitate comparison of state and local just-cause-for-eviction policies. They are not intended to be legal interpretations or complete descriptions of the specific topic.				

	State Law (AB 1482)	City of Concord	City of Antioch
Codification Where the just-cause legislation is codified	Civil Code Section 1946.2.	Concord Municipal Code Chapter 19.40, Residential Tenant Protection Program (specifically, Section 19.40.070)	Antioch Municipal Code Chapter 6, Tenant Eviction Protections.
Adoption Date Date the just-cause legislation was adopted	Signed by Governor 10/8/2019; effective 1/1/2020; sunsets 1/1/2030 unless extended.	Adopted by Ordinance No. 24-3. Effective May 22, 2025.	Adopted 8/27/2024 by Ordinance No. 2240-C-S.
Covered Units Types of rental housing subject to the just-cause legislation	Residential rental units not exempt under AB 1482.	Dwelling units within the City unless fully exempt or exempt from just-cause provisions.	Any building or part of a building used as a residence and rented to a tenant as a dwelling place, except exempt units.
Exemptions Types of rental housing exempted from the just-cause protections	Transient/tourist hotels; certain institutional housing; dormitories; owner-occupied shared housing; single-family owner-occupied residences; owner-occupied duplexes; housing issued a certificate of occupancy within previous 15 years; separately alienable units, such as single-family homes and condominiums, if statutory ownership and tenant notice requirements are met; deed-restricted affordable housing.	Hotels/motels; institutional facilities; dormitories; government-owned or legally exempt housing; owner-occupied shared housing; emergency shelters and homeless shelters; residential facilities (defined in Section 18.200.070); ADUs; owner-occupied duplexes; and two or fewer rented single-family homes or condominiums offered by the same or substantially similar landlord, owner, or natural person.	Hospitals, skilled nursing facilities, and health facilities; certain nonprofit substance abuse treatment or recovery facilities; certain nonprofit transitional housing facilities for homeless persons with occupancy limited to no more than 24 months; and transient hotel/motel occupancies, unless rented for 30 days or more or used to avoid tenancy status.
Tenant Duration Before Protections Apply Length of occupancy required before just-cause protections apply	Protections apply after 12 months of continuous lawful occupancy; in certain multi-tenant situations, protections apply when all tenants have occupied for 12 months or one tenant has occupied for 24 months.	Protections apply upon legal possession of a covered dwelling unit.	Protections apply from the day the rental agreement becomes effective until the landlord-tenant relationship is terminated.
Notice of Tenant Rights Whether landlords must provide written notice of tenant protections	Landlord must provide statutory notice regarding AB 1482 rent cap and just-cause protections.	Yes. Landlord must provide notice as an addendum to the rental agreement or signed written notice for new or renewed tenancies. For existing tenancies, notice must be provided within 180 days of ordinance effectiveness. Notice must be in at least 12-point type, in English and Spanish, and include required statements regarding rent limits, just cause, right of return, relocation assistance, moving stipend, and written lease rights.	Landlord must provide the City form notice before or at the time of entering into a rental agreement and when renewing a rental agreement. Notice must be in English and other frequently spoken languages, and in the language of negotiation or written agreement if other than English.

	State Law (AB 1482)	City of Concord	City of Antioch
Right to Written Lease & Minimum Lease Terms Whether tenants have a right to written leases and minimum lease terms	Not addressed by AB 1482.	Yes. Landlord must offer a prospective tenant a written lease with a minimum term of one year. If rejected, landlord must offer a six-month lease term. If that is rejected, landlord and tenant may agree to a lease term of fewer than six months. Existing tenants may also request a written lease with a minimum term of one year or six months, subject to ordinance requirements.	Not addressed.
At-Fault Eviction Grounds Tenant actions that may justify eviction	Nonpayment; lease violation; nuisance; waste; criminal activity; unlawful use; refusal of lawful entry; unauthorized assignment/subletting; refusal to renew lease; employee/licensee holdover; failure to vacate after tenant notice or accepted surrender offer.	Nonpayment; material rental agreement breach after notice to correct; nuisance; waste; refusal to renew similar rental agreement; criminal activity or criminal threat; unauthorized assignment/subletting; refusal of lawful entry; unlawful use; employee/agent/licensee holdover; failure to deliver possession after tenant notice or accepted surrender offer.	Nonpayment; material lease breach after notice and opportunity to cure; nuisance after notice and opportunity to abate; waste; criminal conviction for illegal use of rental property; criminal threats directed at landlord or agent; refusal to execute similar lease renewal after timely written request; repeated refusal of lawful entry; employee/resident-manager holdover; failure to deliver possession after tenant notice or accepted surrender offer; and unauthorized assignment or subletting.
No-Fault Eviction Grounds Circumstances allowing eviction even when the tenant has not violated the lease	Owner/family move-in; withdrawal from rental market; government/court/local order requiring vacancy; intent to demolish or substantially remodel.	Owner/family move-in (with exceptions for seniors, disabled, and terminally ill tenants); Ellis Act withdrawal; government/court/local order requiring vacancy; intent to demolish or substantial remodel. If a school-aged child resides in the covered unit and the notice of termination falls during the school year, it can be used as a defense for no-fault eviction.	Owner/family move-in (with exceptions for elderly, disabled, handicapped, terminally ill, and low-income tenants); demolition or substantial remodel; compliance with government/court/local order requiring vacancy; withdrawal from the rental market.
Notice of Termination Required contents, language, delivery, and filing requirements for notices terminating a tenancy	Must state the applicable at-fault or no-fault just cause. No-fault notices must inform tenants of relocation assistance or rent waiver rights.	Must state at least one for-cause or no-fault reason and the grounds for termination. Termination notices must be submitted through the City's rent registry portal within 7 calendar days after service. Additional notice content applies to owner move-ins, Ellis Act withdrawals, and demolition/substantial remodels.	Must be served in accordance with Civil Code Sections 1946–1946.5; must state intent to terminate tenancy and identify at least one at-fault or no-fault just cause. For no-fault terminations, relocation assistance notice is required. Copy of notice and proof of service must be submitted to the City within 5 days after service. More extensive noticing requirements apply to Ellis Act withdrawals.

	State Law (AB 1482)	City of Concord	City of Antioch
Termination Notice Period Minimum advance notice required before a tenancy may be terminated	Generally 30 days for tenants occupying less than one year and 60 days for tenants occupying one year or more pursuant to Civil Code Section 1946.1. Shorter or longer periods may apply for certain at-fault evictions or Ellis Act withdrawals.	Ellis Act withdrawal requires at least 120 days' notice, extended to one year for senior or disabled tenants who have lived in the unit for at least one year and provide timely notice of status. Demolition/substantial remodel notices must comply with Civil Code Section 1946.1. Other notices generally follow applicable federal, state, and local notice requirements.	Owner/family move-in requires 60 days' written notice. Ellis Act withdrawal requires at least 120 days' notice, extended to one year for qualifying tenants age 62 or older or disabled who have lived in the unit for at least one year and provide required notice of eligibility. Other notice periods generally follow applicable state law unless a longer period applies.
Relocation Assistance for Temporary Displacement Whether landlords must provide financial assistance to tenants that are temporarily displaced	Not addressed by AB 1482.	Yes. Required for temporary displacement due to substantial remodel. Assistance includes per Federal General Services Administration-rate per diem payments for displacement of 30 days or fewer; and per diem payments or comparable or superior temporary housing for 31 days or more.	Yes. Required for temporary displacement due to repairs, rehabilitation, health and safety violations, hazardous materials exposure, or work that makes the unit untenantable or cannot be completed while occupied, where repairs take less than 30 days. Assistance may include per diem for lodging in Contra Costa County based on the Federal General Services (GSA) rate; temporary use of another habitable Antioch unit; a new rental agreement for another habitable Antioch unit; or safe and sanitary hotel/motel accommodations (within reasonable distance of the tenant's rental)

	State Law (AB 1482)	City of Concord	City of Antioch
Relocation Assistance for Permanent Displacement Whether landlords must provide financial assistance to tenants that are permanently displaced	Required for no-fault evictions. Landlord must provide one month's rent or waive final month's rent.	Yes. Required for no-fault terminations. Standard amount is three times HUD fair market rent for comparable unit type plus \$3,000 moving stipend. Tenant households with lower-income, disabled, senior, terminally ill, and school-aged children receive one additional month of HUD fair market rent. Certain single-family home/condominium cases require two months of current rent plus a \$2,000 moving stipend. One-half of relocation assistance is due within 15 calendar days of service of the notice of termination. The remaining relocation assistance and moving stipend are due no later than the date the tenant vacates.	Yes. Required for no-fault evictions. Landlord must pay two months of the tenant's monthly rent, plus one additional month if the household includes a qualified tenant, plus moving expenses under the Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act - Residential Moving Expense and Dislocation Allowance Payment Schedule published by the Federal Highway Administration. A qualified tenant is any tenant who is elderly, disabled, handicapped, has one or more dependent children under the age of 18, or meets the income limits for a "lower-income household".
Right of Return Whether displaced tenants have the right to reoccupy the unit after displacement	Limited re-rental/re-offer rights. If an intended owner or qualifying family member does not move in within 90 days or does not maintain the unit as a primary residence for at least 12 months, the owner generally must offer the unit to the displaced tenant at the same rent and lease terms. If a stated demolition or substantial remodel is not commenced or completed, the owner must offer the displaced tenant an opportunity to re-rent at the prior rent and terms.	Yes. Provided for owner move-in violations, Ellis Act returns (up to 10 years), government orders, and substantial remodel. Tenant generally returns to the same covered rental unit at prior rent plus lawful increases and prior rental agreement terms.	Yes. Provided for owner/family move-in violations, demolition or substantial remodel, and Ellis Act returns (up to 10 years). Tenant generally returns or receives first refusal at prior rent plus lawful annual increases.
Tenant Buy-Out Agreements Whether landlords and tenants can enter into a buyout agreement where the landlord provides a tenant money or other consideration to vacate the rental unit	Not addressed by AB 1482.	Not addressed.	Yes. Landlord must provide disclosure when proposed agreement is provided: tenant has right not to enter agreement; may consult an attorney; may consult the "department"; and may rescind within 30 days after full execution. Tenant Buy-Out Agreement must be: in writing; translated if negotiated in another language; provided to each tenant at least 5 days before execution; include required bold notice language; allow 30-day rescission; and be filed with the City within 10 days after execution with proof of service.

	State Law (AB 1482)	City of Concord	City of Antioch
Right to Replace Departing Tenant Whether remaining tenant or tenants have the right to replace the departing tenant on a one-for-one basis	Not addressed by AB 1482.	Not addressed.	Yes. Landlord has right to approve or deny prospective replacement tenant, provided he/she does not unreasonably withhold approval.
Enforcement and Remedies Whether the law provides for administrative enforcement, civil actions, affirmative defenses, damages, penalties, attorney's fees, injunctive relief, or other remedies	No dedicated statewide administrative, registration, or filing program. However, noncompliance renders the termination notice void, and a material violation may support a tenant civil action for actual damages, discretionary attorney's fees and costs, enhanced damages under specified circumstances, and punitive damages. The Attorney General, city attorney, or county counsel may seek injunctive relief.	City administers the rent registry, hearing officer process, procedures, regulations, and enforcement. Tenants may bring civil actions for violations without exhausting administrative remedies. Remedies may include injunctive relief, actual/statutory/direct money damages, civil penalties of \$2,000 to \$5,000 per violation, additional penalties for senior or disabled tenants, treble damages or \$1,000 minimum damages, punitive damages, attorney's fees and costs for prevailing tenants, City Attorney enforcement, and affirmative defense in unlawful detainer actions.	City may administer and enforce the chapter, and the City Attorney or designee may develop procedures and guidelines. Aggrieved persons, tenant-representative organizations/entities, and the City may bring civil proceedings against landlords and persons who aid, facilitate, or incite violations. Remedies may include injunctive/equitable relief, treble damages or \$2,000 minimum damages, attorney's fees and costs, additional penalties for violations against disabled persons or persons age 65 or older, compensatory damages, rent refunds, relocation costs, civil penalties up to \$10,000 per violation, punitive damages, criminal penalties, and affirmative defense in unlawful detainer actions.
Note: Information current as of July 2026. The descriptions in this table are simplified criptions of any statute or ordinance. Individual provisions may be more or less protective depending on the specific topic.			



2026

Vallejo Housing Justice Coalition
Urban Habitat



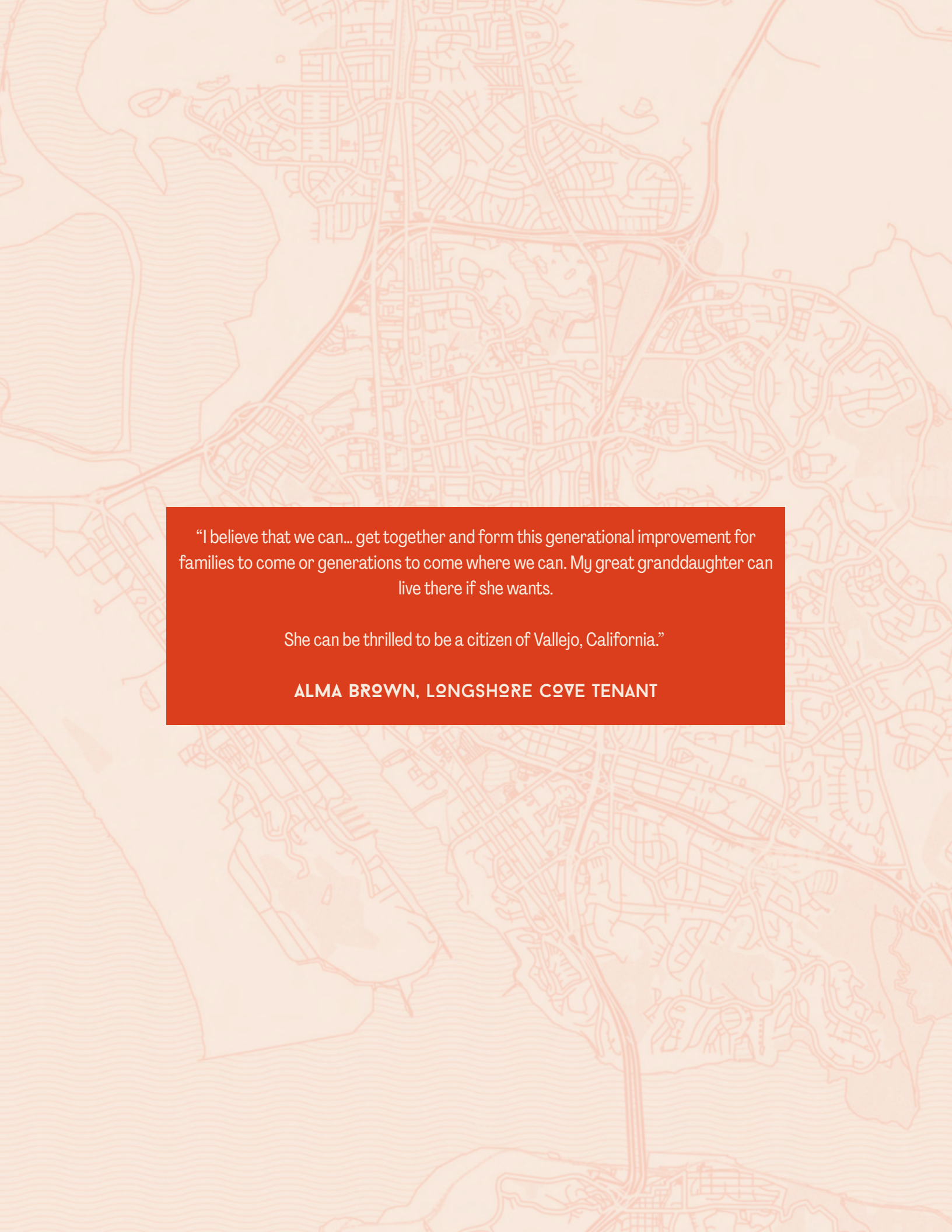
THE RIGHT TO THRIVE: TENANT-LED HOUSING JUSTICE IN VALLEJO, CALIFORNIA

DEVELOPED BY:

Anteeniya Bell, Urban Planner & Researcher

Cristál Gallegos, Vallejo Housing Justice Coalition Senior Organizer

Chris Schildt, Director of Housing Justice

A faint, light orange line-art map of Vallejo, California, serves as the background for the entire page. The map shows the city's layout, including streets, buildings, and the surrounding water bodies. A solid orange rectangular box is centered on the map, containing white text.

“I believe that we can... get together and form this generational improvement for families to come or generations to come where we can. My great granddaughter can live there if she wants.

She can be thrilled to be a citizen of Vallejo, California.”

ALMA BROWN, LONGSHORE COVE TENANT

TABLE OF CONTENTS

TABLE OF CONTENTS	02
PROJECT PARTNERS	03
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	04
INTRODUCTION	05
Why Vallejo?	05
Frameworks for Understanding Housing Injustice in Vallejo	07
SECTION 1: THE PROBLEM	09
How Did Vallejo Get Here?	10
History of Tenant Organizing in Vallejo	15
Vallejo Housing Justice Coalition (VHJC)	16
SECTION 2: TENANT EXPERIENCES IN VALLEJO	18
The Vallejo Tenant Survey	19
Research Approach and Survey Design	19
Research Questions	19
Data Collection	20
Data Analysis	20
Survey Results and Analysis	21
Survey Limitations	34
Discussion	36
SECTION 3: BUILDING TENANT POWER IN VALLEJO	37
Policy Recommendations to Improve Health and Well-Being of Vallejo Renters	38
Addressing Racial Inequities in Vallejo	43
Conclusion	45
Where Do We Go From Here?	46
Appendix	47
Figures	48

PROJECT PARTNERS



URBAN HABITAT (UH)

works to democratize power and advance equitable policies to create a just and connected Bay Area for low-income communities of color. Through strategic partnership, UH supports increasing the power and capacity in low-income communities and communities of color.



VALLEJO HOUSING JUSTICE COALITION (VHJC)

prioritizes and amplifies the voices of the communities most directly impacted by harmful housing policies that have displaced and uprooted families, especially low-income families, immigrants, and people of color.

PRINCIPLE AUTHORS

Anteeniya Bell, Urban Planner & Researcher

Cristál Gallegos, Senior Organizer, Vallejo Housing Justice Coalition

Chris Schildt, Director of Housing Justice, Urban Habitat

This report was made possible by the community members of South Vallejo and tenants of Longshore Cove and Seabreeze Apartments, whose invaluable expertise and experiences form the bedrock of VHJC's ongoing efforts. Their complex histories and compelling narratives, represented within this report as tenant testimonials, highlight the urgent need for collaborative action at the city level to secure permanent affordability and stable housing for all renters in Vallejo. Their contributions not only illuminate the challenges faced by low-income renters and renters of color, but also underscore the essential role of community voices in driving meaningful policy change.

RESEARCHER ACKNOWLEDGMENT

Research has been wielded as an extractive and exploitative instrument of white supremacy, used to further oppress and marginalize Black and Brown communities. Recognizing this harmful legacy, the development of this research is dedicated to reclaiming research-as-justice to uplift rather than harm low-income communities and communities of color. As a mixed-race Black and Korean queer person who has also experienced unstable and dilapidated housing, as well as eviction, similar to many renters in Vallejo, my hope and goal is for community members to use The Right to Thrive report as a transformative tool that aids in building tenant power for low-income renters and renters of color in Vallejo.

Anteeniya Bell

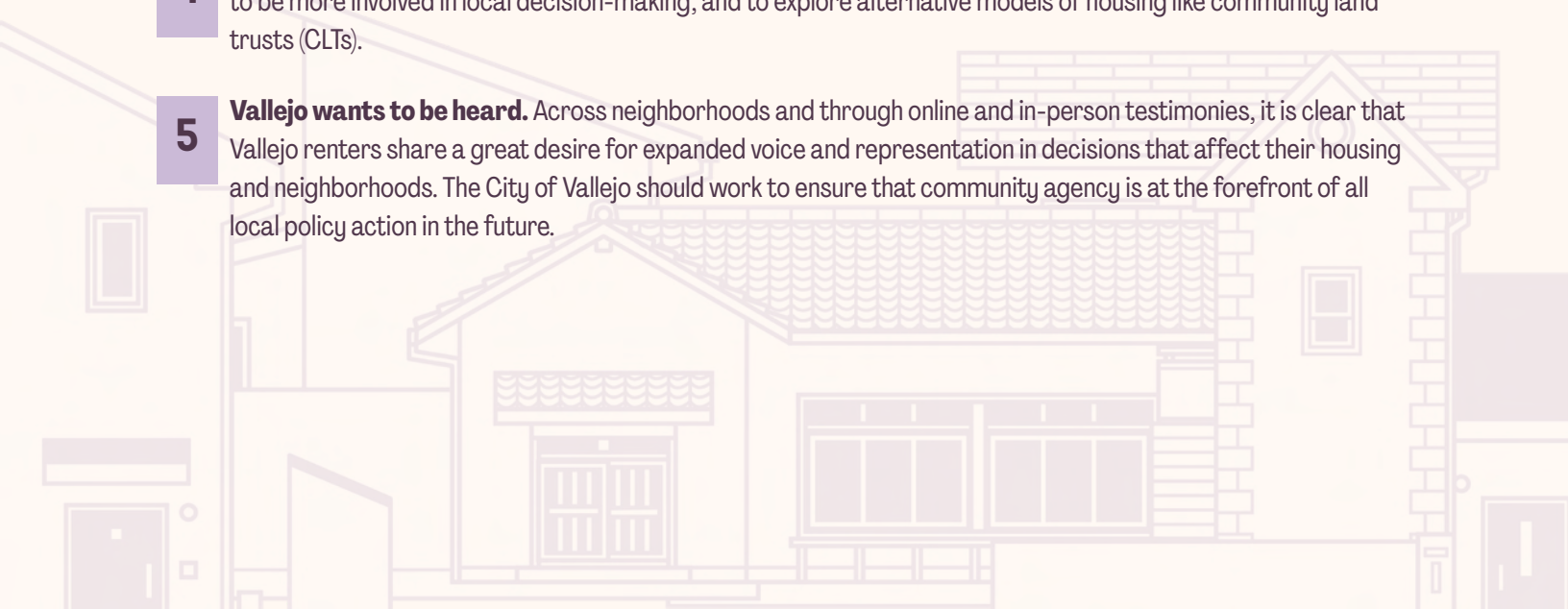
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The City of Vallejo is at a crossroads. Despite its rich cultural diversity and labor organizing history, Vallejo's renters face growing pressures — from unstable housing within a regional housing crisis and rising rents to deteriorating living conditions and limited legal protections from eviction. Over 55% of Vallejo households are renters, yet the city lacks local tenant protection beyond those offered by the state, leaving many residents vulnerable to displacement, harassment, and poor housing quality.

With “The Right to Thrive: Tenant-Led Housing Justice in Vallejo, California,” we sought to conduct the first tenant experience survey assessing renters’ needs in Vallejo, a severely underserved and underfunded city in the Bay Area. In this report, we summarize our findings from online survey data and tenant testimonials gathered at local food banks, farmers markets, and apartment complexes, to highlight the urgency of advancing tenant protections and community-driven housing solutions in Vallejo. It centers the voices and perspectives of those most impacted — low-income renters, Black, Indigenous, and people of color (BIPOC) households, families, and elders — who are calling not only for protection, but for belonging, dignity, and power in shaping the future of Vallejo as a city where all residents can thrive.

KEY FINDINGS:

- 1 Residents want tenant protections.** There is overwhelming support for rent stabilization, just cause evictions, and protections against landlord harassment and displacement to increase affordability across Vallejo, as well as to ensure tenants can remain where they live.
- 2 Housing quality and safety are major concerns.** Over half of renters reported problems with pests, physical building infrastructure, or illegal activity. Many more called for improved building maintenance and neighborhood safety through regular inspections and increased security presence onsite.
- 3 Social connection and mutual aid matter.** Beyond affordability, residents emphasized the importance of supportive communities, cultural pride, and mutual aid networks as part of what makes their neighborhoods truly livable. Creating more spaces to connect is integral to quality of life for renters in Vallejo for this reason.
- 4 Residents want to get involved in their communities.** Many renters are eager to form tenant associations, to be more involved in local decision-making, and to explore alternative models of housing like community land trusts (CLTs).
- 5 Vallejo wants to be heard.** Across neighborhoods and through online and in-person testimonies, it is clear that Vallejo renters share a great desire for expanded voice and representation in decisions that affect their housing and neighborhoods. The City of Vallejo should work to ensure that community agency is at the forefront of all local policy action in the future.



INTRODUCTION

In 2022, United Way Bay Area (UWBA) collaborated with Applied Survey Research to undertake a comprehensive study assessing the alignment of philanthropic fund distribution with community needs across the Bay Area, from 2018-2020.¹ This study aimed to inform strategic decisions regarding funding and resource delivery. The findings highlighted a stark disparity: Solano County, which has the highest needs score among the eight Bay Area counties, receives the least philanthropic funding per capita—\$168 per capita compared to \$11,211 per capita in San Francisco County.² The study concludes with a call-to-action, urging funders and decision-makers to invest in Solano County, in order to address pressing community needs and promote permanent economic stability for its constituents.

This study, *Understanding Poverty and Philanthropic Giving Disparities in the Bay Area 2018-2020*, was a key catalyst for the Vallejo Tenant Survey developed by the Vallejo Housing Justice Coalition (VHJC) to begin understanding the current housing landscape for low-income renters in Vallejo, so as to prioritize and center community voices in the policy advocacy work advanced by VHJC and its partners at the municipal level.

Why Vallejo?

In 2001, the New York Times dubbed Vallejo, California as one of the most racially diverse cities in the nation, recognizing its role as a central maritime, industrial, and agricultural hub while existing on the outskirts of the San Francisco Bay Area.³ Despite still holding this title, and being the largest city in Solano County, Vallejo has largely been excluded from the regional conversation on housing justice due to a false perception of affordable homeownership opportunities in the city. As housing affordability continues to be an ongoing issue, it is imperative that Vallejo join the brigade of California cities instituting tenant protection ordinances to ensure long-term livability and affordability for residents that are most at-risk of displacement and homelessness.

Vallejo is the most populous city in Solano County, with a population of approximately 126,090 people.⁴ While renowned for its waterfront district and rich maritime history, Vallejo's cultural diversity has earned it acclaim over the past two decades as one of the nation's most diverse cities.⁵ As one of the most racially diverse cities in the Bay Area, its demographic composition is approximately 25% Asian, 19% Black, 28% Hispanic, and 23% White.⁶

Vallejo has been spotlighted in local newspapers and Bay Area media networks as the last affordable bastion for homeownership for low-income families and communities of color. As of February 2024, the median home value in Vallejo stood at \$434,800, more than 50% lower than the Bay Area's median home value of \$1.2 million.⁷ This affordability has made Vallejo a hotspot for new investment from private developers eager to build market-rate housing, despite the ongoing regional housing crisis. The city is also touted as an ideal location for retirees seeking to purchase homes, and with the growth of an aging population in the city (more than 15%), it is imperative that affordable, sustainable housing for Vallejo residents to live a full and dignified life is central to the city's housing strategy.⁸



Despite a median household income of \$88,063, Vallejo faces varied and complex housing challenges. The city has one of the highest unemployment rates in the Bay Area, sitting at approximately 5% of the population.⁹ Similar to cities like Antioch, Pittsburg, and Richmond, Vallejo is a periphery city in which its working age population often commutes to more metropolitan areas, namely San Francisco and Sacramento, for quality employment opportunities, highlighting the need for local job creation as a pillar of city and county policy.

In this context, the Vallejo Housing Justice Coalition (VHJC) was formed in 2019 to address the lack of tenant protections and affordable housing options for low-income BIPOC residents. Cristal Rocha, VHJC's original organizer, began this work due to her own personal experience being displaced from her home in Richmond in 2015.¹⁰ Following this, Rocha and her family moved to Vallejo, where her parents were able to purchase a home during a time when their new neighbors were leaving Vallejo for cities like Stockton, Modesto, and Sacramento. Rocha recognized this pattern of place-based loss due to the ongoing housing affordability crisis and chose to transform her own story of displacement into political action, a few months shy of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020.

The COVID-19 pandemic made many of the issues Rocha and other Vallejo residents faced much more evident, as countless tenants faced eviction, landlord harassment, and unsustainable rent increases. Rocha and other VHJC organizers conducted door knocking to get tenants connected to the limited support from the Emergency Rental Assistance Program (ERAP). By doing this work, VHJC was able to understand more clearly how dire many tenants living situations were, many detailing stories of landlord harassment, racism and discrimination, predatory property management practices like theft of rental money, refusal to provide receipt of rental payments, threat of eviction, presence of mold and mildew, and pest infestations.

Due to the urgency of COVID-19, VHJC did not have the chance to reassess community needs, concerns, and priorities to enhance awareness of living conditions at the local and regional levels. VHJC also felt it was pertinent to begin this assessment as the summer of 2023 also marked the end of the statewide eviction moratorium that was activated during the COVID-19 breakout in 2020. Immediately following the moratorium lift, eviction cases in California increased exponentially as landlords began the tenant removal process, where the number of tenants facing evictions increased from 10% in Sacramento County to 35% in Santa Clara County from pre-pandemic filings.¹¹ Many landlords also chose to utilize the last of their rent cap increases, creating an influx of tenants choosing to self-evict as they lacked adequate financial resources or ineligibility for rental assistance programs. And most recently, Vallejo was highlighted in media reports for surpassing New York City in housing costs, indicating a severe escalation in median home prices and monthly rents in Vallejo and nearby cities like Fairfield and Benicia.¹² The Vallejo Tenant Survey was designed to address this gap in engagement and assessment.



FRAMEWORKS FOR UNDERSTANDING

Housing injustice in Vallejo is a complex and multifaceted issue deeply rooted in systemic inequities that have long plagued the city and its most vulnerable residents. Recent research shows that informal eviction processes — such as landlord harassment, degraded housing quality, and rent increases — lead to self-eviction, in which tenants are coerced into leaving their homes. These pressures, compounded by a lack of robust tenant protections, put renters at especially high risk of displacement. Addressing these injustices requires renters and housing justice advocates to have a comprehensive understanding of Vallejo's urban history, tenant organizing and movement-building, and anti-displacement strategies, to ensure that existing and future generations can remain where they live. The following frameworks are important in contextualizing the history and experience of renters in Vallejo.

Housing as a human right and anti-displacement. Displacement refers to the forced or coerced movement of people from their homes, lands, or communities, often driven by external pressure that targets the most vulnerable.¹³ These pressures can be economic (gentrification and rising housing costs), political (war, persecution, or government policies), environmental (natural disasters or climate change), or large-scale development projects (infrastructure building or urban renewal programs). Displacement is a catalyst for housing instability, with profound consequences for those affected.

In Vallejo, the threat of displacement is highest for renters, especially low-income renters in central Vallejo.¹⁴ Displacement tears apart social and cultural networks, disrupting access to essential services, affordable housing, and employment, and makes it difficult for someone to rebuild their lives in new locations. It is closely linked with the process of gentrification, with low-income residents bearing the brunt of rising property values and living costs as a result of wealthier people moving into their neighborhoods.

The principle of housing as a human right asserts that everyone should have access to safe, secure, and affordable housing without discrimination.¹⁵ However, the underlying causes of displacement are deeply entrenched in systemic inequities that require a comprehensive housing justice framework to effectively address and mitigate their impacts. Anti-displacement efforts are crucial in confronting the economic, social, and cultural disruptions that destabilize communities and displace BIPOC residents from their homes.

To combat these forces, tenant-led initiatives that are rooted in direct community engagement and negotiation with local governments are essential. These initiatives can serve as powerful tools to prevent further encroachment of gentrification, and build collective community power. For example, in Marin County, tenants at the Skylark Apartments organized a renters association in response to proposed rent increases. Through rapid-response organizing, including door-knocking, signature gathering, and know-your-rights workshops, they mobilized to advocate for their rights and well-being against inequitable housing practices like unjust evictions and rent hikes. In Vallejo, similar tenant-led, community-informed approaches are vital to safeguarding the human right to housing, simultaneously as movement-building work is still undergoing. Fighting gentrification and displacement ensures that Vallejo continues to house its diverse community members, many of whom have already experienced multiple displacements as previous tenants of San Francisco, Oakland, or Richmond.

Housing as a social determinant of health. Solano Public Health has identified housing as a key priority for the health and well-being of Solano County residents.¹⁶ The vision of the Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP) developed by Solano Public Health and its partners was built on the idea that health systems should be invested in the root causes of the health issues impacting its constituents, and because of this, must center the experiences of Black, Indigenous, and People of Color in Solano County. According to the study, 1 in 3 Solano County residents are at-risk or currently experiencing displacement from gentrification.¹⁷

HOUSING INJUSTICE IN VALLEJO

Housing in Solano County is particularly precarious for families and seniors with fewer financial resources, as they are more likely to live in substandard housing. The rising housing prices in the Bay Area have exacerbated racial disparities, leading to an increase in displacement and segregation. This trend has seen low-income Black households growing in numbers in Fairfield, East Vallejo, and Suisun City. The county's lower income levels mean that it has a higher proportion of cost-burdened households compared to San Francisco, with two in five residents not owning their own homes. The American Community Survey (ACS) defines 'cost-burdened' as households that spend 30% or more of their income on housing. In Solano County, approximately 62% of Black and Native American renters are burdened by high housing costs, while only 48% of white renters are cost-burdened.¹⁸ Overall, at the county level, 49.8 renter-occupied housing units per 100 units are cost-burdened, speaking to the need for affordable housing for the renting class.

According to the National Low Income Housing Coalition, to afford the average cost of a 2 bedroom apartment in Vallejo at fair market value (\$1,963 per month), an individual would have to make \$37.75 an hour, which is 2.4 times the minimum wage for the county.¹⁹ Additionally, the area median income (AMI) for the Vallejo-Fairfield MSA is 43% higher than the average annual income of the city.²⁰ And with less local employment opportunities available, affordability continues to be an issue. Over the last decade, Vallejo has also experienced an influx of low-income families displaced from San Francisco and Alameda County, adding further stress to local infrastructure and services, and straining resources to support both new and existing residents.

Racism as a public health issue. Racism as a public health issue has gained significant attention in recent years, with increasing recognition that systemic racism and racial discrimination have profound and pervasive impacts on the health and well-being of individuals and communities. For example, Black women are most at-risk of eviction in the United States. This understanding has led public health professionals, policymakers, and community advocates to address racism not just as a social and moral issue, but also as a critical determinant of health outcomes. In Vallejo, these issues are particularly pressing given the city's diverse population and ongoing housing affordability challenges, and they continue to affect the city's development and growth, as well as inter-community dynamics.

Vallejo exemplifies how systemic racism in housing manifests through historical and ongoing segregation, discriminatory lending practices, and unequal access to affordable housing. Marginalized populations, particularly low-income Black households, have been disproportionately affected by these inequities, being confined to neighborhoods with substandard living conditions, environmental hazards, and limited access to resources, contributing to higher rates of health issues such as asthma and lead poisoning. The rising housing costs in the Bay Area have intensified these racial disparities, leading to further segregation and displacement of vulnerable communities.

Understanding the legacy of historical violence of urban planning projects like urban renewal, residential segregation, single-family zoning ordinances, and more is essential for developing effective policies and initiatives that promote inclusivity and justice for all residents that are context-specific, place-based, and community-informed — with special emphasis on Black, Indigenous, and people of color (BIPOC) residents in Vallejo.



SECTION 1: THE PROBLEM

“

But it was either not paying y'all(rent) or paying PG&E. So I had to make that choice. But then I said, in the next following month, I said, what am I going to do? I cannot afford to pay PG&E back all this money to get my lights turned on. And if I don't pay him, you know, so I had to make a decision. So I made the decision to walk out of my house and leave everything there.

With the little bit of money I had in my pocket. And that's how, because I knew I was going to get evicted because it was either pay. (sic) I had no money to even pay the cable or nothing. It was just that we had just walked out and because they said I had to pay that PG&E if I wanted to keep my place and stuff.”

“And so, I didn't, when I moved over here, I just had my little bag and stuff. I didn't even have blankets or nothing to sleep in. We didn't care. I was just happy just to get a place.”

“And it's just like, you've been there for a while and you're getting—you're getting no respect. Then you go to the office and it's like a last minute thing. Yeah, definitely. You know, and I was talking to the girl and I said, you know, and she's like talking back to me, you know. And I told her, I said, so do you know I'm a 67 year old woman and you can't talk to me like that, you know.”

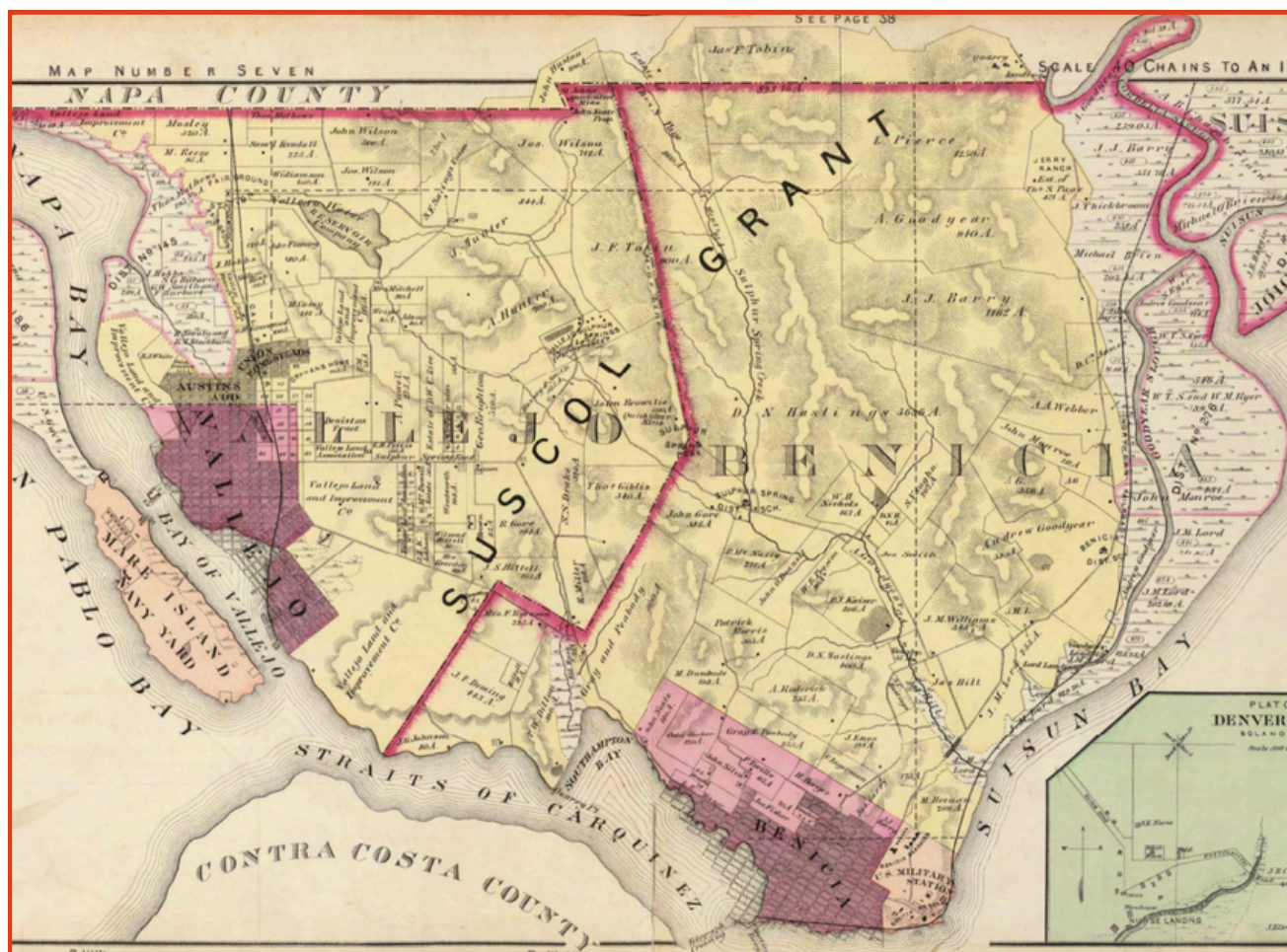
”

Zina Wilson, LongShore Cove Tenant

How Did Vallejo Get Here?

To fully grasp the current housing landscape and renter experience in Vallejo, we must begin by examining the city's urban history. This allows us to pinpoint the root causes of Vallejo's urban inequities, as well as critically engage with past regional and federal urban policies that have exacerbated racial disparities in the American housing market. Such an analysis is crucial, as any further collaboration with city governments to address and rectify racist policies and practices must be grounded in the shared histories and collective memories of the communities most affected by said policies. It is the people who give meaning to a place, and their experiences and stories are essential to understanding and resolving the challenges that impact their everyday lives.

Early history and land privatization. Prior to Spanish settlement and colonization, Solano County was home to the indigenous Coastal Miwok, Suisunes, and Patwin peoples, who continue to steward the land. The Spanish colonial period saw Vallejo integrated into the mission system, which sought to convert Native Americans to Christianity and integrate them into European colonial society. This era significantly disrupted indigenous ways of life, as European agricultural practices, livestock, and crops were introduced, fundamentally altering the local economy and environment for lifetimes. The construction of ranchos — large land grants given to Spanish and later Mexican settlers — laid the groundwork for Vallejo's transition from a Spanish colonial outpost to a significant site in California's Mexican and American history. Rancho Suscol, a Mexican land grant from 1843, established early patterns of land privatization and speculation that continue to influence Vallejo today.



Source: [Vacaville Heritage Council](#)

Vallejo was established as a city in 1851 and briefly served as California's first official state capital until 1853, when the capital moved to Sacramento. In 1853, Mare Island became the first U.S. Navy post on the West Coast, shaping economic migration patterns into Vallejo. During this period, Solano County already had a significant African American population, with additional migration from Texas, Mississippi, Arkansas, and Florida driven by increasing anti-Black racism in the South during the Great Migration (1910-1970).²¹ The Mare Island Naval Shipyard remained a hub for war-industry jobs, attracting Mexican, Black, and Filipino migrants well into the 20th century, until its closure in 1996.

Redlining and racially restrictive covenants.

The history of redlining and race-restrictive covenants in Vallejo reflects the broader patterns of racial discrimination in American housing policies during the 20th century. Redlining, a practice institutionalized by the Home Owners' Loan Corporation (HOLC) in the 1930s, systematically denied minority neighborhoods access to mortgages and other financial services by marking them as high-risk (red) on maps. These maps segregated communities and restricted economic opportunities for African Americans and other minorities. In Vallejo, this practice was compounded by racially restrictive covenants included in property deeds that used explicit language that prohibited the sale or rental of homes to non-white individuals. These covenants were legal until the Supreme Court decision in *Shelley v. Kraemer* (1948), which struck them down federally.

Despite the federal court striking them down, the impacts of redlining and race-restrictive covenants racialized both the land and housing policy in Solano County. Local housing policy and practices focused on delegating specific communities of color to different areas of the city to maintain and control the growing BIPOC population postwar. Prior to 1960, Vallejo was predominantly white (approximately 80%), with East Vallejo being race-restricted for white families.²² These segregated single-family home developments were located around the I-80 "highway home" suburban developments such as Vista de Vallejo, Winslow Terrace,

**DON'T WAIT!
NOW**
is the time to select your
homesite in the new
Vista de Vallejo
SUBDIVISION

Restricted!
HERE ARE PROTECTIVE RESTRICTIONS
FOR YOUR BENEFIT!

That the provisions are to be used exclusively for residential purposes. That no structure or building shall be erected, be or plan
such use premises and no garage or outbuilding or shed nor temporary shall be used for dwelling or building purposes. That no other
lots or building erected thereon, including garage or outbuilding, shall be used for any business purposes. That said premises and all
and every structure erected thereon shall not be sold, leased or conveyed to or occupied or purchased by any person whose blood
and that entirely of the Caucasian race.

That no building or structure of any kind whatsoever shall be built, erected, altered or maintained upon any part of said property
unless plans and specifications of building, showing the type of construction, the kind, nature, shape, color and height of the structure
and the location thereof on the building site, shall have first been submitted to and approved by the Sellers.

That no trade, traffic or business of any kind, including business, entertainment, apartment or industrial or building of similar or the
character shall be conducted or maintained on said property.

Vista de Vallejo affords an exceptional opportunity to
parents who want to bring up their children in the best
possible environment. Here you will find protective building
and racial restrictions, combined with exceptional
advantages for school and play.

Safety, too! Remember, children living in Vista de
Vallejo will be able to reach grade, junior high and senior
high schools without the dangers of traversing or
crossing an automobile highway. All of these schools
will be within 3 blocks of the most remote corner of
Vista de Vallejo.

For full information, without obligation, see either Mr. Hatch or Mr.
Reimers at office, 713 Marin St., or see salesman on tract.

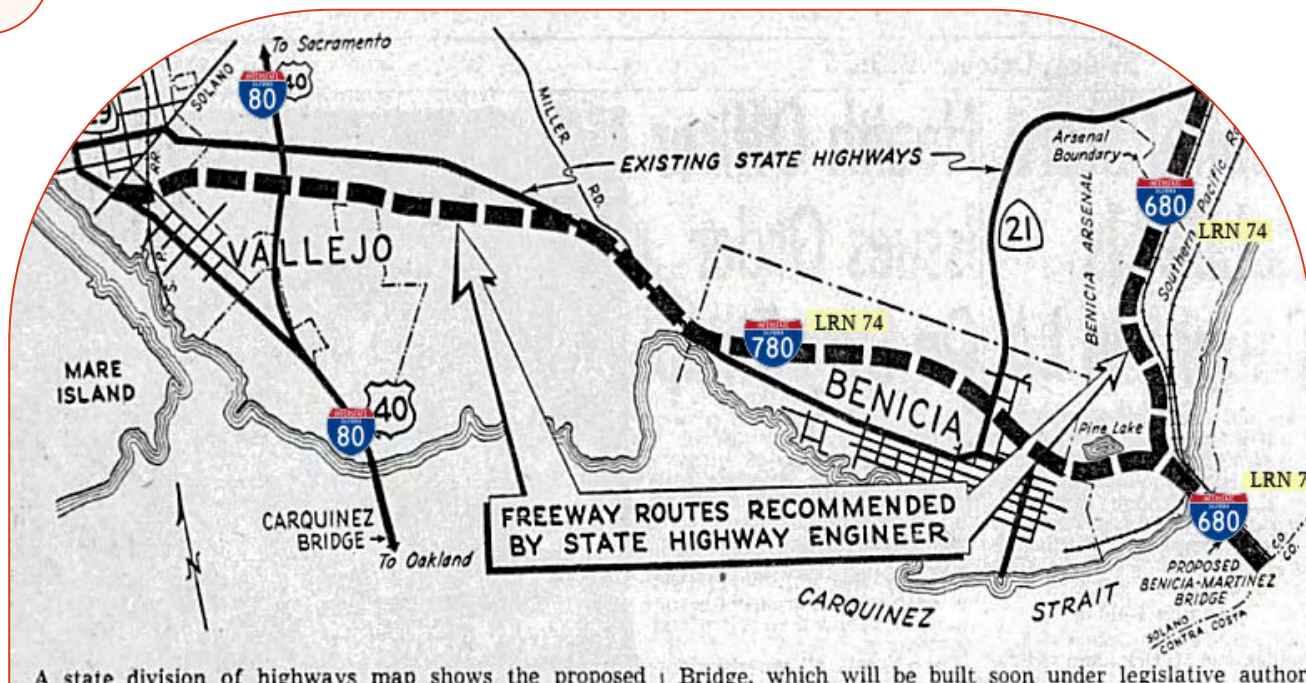
O'HARA and HATCH
713 Marin Street, Vallejo OWNERS Telephone 121

Source: [Open Vallejo](#)



Greenfield Terrace, Fairmont Gardens, and more.²³ The Crest, a neighborhood in North Vallejo, was race-restricted for Black families only, making it one of two areas in the city where Black Vallejoans could purchase homes.²⁴ Despite this, there were many efforts pushed by communities of color in Vallejo seeking refuge from racial violence via private homeownership. For example, in 1952, an organization of citizens concerned about housing discrimination formed the Home Seekers Association, purchasing acres of land in North Vallejo to build permanent housing for Black families.²⁵

While “Whites-only” language in land deeds and homeowner association bylaws are no longer regulatory, today we see persistent wealth gaps in areas designated as “red” on redlining maps, as race-restrictive language made it almost impossible for people of color to build wealth via homeownership. The long-lasting impacts of redlining continues to manifest in contemporary neighborhood characteristics, linking systemic exclusion from home purchasing to the diminished well-being of marginalized communities. Today, residential segregation has created unsafe living conditions for Black, Latinx, and Asian neighborhoods in Vallejo, resulting in healthcare gaps, food deserts, and social isolation, perpetuating cycles of poor health outcomes across generations. This is important as Vallejo houses 1 of 11 census tracts in the Bay Area that are categorized today as racially disadvantaged for low-income Black and Latinx households.²⁶ For example, in 2021, Vallejo census tract 2509 had almost 600 Black and 200 Latinx households that were low-income and living in highly segregated neighborhoods.²⁷ Vallejo census tract 2509 is located by the waterfront district, home to apartment complexes with residents most at-risk of eviction and property management harassment — Longshore Cove Apartments and Marina Vista Apartments.



Source: [California Highways](#)

Urban renewal and freeway construction. Vallejo was one of the first cities to receive federal urban renewal funds from the United States government in the 1960s. Redevelopment of the downtown district, via the Callahan DeSilva development plan, was the first major urban renewal project taken up by the city, headed by former Vallejo Redevelopment Agency director James Richardson in the 1970s and 1980s. The main goal during this time was to revitalize Downtown Vallejo as a commercial business district, connecting Vallejo's transportation systems and tourism areas with the waterfront district.²⁸ Despite these federal funds, ongoing development and revitalization was difficult for the city to keep up with, and many districts, such as the waterfront development plan, fell to the wayside until decades later.

Highway and downtown development was a key focus of Vallejo city leaders in the 1970s. The construction of Interstate 80 (I-80) was a grounding force for perceived growth of the city, as the interstate and further offshoots like I-780 would connect Vallejo to nearby cities of Fairfield and Benicia. I-80 construction was also a key component of connecting Solano County to Contra Costa County more directly, as it would expand the city's transportation network, ultimately leading to the construction of the Carquinez Bridge.²⁹

State highway construction was difficult and unpopular to Vallejo residents, as it would create huge volumes of traffic downtown as well as increase noise and air pollution in the waterfront district. Access to Mare Island for shipyard workers was also of key concern, as most of the working class in Vallejo, many of whom were Black and Filipino, would have increased difficulty commuting to work as highway construction was predicted to disrupt the Mare Island Ferry Co. boats. Additionally, as the waterfront development plans were abandoned, so were the swaths of land purchased by the state to support urban renewal projects. This meant that the waterfront and downtown district would remain relatively undeveloped, despite the city's population growth and demographic shifts in the second half of the 20th century. While previously race-restricted home developments underwent neighborhood secession, multi-family housing became a key necessity to meet the demands of the region's population growth after the 1980s.

Predatory marketing and housing foreclosures. In the late 1990s and early 2000s, financial institutions began aggressively targeting communities of color in Vallejo, and other periphery cities in the Bay Area, with predatory lending practices. This period coincided with a significant demographic shift in Vallejo, as many residents sought housing and employment opportunities in other cities following the closure of Mare Island in 1996 — an exodus that attracted Black, Latino, and Asian individuals and families seeking lower housing prices. Unfortunately, new and existing residents were subjected to high-risk lending schemes, where loans came with fluctuating and exorbitant interest rates that were particularly vulnerable to the economic instability of the looming recession.

Between 1998 and 2000, the percentage of subprime mortgages issued to BIPOC households surged from 2% to 18%. And despite having good credit scores and stable rental histories, many low- and middle-income Black households faced discriminatory practices from traditional lending institutions. These families were either denied conventional loans or steered towards higher risk loans, which carried higher interest rates and less favorable terms. As the recession took hold, these predatory loans led to widespread home foreclosures, beginning in 2008, devastating the financial stability of these communities.

The impact of the Great Recession was particularly severe in Vallejo, leading to the city filing for bankruptcy in May 2008. The bankruptcy drew national attention, as Vallejo became emblematic of the broader economic collapse that was gripping the nation via bank failings. Significant budget shortfalls and revenue losses hurt Vallejo's economy. Prior to the recession, Vallejo's budget was heavily burdened by public servant salaries, which accounted for almost three-fourths of the city's \$80 million budget — substantially higher than the state average of 60%.³⁰ As a result, the city was forced to make deep cuts to essential services, including the closures of three of the eight Vallejo firehouses, as well as almost half of all fire and police staff being cut and the remaining receiving significant salary reductions. Road and infrastructure maintenance were deferred, as the city had to operate on a minimal budget and balance its debt.

The recession also wreaked havoc on Vallejo's housing market. Home prices plummeted from a median home value of \$471,000 in the early 2000s to an extreme low of \$164,300, and approximately 60% of homeowners in the city defaulted on their mortgages. Unemployment in Vallejo soared to 15%, with even higher decreases in sales tax and property tax revenues.³¹ The city eventually emerged from bankruptcy in 2011, with a federal judge approving a \$50 million debt restructuring plan, but the scars of the recession — and the predatory lending that contributed to it — left a lasting impact on Black, Latino, and Asian households in Vallejo, serving as a stark reminder of the destructive power of financial institutions preying on marginalized communities.

The long-term consequences of the recession continue to be felt in California and the nation. The racial wealth gap persisted and widened for Black and Latino communities, who have long struggled to regain the wealth lost during the crisis. Post-recession would find that collective wealth loss experienced by Black families between 2009-2011 was significant; Black households lost 13% of their wealth due to the economic crisis and housing foreclosures.³² Steep drops in property values, combined with the waves of foreclosures meant that many BIPOC families not only lost their homes but were also left with insurmountable debt, while white households, though also affected, were more likely to have other assets to buffer against the loss in home value.³³

The city, private landowners, and affordable housing. Vallejo is one of the last major cities for affordable homeownership in the Bay Area, especially for low-income and BIPOC homeowners seeking to build intergenerational wealth. The relationship between the City of Vallejo and affordable housing development is multifaceted, shaped by historical, economic, and political factors. The largest historical influences include municipal and federal investment into single-home, suburban developments and the usage of zoning ordinances to restrict residential development to single-family zoning.

The Othering & Belonging Institute developed an equity metric to measure the impacts of single-family zoning on residential development in the Bay Area. This study found that 85% of residential land in the Bay Area is dedicated to single-family homes.³⁴ Vallejo was ranked in the middle category of single-family zoning, between 80-90% of residential land being designated for single-family-only zoning.³⁵

Multi-family housing has been the historical response to the segregationist impacts of single-family zoning — such as duplexes, townhomes, and apartment buildings. Unfortunately, multi-family housing is widely unpopular with private housing developers for a multitude of reasons: (1) they often requires a larger initial investment than single-family homes; (2) they must abide by a city's complex zoning regulations and approval processes; (3) they are less profitable in markets where single-family homes are in high demand; and (4) they require ongoing property management, tenant relations, and compliance with rental regulations. The growth of the NIMBYism movement and the push for landlord protections in Vallejo has also made it so that multi-family, affordable housing is viewed as a threat against the culture and values of the city.

Vallejo's primary challenge has been the rising demand and low supply for affordable housing for low- and moderate-income households. Low-income renters, while noted as a priority in the most recent draft of Vallejo's Housing Element, are not the center of housing policy action at the municipal level. Instead, the dominance of landlords and property management companies overseeing available rentals, and the large percentage of city council members that own multiple residential properties, dictate negotiations on housing stock and type in the city. In a 2023 study of Bay Area elected officials who own rental property, Vallejo mayor Robert McConnell was found to own more rental properties than any other elected official surveyed, with around 12 properties that generate between \$120,000-\$1,200,000 annually.³⁶ Increasing renter representation and tenant protections advocates in Vallejo's city council is key to influencing how the city facilitates conversations with private investors, especially in negotiating affordable housing minimums for development projects.

Although Vallejo ultimately adopted its Housing Element, the City has failed to meet the implementation commitments it made to its residents and to the State. The June 2025 and September 2025 deadlines for presenting draft rent stabilization and just cause eviction ordinances have come and gone without City Council review, or action.



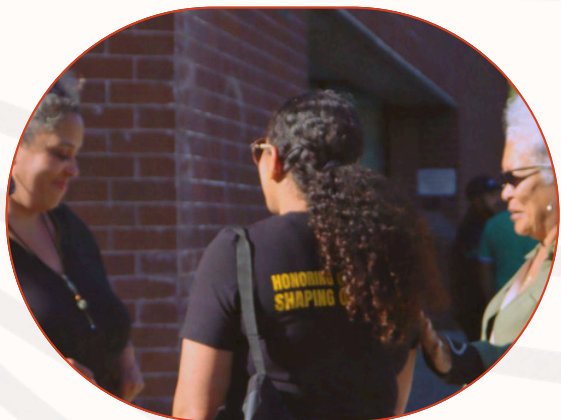
History of Tenant Organizing in Vallejo

Tenant organizing in Vallejo has a rich history rooted in the broader struggles for affordable housing, tenant rights, and social justice. One of the earliest examples of Vallejo residents organizing for fair housing happened during the urban renewal period in the first half of the 20th century.³⁶ Vallejo, like many American cities, experienced a housing boom after World War II. This period saw significant suburban expansion, driven by federal policies favoring homeownership and single-family zoning. While this development provided housing for many, it laid the groundwork for future housing inequality and residential segregation, excluding people of color from the speculative market.

The Vallejo branch of the NAACP, established in 1918, was straightforward in attacking housing inequality and job discrimination at a time when only 2,000 Black residents lived in Vallejo.³⁸ Despite threats from the local Ku Klux Klan, the Vallejo NAACP “pressed for the prosecution of a White property owner accused of torching a Black church, and for equal treatment and cooperation from local authorities and from the commandant of Mare Island Naval Shipyard.”³⁹ In an article by historian Brendan Riley, he highlights author Sharon McGriff-Payne’s account of how her parents utilized a White go-betweener to purchase a home in the 1950s due to the seller refusing to sell to an African American couple.⁴⁰ Early 20th century Vallejo was also defined by its strong labor organizing, especially for Black shipyard workers on Mare Island.

Despite Vallejo being the birthplace of many local Bay Area housing advocates, such as anti-displacement organizer and author James Tracy, little has been documented on Vallejo’s contemporary push for renters’ protections. Even less has been written about the history of racially-restrictive covenants, urban renewal, and redlining in Vallejo, remaining an unexplored part of Vallejo’s legacy. Tracy’s own experience growing up in Vallejo and engaging in labor organizing as a young adult did help shape his later work, including the co-founding of the Eviction Defense Network in San Francisco in the 1990s.⁴¹

Today, the Vallejo Housing Justice Coalition (VHJC) stands at the forefront of tenant advocacy in Vallejo, which is aimed at ensuring affordable, equitable housing for all renters in Vallejo. VHJC’s initiatives include organizing workshops on tenant rights and local housing policy, as well as advancing conversations in community-controlled housing preservation strategies, namely the formation of a community land trust, to prevent displacement and maintain long-term affordability. Tenant leaders and members of VHJC have also vocalized interest in creating a coalition of renters and tenants associations in Vallejo, in order to create a more connected network of renter-focused housing justice organizations across Solano County.



Vallejo Housing Justice Coalition (VHJC)

The Vallejo Housing Justice Coalition (VHJC) is a grassroots organization committed to championing housing justice, tenant rights, and equitable development in Vallejo, California. Established in response to the escalating housing crisis and the pressing challenges faced by low-income and marginalized communities, VHJC strives to ensure that every Vallejo resident has access to safe, affordable, and stable housing. Their advocacy and policy work is at the forefront of their mission, and by actively engaging in policy advocacy at both local and state levels, VHJC promotes laws and regulations that offer and enforce robust tenant protections, and supports the development of affordable housing projects.

In 2018, Urban Habitat (UH) began conversations with local residents about regional segregation and housing challenges. These discussions set the groundwork, context, and priorities for VHJC's work, leading to the coalition's formal establishment in 2019. In addition to their instrumental work supporting tenants at the Strawberry Hill and Holiday Garden Apartments in their fight for an emergency anti-rent gouging ordinance, VHJC has facilitated conversations with city council and the mayor to ensure the renewal of the ordinance until AB 1482 came into effect in 2020.

Community education and outreach form the bedrock of VHJC's initiatives. The coalition conducts workshops, informational sessions, and community meetings to educate residents about their rights as tenants and the resources available to them. These efforts are designed to empower tenants with the knowledge and tools they need to navigate the complexities of the Californian housing system and to advocate for their rights effectively. VHJC also started conversations with tenants for their participation in the city's Housing Strategy Process, highlighting their commitment to inclusive community engagement.

Direct tenant support and legal aid are critical components of VHJC's services. The coalition provides invaluable assistance to tenants facing eviction, harassment, and other housing-related issues by connecting them with legal aid services, offering guidance on dealing with landlords and helping to mediate disputes. This direct support is essential in preventing unjust evictions and ensuring that tenants are not left vulnerable to exploitative practices. In 2020, VHJC shifted its outreach efforts online due to the pandemic, conducting mass phone and text campaigns to inform tenants about their rights and available resources, collaborating with local organizations to push for a county-wide eviction moratorium and increased rental assistance funds.

VHJC also prioritizes research and data collection to inform their advocacy efforts. By conducting surveys and gathering data on housing conditions and tenant experiences in Vallejo, VHJC highlights the real-life impacts of housing policies on renters, ensuring that their policy action work is evidence-based and grounded in the lived experiences of the community.

In 2022, VHJC continued to build relationships with tenants and local organizations, holding know-your-rights trainings and participating in the Housing First Alliance Steering Committee, receiving additional funding from BUILD to hire a campaign coordinator to focus on base-building activities. VHJC's community engagement and advocacy efforts have intensified this year, with tenant leaders participating in national assemblies and engaging in ongoing pressures for Vallejo city council for the delayed Draft Housing Policy and other regional housing projects, such as California Forever. Most recently, they were awarded a grant from the San Francisco Foundation's Greater Community Collaboration fund to establish a new multi-sector collaborative space, aiming to bring more foundation and philanthropic funding to Solano County.

In addition to the tenant protections policy action VHJC has been engaged in since 2019, the organization also pushes two housing justice programs: (1) the Vallejo Leadership Cohort and (2) the Vallejo Community Land Trust.

AT THE VALLEJO HOUSING JUSTICE COALITION (VHJC), WE BELIEVE THAT HOUSING IS A HUMAN RIGHT.

Vallejo Leadership Cohort (VLC). The Vallejo Leadership Cohort (VLC) is a community-driven initiative aimed at empowering local residents to take active roles in advocating for housing justice and equitable development in Vallejo. The 8-week cohort is designed to build leadership skills, foster community engagement, and create a network of informed advocates who can effectively address housing issues in their own neighborhoods.

In early 2023, VHJC founded the Vallejo Leadership Cohort (VLC), an 8-week tenant leadership development program. The first cohort began work from February to July of 2023, with 16 Vallejo tenant leaders.⁴² VLC participants undergo comprehensive training that includes workshops on tenant rights, community organizing, policy advocacy, and public speaking. The program emphasizes the importance of understanding local housing policies, the impact of place-based gentrification, and the need for sustainable, affordable housing solutions. By equipping residents with the knowledge and tools necessary to navigate and influence housing policy, the Vallejo Leadership Cohort aims to create a strong, unified voice for housing justice in Vallejo. This initiative not only empowers individuals but also strengthens the community's ability to advocate for fair and equitable housing practices, ensuring that the needs and rights of low-income and marginalized residents are represented in the city's decision-making process and protected from displacement.

Vallejo Community Land Trust (VCLT). VHJC and Urban Habitat began engaging with city leadership and the planning department to advocate for the introduction of a community land trust (CLT) in Vallejo, starting in 2022. At this time, VHJC was conducting community engagement sessions to involve residents in the updated Draft Housing Element set to be finalized, as well as educate residents on CLTs in the Bay Area. It was here that the Vallejo Community Land Trust (VCLT) was founded, in partnership with the Northern California Land Trust (NCLT), the Bay Area Regional Health Inequities Initiative (BARHII), and Urban Habitat, providing technical assistance to VHJC.

The main goal of VCLT is to address housing insecurity and displacement by maintaining the ownership of land and providing affordable housing options for low- and moderate-income residents in Vallejo. Their key initiatives focus on community training, site identification, scaling up of properties, and acquiring selected sites for community-controlled housing. Currently, work is being done to identify three initial sites for possible acquisition and development, for projects that involve multi-family developments, cooperative-style resident management, and also converts single-family homes into mixed-generation co-housing to support BIPOC elders and Vallejo homeowners.⁴³

SECTION 2: TENANT EXPERIENCES IN VALLEJO

“

What are the **experiences** of renters in Vallejo?

What are the primary **concerns** of Vallejo tenants?

How can Vallejo tenants **transform** their own material

conditions to support their continued health and well-being? ”

The Vallejo Tenant Survey

Following several community workshops and “know your rights” trainings, VHJC developed the Vallejo Tenant Survey to advance tenant experience research in Vallejo. Given that tenant organizing is relatively new in this part of the Bay Area, this survey seeks to understand current housing experiences of Vallejo renters, which will inform VHJC and other housing justice advocates on priority areas to push for policy and systems change at the city and county levels. Additionally, this foundational work aims to empower tenants and catalyze long-term improvements in housing stability and affordability in Solano County, as well as build momentum and capacity for reparative policy action in the city of Vallejo.

Research Approach & Survey Design

The Vallejo Tenant Survey was developed by the Vallejo Housing Justice Coalition (VHJC) to understand the unique perspectives and experiences of renting households in the city, specifically that of low-income renters and renters of color. The survey aimed to integrate resident narratives with quantitative data, shedding light on the lived realities of Vallejo’s renting class as previous studies, such as United Way Bay Area’s Understanding Poverty and Philanthropic Giving Disparities in the Bay Area 2018–2020 report only provides a regional overview of funding gaps. This methodology was grounded in principles of community-driven systems change and transformative human-centered policy. In total, the survey consists of 18 questions, containing both qualitative and quantitative questions to better understand the concerns, needs, and desires of Vallejo’s renting class.

Most importantly, this survey is the first grassroots effort to collect data that is localized and specific to Vallejo, as it is an underrepresented and underfunded city in the greater Bay Area. Vallejo should be a part of the region’s conversations on equitable housing development, especially as the rate of evictions have increased and housing quality and maintenance has steadily declined since the height of the COVID-19 pandemic. VHJC’s central goal in designing this survey is to empower BIPOC renters in Vallejo in being a part of the physical improvements to their home environments. It is the hope of VHJC that this survey contextualizes the long-lasting impacts that residential segregation, single-family zoning, predatory housing practices, and more have had on low-income renters and renters of color. In addition, this survey should serve as an anti-displacement tool that allows Vallejo tenants to remain where they live and use their voices to engage in policy action with the city.

Research Questions

THE MAIN RESEARCH QUESTIONS GUIDING THIS PROJECT WERE:

1.	What are the experiences of renters in Vallejo?
2.	What are the primary concerns of Vallejo tenants?
3.	How can Vallejo tenants transform their own material conditions to support their continued health and well-being?

Data Collection

VHJC began collecting online responses from the Vallejo Tenant Survey in November 2023. The survey was influenced by VHJC's ongoing work with Vallejo city council on the newest Draft Housing Element, the development of the Vallejo Community Land Trust, and the introduction of permanent tenant protection ordinances in Solano County. Participants were recruited through VHJC's network of supporters, social media campaigns, and local events to ensure broad and inclusive engagement. Special efforts were made to reach the most impacted residents, many of whom are predominantly low-income Black and Latinx residents at risk of eviction and landlord harassment. Surveys were collected for nine months until July 2024: online responses were paused at the beginning of June 2024 and VHJC canvassers began collecting in-person survey responses in June and July.

Data Analysis

Both qualitative and quantitative analyses of the data were conducted.

Qualitative. VHJC staff and organizers, as well as the Housing Justice Intern at Urban Habitat, facilitated in-person surveys at local community events and social service provisions, such as the Downtown Vallejo Farmers Market and Faith Food Fridays, a local food pantry. Surveys were available in English, Spanish, and Tagalog, allowing for greater accessibility among Vallejo's diverse population. VHJC staff assisted residents with clarifying survey questions and provided verbal translation when necessary. Surveys were printed and distributed at each event and collected by VHJC staff. Follow up surveys were conducted over-the-phone as well. VHJC and Urban Habitat staff compiled the data. As in-person surveys were conducted after the online survey data was collected, in-person data was analyzed later. Special attention was paid to significant differences between in-person and online surveys and also aggregated together to compare them for commonalities and differences.

The survey also included several open-ended short answer questions to understand current living situations of tenants, their stance on tenant protection ordinances, and their overall opinion of what they like most and least about their current housing. These questions were analyzed with a word frequency analysis and qualitative coding of answers to identify commonalities and differences between responses. These responses were also coded for positive and negative associations on topics related to physical amenities, neighbor relationships, sense of belonging, safety, and more. Codes were then quantified and tallied to identify key priorities for renters and residents living in Vallejo.

Additional tenant testimonies were collected by VHJC for more detailed narratives on the landlord-tenant relationship and discriminatory housing practices, as well as understanding ways that renters in Vallejo thrive in the face of exclusion, eviction, and displacement. The value of these narratives cannot be overstated, and underscore the need for policy action that addresses the root causes of housing instability for Vallejo's most vulnerable residents. This qualitative approach ensured that the voices of low-income renters and renters of color were accurately captured, providing a rich and nuanced understanding of their housing experiences. Respondents were able to emphasize the importance of community support networks and the role of local organizations in advocating for their rights, as well as describe their daily struggles as renters with things such as housing maintenance, financial stress due to high rental costs, and the impacts of gentrification and displacement.

Quantitative. The quantitative data from the Vallejo Tenant Survey provides a detailed overview of the demographic and economic characteristics of renters in Vallejo, specifically on housing tenure, and monthly household income. VHJC staff and organizers compiled and sorted the survey data by geography via zip code.

Urban Habitat's Housing Justice Intern then conducted the initial quantitative analysis with the online survey responses, producing a preliminary report that summarized demographic information and key findings to understand differences in experiences of renters in Vallejo, which would ultimately guide the structure of this final report. Additional research was conducted, utilizing American Community Survey 2020 5-Year Census data for the city of Vallejo to provide comparative statistics on race, rent cost burden, and median household income, as these questions were not put in the survey.

Survey Results and Analysis

VHJC received a total of 319 responses (279 online and 40 in-person) from Vallejo residents in zip codes 94589, 94590, 94591, and 94592. The highest response rate came from the 94591 zip code which corresponds with East Vallejo, accounting for 116 responses (36.4% of total responses). The zip code 94590 (Downtown and South Vallejo) followed with 96 responses, zip code 94589 (North Vallejo) had 73 responses, and zip code 94592 (Mare Island) accounted for the smallest proportion with 34 responses, respectively. Zip code 94590 is of key interest, as it is home to three apartment complexes with a large proportion of low-income renters and renters of color, with a significant number of tenants who are disabled, single-parent households, or seniors. These complexes—the Seabreeze Apartments, Marina Vista Apartments, and Longshore Cove Apartments—have been at the center of conversations regarding future development to revitalize the downtown and waterfront districts, which would advance gentrification and displacement processes in Vallejo.

Table 1: Highest Proportion of Residents Surveyed Live in East Vallejo

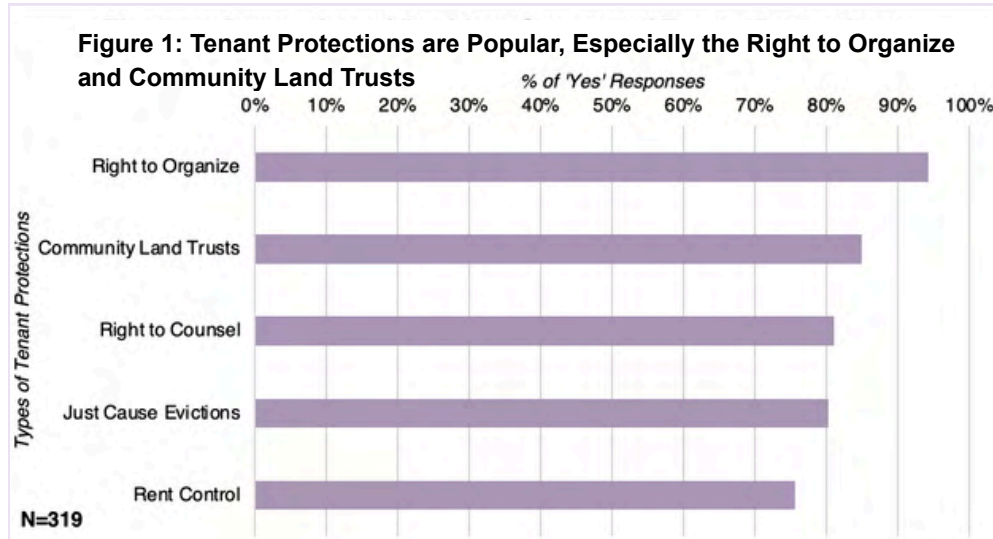
<i>Zip Codes</i>	<i>Region</i>	<i>Number of Responses</i>	<i>Share of Responses (%)</i>
94589	North Vallejo	73	22.9%
94590	Downtown & South Vallejo	96	30.1%
94591	East Vallejo	116	36.4%
94592	Mare Island	34	10.7%

***N=319**

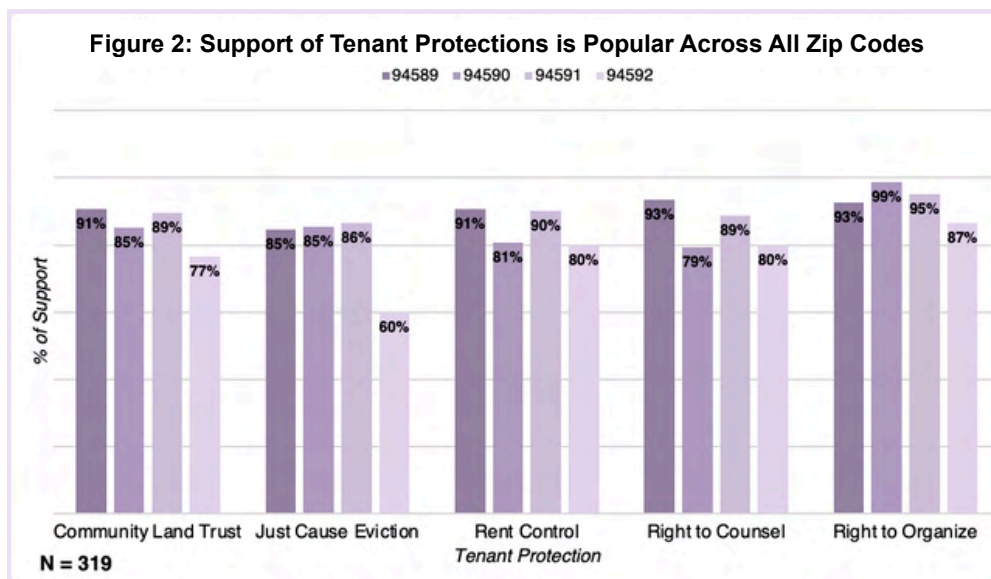


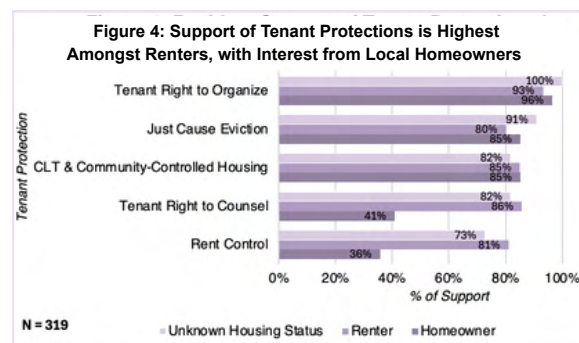
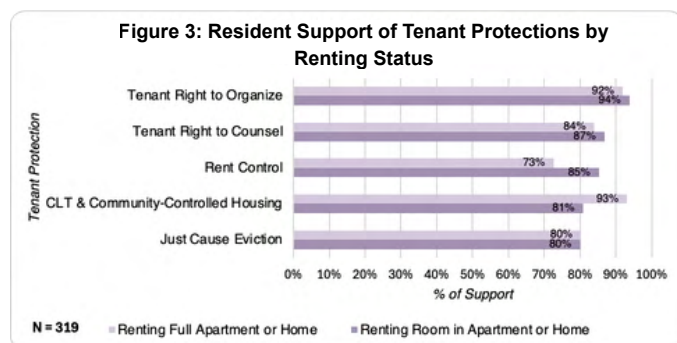
Key Findings

Residents want policy action and tenant protections. Residents were asked five multiple choice questions about introducing tenant protections that protect renters right to remain in Vallejo, namely the tenant's right to organize, the right to counsel, unfair and discriminatory evictions, alternative collective housing models, and the city's right to restrict annual rent increases.



A majority of respondents support increasing renters' rights and anti-eviction protections in the city, approximately 75-95% overall. Support for tenant protections is above 79% in all parts of Vallejo, except on Mare Island, where support ranges between 60-80% respectively. In addition to support of renters' rights at the zip code level, there was also similar widespread approval for residents surveyed of differing housing status, which comprises homeowners, renters, and those with unknown housing statuses. There seems to be some slight differences in levels of support for a tenant's right to counsel and rent control, with approximately 35-40% of homeowners being in support of these two tenant protections.





Renters are living in a broad range of complex circumstances. The majority of respondents were renters, with 277 renters compared to 29 homeowners. Additionally, about 5% of respondents had unknown housing statuses at the time of the survey — many of these respondents completed the survey in-person. This equates to 86% of participants identifying as renters, with many noting concerns around rent increases and desires for social connection with neighbors as well as desires for improvements to the physical infrastructure of their places of living. Among renters, 193 respondents are renting apartments, with the highest concentrations in the 94590 and 94591 zip codes. Additionally, 83 respondents noted that they rent rooms in houses or apartments, with the highest concentrations in East Vallejo, Downtown Vallejo, and South Vallejo (see more in Appendix A).

Table 2: Renting Apartments and Homes is More Common Across All Zip Codes

Zip Code	94589		94590		94591		94592	
Renting Status	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
Renting Apartment/Home	36	57%	71	85%	65	68%	21	64%
Renting Room in Apartment/Home	27	43%	13	15%	31	32%	12	36%
Total Count	63		84		96		33	
N = 276								

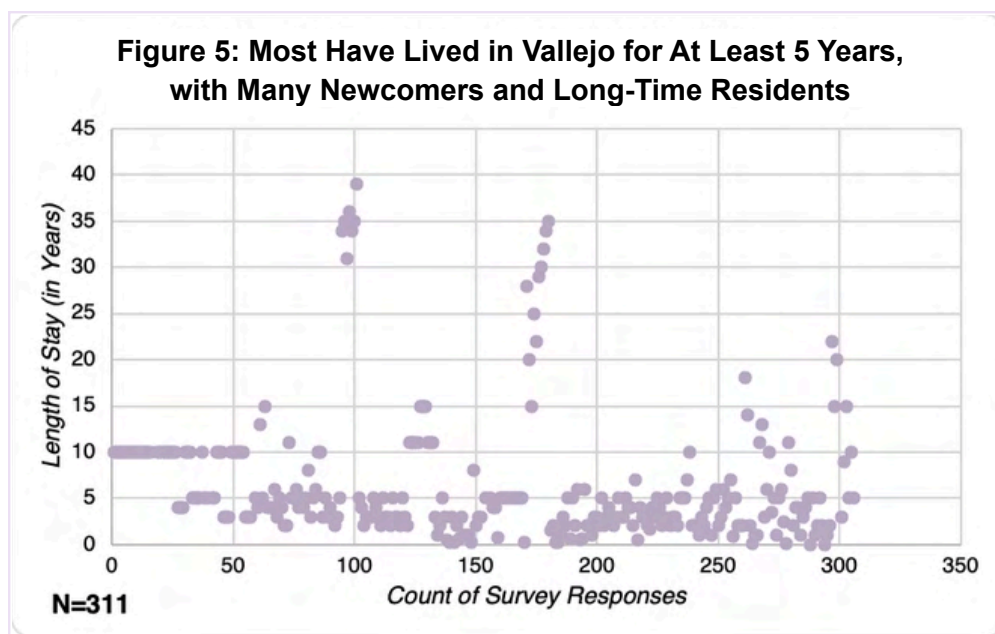
During the data collection process for in-person surveys, most of which were conducted at the Downtown Vallejo Farmers Market and Food Faiths Fridays, 30.8% of respondents surveyed (n=12) noted that they were currently living in complex situations. Some had been recently evicted and others were couch surfing, living in their personal vehicles, or homeless. Aggregated with all surveys, those in complex living situations accounted for 3.8% of respondents; although a small percentage, this data point speaks to the need for affordable housing solutions for those at-risk or already unhoused, such as permanent supportive housing.

Monthly household income highlights significant economic disparities among Vallejo residents. The survey collected data on monthly household income, which refers to the accumulated income for all working members within a household. Responses were diverse between in-person and online survey results, revealing that most

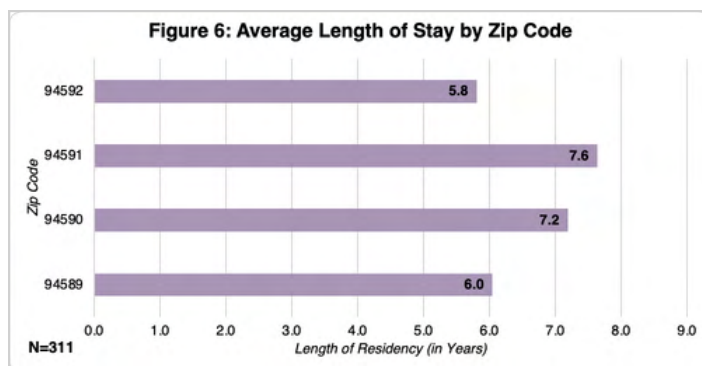
respondents earn a monthly household income between \$1,000 and \$5,000. Specifically, 46.5% of online respondents reported between \$2,500 and \$5,000 earned within their household per month, and about 1% earned less than \$1,000 per month. In-person responses showed a higher concentration of lower incomes, with 35 respondents earning \$2,500 or less per month. These aggregated findings highlight significant economic disparities among Vallejo renters.

In-person surveys had a larger concentration of respondents who were unemployed, retired, or on disability, revealing the need for continued engagement with Vallejo's most impacted community members. The income distribution data indicates that a substantial portion of renters are living on modest incomes, with many earning less than the median household income for the city. This financial strain is further compounded by the high cost of living and the pressures from private development and market-rate housing investments in Vallejo. Additionally, approximately 87.7% (280 out of 319) community members were employed at the time they submitted their survey.

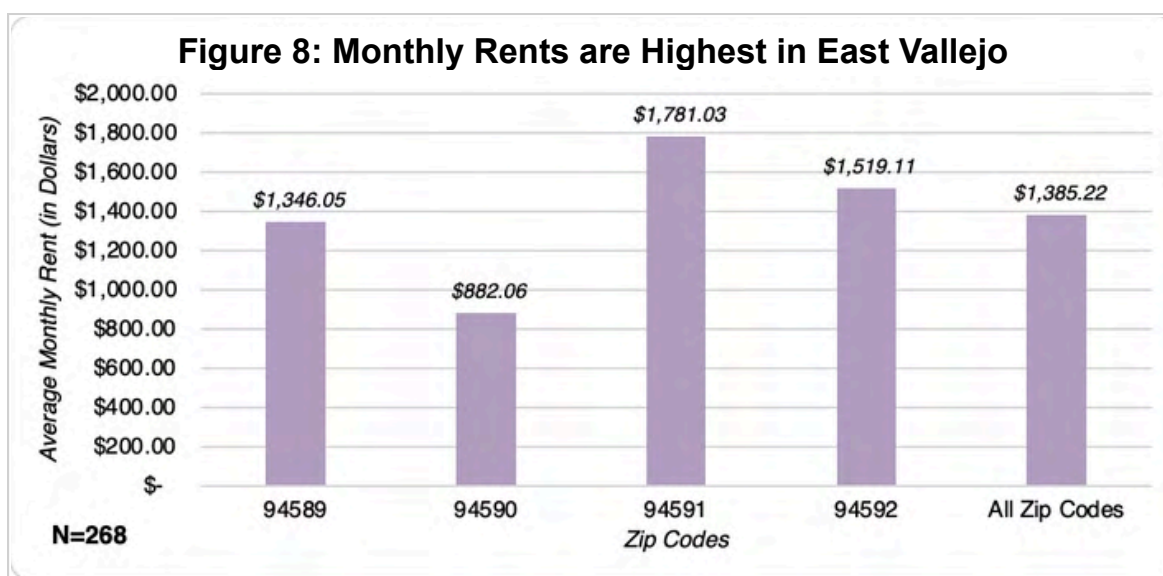
The high proportion of renters in our survey pool also underscores the housing affordability challenges faced by Vallejo residents, given that the average rent in Vallejo for a fair market rate 2-bedroom is about \$2,050 per month, according to sources like Apartments.com and Zillow.^{44,45} This means that for most of our respondents whose households earn between \$2,500 and \$5,000 per month, as much as 82% of their monthly income might be spent on rent payments.



Renters continue to rent for extended lengths of time. Length of residency differs slightly by zip code and type of housing arrangement, as well as for those who gave online and in-person responses. There were some tenants who had recently moved and had only occupied an apartment for less than a month, and there were other long-time renters who had lived in their homes for as long as 39 years. In this survey, 'home' refers to the dwelling or living quarters in which an individual lives, and a 'house' refers to a type of home in which an individual lives. The average length of stay for online respondents was greatest for those living in houses at 8.25 years, and 7.59 years for apartment dwellers. The average length of stay for in-person respondents was greatest for apartment dwellers at 7.12 years, and 6.63 years for those living in houses. The locations (by zip code) with the longest average length of residence was in East Vallejo at 8.03 years for online respondents, and in Downtown and South Vallejo for 8.75 years for in-person respondents.



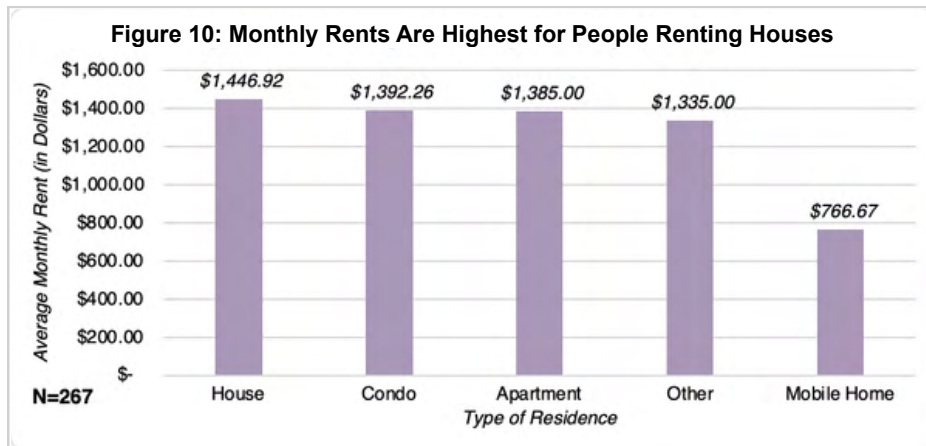
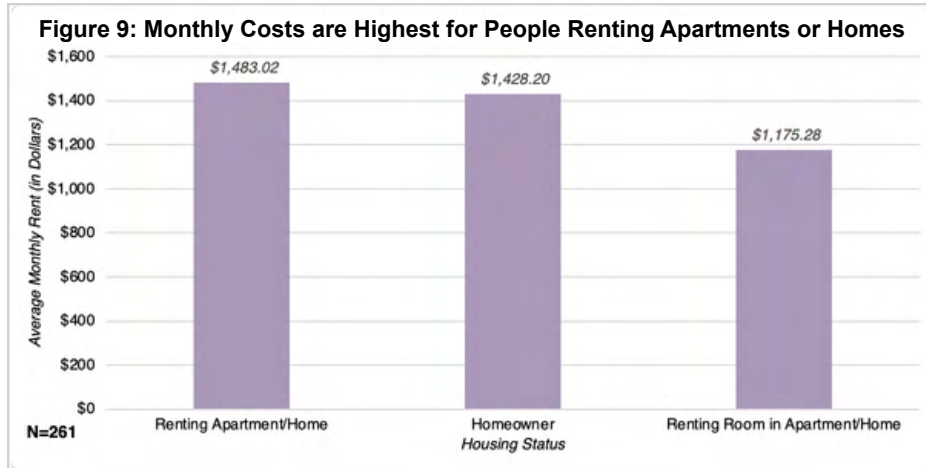
Average monthly rent payments range across zip codes, and anxieties regarding rent increases persist. The average rent paid throughout all zip codes is \$1,385.22 per month (n = 268). The highest average rents per month are located in East Vallejo at \$1,781.03 per month, and lowest rents per month are located in Downtown and South Vallejo at \$882.06 per month. Important to note is that a significant proportion of respondents (approximately 16.5%) did not respond to this question. This could be attributed to respondents not having to pay rent as they are living with family, being private homeowners, being housing voucher recipients, or living in precarious situations, such as being unhoused or living in their cars. Additionally, this survey did not ask for number of renters per household.



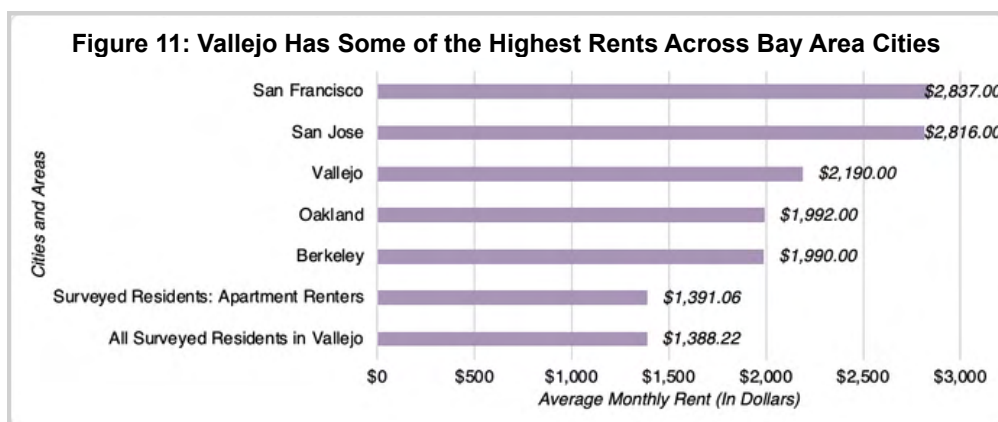
The average monthly rents follow different patterns if we look at housing status and type of residence for respondents. For housing status, average monthly rents are highest for those renting entire apartments or homes (n = 176) at \$1,483.02 per month, and lowest for those renting a room within an apartment or home (n = 75) at \$1,175.28 per month. For housing status based on type of residence, rents per month are highest for those living in houses (n = 71) at \$1,446.92 per month and lowest for those living in mobile homes (n = 6) at \$766.67 per month. A majority of those surveyed live in either apartments or condos (n = 185), with rents averaging \$1,385.00 for apartment dwellers per month and \$1,392.26 for condo dwellers per month.

Although the average monthly rent payments are lower than the monthly rent for a standard fair market rate 2 bedroom apartment in Vallejo, going for about \$2,050 a month, tenants still described anxieties around rent increases and long-term affordability. Additionally, as we did not collect information on the total number of residents within a household, it is hard to make generalizations regarding rent burden. We do know, however, that many residents in

Vallejo and Solano County are experiencing significant rent burden, even before the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. New census data from the 2023 American Community Survey has shown that about 1 in 3 households in the Bay Area are considered “cost-burdened,” meaning that more than 30% of a household’s income is spent on living costs, primarily rent.⁴⁶ In Vallejo, over 40% of households are cost-burdened.⁴⁷ This is significant because over half of the city is composed of renters, and with the ongoing economic downturn the country and region are facing, living costs are only expected to rise.



Additionally, when we compare the average monthly rents of residents surveyed to other major cities in the Bay Area, we see major differences. Based on rent estimates from March 2025, the overall rents for Vallejo are approximately \$2,190 per month.⁴⁸ Although monthly rents are trending lower for surveyed residents, this may be due to a number of factors (e.g. many persons living in one household that are splitting monthly rental costs). As we did not collect the



number of persons per household in each survey response, it is difficult to know if residents surveyed are representative of all Vallejo residents impacted by high rental costs. Because of this, further outreach is needed to properly understand how rent-burdened the people of Vallejo are.

Annual rent increases vary among respondents. Responses to questions of rent increases were varied, as we received both percent (%) increases and dollar (\$) increases, as well as short descriptive phrases detailing their experiences. For the 61 respondents who provided a percent increase, online respondents reported on average their rents increased by 12% annually. In-person respondents reported a 6% average annual rent increase. 86 respondents provided annual rent increases in dollar amounts, online respondents (n=78) reported on average their rents increased by approximately \$131 annually. In-person respondents (n=6) reported an estimate of \$203 average annual increase (this sample size is significantly smaller than the online respondents, but may speak to major income differences between online and in-person survey takers). 37.4% of total respondents experienced no rent increases (n = 120), which could be attributed to many factors such as lack of rent payments, home ownership, renting to own mortgage payments, or community members who are currently unhoused, recently evicted from their homes, or living in their cars.

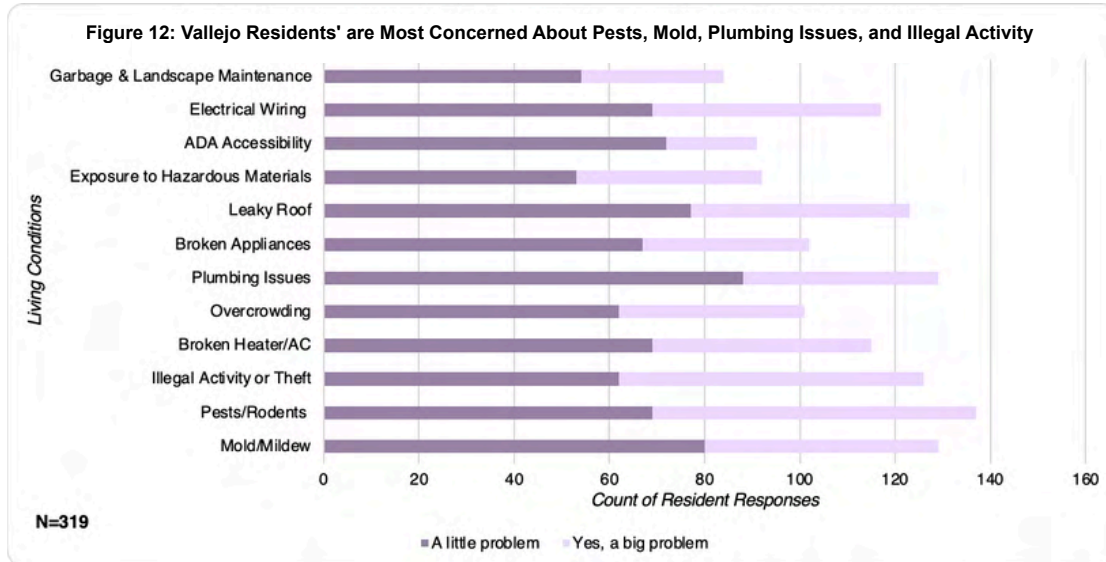
Table 3a: People Renting Rooms in Apartments or Homes Report Higher Dollar Increases in Annual Rent	
Type of Renter	\$ Increase Annual Rent
<i>Renting Apartment/Home</i>	\$113.06
<i>Renting Room in Apartment/Home</i>	\$239.38
Totals	N = 83

Average annual increases also differ by housing status. Community members renting apartments or homes (n = 76) experienced a 19% percentage increase or \$113.06 dollar increase to their annual rental costs. Residents renting a room in an apartment or home (n=49) experienced a 10% percentage increase or \$239.38 dollar increase to their annual rental costs.

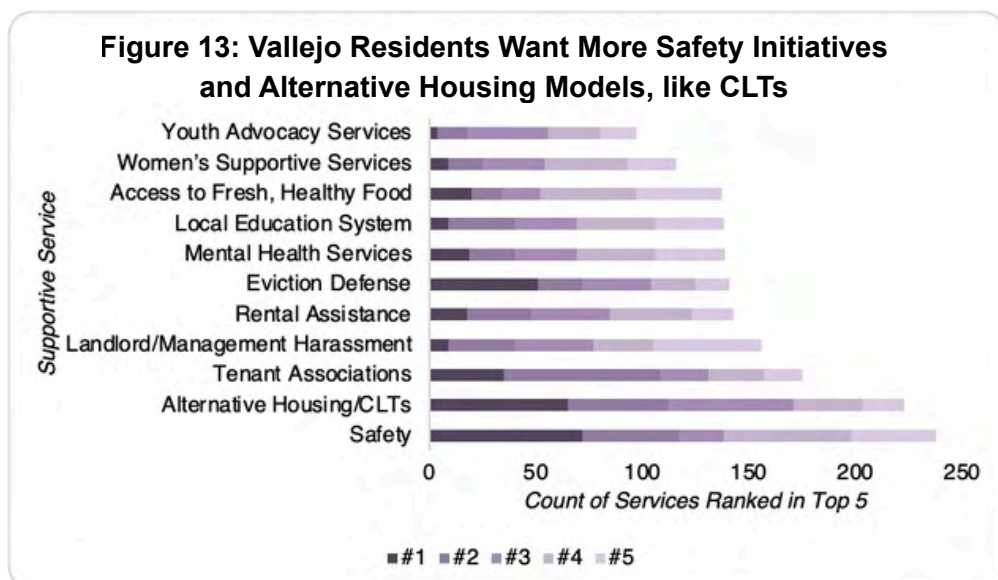
Table 3b: People Renting Apartments or Homes Report Higher Percent Increases in Annual Rent	
Type of Renter	% Increase Annual Rent
<i>Renting Apartment/Home</i>	19%
<i>Renting Room in Apartment/Home</i>	10%
Totals	N = 52

Residents describe their living situations in a multitude of ways. We asked residents to describe their current living situation in one sentence, and received 217 responses from community members (71% of total respondents). We received a mix of generally positive and negative responses from residents. Almost 39% of respondents described their living situations as satisfactory or generally positive, with an additional 10% reporting that where they live exceeds their expectations. The remaining 51% of community members had complex responses to this prompt, with about 9% of respondents describing their housing arrangements with friends, family, and roommates. Affordability concerns and financial stress was also reported by several renters (7.4%), who reported briefly on anxieties regarding

rent increases and continued affordability of their homes. 5.5% of respondents stated that they had generally negative opinions on their current living situation, describing themselves as “not very happy” or “struggling”. One respondent dissatisfied with their current living situation pointed at the lack of social services in the city putting “the poor people at the bottom” of Vallejo’s housing hierarchy.



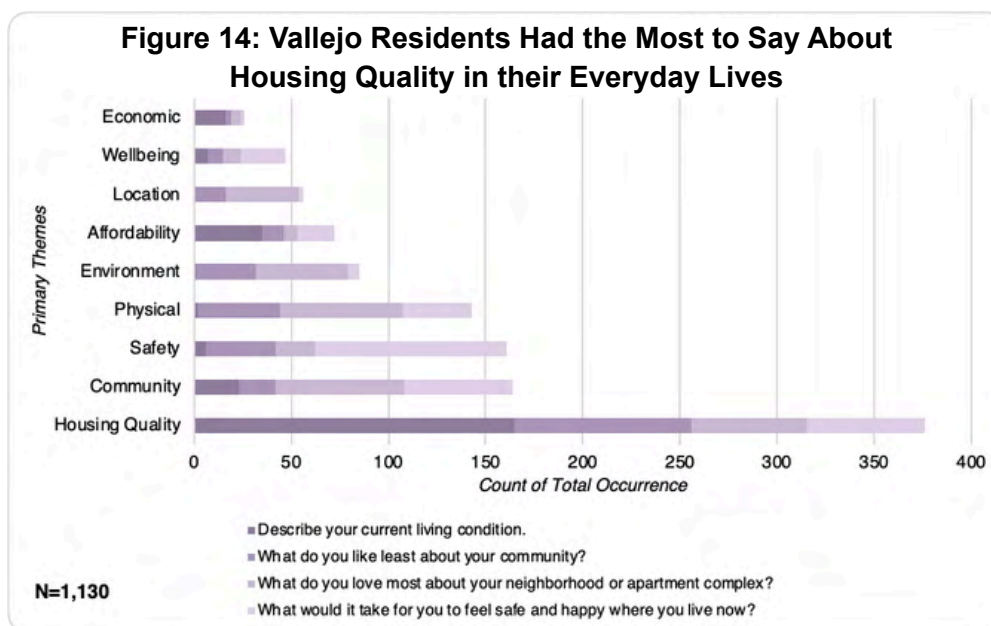
In addition, residents describe concerns regarding their living conditions in various ways. Issues like illegal activity and pests or rodents are common concerns across all zip codes. More than half of residents surveyed (53.6%) reported these issues in their apartment buildings as “a big problem” or “a little bit of a problem.” In contrast, fewer tenants expressed concern about ADA accessibility in their buildings and complexes. This counters concerns tenant leaders, many of whom are older adults with disabilities, in Downtown and South Vallejo who claim that many of their units are not ADA compliant. Broken appliances are also of leading concern to North Vallejo residents, while presence of mold and mildew is important for residents in East Vallejo. A more detailed breakdown of residents’ perspectives on their living conditions can be found in Appendix A.



Residents are interested in different types of supportive services. Community members were asked to rank their top 5 supportive services they would prioritize to improve their health and well-being. Across all respondents, the highest ranked supportive services were: safety (74.6%), affordable housing and alternative housing models such as community land trusts (69.9%), and tenant associations (54.9%). Other supportive services still ranked as medium priorities for residents surveyed, such as landlord and property management harassment or rental assistance. Youth advocacy services and women's supportive services ranked the lowest across all responses, with between 30-36% of residents ranking it in their desired supportive services. There were slight variations between different regions of Vallejo, but not in comparable proportion to the highest ranked supportive services. There were some differences in responses from residents who reported via the online survey or in-person. In-person respondents noted that access to fresh, healthy food and women's supportive services were important to them, and online respondents highlighted support for eviction defense.

Key Resident Concerns

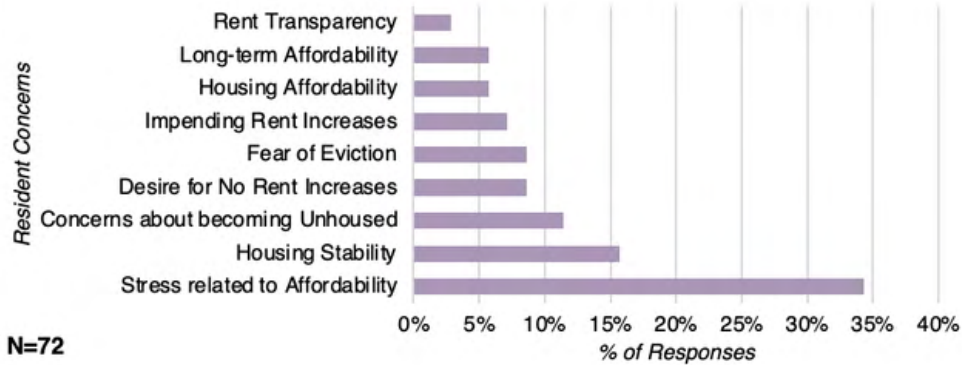
The most common issues highlighted by community members were housing quality, community characteristics and resources, safety, and physical infrastructure. The tenant testimonials we collected from tenant leaders and housing justice advocates in the city displayed throughout the report gives more detail to these tensions between landlords and tenants, but further investigation into discriminatory practices and intimidation tactics should be conducted in specific apartment communities, such as the Longshore Cove Apartments or Marina Vista Apartments. In addition, resident concerns differ by zip code, so engagement may be needed to address localized, specific needs of community members living in different parts of Vallejo.



To understand Vallejo renters current living situations further, we asked: (1) “What do you love most about your neighborhood or apartment complex?”; (2) “What do you like least about your neighborhood or apartment complex?”; and (3) “What would it take for you to feel safe and happy, where you live now?”. Responses were coded based on common topics, and many residents noted multiple topics in their qualitative answers, so there may be slight overlapping in codes designated to each response.

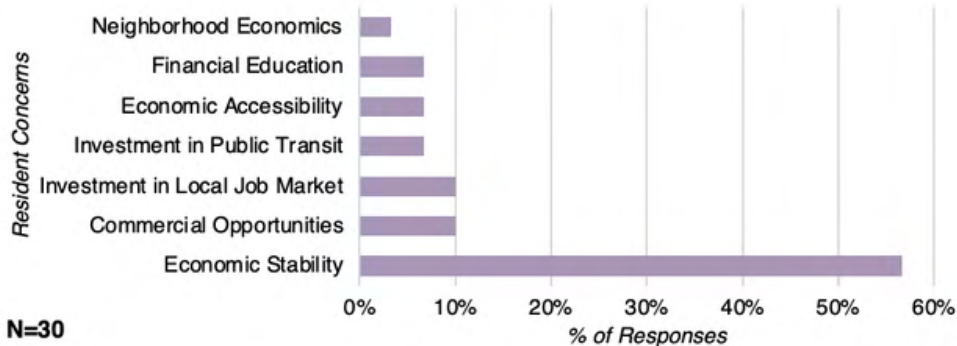
In total, we received 727 comments for the four key qualitative questions available on the survey. As these were open-end questions without a word limit, residents were able to provide detailed responses. Due to this, some responses were attributed with more than one qualitative code. In total, 1,130 primary codes were attributed to resident comments and 1,288 sub-codes were attributed to resident comments, which accounts for specificity in response. Important to note is that many comments were categorized with just the primary code, as they were more general responses.

Figure 15: Residents Experience A Lot of Stress Related to Housing Affordability and Stability

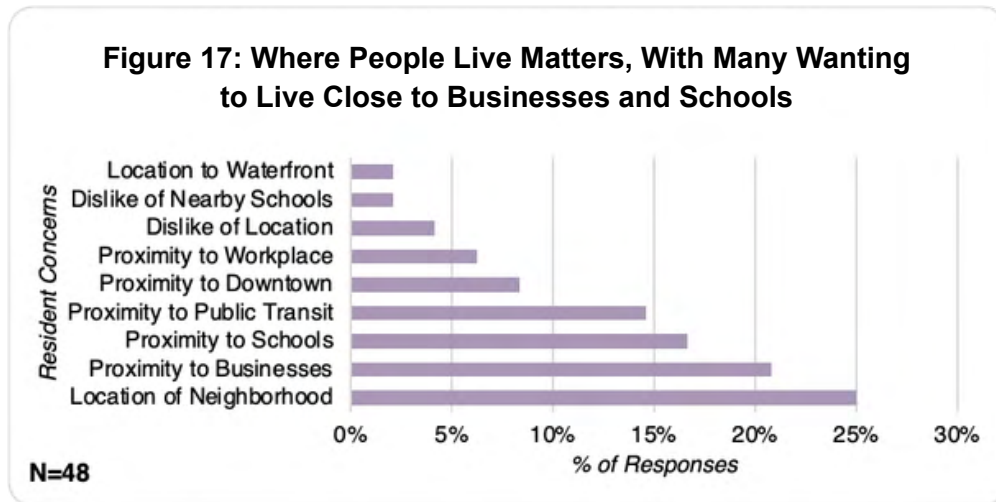


Primary Concern: Long-term Affordability. Housing affordability is a critical factor that shapes economic mobility, individual and community health, and financial security. Within survey responses, affordability was a primary concern, mentioned 35 times within resident responses. Many expressed a deep sense of fear and anxiety about the ability to remain in their current homes, driven by rising costs and uncertain futures. Residents repeatedly emphasized the difficulty of managing rent and daily expenses within tight financial constraints, expressing doubt about their ability to improve or maintain their current living situations. One resident captured this sentiment, stating: "Home prices or rents in the community may be too high and beyond the affordability of residents, leading to financial stress and dissatisfaction."

Figure 16: Residents Want Economic Stability in Their Neighborhoods



A recurring theme was the anxiety surrounding potential rent hikes, especially among renters who faced the possibility of displacement due to their landlords' intentions to sell homes because of rising mortgage costs. While some residents described their current living situations as stable, they voiced growing concerns about future affordability, highlighting the fragile nature of housing security in the community. Additionally, 57% of neighborhood concerns of residents were focused on the economic stability of their neighborhoods, and their desire for economic support to increase accessibility to nearby workplaces and public transit networks. For many, proximity and location are large indicators of access and affordability in their neighborhoods, with a number of residents citing proximity to local businesses, public schools, and the waterfront as key to their health and well-being in Vallejo.



Sense of Community and Belonging. A strong sense of belonging emerged as a key factor in residents' enjoyment of their living environment, ranking as the second most common reason for their satisfaction. Moreover, it was the top-ranked factor that residents felt would most improve their overall satisfaction with their current living conditions. Othering alienates individuals or groups, preventing their full participation in social and communal life. For Vallejo renters, their neighborhoods, apartment buildings, and complexes play a vital role in creating spaces for connection, fostering relationships that embrace diversity and build bridges across differences.

Social Connection and Cultural Programs. Vallejo residents across all zip codes voiced desire for social and cultural connection, noting the need to have better shared community spaces that foster opportunities for interaction and collaboration. Approximately 26% of the comments focused on community infrastructure highlighted a sense of belonging and sense of community as key concerns for what makes a neighborhood more livable and joyful. Social interactions and relationships within a neighborhood or community were also of critical importance to those surveyed. Knowing your neighbor is a key component of increasing one's sense of belonging and community, and as one of the most diverse cities in the Bay Area, culturally inclusive development and programming is key to increasing social connection between neighbors.

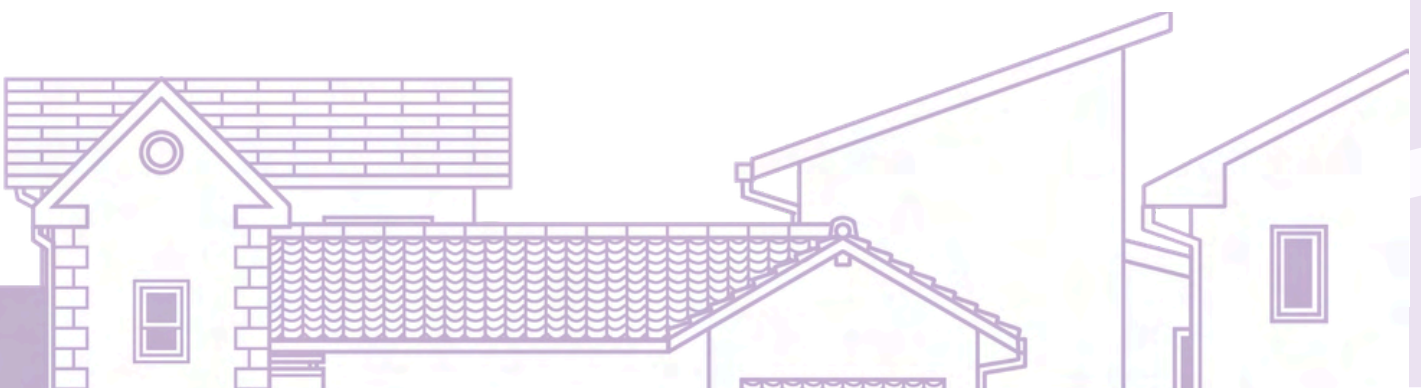
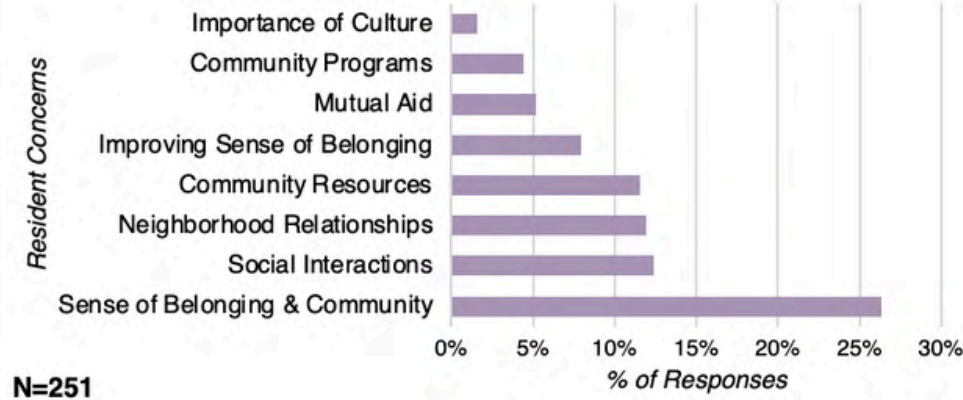


Figure 18: Residents Prioritize Sense of Belonging and Community in Their Everyday Lives

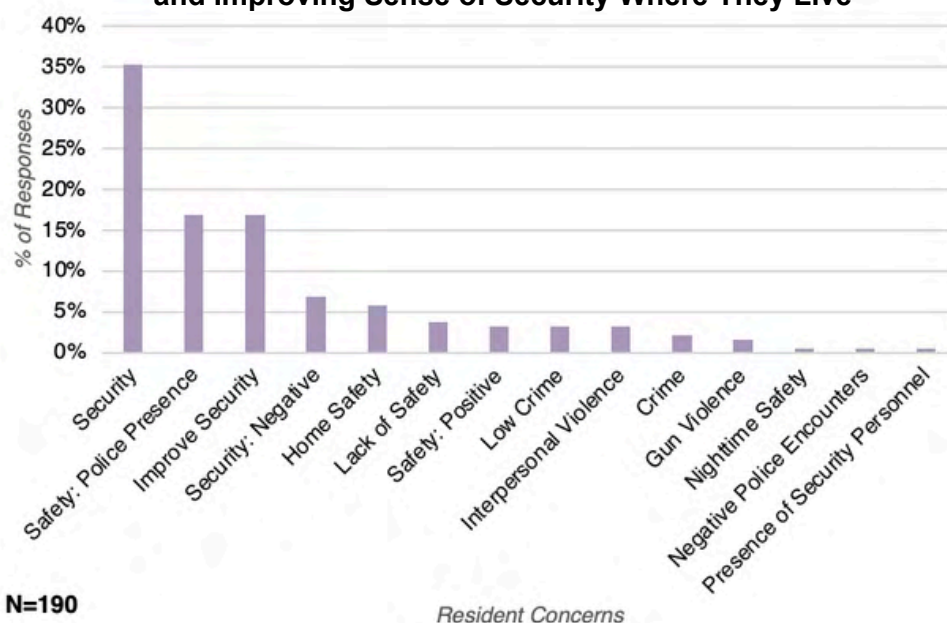


Community, sense of culture, and social cohesion are also extremely essential to Vallejo residents. In addition to building trust, a shared sense of community helps people feel connected rather than isolated, where shared values, mutual respect, and strong cultural identities can be a motivating, unifying force for collective action and transformation. Additionally, as housing insecurity and risk of eviction can be major drivers of toxic stress, being able to rely and be supported by a community of neighbors can be an amazing buffer against the emotional and physical toll of landlord harassment, dilapidated housing maintenance, and rapid development.

Mutual Aid and Supportive Services. Mutual aid and community resource networks are vital for a city like Vallejo due to ongoing income inequality, housing insecurity, and historic underinvestment in public infrastructure. Vallejo is a city where half of its residents are renters, with a large proportion of renters being working-class families and communities of color, many of whom lack robust social safety nets due to systemic barriers accessing basic services. Mutual aid helps fill critical gaps by mobilizing community-based networks to provide food, housing support, emergency resources, and care without the stress of bureaucratic hurdles. Mutual aid and community-based supportive services also reflect a culture of solidarity, where neighbors can care for each other in the absence of local and federal government intervention and service provision. In Vallejo, where trust in the city government can be low and needs are extremely high, mutual aid and community services provide immediate relief but also build resilience, community power, and local leadership from the ground up.

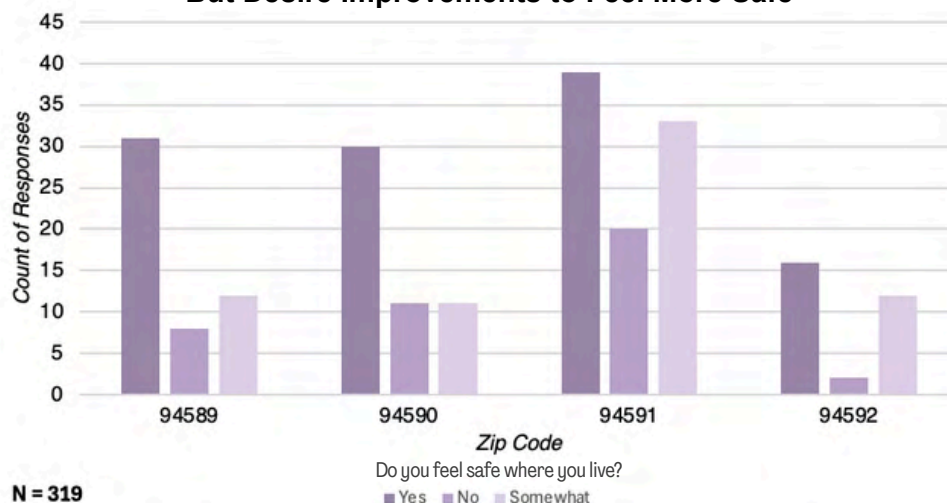
Physical Amenities and Building Maintenance. Nearly half of all resident concerns centered on the quality of housing, neighborhood infrastructure, and the upkeep of apartment buildings and complexes. 33% of all comments identified housing quality as a major issue affecting their daily lives and offered suggestions for improvement, such as regular inspections, pest control, and improving landlord and property management relationships. While some residents (approximately ¼ of housing quality-related commenters) expressed satisfaction and comfortability with their current living conditions, the overwhelming focus on substandard maintenance and dilapidated infrastructure from others reflects a broader need for investment into building repairs and improvements to onsite amenities.

Figure 19: Many Residents Have Concerns About Safety and Improving Sense of Security Where They Live



Safety and Security Personnel. Concerns regarding safety manifested in many ways. The most frequently cited issue was the security of private property, with 35% of safety-related comments emphasizing the need for stronger security measures, such as better surveillance or onsite security personnel, to improve sense of safety. Some residents expressed a desire for increased police presence as a deterrent to crime, particularly in areas with histories of gun violence or visible street crime, like in Downtown and South Vallejo. A few residents noted past negative experiences when encountering police, so presence of police brings about mixed responses, although reliance on police to protect their neighborhoods seems to be a shared value of residents surveyed. Not all safety concerns were tied to public crime, as many raised concerns about interpersonal violence, such as domestic abuse or neighbor conflicts, which are harder to monitor and address through traditional police enforcement alone. This complexity is compounded in Vallejo, where the Police Department's ongoing badge-bending scandal has deepened community mistrust and created understandable hesitation around relying solely on law enforcement for safety, making stable housing and tenant protections even more essential.

Figure 20: Most Residents Feel Safe in Their Communities, But Desire Improvements to Feel More Safe



When asked a different question on feelings of safety as it relates to resident experiences and knowledge, approximately 34% of respondents noted feeling somewhat safe or not safe at all where they live. Collectively, these experiences point to the need for a holistic approach to community safety that balances protection of property, responsiveness, and fosters trusts and violence prevention across all housing environments.

Survey Limitations

The Vallejo Tenant Survey is the first grassroots effort to understand tenant experiences in Vallejo. As an initial step, it is important to acknowledge several limitations that may impact the findings and insights derived from this research. Future research efforts should aim to address these limitations by developing a more robust and targeted outreach to Vallejo's most impacted residents. Addressing these limitations through continued research and engagement with tenants in Vallejo can enhance the development of more effective housing policies that guarantee that renters have the right to remain in their homes without the risk of displacement.

1 **Absence of Race and Ethnicity.**

Race and ethnicity demographic questions were not asked on the survey, making it impossible to link direct survey outcomes to racial disparities related to housing instability, displacement, rent increases, or landlord discrimination. Vallejo has a deep history of segregation and racialized housing policies, and so, excluding questions related to race risks erasing the ongoing effects of redlining, gentrification, and racial discrimination has had for different marginalized communities in Vallejo, especially Black residents. This is of key importance as research shows that BIPOC communities often bear the brunt of evictions, rent burdens, and poor housing conditions. Without this demographic data, it may be difficult to make the case for race-conscious policies seeking to redress historic, discriminatory housing policies. Additionally, although it is the goal of VHJC to address racial equity, this could potentially lead to excluding key voices from decision-making in housing and their perspectives may be overlooked in addressing Vallejo's housing crisis.

2 **Monthly Household Income.**

Very few demographic questions were asked to community members besides monthly household income, which accounts for all working persons within a household.⁴⁹ However, the number of working persons within a household was not collected, nor was information on the presence of children within a household. This complicates the analysis of income data, particularly in households with multiple earners or non-traditional living arrangements, such as roommates or people with unstable incomes.

3 **Focus on Renters.**

While the survey centered on the experiences of renters, more open-ended questions on affordability, fear of eviction, and affordable housing that were targeted for low-income households could have been asked to collect specific data on the most impacted and most at-risk to be displaced by the regional housing crisis affecting Vallejo. As evident with our in-person surveys, many individuals and families are currently living in precarious housing situations.

4 **Unhoused Community Members.**

The survey did not focus on the unhoused population, though some data was gathered from those living in complex or precarious housing situations. This exclusion limits our understanding of the full spectrum of housing instability in Vallejo. Future research should include intentional efforts to capture the experiences of unhoused community members, especially as the conditions they face grow increasingly dire. The death of James Oakley II, an unhoused Black Vallejo resident killed by a city-operated tractor/backhoe, underscores both the urgency and the consequences of systemic neglect. Without lifting up the voices and realities of our unhoused neighbors, any housing justice analysis remains incomplete.

Organizational Capacity.

5 Vallejo is an under-researched city in the Bay Area, despite its rich culture, history, and people. The Vallejo Tenant Survey was a hyper-localized research effort, and to continue the next iteration of this work effectively, there is a need for organizational growth and increased capacity. In-person surveys garnered calls for immediate housing placement and community members already undergoing the eviction process, and while VHJC is not a placement-focused organization, pointing renters to the appropriate resources is needed to build trust within the community. This requires a more robust and sustained research approach in the future, as well as a permanent physical space in the heart of Downtown and South Vallejo, where the most impacted currently live.

Digital Divide.

6 The primary research method was an online survey, which, while accessible to many, excluded community members who do not have access to a personal device with internet access. This could also be influenced by the fact that 10% of the residents reported that they were unemployed at the time of taking the survey, as previous research has shown that digital access and employment are intimately linked.⁵⁰

Survey Design and Format.

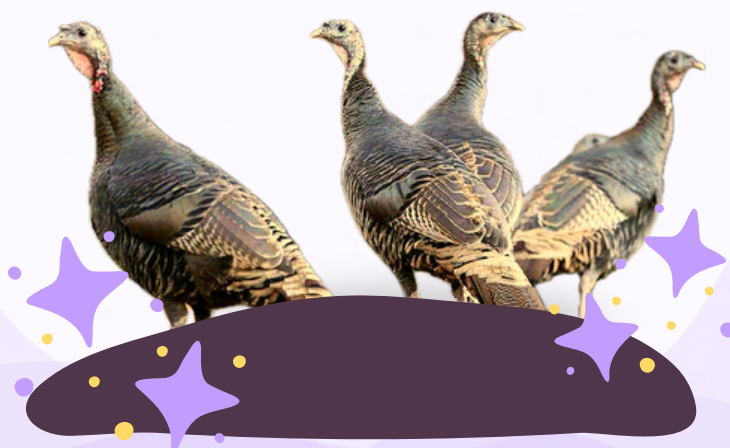
7 One of the major limitations that may have influenced our findings was the design and format of the survey and its questions. The survey was composed of 18 questions with multiple choice, ranking, and short answer options, increasing both the length of the survey and the data analysis process. The in-person survey was formatted to four pages in length, which may have led to residents being discouraged from participating.

Response Bias.

8 The survey relied on self-reporting, which can introduce bias in responses. Respondents may have provided answers they perceived as socially desirable or may have misunderstood questions, leading to inaccurate data. For instance, in the question dedicated to understanding tenants' current living situations, some respondents described their specific housing arrangements (type of housing, who they lived with, length of stay) while others provided feelings or emotions attached to the living conditions (happiness, stress, anxiety).

Null Responses.

9 For each question, we have a significant proportion of respondents who did not provide responses. For example, there were some multi-part questions where about 16-30% of respondents did not respond, which may speak to more on-the-ground assessment needed by canvassers to provide physical clarity and understanding for questions that could vary in response. Additionally, the length of the survey overall may have discouraged residents from answering all questions.



Discussion

As VHJC and Urban Habitat advocate for just cause eviction protections, rent stabilization, anti-harassment ordinances, and tenants' rights to counsel, the results of this project are crucial for ongoing engagement and tenant organizing with Vallejo's most impacted residents, predominantly low-income Black and Brown renters. This is especially urgent, as the number of low-income households in Vallejo and across Solano County has grown in response to rising housing prices throughout the Bay Area, deepening existing racial and economic inequalities.⁵¹ Intensified racial disparities across the region may also reinforce existing residential segregation in areas like Downtown and South Vallejo. The consequences of these rising inequalities are not abstract, as they directly contribute to an increase in homelessness in Vallejo. And despite calls for investing in permanent, dignified housing solutions, the city has often responded with criminalization and police enforcement, further dehumanizing unhoused neighbors and pushing them to the margins of public life.

Vallejo's diversity poses a unique challenge and opportunity for addressing housing justice, especially when we consider how historic interracial tensions and the long-lasting legacy of anti-Black racism, particularly by non-Black residents, continue to shape how resources and power are distributed throughout the city. As one of the most diverse cities in the Bay Area, a shared sense of belonging is vital to ensuring that Vallejo remains racially and culturally diverse. This sense of belonging must include unhoused residents — many of whom are Black, disabled, and multiply displaced — whose visibility and humanity are often erased in public discourse and municipal policy.

Belonging is more than just an emotional attachment to a place, but being able to define oneself within a place. For BIPOC renters, this means protecting and preserving their homes, strengthening cultural and familial ties, and maintaining social networks necessary to navigate the city's existing and future economic challenges. When communities are grounded in trust, mutual respect, and collective care — including their unhoused neighbors — they are able to organize for transformative housing solutions that resist displacement and gentrification for all. Building tenant power in Vallejo will require directly addressing and reconciling anti-Blackness and class divisions within Latinx, Asian American, and other communities of color to create a truly multi-ethnic, interclass tenant movement that affirms the dignity and right to housing for all, regardless of income or housing status.



SECTION 3: BUILDING TENANT POWER IN VALLEJO



Policy Recommendations to Improve Health and Well-Being of Vallejo Renters

Tenant protection ordinances (TPOs) are a set of laws and regulations designed to safeguard the rights and well-being of renters, and are aimed to ensure that tenants have safe, affordable, and stable housing. They are crucial for maintaining housing stability, preventing homelessness, and promoting fair and equitable housing practices. They vary by region and are often subject to ongoing legislative efforts and community advocacy from tenant organizations and renter's associations. Some examples of TPOs include: anti-harassment laws to protect tenants from landlord intimidation, habitability standards that require landlords to maintain rental properties in livable condition, or security deposit regulations that govern the collection, use, and return of deposits. Although statewide TPOs can be issued, they are less common and hard to enforce without robust local tenant outreach and legal services, so most legislation happens at the municipal level.

Tenant protections are essential for building tenant power in Vallejo. According to Tenants Together, less than 8% of California cities have a form of robust tenant protections.⁵² While the statewide Tenant Protection Act of 2019 (AB 1482) caps rent increases for most residential units at 5-10%, local enforcement is at the behest of renters to report the rent increase to a local housing authority, tenant advocacy group, or the Attorney General.⁵³ Our survey results also indicate that Vallejo residents are heavily impacted by rent increases currently, with almost 20% of respondents averaging a 13% increase in their rent annually. Additionally, AB 1482 is set to expire in January 2030, so more permanent legislation is needed to ensure that renters can remain in the neighborhoods they live in.

As noted by the Urban Displacement Project, “Safe and stable housing is foundational to the rest of our lives — without it, it’s hard to meet our needs around health, school, jobs, and community.”⁵⁴ Most importantly, safety must be understood as more than just the absence of crime: it encompasses economic security, emotional well-being, and trust in one’s neighbors. In housing, safety is often viewed as an amenity, used to raise property values or justify punitive policing. Yet, renters’ actual experiences of safety are shaped by their race, gender, income, and the presence of supportive services embedded within their communities. Feeling safe also means knowing that your rent won’t spike unexpectedly in unpredictable ways, that you won’t be harassed by your landlord for trying to organize your floor, and that neighbors will watch out for each other.

Responses from our survey show that residents across Vallejo crave connection — to their neighborhoods, to economic opportunities, to better schools and educational opportunities, and more. They have articulated that despite being overburdened by rent, wishy-washy landlords, and degraded public infrastructure that they have hopes for more. Together, tenant protections like rent stabilization, just cause evictions, anti-harassment laws, a tenant’s right to organize, a tenant’s right to counsel, and community-controlled housing models like community land trusts prevent displacement and ensure that renters continue to have a say in shaping the future of their communities. These protections are not just legal tools — they are the foundation for creating communities where people feel rooted, protected, and safe. And for the renters of Vallejo, it means that they can continue to build on their hopes and dreams collectively.

Which Tenant Protections Have the Most Promise in Vallejo?

Rent Stabilization. For years, community members and tenant organizations in Vallejo have been advocating for rent stabilization at the city level. Both Solano County and the city of Vallejo lack rent regulations to ensure the safety and protection of tenant's rights as a renter. The city of Vallejo does not have a general rent stabilization policy, although it instituted a state of emergency to prevent price gouging for rental properties in June 2019 that prohibited landlords from increasing rents to tenants by more than 10%.⁵⁵

In 2015, Richmond and Mountain View were the first cities in California to establish rent stabilization policies after three decades. Since then, tenant organizers in more than 30 cities in California have successfully instituted some form of rent stabilization through their advocacy. As rent stabilization has gained momentum across the state, its benefits have extended to both tenants and landlords. For tenants, rent stabilization offers vital protections against sudden and excessive rent hikes, helping to prevent displacement in cities where evictions and gentrification pressures are highest. For landlords, rent stabilization is practical and effective, offering longer tenancies, which overall reduces turnover costs and extended vacancies, ensuring a more reliable, consistent rental income stream.⁵⁶ Through this, rent stabilization policies transform volatile rental markets into more equitable and sustainable housing landscapes, which has promise for all communities in California.

VHJC helped facilitate conversations with city council members and former mayor Bob Sampayan leading up to the emergency ordinance in 2019, supporting residents of Strawberry Hill Apartments and Holiday Garden Apartments through their tenant organization Reliable Tenants.⁵⁷ Strawberry Hill is a 64-unit complex located across the street from Kaiser Permanente in North Vallejo, whose tenants are predominantly elders on a fixed income. A majority of Strawberry Hill tenants are also Filipino American, and this area of Vallejo has a large Filipino community. Renters were at-risk of displacement and homelessness due to a new San Francisco-based property management company, Reliant Group Management, purchasing the apartments and informing their tenants they would be doubling the price of rent. Reliant Group stated that they would assist tenants with rehoming to other affordable housing apartments in cities like Antioch and Pittsburg, and many long-time tenants of Strawberry Hill and Holiday Garden suspected that the properties would be turned into workforce housing for Kaiser employees with larger incomes.⁵⁸

In 2019, California passed the California Tenant Protection Act (AB 1482), a statewide rent stabilization law that limits the annual rent increases and removes the right of landlords to evict tenants without just cause.⁵⁹ AB 1482 is an important tenant protection ordinance at the state level, although it excludes certain affordable housing projects, such as Low-Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) properties, some project-based properties, and public housing projects.⁶⁰ Unfortunately, many tenants cannot access AB 1482 protections: tenants must hire an attorney and sue their landlord if a property is found in non-compliance. Additionally, AB 1482 is not a permanent tenant protection and requires state legislators to vote for its extension by 2030.⁶¹ This becomes an issue for cities like Vallejo, where local protections do not exist.

Just Cause Evictions. Just cause refers to laws that protect tenants from arbitrary eviction, or eviction without reason.⁶² They are critical for maintaining housing stability and promoting equitable urban development in the Bay Area, and ensure that landlords can only evict tenants for specific, legitimate reasons. By safeguarding tenants from retaliatory evictions, especially for exercising their legal rights by reporting unsafe or unsanitary conditions, just cause fosters a more just and resilient housing market.

Just cause laws also promote fairness by ensuring evictions are carried out with proper notice, and give tenants an opportunity to address lease violations or disputes. Moreover, they help mitigate homelessness by preventing

unnecessary evictions, reducing the risk of renters struggling to find new housing quickly in a tight housing market. Housing stability allows tenants to focus on their jobs, education, and family needs without the anxiety of sudden displacement, contributing to broader economic security. Stable housing is fundamental to community cohesion, as higher turnover rates from frequent evictions disrupts neighborhood stability and social networks, undermining the vitality of urban areas. This is an important reminder that the threat of eviction is a form of structural violence often experienced by low-income and BIPOC renters, who are often at the whim of local and regional policies due to underrepresentation within city governments.

TABLE 4: OVERVIEW OF TENANT PROTECTION ORDINANCES (TPOS)

Type of Protection	What Is It?	What Does it Do?	Presence in Bay Area Counties
Rent Stabilization	Legal policy that limits how much landlords can charge for rent	Ensures housing stays affordable, especially for lower-income residents	Alameda, Hayward, Los Gatos, Richmond, Oakland
Right to Counsel	Guaranteed legal representation for tenants facing eviction	Keeps people housed, decreases likelihood of eviction, and reduces the imbalance between landlords and tenants	San Francisco
Anti-Harassment and the Right to Organize	Laws designed to protect tenants from abusive behavior by landlords or property managers, allowing tenants to come together collectively to advocate for their rights without fear of landlord retaliation	Prevents landlords from using intimidation, coercion, or other aggressive acts to force tenants out of their homes, allowing tenants to file complaints, seek legal action, and request mediation	Richmond <i>*Notable example: Los Angeles</i>
Just Cause Evictions	Laws that prohibit landlords from evicting tenants without specific reason, and within certain requirements within a specific time of notice	Protects tenants from unlawful or retaliatory eviction, and refusal to renew leases; helps prevent displacement and tenant discrimination; promotes housing stability in areas with low vacancies and high rental costs	Berkeley, Oakland, East Palo Alto, Petaluma
*Community Land Trusts	A non-profit organization that promotes affordable housing and community land development through collective land ownership; goal is permanent collective land ownership by removing land and housing from the speculative market	Non-profit holds the land on behalf of a community (via land deed), and serves as long-term steward for things like affordable housing, community gardens, urban farms, commercial spaces, and more	Vallejo, San Francisco, Berkeley <i>Example: Bay Area Community Land Trust</i>

**This is an additional measure being pushed by VHC.*

Right to Counsel. A tenant's right to counsel is an emerging and crucial aspect of housing justice in the Bay Area, and remains a relatively new phenomenon in the United States. This right ensures that tenants facing eviction proceedings have access to legal representation, significantly enhancing their ability to navigate the complexities of the legal system and protect their right to remain in their homes. The stakes of eviction cases are high for Bay Area renters as eviction filings by landlords have surged following the cessation of the statewide eviction moratorium due to the COVID-19 pandemic. A recent study by Cal Matters found that eviction filings have surpassed average pre-pandemic levels, often accompanied by sudden rent increases that forces tenants to self-evict themselves or be evicted.⁶³ Given the high stakes of eviction cases, the most severe being homelessness, the right to counsel is a powerful tool for promoting equity and fairness in the housing market.

Legal representation can make a substantial difference in eviction outcomes. Tenants with lawyers are far more likely to avoid eviction and secure favorable settlements compared to tenants who represent themselves. This underscores the importance of legal aid that ensures that tenants' rights are upheld and not unfairly disadvantaged in legal proceedings. Approximately 80% of landlords utilize attorneys in eviction filings, further highlighting the inherent power imbalance embedded in the landlord-tenant relationship.⁶⁴ Additionally, low-income renters and renters of color are disproportionately affected by eviction and housing instability, even more so post-pandemic. Black women, for instance, are twice as likely to endure evictions than their white counterparts speaking to the complexities of race and housing in California and the nation.⁶⁵

San Francisco was the first city in California to pass a tenant right to counsel ordinance, approved in 2018 under Proposition F. Under Proposition F, the Tenant Right to Counsel (TRC) program, gives renters access to free legal representation within 30 days of receiving an eviction notice, regardless of income level. Since 2019, Proposition F has saved thousands of San Franciscans from undergoing eviction and becoming unhoused.⁶⁶ Between 2022 and 2023, TRC provided legal services to over 1,800 tenants, and about 95% of TRC's clients were low-income or extremely low-income, with tenants in the Tenderloin, Mission, and SOMA districts having the highest client representation.⁶⁷ Furthermore, TRC has proven extremely cost-effective for the city, with the average case cost being a little over \$6,000 compared to the cost of maintaining one shelter bed in the city, which is around \$70,000 annually, with the program boasting a success rate of about 92%.⁶⁸

Anti-Harassment and the Right to Organize. Anti-harassment ordinances are local laws designed to protect tenants from the abusive behavior of landlords or property managers. These ordinances define specific actions that constitute harassment and establish legal consequences for landlords, aiming to prevent landlords from using aggressive or coercive tactics to force tenants out of their homes or make their living conditions unbearable. Common forms of harassment include threats of eviction without proper cause, cutting off essential services like water or electricity, or entering rental units without proper notice. Additionally, landlords may use intimidation, verbal abuse, or refuse necessary repairs in an attempt to make living conditions uninhabitable. Harassment can also involve retaliation against tenants for asserting their rights, such as filing complaints or organizing with other tenants, as well as implementing unjust rent increases or changes in lease terms to pressure tenants into leaving. In apartment complexes in South Vallejo like Longshore Cove Apartments and Marina Vista Apartments, where the risk of property management intimidation and harassment is high, this is of utmost importance.

Anti-harassment ordinances typically allow tenants to file complaints with local housing authorities and tenant associations, seek legal actions such as restraining orders or lawsuits for damages, and request mediation to resolve disputes. Cities with stronger tenant protections, like New York, San Francisco, and Los Angeles, often have robust anti-harassment ordinances to safeguard renters from landlord abuses in highly competitive rental markets. In the case of Los Angeles, renters also have the right to organize, allowing them to form tenant unions or associations as collectives to advocate for their rights without fear of retaliation. This includes the freedom to assemble, protection from retaliatory evictions or rent increase, and the ability to hold tenant meetings in common areas of buildings. Organized tenants have stronger negotiating power to better conditions and services as a group, improve political education by sharing knowledge about local housing laws, and overall create solidarity among renters.

Community Land Trusts. Alternative land stewardship models are becoming increasingly more popular to create permanent affordability in urban areas. A community land trust (CLT) is a non-profit organization designed to acquire and hold land for the benefit of a community, ensuring that it is used in a manner that serves the public interest.⁶⁹ It

does so by removing land from the speculative market, and while typically focused on providing affordable housing, they can be used for community-controlled commercial spaces, civic buildings, urban agriculture, public facilities, and more.

CLTs ensure that housing and other developments on the land remain affordable for future generations. They achieve this by owning the land and leasing it to homeowners or developers under long-term, 99-year renewable ground leases. CLTs have mixed governance structures, often including a board of directors made up of residents, community leaders, and public representatives. It is important that the land is managed in this way to continue to reflect the changing needs and desires of the community, as community control is a key component of CLT housing. Homeowners within a CLT can also build equity through their property, although resale prices are usually restricted to keep homes affordable. This balance helps provide financial stability for homeowners while maintaining affordability for future buyers. Additionally, CLTs often provide supportive services for residents, such as homebuyer education, financial counseling, and maintenance or repair services.

CLTs are commonly integrated within social housing and cooperative housing models as part of a broader movement to decommodify land and housing. Social housing is a public, non-market alternative to private housing with significant overlaps with the CLT model, frequently being developed on CLT-managed land to guarantee long-term stability for community residents.⁷⁰ CLTs can also operate under cooperative housing models, such as shared equity, so they are owned and managed by residents in alignment with key principles of community ownership and shared governance that define CLTs. National organizations like the Right to the City Alliance advocate for these models as part of a broader vision for housing justice that deeply prioritizes affordable, democratically controlled housing rooted in community needs over market speculation. Together, these approaches offer a pathway to transform housing from a commodity into a human right.



Addressing Racial Inequities in Vallejo

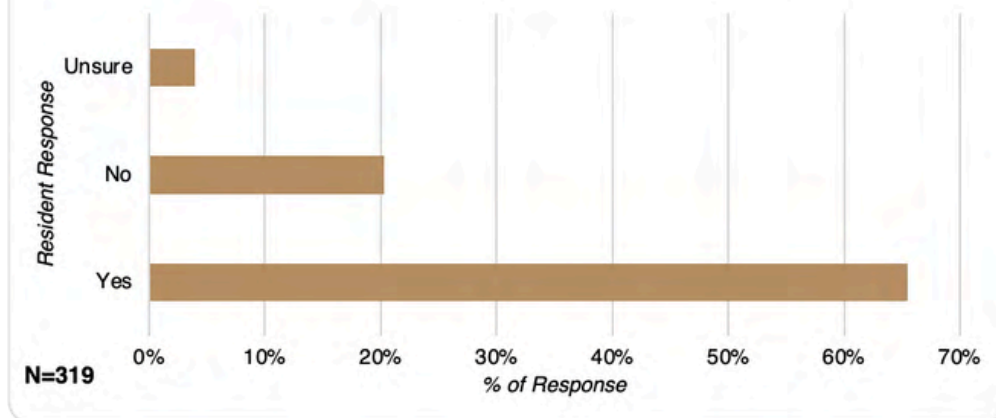
Build a multi-ethnic coalition of tenants that is anti-racist. Tenant unions are essential tools that empower renters to collectively advocate for their rights and improve their living conditions. These coalitions create spaces for tenants to engage in collective bargaining, negotiating better terms for their rental agreements and unit conditions. Additionally, tenant unions serve as crucial spaces for legal and housing education, where renters can gain the knowledge and confidence to navigate complex issues like eviction notices, substandard housing conditions, and unfair practices, enabling tenants to assert their rights and dignity in the face of ongoing housing challenges. Perhaps most importantly, tenant unions foster a sense of solidarity among renters, especially in building-based unions. Renters often feel isolated when negotiating individually with landlords or property managers, but when united, their collective voices carry more weight. This shift from being passive stakeholders in the decision-making process to active partners in advocating for their needs is a powerful transformation. Given Vallejo's unique history of segregation, it is important that tenant organizing spaces actively divest from anti-Blackness in order to build coalition networks that are multi-ethnic and committed to anti-racism as a core practice. Without this focus, anti-Blackness will continue to perpetuate divisions, further segregating Vallejo.

Increase regional investment in Solano County. Solano County has the highest overall needs score of any Bay Area county, yet it receives the lowest amount of philanthropic funding per resident — only \$168 per capita, compared to \$11,211 per capita in San Francisco County.⁷¹ Failing to address long-standing disparities in funding will only continue to limit the county's ability to respond to resident needs. Increasing regional investment in Solano County will enable funders, policymakers, and institutions to advance place-based equity issues, stabilize housing and economic insecurity, strengthen regional resilience, and increase the sense of accountability and trust in local government.

Build capacity for tenant leadership development and prioritize community members for city leadership positions. The Boards and Commissions Leadership Institute (BCLI) is a program at Urban Habitat designed to empower and train social justice leaders to serve on local and regional boards and commissions. BCLI aims to diversify leadership within governmental bodies to ensure that communities of color and low-income communities are represented in decision-making processes to advance equitable policy. The program offers a comprehensive curriculum that includes workshops, seminars, and mentorship opportunities centering topics such as affordable housing, transportation, land use, environmental justice, and community health. Members of BCLI also receive training in public speaking, policy analysis, and coalition-building, and they gain skills necessary to navigate the intricacies of the Bay Area's varied political landscapes in order to build a pipeline of informed, skilled, and dedicated leaders.

Develop organic leaders, not activists. Over 60% of respondents noted that they want to become more involved with VHJC and their community. Many also spoke up feeling powerless to address the changes happening within their communities, while others felt activated to make a long-lasting impact through becoming more involved in their communities. Developing organic leaders from those within tenant organizing spaces is essential to building strong, sustainable tenant unions. Their leadership is localized and rooted in their lived experiences with understanding local housing issues with the shared values of their neighbors, making tenant organizing strategies more aligned with what renters truly need. This not only builds long-term community power but also ensures that tenant-led social movements are resilient and adaptive to the changing housing landscape through distributive leadership strategies, instead of relying on external organizers. This approach is especially crucial in under-resourced communities where outside support may be inconsistent, and where meaningful change is reliant on leadership from within the community.

Figure 21: Would you like to become more involved with VHJC and your community?



Investigate where wealth is accumulated in Vallejo. Understanding how and where wealth is accumulated in Vallejo is essential to understanding the root causes of inequality in the city. In the United States, homeownership remains the one of the single greatest drivers of intergenerational wealth, yet low-income people and communities of color, particularly Black, Indigenous, and immigrant families, have historically been locked out of these opportunities through discriminatory housing practices. In Vallejo, patterns of ownership, investment, and property value growth could reveal stark disparities in who benefits from economic development and who is left behind. At the city level, it's also important to examine how civic infrastructure contributes to this imbalance. For example, city departments with staff vacancies could reallocate a portion of salaries to hire community researchers and tenant leaders to help bridge trust gaps and increase data transparency.

Invest in South Vallejo. Investing in South Vallejo is essential for advancing racial equity and building long-term community resilience, especially as it is home to a significant portion of Vallejo's renting class. This is exceedingly important, as the second largest proportion of surveyed residents live in Downtown and South Vallejo. This area includes three major apartment complexes – Seabreeze Apartments, Marina Vista Apartments, and Longshore Cove Apartments – which houses large numbers of low-income renters, renters of color, disabled tenants, single-parent headed households, and seniors. These residents are not only vulnerable to housing insecurity but are also at the center of growing concerns around displacement, as city leaders pursue redevelopment plans aimed at revitalizing the downtown area and waterfront districts. Without strong tenant protections and community-driven planning, these efforts risk accelerating gentrification and pushing long-time residents out of their neighborhoods. Strategic investment in South Vallejo, through increasing public funds and private philanthropy, generating local jobs, and pushing affordable housing in the city's development pipeline, can keep residents housed and empowered. Environmental justice efforts to address public health disparities and climate vulnerabilities is also important. Supporting local small businesses, cultural districts, and community arts programs can celebrate South Vallejo's rich Black, Filipino, and Latine cultural heritage while also strengthening its economic base. Ultimately, investing in South Vallejo must be led by its own people — especially tenant leaders and youth organizers — to ensure that future development centers their voices, needs, and the right to remain.



CONCLUSION



Where Do We Go From Here?

Historical and contemporary tensions between private homeowners and multi-family housing developers – alongside the structural imbalance between landlords and tenants — reveals the ways in which power and wealth are concentrated in Vallejo, excluding low-income renters and renters of color from shaping their built environments. As the housing crisis continues to affect Bay Area renters, Vallejo must balance preserving existing neighborhoods with the need for diverse, affordable housing options. Rezoning efforts, flexible housing policies, and tenant protections is the first step to addressing the racist and classist history of suburbanization and single-family zoning in Solano County.

Additionally, like many cities across the nation and throughout California, Vallejo is at increased risk of climate disaster, particularly to wildfires, flooding, and drought. Identifying climate resilient and adaptive ways to protect renters and low-income homeownership in Vallejo is imperative for this reason. While the focus of this report has been to advocate for the rights of renters, we acknowledge that homeownership is still one of the primary ways for BIPOC households to build generational wealth and to bridge the racial wealth gap in the United States. Still, private homeownership in Vallejo has been marked by the dark shadow of redlining and urban renewal. A movement growing across California is the promise of digitizing racially-restrictive covenants in home deeds and removing racist language from contracts.⁷² Decommodifying individual homeownership and moving towards a model of community-owned housing, as offered by the Othering & Belonging Institute, may be another way of generating more affordable, long-term housing solutions for marginalized communities in Vallejo.⁷³

Better data transparency and knowledge sharing at the city-level is also integral to building an informed coalition of renters in Vallejo. For this, centralized databases dedicated to eviction filings available to the public would be important, especially in supporting tenants navigating the housing legal system.

Building tenant power in Vallejo requires a combination of grassroots organizing and strategic political action. Renters have the tools to fight back against displacement and housing injustice, from pushing for local ballot measures and rent stabilization ordinances to forming tenant associations and building a local landlord database, building off to the works of projects like Worst Evictors Bay Area, to better understand discriminatory housing practices. Door-knocking and signature gathering are one of the key ways VHJC mobilizes building communities to push for policies that protect tenants. By organizing with their neighbors and using local politics and community knowledge to their advantage, such as the way Larkspur residents in Marin County have, Vallejo renters can create long-lasting change to the current housing landscape in Solano County, ensuring stable, affordable housing and a future where tenants, not corporate landlords, have the power.



The background of the page is a detailed, light orange line-art map of a city. The map shows a complex network of streets, including a prominent grid system in the center. A river or waterway flows through the city, with several bridges crossing it. The map also depicts various urban features like parks, industrial areas, and residential zones. A white rectangular box is centered over the map, containing the word 'APPENDIX.' in a bold, dark red, sans-serif font.

APPENDIX.

Figures

Figure A: Racial Demographics of Vallejo Zip Codes (2020 Decennial Census Estimates)								
Zip Codes	94589		94590		94591		94592	
Total	43,892		52,911		68,969		1,260	
	Estimates	%	Estimates	%	Estimates	%	Estimates	%
American Indian / Alaska Native	337	0.8%	569	1%	590	0.9%	10	0.8%
Asian	8,031	18.3%	4,776	9%	16,853	24.4%	333	26.4%
Black	6,728	15.3%	9,055	17.1%	9,899	14.4%	111	8.8%
Hispanic / Latinx	11,602	26.4%	12,930	24.4%	12,664	18.4%	178	14.2%
Two or More Races	3,824	8.7%	5,320	10%	7,188	10.4%	154	12.2%
Native Hawaiian / Pacific Islander	414	0.9%	350	0.7%	615	0.9%	11	0.9%
White	7,851	17.9%	11,784	22.3%	14,126	20.5%	294	31.3%
Additional Races	5,105	11.6%	8,127	15.4%	7,034	10.2%	69	5.5%

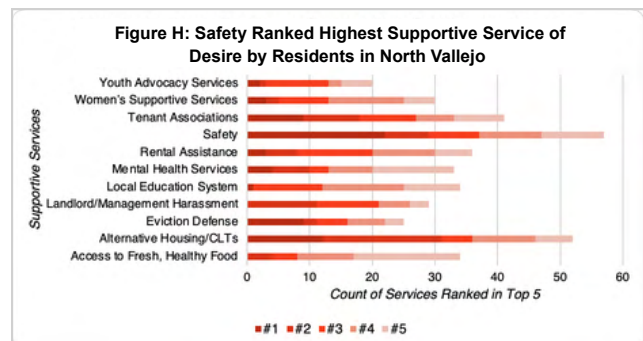
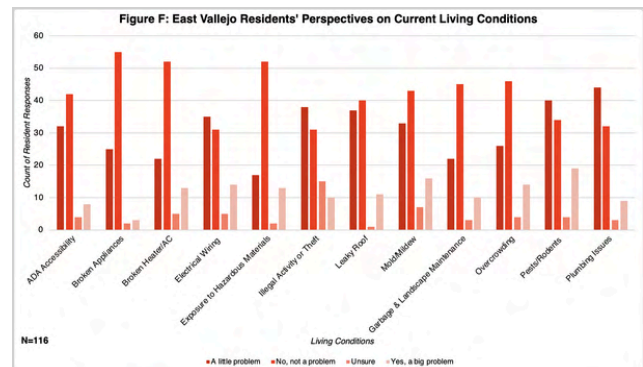
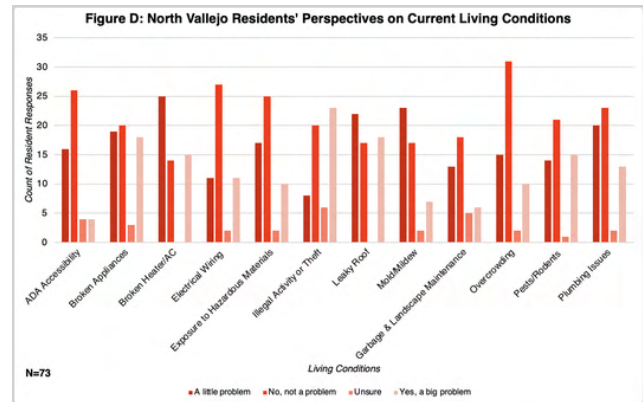
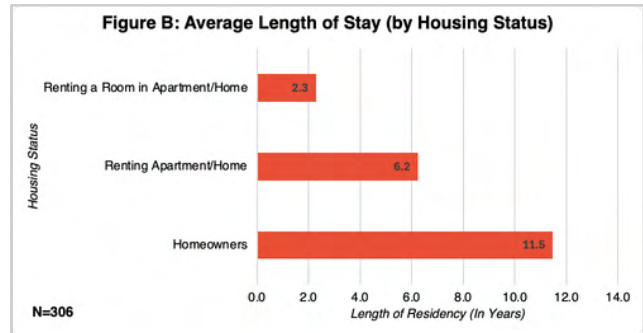
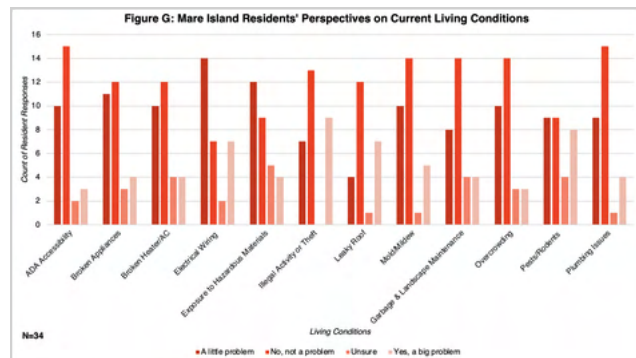
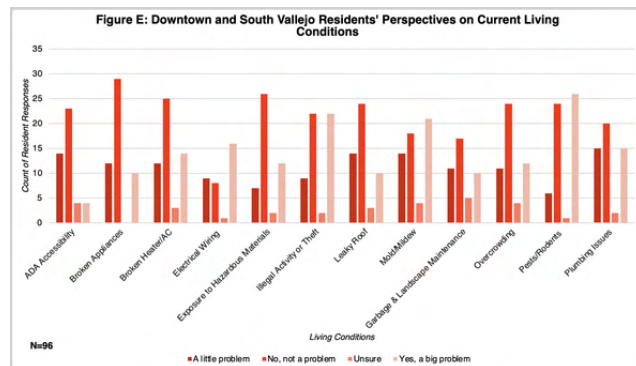
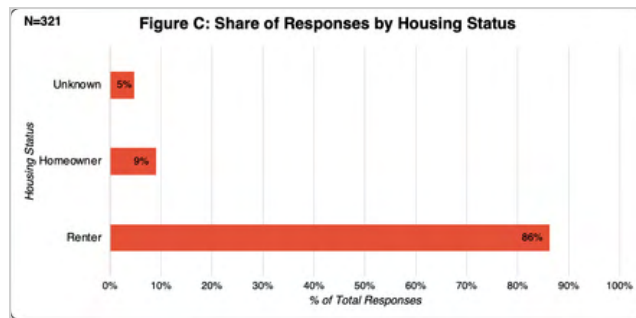


Figure I: Alternative Forms of Housing and Safety Rank Highest in Supportive Services Desired by Residents in Downtown and South Vallejo

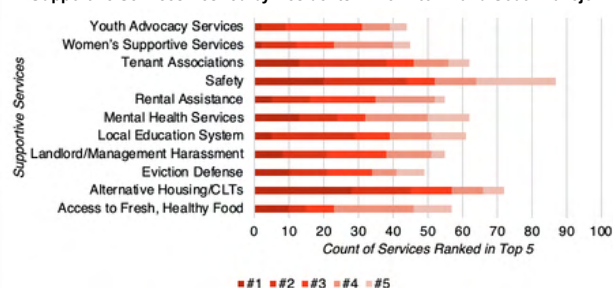


Figure J: Safety Ranked Highest Supportive Service of Desire by Residents in East Vallejo

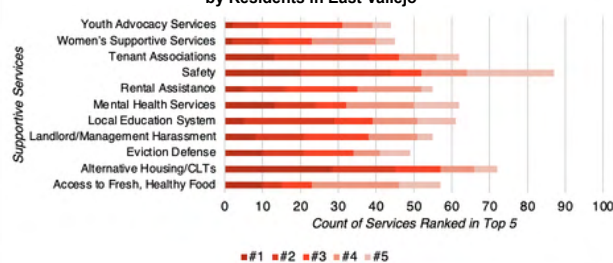


Figure K: Alternative Forms of Housing and Safety Rank Highest in Supportive Services Desired by Residents on Mare Island

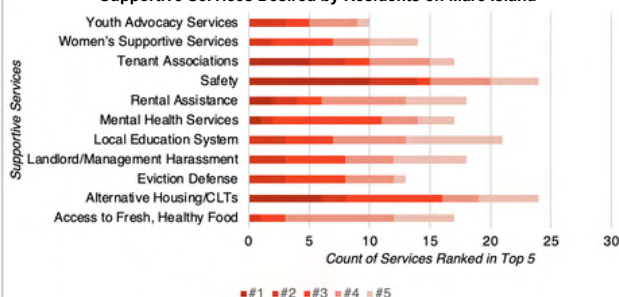


Figure L: Percent (%) of Total Occurrence of Key Themes Across Qualitative Questions

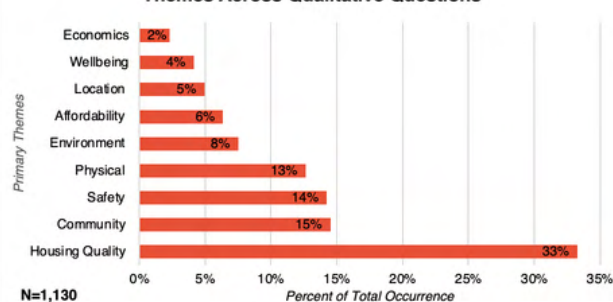


Figure M: Proportion of Resident Concern: Environmental Conditions

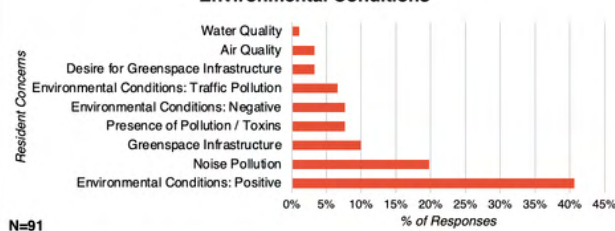


Figure N: Proportion of Resident Concern: Housing Quality



Figure O: Resident Experiences and Knowledge

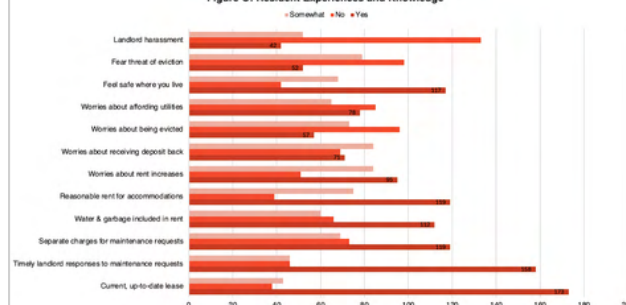


Figure P: Key Themes of Qualitative Questions

Key Theme	Number of Sub-codes	Number of Sub-Codes Allocated to Responses
Affordability	9	78
Community	14	251
Economic	7	38
Environment	10	91
Housing	27	397
Physical	15	171
Safety	14	198
Well-Being	6	48
Location	9	48

N = 1,288



ENDNOTES

¹ United Way Bay Area. 2022. Understanding Poverty and Philanthropic Giving Disparities in the Bay Area 2018-2020. https://uwba.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/08/Understanding-Poverty-and-Philanthropic-Giving-Disparities-Report_06.13.2023.pdf

² Ibid.

³ Holmes, S. 2001. A Diverse City Exists Equal but Separate. The New York Times.

⁴ U.S. Census Bureau. Vallejo city, California. <https://data.census.gov/profile?q=Vallejo%20city,%20California%20Race%20and%20Ethnicity>

⁵ Raskin-Zrihen, R. 2019. Vallejo is diverse but segregated, new study finds. Times-Herald. <https://www.timesheraldonline.com/2019/02/12/vallejo-is-diverse-but-segregated-new-study-finds/>

⁶ City of Vallejo. 2022. Why Vallejo: Quick Facts About the City of Vallejo.

⁷ Zillow. Vallejo CA. <https://www.zillow.com/vallejo-ca/land/>

⁸ Nesbit, J. 2024. Best Places to Retire in California. U.S. News Real Estate. <https://realestate.usnews.com/real-estate/articles/best-places-to-retire-in-california>

⁹ U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. Vallejo-Fairfield, CA. https://www.bls.gov/eag/eag.ca_vallejo_msa.htm

¹⁰ Hepler, L. 2022. California just extended eviction protections again. But how many people does the deal leave out?. SF Chronicle. <https://www.sfchronicle.com/california/article/California-just-extended-eviction-protections-17049442.php>

¹¹ Kuang, J. 2023. Across California, eviction cases have returned to – or surpassed – pre-pandemic levels. Cal Matters. <https://calmatters.org/housing/homelessness/2023/11/california-evictions-post-pandemic/>

¹² Padilla, C. (2023). Vallejo and Fairfield beat NYC in new ranking of Most Expensive Places to Live in U.S. CBS News. <https://www.cbsnews.com/sacramento/news/vallejo-and-fairfield-beat-nyc-in-new-ranking-of-most-expensive-places-to-live-in-u-s/>

¹³ Dorazio, J. 2022. Localized Anti-Displacement Policies: Ways to Combat the Effects of Gentrification and Lack of Affordable Housing. Center for American Progress. <https://www.americanprogress.org/article/localized-anti-displacement-policies/>

¹⁴ Thomas, T. et al. 2019. California Estimated Displacement Risk. Urban Displacement Project. <https://www.urbandisplacement.org/maps/california-estimated-displacement-risk-model/>

¹⁵ Tars, E. 2021. Housing as a Human Right: 2020 Advocate's Guide. National Homelessness Law Center.

¹⁶ Solano Public Health. 2023. Solano County Community Health Improvement Plan.

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ Race Counts. N.d. Housing Cost Burden (Renter). <https://www.racecounts.org/issue/housing/>

¹⁹ National Low Income Housing Coalition. 2023. Out of Reach: California. <https://nlihc.org/or/state/ca>

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ Thompson, I. 2012. "Historian releases new book on Vallejo's black heritage." Daily Republic. https://www.dailyrepublic.com/news/solano-county/historian-releases-new-book-on-vallejo-s-black-heritage/article_73b9c2d5-3717-5c5b-ba93-8b9de9e9e6dd.html

²² Riley, B. 2023. "How decades of racist housing policies shaped modern Vallejo." Open Vallejo. <https://openvallejo.org/2023/05/05/how-decades-of-racist-housing-policies-shaped-modern-vallejo/>

²³ Ibid.

²⁴ Riley, B.

²⁵ St. Clair, K. (2018). "'Re-Shaping Vallejo' lines the walls of City Hall with history. Times Herald." <https://www.timesheraldonline.com/2018/01/23/re-shaping-vallejo-lines-the-walls-of-city-hall-with-history/>

²⁶ Mendiola Ross, A. (2022). "One in 10 Bay Area Neighborhoods are Segregated Areas of White Wealth." Bay Area Equity Atlas. <https://bayareaequityatlas.org/mapping-segregation>

²⁷ Ibid.

²⁸ Rohrs, S. (2018). "For better or worse, urban renewal has helped shape modern day Vallejo". Times-Herald. <https://www.timesheraldonline.com/2009/07/26/for-better-or-worse-urban-renewal-has-helped-shape-modern-day-vallejo/>

²⁹ Riley, B. "Brendan Riley's Solano Chronicles: Vallejo's worst idea ever?" Times-Herald. <https://www.timesheraldonline.com/2024/06/06/brendan-rileys-solano-chronicles-vallejos-worst-idea-ever/>

³⁰ CBS Sacramento. 2011. "Vallejo Finally Emerging From Bankruptcy." CBS News. <https://www.cbsnews.com/sacramento/news/vallejo-finally-emerging-from-bankruptcy/>

³¹ Small, J. 2012. "The cost of Vallejo's 2008 bankruptcy and what that means for California now." LAist. <https://laist.com/news/kpcc-archive/cost-vallejos-bankruptcy>

³² Burd-Sharps, S. & Rasch, R. 2015. Impact of the US Housing Crisis on the Racial Wealth Gap Across Generations. The Social Science Research Council (SSRC) and the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU).

- ³³ Hutchful, E. 2018. The Racial Wealth Gap: What California Can Do About a Long-Standing Obstacle to Shared Prosperity. California Budget & Policy Center. <https://calbudgetcenter.org/resources/the-racial-wealth-gap/>
- ³⁴ Menendian, S. et al. 2020. Single-Family Zoning in the San Francisco Bay Area: Characteristics of Exclusionary Communities. Othering & Belonging Institute.===
- ³⁵ Ibid.
- ³⁶ Urban Habitat & Bay Rising. 2023. Decision-making and Representation in Action: A Closer Look at Landlord Elected Officials and Tenant Protection Legislation in the Bay Area. Bay Area Equity Atlas. <https://bayareaequityatlas.org/electeds2023/casestudy>
- ³⁷ Riley, B. 2023. “Brendan Riley’s Solano Chronicles: Blacks struggle for equality in Vallejo, Mare Island.” Times Herald. <https://www.timesheraldonline.com/2023/02/23/brendan-rileys-solano-chronicles-blacks-struggled-for-equality-in-vallejo-mare-island/>
- ³⁸ Ibid.
- ³⁹ Ibid.
- ⁴⁰ Ibid.
- ⁴¹ O’Donoghue, L. 2014. Don’t call it gentrification. Salon. https://www.salon.com/2014/11/02/don%E2%80%99t_call_it_gentrification/
- ⁴² Gallegos, C. 2023. Building a tenant-led movement in Vallejo. Urban Habitat. <https://urbanhabitat.org/newsletter/building-a-tenant-led-movement-in-vallejo/>
- ⁴³ Northern California Land Trust. 2023. Vallejo CLT. <https://www.nclt.org/vallejo-clt>
- ⁴⁴ Vallejo, CA rental market. 2025. Zillow. <https://www.zillow.com/rental-manager/market-trends/vallejo-ca/>
- ⁴⁵ Rental Market Trends in Vallejo, CA. 2025. <https://www.apartments.com/rent-market-trends/vallejo-ca/>
- ⁴⁶ Leonard, C. & Devulapalli, S. 2023. “Where is the Bay Area’s housing crisis impacting people the most? Here’s one key stat.” SF Chronicle. <https://www.sfchronicle.com/bayarea/article/housing-costs-rent-mortgage-18535110.php>
- ⁴⁷ Ibid.
- ⁴⁸ Rent Estimates: March 2025. Apartmentlist.com.
- ⁴⁹ Median Household Income (Quick Facts). U.S. Census.
- ⁵⁰ Duane, J. 2016. Access to Broadband Fuels Workforce Development and Enhances Job Skills. National Telecommunications and Information Administration. Accessed March 2025: <https://www.ntia.gov/blog/2016/access-broadband-fuels-workforce-development-and-enhances-job-skills>.
- ⁵¹ Solano Public Health. 2023. Solano County Community Health Improvement Plan.
- ⁵² Rent Control for All. Tenants Together. <https://www.tenants-together.org/campaigns/rent-control-all>
- ⁵³ The California Tenant Protection Act of 2019 (AB 1482). City of San Francisco.
- ⁵⁴ Kumar, V. 2022. Who Benefits from Tenant Protections?. Urban Displacement Project. <https://www.urbandisplacement.org/blog/who-benefits-from-tenant-protections/>
- ⁵⁵ City of Vallejo. 2019. “06-28-109 - Press Release - Vallejo Issues Proclamation of Emergency to Prevent Pricing Gouging On Rentals.”
- ⁵⁶ Rent Control for All. Tenants Together. <https://www.tenants-together.org/campaigns/rent-control-all>
- ⁵⁷ Raskin-Zrihen, R. 2019. “Vallejo tenants at risk of displacement get possible reprieve.” Times-Herald. <https://www.timesheraldonline.com/2019/06/04/vallejo-tenants-at-risk-of-displacement-get-possible-reprieve/>
- ⁵⁸ Ibid.
- ⁵⁹ Western Center on Law & Poverty. 2020. AB 1482 - California Rent Cap & Just Cause for Eviction Resources. https://wclp.org/eviction-resources-in-response-to-ab-1482/?gad_source=1&gclid=Cj0KCQjw-uK0BhC0ARIsANQtgGM2Jju14H0sagF7Bw58bk_U9lhQbeh4GiA9N8calsgpdgYB4G8UH30aAid8EALw_wcB
- ⁶⁰ National Housing Law Project. Does AB 1482 Apply to Tenants Using Section 8 Vouchers or Tenants Living in Affordable Housing? Factsheet. <https://wclp.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/01/AB-1482-Factsheet-HCVs-and-Affordable-Housing.pdf>
- ⁶¹ Bungalow. 2022. California’s rent control law, explained. <https://bungalow.com/articles/californias-rent-control-law-explained>
- ⁶² Cuellar, J. 2019. Effect of “Just Cause” Eviction Ordinances in Four California Cities. Journal of Public and International Affairs (Princeton University). <https://jpia.princeton.edu/news/effect-just-cause-eviction-ordinances-eviction-four-california-cities>
- ⁶³ Kuang, J. 2023. “Across California, eviction cases have returned to – or surpassed – pre-pandemic levels.” Cal Matters. <https://calmatters.org/housing/homelessness/2023/11/california-evictions-post-pandemic/>

⁶⁴ DeBenedetti, K. 2024. “Thousands of San Francisco Residents Saved from Eviction by 2018 Legal Aid Measure.” KQED. <https://www.kqed.org/news/11984467/thousands-of-san-francisco-residents-saved-from-eviction-by-2018-legal-aid-measure>

⁶⁵ Beiers, S., Park, S., & Morris, L. 2020. Clearing the Record: How Eviction Sealing Laws Can Advance Housing Access for Women of Color. ACLU. <https://www.aclu.org/news/racial-justice/clearing-the-record-how-eviction-sealing-laws-can-advance-housing-access-for-women-of-color>

⁶⁶ DeBenedetti, K. 2024. “Thousands of San Francisco Residents Saved from Eviction by 2018 Legal Aid Measure.” KQED. <https://www.kqed.org/news/11984467/thousands-of-san-francisco-residents-saved-from-eviction-by-2018-legal-aid-measure>

⁶⁷ Ibid.

⁶⁸ Ibid.

⁶⁹ Zepeda, F., Montojo, N., & Goldberg, L. 2022. Community Land Trusts as Stewards of Public Land. Othering & Belonging Institute (University of California, Berkeley). <https://belonging.berkeley.edu/community-land-trusts-stewards-public-land/#:~:text=CLTs%20monitor%20and%20enforce%20the,and%20direction%20to%20the%20organization.>

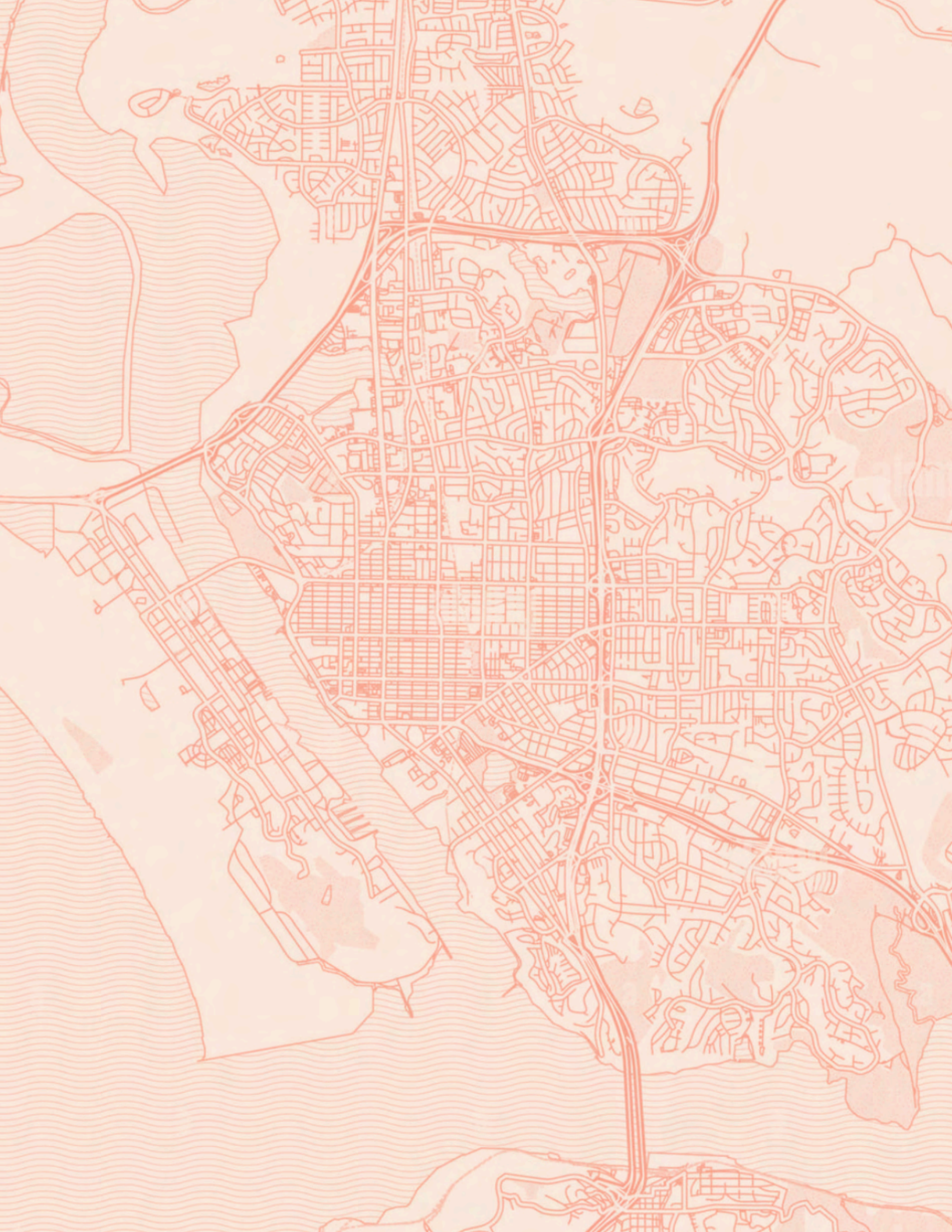
⁷⁰ Alliance for Housing Justice. What is Social Housing?. <https://www.allianceforhousingjustice.org/us-social-housing-principles>

⁷¹ Ibid.

⁷² Riley, B. 2023. How decades of racist housing policies shaped modern Vallejo. Open Vallejo. <https://openvallejo.org/2023/05/05/how-decades-of-racist-housing-policies-shaped-modern-vallejo/>

⁷³ Montojo, N. et al. 2025. Living in the Future: Scaling Community Owned Housing in California. Othering & Belonging Institute.





September 10, 2026

Mayor Andrea Sorce
Vice Mayor Peter Bregenzer
Council Member Alexander Matias
Council Member Diosdado Matulac
Council Member Tonia Lediju
Council Member Charles Palmares
Council Member Helen-Marie Gordon
Via email: city.clerk@cityofvallejo.net

And
Kristin Pollot, Planning Manager
Via email: Kristin.Pollot@cityofvallejo.net

Harry Black, City Manager
City of Vallejo
Via email: Harry.Black@cityofvallejo.net

Re: Key Policy Objectives for Vallejo's Just Cause & Rent Stabilization Ordinances

Dear Vallejo City Council Members and Staff,

Vallejo Housing Justice Coalition writes to urge the City to adopt promptly Just Cause and Rent Stabilization ordinances that incorporate the attached policy priorities. The City of Vallejo is now a year beyond the deadlines for moving these policies forward that it committed to in its Sixth Cycle Housing Element, and our city cannot wait any longer for these essential policies to protect our families and stabilize our community. These priorities are grounded in extensive input from Vallejo tenants, local organizations, and housing policy experts to support the City's fulfillment of those commitments.

Vallejo Housing Justice Coalition (VHJC) is comprised of community members and partners whose goal is to ensure affordable and equitable housing and community stability in Vallejo. VHJC prioritizes and amplifies the voices of the communities most directly impacted by harmful housing policies that have displaced and uprooted families, especially low-income families, immigrants, and people of color. VHJC and our partners developed the attached policy priorities based on input from a range of stakeholders, including tenants, local advocacy and service organizations, and statewide housing policy experts. These policy priorities are the result of more than a year of community meetings and outreach conducted by VHJC and our partners, as well as research into conditions facing renters in Vallejo including the recently released *Right to Thrive* report. The policy priorities have been endorsed by organizations representing diverse community perspectives, with additional endorsements forthcoming.

As you are aware, the city made a commitment in its Sixth Cycle Housing Element to present four tenant protection ordinances to the City Council: rent stabilization and just cause eviction

protections by September of 2025, and tenant anti-harassment and right to counsel by June of 2026. Both legally mandated deadlines have passed without any draft ordinances presented.

We are concerned that the City has still not committed to a clear and prompt timeline for consideration and adoption of the renter protection ordinances described in the Housing Element even though the City is more than a year tardy in fulfilling its obligations. We understand that the City Council will hold a study session about renter protections in late September, and that staff expect to develop a plan for drafting the ordinances after the study session. Given that the City is already a year behind the legally binding deadline it laid out in its Housing Element, we urge an aggressive timeline and swift action to ensure that the City adopts much-needed policies to protect Vallejo tenants from displacement. The attached policy priorities, developed through extensive community input, are intended to help this process move quickly and effectively. Vallejo families cannot afford further delay.

Thank you for your consideration and attention to this issue, and we look forward to continued engagement with the City as it moves with urgency and transparency to fulfill its commitments and deliver long-overdue protections for Vallejo's renters.

Sincerely,

Cristal Gallegos

Project Director

Vallejo Housing Justice Coalition

Just Cause & Rent Stabilization in Vallejo

Why Do We Need Tenant Protections in Vallejo?

Tenants, particularly low-income tenants of color, experience significant displacement as a result of rapidly rising rents and arbitrary evictions. In Solano County, over half of all low-income households live in neighborhoods that are at risk of gentrification, the highest share among all counties in the Bay Area. Vallejo remains one of the last “affordable” cities in the Bay Area, but that will not remain the case unless the City Council acts quickly by passing rent stabilization and just cause for eviction ordinances.

Tenant Protection Policies Should Apply Broadly

Everyone deserves a safe, stable home regardless of the type of unit they rent or the type of rental agreement they have. Just cause and rent stabilization should apply to all tenancies, including informal tenancies, oral tenancies, and subleases, as well as to tenants in unpermitted units, hotels, and mobile homes.

- **Covered by just cause:** All rental units.
- **Covered by rent stabilization:** Maximum coverage allowed by state law: multifamily buildings—including duplexes and triplexes—constructed before 1995.

Components of a Rent Stabilization Ordinance:

- **Cap rent increases to 60% of the annual change in CPI or 2.5%, whichever is less:** For renters to remain in their homes long-term, rents should not rise faster than wages.
- **Protect renters from hidden charges:** Many landlords use confusing formulas to charge tenants for utilities that are not separately metered, causing housing costs to vary wildly. To keep housing costs predictable, rents should include the costs of any utilities that are not separately metered, and landlords’ ability to add new fees or other charges should be limited.
- **Administrative Hearings:** There should be a hearing process for landlords who need to increase rents beyond the annual limit to get a fair return, as well as for tenants seeking rent reductions.
- **Rent Registry:** Requiring landlords to report on rents, vacancies, and evictions, promotes transparency and legal compliance.
- **Rent rollback:** To discourage landlords from increasing rents in anticipation of rent stabilization being adopted, use rents as of December 31, 2024, the date the City’s current Housing Element was adopted, as base rents for calculating future rent increases.

Components of a Just Cause Ordinance:

- **Just Cause ordinances prevent landlords from evicting tenants arbitrarily. Landlords must either provide an at-fault or no fault reason for the eviction.**
 - **At-fault:** A landlord has grounds to evict a tenant for certain behaviors. The at-fault reasons should be limited to serious issues such as nonpayment of rent for two or more

Just Cause & Rent Stabilization in Vallejo

months; serious breach of material, mutually agreed-upon terms of a lease or rental agreement; nuisance; violent criminal activity on the premises; or using the rental unit for illegal purposes (e.g., manufacturing or selling illegal drugs).

- **No fault:** Evictions for reasons unrelated to a tenant's behavior should be limited: 1) repairs are necessary (tenant has a right to return afterwards), 2) landlord wants to take the unit off the rental market, or 3) an owner (or their immediate relative) wants to move-in, with maximum safeguards for vulnerable tenants such as disabled, elderly, or terminally ill renters, and for students and teachers during the school year.
- **Allow Tenants to Cure for At-Fault Reasons:** Requiring a 10-day written warning with opportunity to cure for most at-fault reasons is critical so that an eviction does not arise from a misunderstanding or one-time mistake.
- **Provide adequate relocation payments:** When landlords evict tenants for no-fault reasons, they should be required to provide relocation assistance to help displaced tenants secure new housing, including additional payments for certain tenants (low income, elderly, persons with disabilities, or minor children).
- **Deter evictions via legal remedies:** Requiring landlords to pay triple damages for evictions without just cause would deter landlords from evicting tenants for discriminatory or unjust purposes.
- **Just Cause Protections from Day 1:** State tenant protections exclude renters who have lived in units less than a year. All tenants deserve protection from unjust evictions. This local policy would fill a substantial loophole that exists in state law.

Other Rights:

- **Rent Registry/Fees** Require Landlords to register their rental units and pay a small fee. The combined fees from all units will cover the cost of the administration of all tenant protections programs, including any additional staffing and infrastructure needed to implement them.
- **Increase buyout transparency:** Requiring landlords that offer buyout agreements to translate them into the tenants' language and file signed copies with the City will help to ensure that landlords do not pressure tenants into signing buyout agreements that they do not understand.

Many Bay Area Cities Already Have Rent Stabilization and Justice Cause Ordinances

Including: Berkeley, Oakland, Alameda, San Francisco, Richmond, San Leandro, Antioch, Concord, San Jose, Hayward, East Palo Alto, and Mountain View.

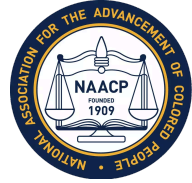
Just Cause & Rent Stabilization in Vallejo

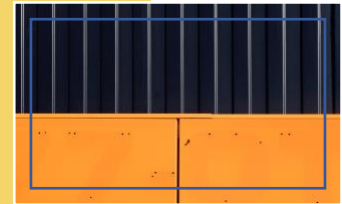
Endorsed as of 09/15/2026 By:

Organizations:



enough
housing.





City of San Pablo

Fiscal Analysis of a Rent Stabilization and Tenant Protections Ordinance

July 30, 2024

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction	1
About the Proposed Initiative	1
Purpose of this Report	2
Executive Summary	2
Fiscal Impact (Elections Code Section 9212(a)(1))	2
Effect on the Internal Consistency of City's Plans (Elections Code Section 9212(a)(2))	5
Effect on the use of Land (Elections Code Section 9212(a)(3))	5
About RSG	6
How California Tenant Protections Generally Work	7
Costa-Hawkins and Impact of Potential November 2024 Repeal	7
Implications of Costa-Hawkins Repeal on the Proposed Ordinance	8
Just Cause Eviction and Ellis Act Protections	8
Implications of the Ellis Act Under the Proposed Ordinance	8
Tenant Protection Act	8
Implications of the Tenant Protection Act Under the Proposed Ordinance	9
Rent Stabilization Studies And Market Trends	10
Rent Stabilization Literature Review	10
Market Trends	11
Analysis of Community Housing Characteristics and Goals	14
Housing Characteristics	14
Income Levels and Affordability	16
Regional Housing Needs Allocation and Housing Element Goals	18
Comparative Analysis of Peer Jurisdictions	21
Rent Stabilization Provisions	23
Rent Increase Limits	24
Rent Banking	25
Administrative Considerations	25
Eviction Protection Provisions	25
Just Cause Reasons for Eviction	26
Noticing Requirements	26
Relocation Assistance	27
Withdrawal from Rental Market	29
Buyout Agreements	29
Administrative Considerations	30
Registration and Compliance	30
Annual Registration and Fee	31

Administrative Penalties and Fines.....	33
Administrative Considerations	35
Petitions and Petition Process	35
Petition Types and Fee	36
Petition Review and Hearings.....	37
Appeals	38
Administrative Considerations	38
Enhanced Tenant Protections	39
Right to Organize	39
Anti-Harassment / Retaliation provisions	39
Administrative Considerations	40
<i>Fiscal Impact Analysis.....</i>	<i>41</i>
Program Staffing and Budget.....	41
Number of Rental Units.....	43
Scope of Regulatory Oversight.....	44
Existing Staffing Framework and Efficiency.....	44
Estimated Staffing Needs	45
Cost Breakdown and Considerations	46
Proposed Ordinance Cost Estimate	46
First-Year Implementation	51
Reasons for Potential Deficits.....	51
Strategies for Managing Ongoing Costs	52
<i>Work Program</i>	<i>53</i>
Key Considerations	53
Implementation Steps and Timelines.....	53
<i>Appendix A – Defined Terms.....</i>	<i>55</i>

List of Tables

Table 1: Overview of Sample Jurisdiction Provisions and Budgets	4
Table 2: Demographic Overview of San Pablo and County	14
Table 3: Housing Types (City of San Pablo)	15
Table 4: Housing Units by Year-Built Date (City of San Pablo)	15
Table 5: Overview of Sample Jurisdictions	21
Table 6: Comparison of Ordinance Provisions	22
Table 7: Comparison of Rent Stabilization Provisions	24
Table 8: Comparison of Relocation Assistance	28
Table 9: Comparison of Rental Registry and Fee	32
Table 10: Comparison of Administrative Penalties and Fines	34
Table 11: Comparison of Petition Provisions	36
Table 12: Comparison of Program Staffing and Budget.....	41
Table 13: Estimated Annual Costs and Start-Up Considerations	47
Table 14: City of Concord Program Implementation Costs	51

List of Figures

Figure 1: Average Multi-Family Residential Per-Unit Sales Prices by Jurisdiction.....	12
Figure 2: Multi-Family Asset Value by Owner Origin by Jurisdiction	13
Figure 3: Median Income in the City and County (2020-2024)	16
Figure 4: Comparison of Allowable Rent Increase Limits (2020-2024)	17
Figure 5: Market Rents vs. HCD Rent Limits (2020-2024)	17
Figure 6: 5th Cycle RHNA Progress (City of San Pablo)	19
Figure 7: 6th Cycle RHNA Progress (City of San Pablo)	20

INTRODUCTION

On December 14, 2023, Movement Legal - a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization advancing the rights and interest of tenants in California - submitted a Notice of Intent to Circulate the *San Pablo Rent Stabilization and Tenant Protections Initiative* (“Initiative”) to the City of San Pablo (“City”). The Initiative proposed adopting a Rent Stabilization and Tenant Protections Ordinance (“Ordinance”) to enact tenant protections on rental housing in the City.

Movement Legal did not collect enough certified signatures for the Initiative to be eligible for the November 2024 election (the minimum threshold is 10% of registered voters). If Movement Legal proposes a similar initiative in the future, the City anticipates it could be placed on the ballot in November 2026.

The City retained RSG, Inc. (“RSG”) in May 2024 to prepare an independent fiscal analysis of the Ordinance proposed by the Initiative. Although the Initiative will not be on the November 2024 ballot, this report will assist the City in understanding the fiscal and administrative needs to implement a rent stabilization program should one be enacted in the future. The analysis considers the level of services required by the Ordinance proposed by the Initiative as a model. It also considers the City’s housing market, demographics, and costs to administer rent stabilization ordinances in other cities in the region.

This report is structured to address impacts pursuant to California Elections Code Section 9212(a) so it may be referenced if a similar initiative qualifies as a future ballot measure.

About the Proposed Initiative

The Initiative proposed an Ordinance that places tenant protections on rental housing, generally including:

- An **annual allowable rent increase** of 60% of the change in the regional Consumer Price Index (“CPI”), but in no event will the allowable increase be less than 0% or more than 3%. The base rent is the rent as of December 14, 2023 for tenancies in place as of that date, or the initial rent for tenancies that begin after such date.
- **Eviction protection provisions** to define just cause reasons for eviction, implement enhanced eviction noticing requirements, implement Ellis Act regulations for withdrawing units from the rental market, require relocation assistance for no-fault evictions and temporary displacement, impose requirements when completing substantial rehabilitation of rental units, and regulate tenant buyout agreements.
- Data collection requirements and an annual **rental housing fee** to track compliance and fund administration.
- A landlord and tenant **petition and hearing process**.
- Other **enhanced tenant protections** such as the right for tenants to organize, anti-harassment and retaliation provisions.

The Ordinance proposed by the Initiative complies with State laws related to rent stabilization and tenant protections based on a review by the City Attorney.

Rent stabilization ordinances vary widely by jurisdiction and may be adopted by City Council or a voter initiative. If an ordinance is adopted by City Council, the City Council sets specific policies and may amend the ordinance at any time. If an ordinance is adopted by a voter-approved ballot initiative, amendments must be approved in subsequent elections. However, the City may create internal policies and regulations to implement the voter-approved ordinance as adopted.

Purpose of this Report

This report presents fiscal and administrative considerations for implementing a rent stabilization ordinance. It analyzes the Ordinance proposed by the Initiative and compares it to five Bay Area jurisdictions (Alameda, Berkeley, East Palo Alto, Hayward, and Richmond). A comparable analysis highlights the different level of services required by each program based on their specific policies. This report estimates the amount of staffing and costs required to implement the Ordinance proposed by the Initiative as a potential model. Actual costs would vary based on the scope of an adopted ordinance and number of covered rental units.

If a new initiative qualifies as a future ballot measure, the City Council may order a report pursuant to California Elections Code Section 9212(a) to examine its impact on the City. This report analyzes the following components pursuant to Elections Code Section 9212(a) and may be referenced for a future initiative if applicable:

- (1) Fiscal impact.
- (2) Effect on the internal consistency of the City's general and specific plans, including the housing element.
- (3) Effect on the use of land, the impact on the availability and location of housing, and the ability of the city to meet its regional housing needs.

Executive Summary

Fiscal Impact (Elections Code Section 9212(a)(1))

The **estimated fiscal impact** of the proposed Ordinance to the City is approximately **\$1.21 million** in ongoing annual costs, excluding adjustments for inflation. An estimated **five full-time staff** members will be required to administer the program. This is based on an approximation of staff and overhead costs to administer the services required by the Ordinance.

The approximation of staff and overhead costs needed to implement the Ordinance is informed by thorough research and interviews conducted with five peer jurisdictions that have implemented similar rent stabilization and tenant protections ordinances. These jurisdictions experience annual operational costs ranging from \$615,000 to \$7.51 million, illustrating a broad spectrum of potential financial commitments based on varying program capacities and enforcement levels.

The actual costs, necessary staffing, and resource requirements for the City's program will hinge on several variables that are detailed further within this report. These include the number of rent-stabilized units, level of services provided, the volume of landlord and tenant inquiries and

petitions, as well as compliance rates and the extent of regulatory oversight. The estimated fiscal impact for San Pablo's program assumes that it will initially operate at a moderate capacity. In the early stages, the program will likely concentrate on basic compliance due to staffing and resource limitations. However, the proposed Ordinance necessitates a high level of regulatory oversight, which will drive the program towards more comprehensive enforcement and community engagement over time.

Table 1 provides a comparison of the jurisdictions studied, summarizing the general provisions of each ordinance, total budgets, and the approximate cost per rental unit, offering a contextual benchmark for evaluating the potential financial implications of the proposed Ordinance in San Pablo. More details about the methodology for determining the estimated annual costs is included in the Fiscal Impact Analysis section of this report.

Table 1: Overview of Sample Jurisdiction Provisions and Budgets

	San Pablo	Alameda	Berkeley	Hayward	Richmond	East Palo Alto
1. Rent Stabilization Provisions						
Limits allowable rent increase	X	X	X	X	X	X
Includes Rent Banking provisions		X	X	X		
2. Eviction Protection Provisions						
Defines just cause reasons for eviction	X	X	X	X	X	X
Implements enhanced noticing requirements	X	X	X	X	X	X
Permanent relocation assistance provisions for no-fault evictions	X	X	X	X	X (separate ordinance)	X (separate ordinance)
Requires short-term relocation to tenants temporarily displaced	X	X	X	X	X (separate ordinance)	X (separate ordinance)
Implements Ellis Act regulations for withdrawal from rental market	X	X (separate resolution)	X (separate ordinance)		X	
Regulates buyout agreements	X	X	X (separate ordinance)			
Additional requirements when completing substantial rehabilitation	X	X				
3. Registration and Compliance						
Annual Program Fee required	X	X	X	X	X	X
Implements Rental Registry / Annual reporting is required	X	X	X		X	X
Imposes Administrative Penalties	X	X	X	X	X	
4. Petitions and Petition Process						
Landlord and Tenant Petition and hearing process	X	X	X	X	X	X
Establishes a Rent Stabilization Board			X		X	X
5. Enhanced Tenant Protections						
Anti-Harassment / Retaliation provisions	X	X	X	X	X (separate ordinance)	X
Includes provisions about the right for tenants to organize	X					
Annual Budget	\$1.21 M	\$1.99 M	\$7.51 M	\$642,000	\$3.00 M	\$615,000
Number of Rental Units Administered¹	5,608	16,579	25,000	11,580	18,000	2,500
Cost Per Rental Unit	\$215	\$120	\$300	\$55	\$167	\$246
<i>Rental Registry/Housing Fee per fully covered unit</i>	<i>\$120 (initial)</i>	<i>\$162</i>	<i>\$290</i>	<i>\$66</i>	<i>\$220</i>	<i>\$234</i>

¹Approximation. See Table 12 for a detailed unit of measurement for rental units by jurisdiction.

A rent stabilization ordinance would not have a direct impact on development impact fees, property tax, sales tax, business license tax, community facilities district fees, and property tax in-lieu of motor vehicle license fees revenues. **The proposed Ordinance includes a Rental Housing Fee on landlords to finance the reasonable and necessary expenses of the Ordinance** (proposed Ordinance Section 8.05.150). The initial fee would be \$120 per controlled rental unit per year (\$10 per month) until the City Council can determine a fee amount. A preliminary estimate of the cost to implement the Ordinance is \$215 per rental unit; however

actual costs would vary based on the number of controlled rental units and other factors such as salary and contract negotiations.

The City has 5,608 rental units based on 2022 U.S. Census data. The actual number of controlled units would be determined after implementing a rental registry. It would also depend on a separate statewide November 2024 ballot measure to repeal the Costa-Hawkins Rental Housing Act of 1995 (“Costa-Hawkins”), which could significantly increase the number of controlled units (see the “How California Tenant Protections Generally Work” section for more details). If a rent stabilization ordinance is enacted, the City may implement a rental registry and conduct a more thorough fee study to determine a Rental Housing Fee and the number of staff required to administer the program. This report assumes all rental units within the City would be fully or partially covered by a rent stabilization ordinance for the purposes of this fiscal analysis.

The Initiative’s proposed Ordinance was silent on whether the Rental Housing Fee could be passed through to tenants and whether the fee could be revised at the City’s discretion. The City would need to clarify this if another initiative is proposed in the future.

Effect on the Internal Consistency of City’s Plans (Elections Code Section 9212(a)(2))

A rent stabilization initiative **is consistent with the City’s Housing Element** by addressing multiple goals and policies to address affordability and housing security, striving for the provision of housing affordable to San Pablo residents, promoting fair housing practices, and informing the community on available programs to address individual housing needs. This is based on an analysis of San Pablo’s demographics and housing characteristics and a review of Housing Element goals.

Effect on the use of Land (Elections Code Section 9212(a)(3))

Rent stabilization would not have a direct impact on the use of land, such as new housing development, and the ability of the City to meet its Regional Housing Needs Allocation (“RHNA”). Rent stabilization does not directly regulate the development of new housing units. RHNA production goals will not be met by a rent stabilization ordinance because it does not construct new deed-restricted affordable rental units. It is notable that the City nearly met or exceeded its very low, low, and moderate income 2015-2023 RHNA production goals.

Under current State law, housing units constructed after 1995 are exempt from rent stabilization statewide. If Costa-Hawkins is repealed, this exemption would be removed, and new development would be subject to rent stabilization. Research on the impact of rent stabilization on new development is mixed. A 1998 analysis conducted by the City of Berkeley found rent stabilization had little to no impact on new development in the City,¹ whereas a 2019 article on the impact of rent control in San Francisco found that it reduced rental housing supply.² If Costa-Hawkins is repealed, new studies will need to be conducted about the impacts of rent stabilization on new development without exemptions for new construction, single-family homes, condominiums, and the ability to reset rents to market rates upon vacancy.

¹ Urban Habitat. (2018). Strengthening Communities Through Rent Control. Retrieved from https://urbanhabitat.org/sites/default/files/UH%202018%20Strengthening%20Communities%20Through%20Rent%20Control_0.pdf.

² Diamond, Rebecca, Tim McQuade, and Franklin Qian. (2019). "The Effects of Rent Control Expansion on Tenants, Landlords, and Inequality: Evidence from San Francisco." *American Economic Review*, 109 (9): 3365–94.

About RSG

RSG has extensive experience advising on and administering rent stabilization programs and policies, including recent engagements with the cities of Carson, Corona, El Monte, Escondido, Oceanside, Palmdale, Pomona, Pico Rivera, Santa Ana, and San Jose. RSG brings a depth of knowledge and expertise to this report with over 40 years of experience in the areas of affordable housing finance and development, housing policy, and community engagement.

HOW CALIFORNIA TENANT PROTECTIONS GENERALLY WORK

Rent stabilization programs and policies have existed in California for decades.³ Many jurisdictions have established rent stabilization ordinances dating back to the 1970's with the intention of keeping current residents housed by limiting rent increases and preventing unwarranted evictions.

Rent increase limits under rent stabilization programs vary by jurisdiction and seek to balance tenant and landlord interests. While these policies provide tenants with increased housing stability and security, landlords may raise their rents above the allowed limit through petitions for fair returns or capital improvements, protecting their right to a fair return on investment.

Rent stabilization programs and policies are often, but not always, governed by a hearing officer/examiner or a board composed of community members acting as a regulatory body that adheres to non-arbitrary decision-making to protect the rights of both tenants and landlords. The proposed Ordinance designates a hearing examiner to conduct hearings on landlord and tenant petitions.

Rent stabilization programs are constrained by limitations in State law, including three key pieces of legislation:

1. Costa-Hawkins Rental Housing Act of 1995 (Civil Code Sections 1954.50-1954.535)
2. Ellis Act (Government Code Sections 7060-7060.7)
3. Tenant Protection Act (California Civil Code Section 1946.2, et seq.)

These three laws are described in more detail below, along with how they would apply with the proposed Ordinance.

Costa-Hawkins and Impact of Potential November 2024 Repeal

Costa-Hawkins limits the types of policies a local jurisdiction can impose when establishing rent restrictions. Generally, Costa-Hawkins limits rental restrictions on:

- units constructed after 1995,
- protects landlords' rights to raise the rent to market rate upon their units' vacancy, and
- exempts most single-family homes and condominiums from local rent restrictions.

The November 2024 ballot will include a statewide measure to repeal Costa-Hawkins called the *California Prohibit State Limitations on Local Rent Control Initiative*. This is separate and unrelated to the local San Pablo Initiative. Specifically, if the Costa-Hawkins repeal is passed by California voters, it would not only strike from the Civil Code the Costa-Hawkins Act as it is today, but also expressly prohibit the state from limiting any city, county, or city and county to maintain, enact, or expand residential rent control.

³ The terms "rent control" and "rent stabilization" are often used interchangeably, despite denoting distinct rental price regulation methods. Rent control involves rigid rent caps, while rent stabilization permits gradual rent increases. The distinction is also sometimes referred to as first and second generation rent control, with the latter referring to "rent stabilization."

Implications of Costa-Hawkins Repeal on the Proposed Ordinance

The Ordinance proposed by the Initiative was not conditioned upon any change to Costa-Hawkins. However, if Costa-Hawkins is repealed, under the proposed Ordinance rental units exempt from Costa-Hawkins would be exempt from its rent stabilization provisions (proposed Ordinance Sections 8.05.060 and 8.05.160) only for the first ten years after the completion of their construction (proposed Ordinance Section 8.05.040). This means units constructed after 1995, single-family homes, and condominiums would be subject to annual rent increase limits starting ten years after they were constructed. Landlords would continue to be permitted to set the initial rent for a new tenancy to the extent permitted by State law (proposed Ordinance Section 8.05.060).

If a similar Ordinance is proposed in the future, the City would need to clarify whether new development constructed after the repeal of Costa-Hawkins would be exempt from rent stabilization for ten years, and whether landlords could increase rent to market rate upon their units' vacancy.

Just Cause Eviction and Ellis Act Protections

Rent stabilization ordinances are often paired with locally enacted just cause eviction provisions, collectively forming rent stabilization programs. Just cause eviction provisions typically define what causes are allowable for a property owner to seek eviction of a tenant and may include relocation assistance requirements to support tenants who are being evicted at no fault of their own in finding new housing. Studies show just cause eviction policies measurably lower eviction rates.⁴ It is important to note just cause eviction protection policies are not bound by legislation such as Costa-Hawkins.

However, the Ellis Act (1985) establishes the right of landlords to withdraw certain existing housing units from the rental market. Specifically, the Ellis Act prohibits a public entity to compel the owner of residential real property to offer or continue to offer accommodations. Further, the Ellis Act allows local jurisdictions to adopt certain regulations controlling the withdrawal process, the return of withdrawn units to the rental market (including penalties for return within two years), and the transfer of these constraints to successors in interest.

Implications of the Ellis Act Under the Proposed Ordinance

If the Ordinance were to pass, before a unit is withdrawn from the rental market, the landlord would be required to provide a minimum 120-day notice of termination of tenancy and relocation payments. Households meeting certain conditions (e.g. senior, disabled, school-age children or educator) would be eligible for extended notice and higher relocation payments.

Tenant Protection Act

Housing costs in the California continue to rise, and many tenants have experienced significant rent increases and/or evictions. Recognizing this issue, the State Legislature enacted the Tenant Protection Act (Civil Code Section 1946.2, et seq.) which will be effective through December 31,

⁴ Julieta Cuellar, "Effect of Just Cause Eviction Ordinances on Eviction in Four California Cities," Princeton University Journal of Public and International Affairs (2019), <https://jpia.princeton.edu/news/effect-just-cause-eviction-ordinances-eviction-four-california-cities>

2029, unless amended. The Tenant Protection Act established a statewide rent cap that limits annual increases to 5% plus any rise in the CPI, not to exceed a total 10% increase. In addition to limiting annual rent increases, the Tenant Protection Act also enacted statewide provisions to prevent tenant evictions without just cause when all tenants have lived in the unit for at least 12 months or at least one tenant has occupied the unit for at least 24 months.

Implications of the Tenant Protection Act Under the Proposed Ordinance

Rental units subject to the Ordinance's annual allowable rent increase would need to comply with the more restrictive limit.

RENT STABILIZATION STUDIES AND MARKET TRENDS

Rent Stabilization Literature Review

There is mixed and somewhat limited research on the impact of rent stabilization. Existing literature tends to examine the effects of rent control policies, which involve rigid rent caps, as opposed to rent stabilization policies, which allow for gradual rent increases. Due to these limitations, a nuanced understanding must be carefully considered to predict the potential impacts of rent stabilization in San Pablo.

Proponents of rent control highlight its positive impacts on tenant displacement and housing stability, while opponents argue that rent control policies can reduce housing supply and lead to deteriorating housing quality. A 2019 study published in *the American Economic Review* that examined the impact of rent control expansion in San Francisco found that rent control policies reduce tenant displacement rates and increase the likelihood that tenants remain in their homes long-term.⁵ Furthermore, a 1998 analysis conducted by the City of Berkeley found that rent control had little to no impact on new development in the City.⁶ Lastly, a 2015 study published in *Cities* expanded existing research on rent control ordinances in New Jersey communities and found that rent control did not have a significant effect on property values when compared to non-rent controlled cities.⁷

Conversely, the 2019 San Francisco study also found that rent control reduced rental housing supply by contributing to condominium conversions and other methods to exempt units from rental regulation. Additionally, a 2007 analysis of the removal of rent control in Massachusetts published in the *Journal of Urban Economics* found that rent-stabilized buildings have greater maintenance and habitability concerns, which may drive down non-controlled rents in surrounding areas.⁸ In a 2016 publication prepared by Beacon Economics for the California Apartment Association, similar outcomes were predicted in regard to property maintenance, which can affect the quality of life for tenants, and affect the surrounding neighborhood by decreasing the value of adjacent properties.⁹

A separate 2014 analysis on the removal of rent control in Massachusetts published in the *Journal of Political Economy* found that rent-controlled properties were valued at a discount of about 45 to 50% relative to never-controlled properties with comparable characteristics in the same

⁵ Diamond, Rebecca, Tim McQuade, and Franklin Qian. (2019). "The Effects of Rent Control Expansion on Tenants, Landlords, and Inequality: Evidence from San Francisco." *American Economic Review*, 109 (9): 3365–94.

⁶ Urban Habitat. (2018). Strengthening Communities Through Rent Control [PDF file]. Retrieved from https://urbanhabitat.org/sites/default/files/UH%202018%20Strengthening%20Communities%20Through%20Rent%20Control_0.pdf.

⁷ Ambrosius, J. D., Gilderbloom, J. I., Steele, W. J., Meares, W. L., & Keating, D. (2015). Forty years of rent control: Reexamining New Jersey's moderate local policies after the Great Recession. *Cities*, 49, 121–133. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.cities.2015.08.001>

⁸ Sims, D. P. (2007). Out of control: What can we learn from the end of Massachusetts rent control? *Journal of Urban Economics*, 61(1), 129–151. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jue.2006.06.004>

⁹ Thornberg, C., Levine, J., & Beacon Economics. (2016). An analysis of rent control ordinances in California (By California Apartment Association). https://caanet.org/u/2016/02/Jan2016_Rent_Control_Study.pdf

neighborhood.¹⁰ The same analysis found that rent-controlled properties' assessed values rose by 18 to 25% relative to never-controlled properties following rent decontrol.

Additionally, a 2003 study published in the *American Economic Review* indicated that rent regulations can lead to reduced tenant mobility and as a result, create a mismatch of housing needs to current housing situations.¹¹ For instance, in order to maintain regulated rent, a couple may continue to occupy a large family-sized apartment instead of occupying a smaller unit when housing needs decrease, which results in a misallocation of housing stock.

If Costa-Hawkins is repealed, new studies will need to be conducted about the impacts of rent stabilization on new development without exemptions for new construction, single-family homes, condominiums, and the ability to reset rents to market rates upon vacancy.

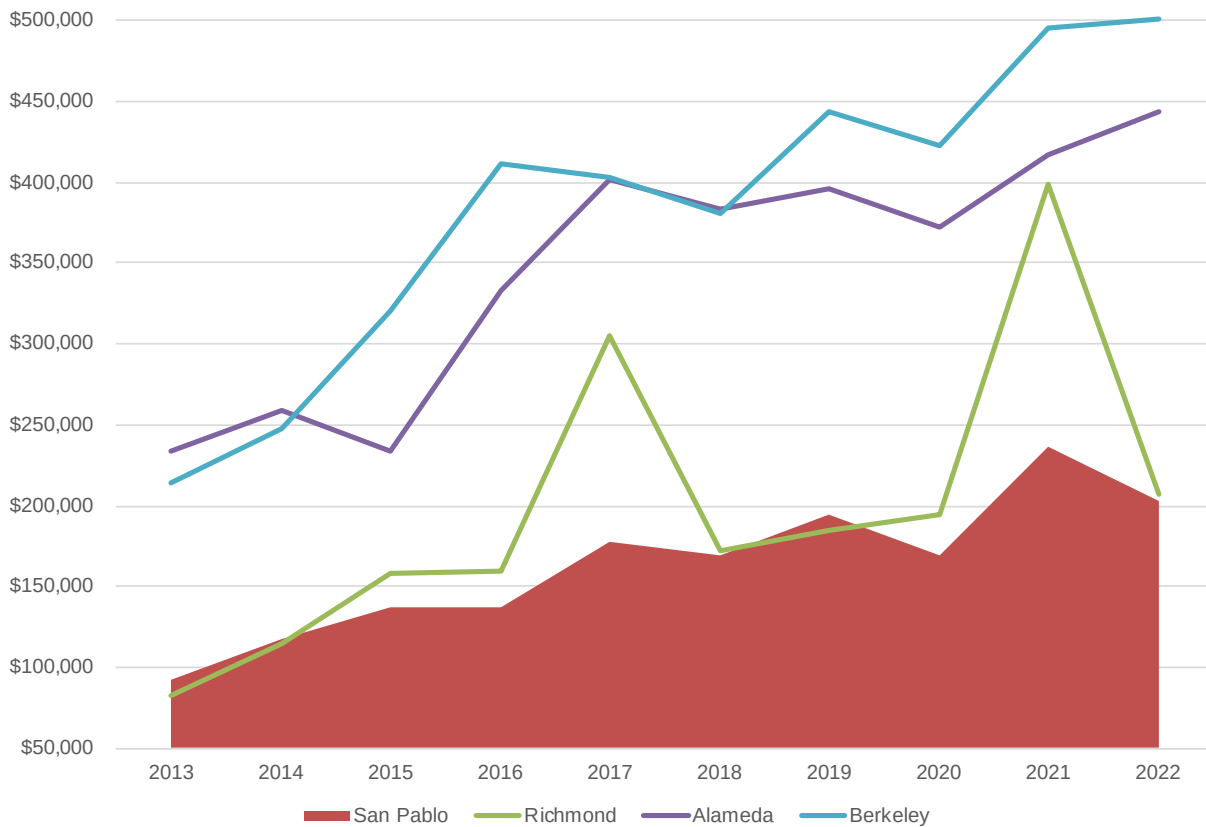
Market Trends

Historical real estate market trends can highlight the potential effects of a rent stabilization ordinance on property values. This may affect property tax revenues, housing quality, and community investment. Figure 1 provides a historical comparison of per-unit average sales prices for multi-family properties across nearby jurisdictions with rent stabilization policies, in addition to San Pablo.

¹⁰ Autor, D. H., Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Palmer, C. J., Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Pathak, P. A., & Massachusetts Institute of Technology. (2014). Housing Market Spillovers: Evidence from the End of Rent Control in Cambridge, Massachusetts. In *Journal of Political Economy* (Vols. 122–122, Issue 3, pp. 661–662). The University of Chicago. <https://economics.mit.edu/sites/default/files/publications/housing%20market%202014.pdf>

¹¹ Glaeser, Edward L., and Erzo F. P. Luttmer. (2003). "The Misallocation of Housing Under Rent Control." *American Economic Review* 93(4):1027–46.

Figure 1: Average Multi-Family Residential Per-Unit Sales Prices by Jurisdiction



Note: The City of Berkeley's RSO was adopted in 1980, while the City of Richmond and Alameda had RSOs adopted in 2016.
Source: ParcelQuest

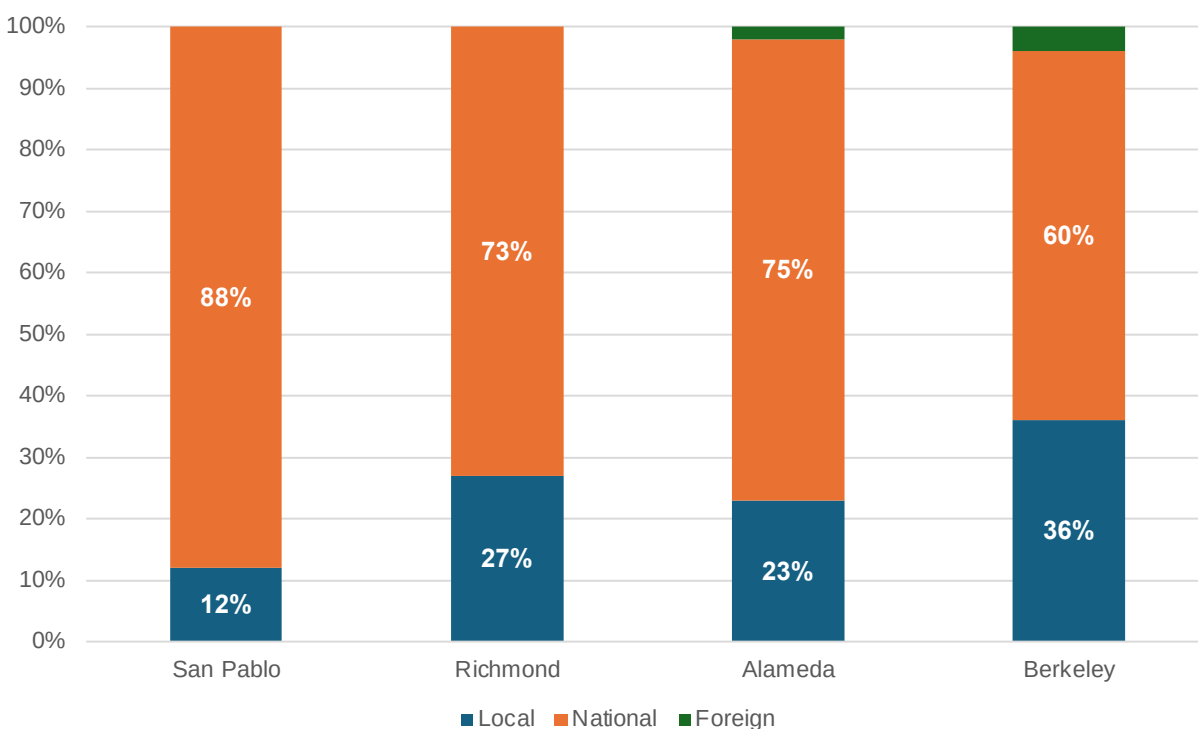
Alameda and Richmond adopted rent stabilization in 2016 and Berkeley has a long-standing ordinance adopted in 1980. Both Richmond and Alameda saw increases in multi-family sales prices from 2013 to 2016, which continued immediately following the adoption of their rent stabilization ordinances. From 2016 to 2022, all jurisdictions experienced increases in multi-family sales prices with San Pablo experiencing the highest growth (48%), followed by Alameda (33%), Richmond (30%), and Berkeley (22%). This suggests that rent stabilization policies may not hinder property values in the short-term. However, the long-term effects of recently adopted policies in Alameda and Richmond could be evaluated as more time passes. Additionally, factors such as interest rates, regional housing supply, income growth, population growth, and other local policies impact real estate market fluctuations.

RSG conducted interviews with three brokers with extensive experience in the multi-family residential market in both Contra Costa and Alameda Counties. Most brokers stated that statewide tenant protections, such as the Tenant Protection Act, are beneficial in protecting tenants against excessive rent increases. However, the benefit of local rent stabilization policies was debated as some brokers found that local policies lead to a greater prevalence of landlord-tenant issues. Additionally, nearly all brokers interviewed stated that rising costs have presented a challenge for landlords. Limited rent increases make it difficult keep up with operating and

maintenance costs and can lead to deteriorating housing quality. As a result, most brokers interviewed opined that rent stabilization policies have negative impacts on property values. Additionally, one broker spoke about a colleague's experience in the City of Concord in which several properties fell out of escrow following the adoption of a rent stabilization ordinance in April 2024. This was corroborated by other brokers who stated that rent control policies may deter buyers from purchasing rental properties in jurisdictions with these policies. Most brokers interviewed stated that if Costa-Hawkins is repealed, it may lead to buyers purchasing multi-family residential properties in other states.

There is general concern that rent stabilization ordinances may harm small “mom-and-pop” property owners by reducing potential returns on multi-family residential properties. As a result, it is important to understand the types of property owners in San Pablo and nearby jurisdictions with rent stabilization policies. Figure 2 provides a comparison of multi-family residential asset value by owner origin across nearby jurisdictions with rent stabilization policies, in addition to San Pablo.

Figure 2: Multi-Family Asset Value by Owner Origin by Jurisdiction



Source: CoStar

San Pablo's multi-family real estate ownership landscape is significantly influenced by national owners, with 88% of real estate asset value owned by entities headquartered outside the metropolitan area. In contrast, only 12% are local owners, the lowest among the jurisdictions researched. By contrast, the City of Richmond's real estate market consists of 27% local owners and 73% national owners. This suggests that San Pablo's housing market is unique from other jurisdictions who have implemented rent stabilization ordinances, where local owners constitute a greater portion of the real estate market. National owners may have a greater ability to absorb

rising operating costs with a larger real estate portfolio. Furthermore, national owners may also have a greater ability to navigate and afford fair return rent increase petitions on a regular basis compared to a local owner with a smaller portfolio.

ANALYSIS OF COMMUNITY HOUSING CHARACTERISTICS AND GOALS

Housing Characteristics

Located in western Contra Costa County, San Pablo encompasses 2.6 square miles and has a total population of approximately 31,100 residents.¹² San Pablo is accessible through Interstate 80, which connects the City to nearby metropolitan areas such as San Francisco, Berkeley, and Oakland.

Table 2 provides a demographic overview of the City of San Pablo and Contra Costa County.

Table 2: Demographic Overview of San Pablo and County

	2024 Population	Total Number of Housing Units	Average Household Size	Percentage of Renter- Occupied Households	Percentage of Rent- Burdened Households	Poverty Rate
City of San Pablo	31,088	10,161	3.33	57.6%	55.9%	11.8%
Contra Costa County	1,146,626	430,051	2.84	31.2%	53.7%	8.7%
Percentage Difference	189.4%	190.9%	15.9%	59.5%	4.0%	30.2%

Source: California Department of Finance ("DOF") (2024), U.S. Census Bureau 5-Year Estimates (2022), ESRI (2023)

Renter-occupied households make up approximately 58% of housing units in San Pablo, which is nearly double the rate of renter-occupied housing units in Contra Costa County (31%). In addition to lower rates of home ownership when compared to the County, approximately 56% of renter households are rent-burdened, which means that gross rent exceeds 30% of household income.

The City's housing supply includes approximately 10,100 housing units with a mix of housing types. Costa-Hawkins exempts most single-family residences from local rent restrictions. To accurately evaluate the scale and associated cost of rent stabilization programs, housing types must be examined to gain a high-level understanding of the number of potentially covered and exempt units.

Table 3 provides a breakdown of housing types in San Pablo.

¹² As of January 1, 2024 (Source: California Department of Finance)

Table 3: Housing Types (City of San Pablo)

	Number of Housing Units	Percentage of Total
Single-Family Dwelling Units	5,650	55.6%
Multi-Family Dwelling Units ¹	4,055	39.9%
Mobile Homes	405	4.0%
Boat, RV, Van, etc.	51	0.5%
Total	10,161	

¹Multi-family dwelling units refer to residential buildings with more than one dwelling unit.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau 5-Year Estimates (2022)

The majority of housing units in San Pablo are single-family residences, which make up over 55% of housing units, while multi-family housing makes up approximately 40% of housing units. A small proportion, or 4%, of housing units are mobile home spaces in San Pablo.

Year-built dates also affect the number of rental units subject to rent stabilization. Mentioned previously, Costa-Hawkins limits rental regulations on units constructed after 1995; however, the proposed Ordinance states that if Costa-Hawkins is repealed or amended, by operation of law, new Rental Units would be exempt only for the first 10 years after the completion of their construction (proposed Ordinance Section 8.05.040(A)).

Table 4 provides an overview of housing units in the City by year-built date.

Table 4: Housing Units by Year-Built Date (City of San Pablo)

	Number of Housing Units	Percentage of Total ¹
Built 2000 or later	1,004	13.2%
Built 1990 to 1999	836	8.2%
Built 1990 or before	7,985	78.7%
Total	10,161	

¹Total may not add due to rounding.

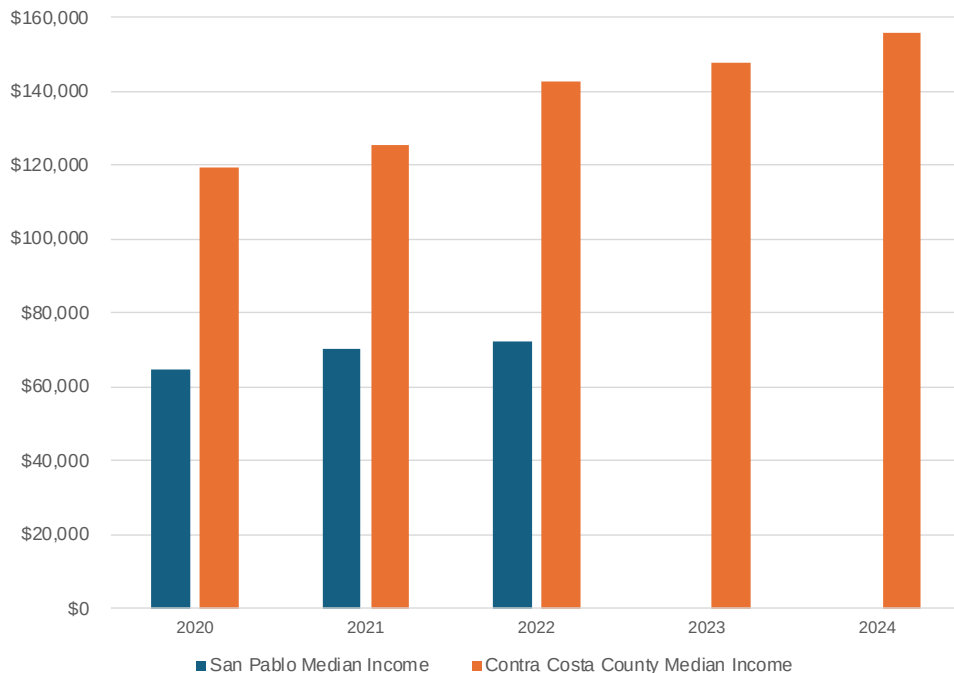
Source: U.S. Census Bureau 5-Year Estimates (2022)

The vast majority, approximately 79%, of housing units in San Pablo were built prior to the year 1990. Approximately 8% of housing units were built between 1990 and 2000, while the remaining housing units, around 13%, were built in 2000 or later. The U.S. Census Bureau does not provide the number of housing units constructed between 1995 and 2000. In order to determine the number of rental units exempt from the proposed Ordinance under Costa-Hawkins, the City will need to identify units constructed after 1995 using building permit or assessment roll data in conjunction with a rental registry.

Income Levels and Affordability

Figure 3 provides median incomes in the City and County from 2020-2024.

Figure 3: Median Income in the City and County (2020-2024)



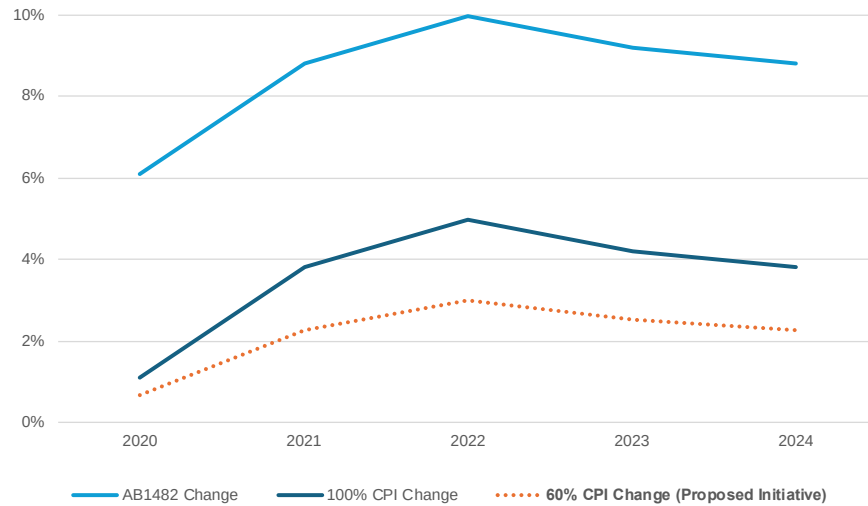
Note: Median income data for the City of San Pablo in 2022 and 2023 was unavailable at the time of this report.
Source: U.S. Census Bureau 5-Year Estimates (2022), California Department of Housing and Community Development

As noted in the City's 2023-31 Housing Element, nearly 21% of households in the City make less than 50% of the Area Median Income ("AMI") (or very low income) and 29% of households in the City make less than 30% of AMI (extremely low income). In 2022, the median income in the City of San Pablo was \$72,552, which is approximately 65% lower than the County's median income in the same year.

Two-bedroom market rents in the City have increased by almost 13% from 2020 to 2024, while the CPI increased by approximately 18% in the same period. This means that the change in market rents was approximately 72% of the change in the CPI.

Figure 4 shows a comparison of the proposed rent increase limit against other prevalent rent increase limits implemented throughout the state.

Figure 4: Comparison of Allowable Rent Increase Limits (2020-2024)

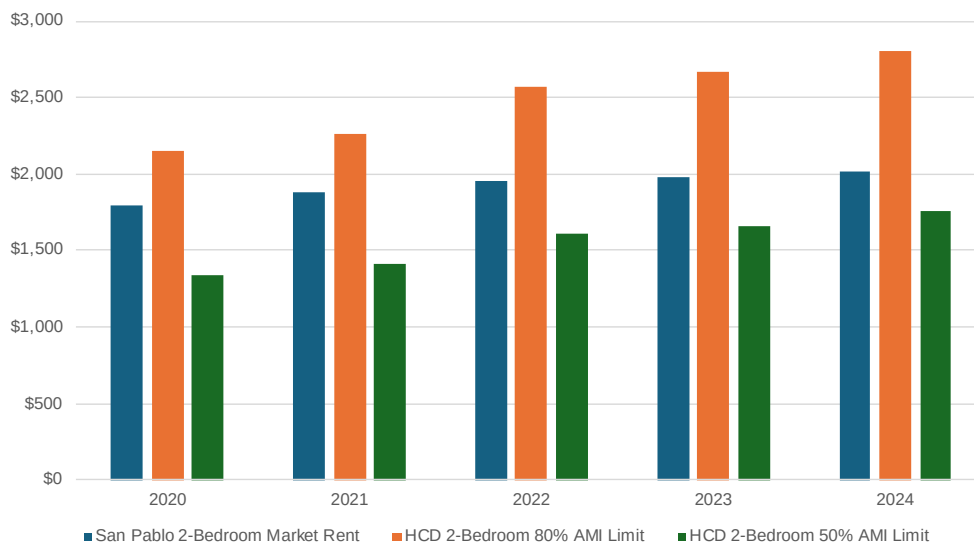


Source: US Bureau of Labor Statistics

Additionally, aside from a spike in HCD rent limits in 2022, allowable rent increases under AB1482 have consistently been the highest allowable rent increase limits. Some jurisdictions with rent stabilization ordinances apply a 100% change in the CPI rent increase limit, which are 5% lower than what is permitted under AB1482. Lastly, a 60% change in the CPI rent increase limit, which is provided in the proposed Ordinance, has resulted in the lowest rent increase limits.

Figure 5 illustrates how HCD rent limits compare to market rents in the City of San Pablo.

Figure 5: Market Rents vs. HCD Rent Limits (2020-2024)



Source: HCD Income Limits, CoStar

HCD rent limits for households that fall under the 80% AMI limit (low income) have exceeded market rents in the City in recent years while 50% AMI rent limits have consistently been under market rents. It is worth noting that HCD income limits are based on median income for the County as a whole, which are significantly higher than the median income in the City of San Pablo. Nearly half of households in the City may qualify under very low income limits based on the high proportion of extremely low and very low Income households in the City.

Regional Housing Needs Allocation and Housing Element Goals

San Pablo has a total of 10,161 housing units based on U.S. Census Bureau 5-Year Estimates for 2022. According to the 2023-2031 San Pablo Housing Element, there are currently a total of 568 deed-restricted affordable housing units in the City of San Pablo. These figures will increase in the future with new development.

Every eight years, each California jurisdiction is allocated a specific number of housing units through the Regional Housing Needs Allocation (“RHNA”), a metric the State’s Housing and Community Development Department (“HCD”) uses to identify each jurisdiction’s housing production goals to meet demand from population growth. According to the 2021-2029 6th Cycle RHNA, San Pablo’s share of necessary new housing is 746 units, including 173 units affordable to very low income households, 100 units affordable to low income, 132 units affordable to moderate income, and 341 units affordable to above-moderate (“market-rate”) income households.

The implementation of a rent stabilization program would not contribute towards the City’s RHNA allocation since it does not result in the development of new deed-restricted affordable housing units. However, rent stabilization could support other goals in the City’s 2023-2031 Housing Element such as:

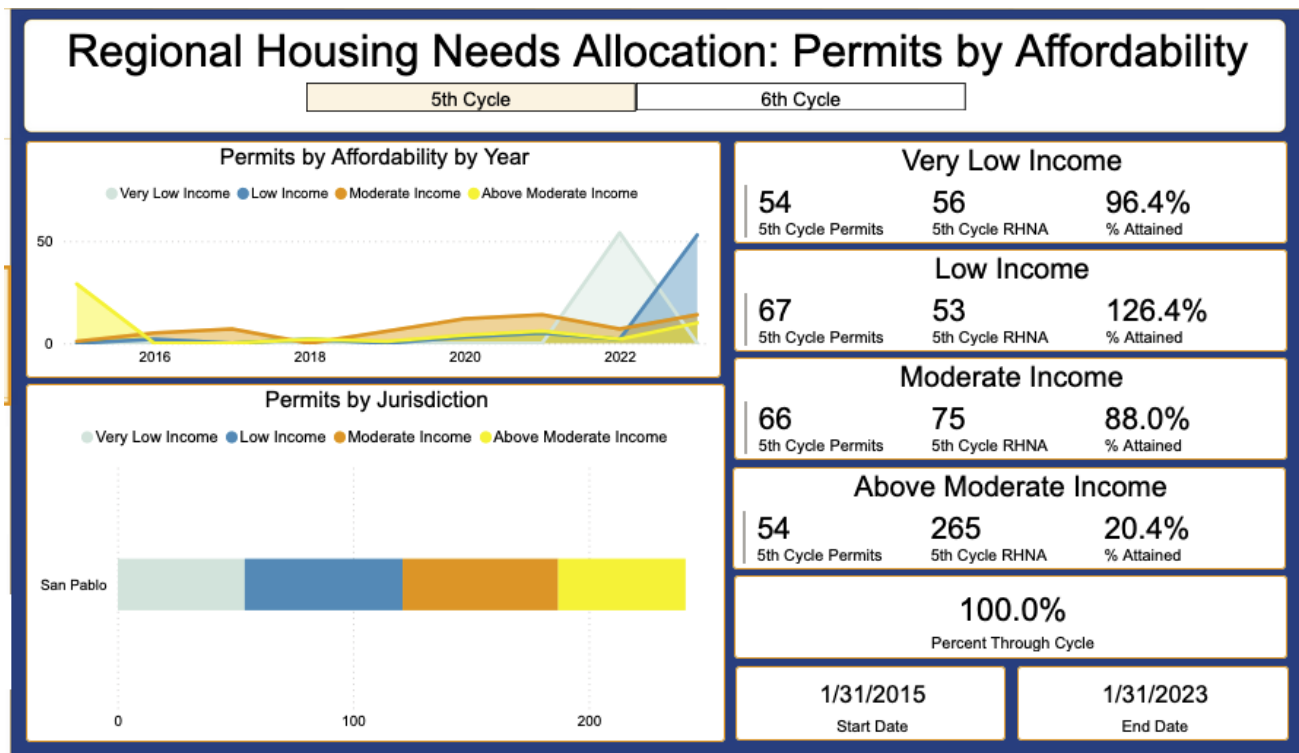
- Housing Goal #2. Take action to address affordability and housing security for all income groups and family types in San Pablo.
 - Policy 2-1: Continue to promote and support the development of affordable housing units for lower income households and strive for the provision of housing that is affordable to, and meets the needs of, current and future residents of San Pablo.
- Housing Goal #3. Equal housing opportunity for all residents of San Pablo, regardless of race, religion, sex, marital status, ancestry, national origin, color, or ability.
 - Policy 3-2: Collaborative Fair Housing Efforts. Work collaboratively with local non-profit, public and private sector partners to raise awareness and achieve implementation of fair housing practices.
- Housing Goal #6: Strengthen local government institutional capacity, provide information to the community and monitor accomplishments to respond effectively to housing needs.
 - Policy 6-1: The City recognizes that housing that is safe, healthy, and affordable is an important City priority, and the City will take a proactive leadership role in

following through on identified Housing Element implementation actions in a timely manner.

- Policy 6-3: The City will provide outreach and information to the community on the availability of programs to address individual housing needs, and will actively involve the community through information, outreach, and review.

Figure 6 displays the City's progress in the 5th Cycle RHNA, which concluded on January 31, 2023.

Figure 6: 5th Cycle RHNA Progress (City of San Pablo)

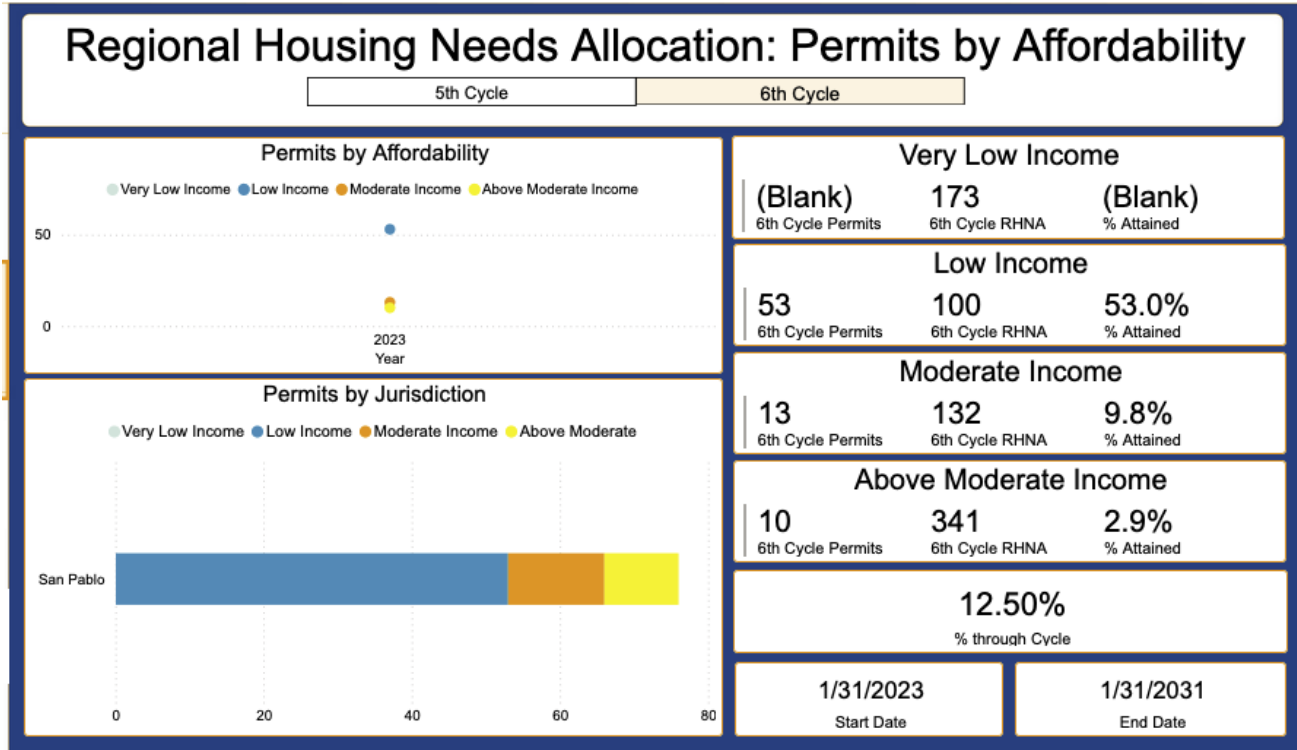


Source: HCD

The City of San Pablo's progress in the 5th Cycle RHNA demonstrates that the City achieved, or was close to achieving, its housing unit allocation for three of four income levels. The City had the lowest attainment rate for the above moderate income category, in which the City attained approximately 20% of its 5th Cycle RHNA allocation.

Figure 7 displays the City's progress in the 6th Cycle RHNA, which began on January 31, 2023.

Figure 7: 6th Cycle RHNA Progress (City of San Pablo)



Source: HCD

The City of San Pablo's 6th Cycle RHNA concludes on January 31st, 2031. At the time of this report, the City has achieved over 50% of its low income RHNA allocation. However, the City has attained less than 10% for each of the remaining three income levels.

Costa-Hawkins prohibits rental regulations on units constructed after 1995. This exempts new developments from local rent restrictions and allows housing developers to set rental prices based on current market conditions. As a result, the Ordinance would not affect the development of new housing units in the City if Costa-Hawkins remains in place. If Costa-Hawkins is repealed, new studies will need to be conducted about impacts of rent stabilization on new development without exemptions for new construction, single-family homes, condominiums, and the ability to reset rents to market rates upon vacancy.

COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF PEER JURISDICTIONS

In California, over 25 jurisdictions have enacted citywide rent stabilization or just cause eviction policies. In May 2024, RSG researched and interviewed representatives from two California jurisdictions (Concord and East Palo Alto) that have rent stabilization and just cause eviction programs. The goal was to understand their program components, administrative structure and resources, program budgeting factors, and best practices, which will help the City estimate the fiscal impact of the proposed Ordinance. RSG also leveraged our database and prior interviews with representatives from four additional local jurisdictions (Alameda, Berkeley, Hayward, and Richmond). We selected these jurisdictions because they represent a mix of new and long-standing programs, are primarily voter-approved initiatives, are located in the Bay Area, and have well-established programs with readily accessible information. For this report, we reference Alameda, Berkeley, Hayward, Richmond, and East Palo Alto as the sample jurisdictions. We also include information from an interview with Concord, who adopted a rent stabilization ordinance in April 2024 and is in the implementation process. Table 5 provides an overview of the sample jurisdictions.

Table 5: Overview of Sample Jurisdictions

Jurisdiction	Approved By	Year Adopted	Population	Rental Units	% Rent Burdened	Poverty Rate
San Pablo	Voter Proposed	N/A	31,088	~5,608	56%	11.8%
Alameda	Voter	2016	34,391	16,579	42%	7.1%
Berkeley	Voter	1980	54,438	25,000	52%	17.7%
Hayward	City Council	2019	53,997	11,580	51%	9.6%
Richmond	Voter	2016	40,950	18,000	56%	14.3%
East Palo Alto	Voter	2010	8,270	2,500	56%	12.2%

Source: City Ordinances and US Bureau of Labor Statistics (2022)

The rent stabilization programs in these sample jurisdictions are unique and contain differing provisions and complexities. These variations reflect the diverse needs and priorities of each community. For instance, some jurisdictions have implemented more intricate systems with multiple layers of regulation and oversight, while others have adopted simpler, more streamlined approaches. This diversity in program design allows us to compare a wide range of administrative practices with the proposed Ordinance in San Pablo. Table 6 provides an overview of the general provisions contained in each sample jurisdiction ordinance.

Table 6: Comparison of Ordinance Provisions

	San Pablo	Alameda	Berkeley	Hayward	Richmond	East Palo Alto
1. Rent Stabilization Provisions						
Limits allowable rent increase	X	X	X	X	X	X
Includes Rent Banking provisions		X	X	X		
2. Eviction Protection Provisions						
Defines just cause reasons for eviction	X	X	X	X	X	X
Implements enhanced noticing requirements	X	X	X	X	X	X
Permanent relocation assistance provisions for no-fault evictions	X	X	X	X	X (separate ordinance)	X (separate ordinance)
Requires short-term relocation to tenants temporarily displaced	X	X	X	X	X (separate ordinance)	X (separate ordinance)
Implements Ellis Act regulations for withdrawal from rental market	X	X (separate resolution)	X (separate ordinance)		X	
Regulates buyout agreements	X	X	X (separate ordinance)			
Additional requirements when completing substantial rehabilitation	X	X				
3. Registration and Compliance						
Annual Program Fee required	X	X	X	X	X	X
Implements Rental Registry / Annual reporting is required	X	X	X		X	X
Imposes Administrative Penalties	X	X	X	X	X	
4. Petitions and Petition Process						
Landlord and Tenant Petition and hearing process	X	X	X	X	X	X
Establishes a Rent Stabilization Board			X		X	X
5. Enhanced Tenant Protections						
Anti-Harassment / Retaliation provisions	X	X	X	X	X (separate ordinance)	X
Includes provisions about the right for tenants to organize	X					

RSG has analyzed the administrative components of these rent stabilization programs to inform the potential impacts of establishing and maintaining such a program in San Pablo. Our analysis includes an in-depth look at the structures and resources necessary for effective program administration as it relates to the following categories:

1. Rent Stabilization Provisions
2. Eviction Protection Provisions
3. Registration and Compliance
4. Petitions and Petition Process
5. Enhanced Tenant Protections

By leveraging the experiences of sample jurisdictions, we can anticipate the administrative demands and financial considerations to better understand the impacts of the proposed

Ordinance in San Pablo. Notably, the Ordinance proposed by the Initiative may require a higher level of oversight and regulation compared to the sample jurisdictions that we researched. As shown in Table 6, it has more comprehensive measures designed to regulate landlord-tenant relationships, resulting in more provisions requiring administration. Consequently, San Pablo's higher level of oversight could require added staff to handle specific administrative procedures compared to jurisdictions with less provisions. From a fiscal impact perspective, implementing and managing the increased regulatory framework will likely necessitate substantial resources, as further detailed in later sections.

Rent Stabilization Provisions

Rent stabilization provisions form the foundation of local rent stabilization programs. Typically, a jurisdiction implements a “rent limit” or maximum percentage by which landlords are allowed to increase tenants' rents, usually within a 12-month period. Some jurisdictions explicitly cap and floor their rent increase limits, ensuring that the rent increase limit does not exceed or fall below a specified percentage. Additionally, some jurisdictions include rent banking provisions that allow landlords to defer rent increases and apply them in the future. Table 7 summarizes the rent limit provisions in the proposed Ordinance compared to each of the sample jurisdictions.

Table 7: Comparison of Rent Stabilization Provisions

Jurisdiction	Rent Increase Limit	Minimum Rent Increase	Maximum Rent Increase	Banking Limits
San Pablo (Proposed)	60% of change in CPI	0%	3%	None stated
Alameda	70% of change in CPI	1%	5%	Regardless of how much they have banked, a landlord can never impose a rent increase of more than the allowable rent increase percentage for that year plus 3.0% (not to exceed a total of 8%) Can only impose banked increases up to 3 times during any tenancy and not more than once in a 24-month period Banked increases are not transferrable to a successor landlord
Berkeley	65% of change in CPI	0%	7%	Banked increases are permitted without limitations until the amount charged for rent reaches the rent ceiling
Hayward	5%	N/A	N/A	Banked rent increase + current year's allowable increase cannot exceed 10% Unused banked amounts expire after 10 years Banked increases are transferrable to a successor landlord
Richmond	60% of change in CPI	0%	3%	Landlords may bank no more than 5% plus the current year's allowable increase (3% or less) - not to exceed 8% Banked increases are transferrable to a successor landlord
East Palo Alto	80% of change in CPI	0%	10%	None Stated

Rent Increase Limits

Rent increase limits—sometimes referred to as “annual general adjustments”—vary by jurisdiction but are typically tied to a certain percentage of the change in the CPI for the jurisdiction's region or are established as a flat rate. The Ordinance proposes a rent increase limit of 60% of change in CPI, not to exceed 3%. The proposed rent increase limit aligns with Richmond, representing the most restrictive of the sample jurisdictions surveyed.

All but one of the sample jurisdictions (Hayward) tie their rent increase limit or annual general adjustment to a percentage of the change in CPI for the preceding twelve-month period. All five jurisdictions have maximum amounts for their rent increase limits, which range from 3 to 10%. Four of the five jurisdictions have minimum amounts for their rent increase limits which range from 0 to 1%. This “floor” acts as a safeguard to prevent rents from falling below a certain level.

Rent Banking

Some jurisdictions allow rent banking, which allow landlords to accrue rent increases they chose not to implement in prior years to the future. When rent banking is allowed, landlords can add a portion of what they "banked" to a subsequent year's rent increase. Some jurisdictions include noticing requirements when applying banked amounts. Others do not allow banking at all. When rent banking is allowed, ordinance may establish certain limits to prevent large and sudden rent increases for tenants. A majority (four) of the sample jurisdictions allow for rent banking and contain regulations on banking rents. The proposed Ordinance in San Pablo is silent on rent banking.

Administrative Considerations

Implementing rent increase limits involves a comprehensive set of administrative tasks. Initially, staff will need to educate landlords and tenants about the new regulations, provide guidance on allowable rent increases, and monitor compliance. This educational phase is crucial for ensuring that all parties understand their rights and responsibilities pursuant to the rent limit policies, which may involve conducting workshops, distributing informational materials, and offering one-on-one assistance.

Ongoing tasks include calculating annual allowable rent limits by reviewing market trends, assessing inflation rates or economic indicators, and applying the designated formula or percentage. Staff must communicate these limits clearly to landlords and tenants for accurate and fair implementation across all rental units.

Additionally, staff will collect and analyze data on rent levels using tools like surveys, rental market reports, and database analysis. This data collection effort is essential for evaluating the effectiveness of rent limits, monitoring changes in rental prices, and identifying any areas of concern or potential non-compliance.

Eviction Protection Provisions

Rent stabilization ordinances are often supplemented by eviction protection provisions designed to enhance tenant safeguards and prevent arbitrary evictions. These provisions specify the allowable grounds for a property owner to evict a tenant, categorizing them into at-fault and no-fault reasons. Additionally, these ordinances frequently mandate relocation assistance to help tenants displaced through no fault of their own in securing new housing. Enhanced eviction protections may also include stricter notice requirements, regulation of evictions under the Ellis Act, and oversight of tenant buyout agreements to ensure fair treatment and transparency. These measures collectively aim to provide a more secure and stable housing environment for tenants.

Just Cause Reasons for Eviction

Just cause reasons for eviction are specific grounds that a landlord must cite to legally evict a tenant. The Tenant Protection Act of 2019, also known as AB 1482, outlines these just cause reasons, separating them into two main categories: at-fault and no-fault evictions. At-fault evictions occur due to the tenant's actions or behaviors that violate the terms of the lease or rental agreement. Common at-fault reasons include failure to pay rent or breaching significant lease terms. No-fault evictions occur for reasons unrelated to the tenant's behavior. Examples of a no-fault eviction are situations where the property owner, or their immediate family member, intends to move into the rental unit as their primary residence or if significant repairs or renovations are necessary and cannot be completed while the tenant remains in the unit.

All five of the sample jurisdictions—Alameda, Berkeley, Hayward, Richmond, and East Palo Alto—include provisions in their ordinances that define just cause reasons for eviction at varying levels of specificity. These jurisdictions tailor their just cause eviction rules to reflect local housing needs and policy goals. The proposed Ordinance in San Pablo defines at-fault and no-fault reasons for eviction and introduces additional protections, including requirements for landlords to provide tenants with an opportunity to rectify any lease violations before proceeding with an eviction. Additionally, specific safeguards are proposed for elderly, disabled, and terminally ill tenants to prevent their displacement. The Ordinance also includes protections for educators and students to avoid evictions during the academic year, as well as protections for families when additional household members are added.

Noticing Requirements

All five of the sample jurisdictions incorporate additional noticing requirements at varying levels to enhance tenant protections when serving an eviction notice. These requirements may mandate that eviction notices include specific language outlining the reasons for eviction in clear and understandable terms, and that notices inform tenants of their rights under the local rent stabilization ordinance, such as the right to dispute the eviction or seek legal assistance. Furthermore, landlords may be required to provide a copy of the eviction notice to the City or relevant housing authority after service to a tenant. This allows for program oversight into the eviction process and can help to monitor eviction activities, verify compliance with rent stabilization regulations, and offer support to affected tenants.

The Ordinance proposed by the Initiative requires landlords to state the cause for termination and ensure that any notice of eviction includes specific language regarding the status of the rental unit and the local laws governing the unit. Furthermore, the Ordinance requires that any notice of termination of tenancy be provided to the City within three days of service to the tenant. Under the proposed Initiative, failure to comply with any part of the Ordinance can be used by the tenant as an affirmative defense in an eviction action brought by the landlord to recover possession of the rental unit.

Additionally, a unique aspect of San Pablo's proposed Ordinance is the requirement for landlords to obtain approval of a Tenant Safety Plan before undertaking repairs, construction, or substantial renovation of occupied rental properties. This measure aims to mitigate temporary untenable

conditions. The Tenant Safety Plan must include details such as the identities of the landlord, tenants, and contractors involved, point of contact information, a description of the scope of the work, the impact of the renovation on the habitability and personal property of the affected tenants, and appropriate mitigation measures. Program staff must review the Tenant Safety Plan within five working days of its submission, and after approval, a copy must be provided to the affected tenants along with a Notice of Substantial Renovation.

Relocation Assistance

Relocation assistance refers to guidelines and provisions established by a local jurisdiction requiring landlords to pay a defined amount to support tenants who are being evicted at no fault of their own. Relocation assistance payment amounts vary widely by jurisdiction and tenant qualifications, such as age or disability, and are intended to support tenants in finding new housing accommodations. Table 8 provides a summary of relocation assistance in each of the jurisdictions that were interviewed.

Table 8: Comparison of Relocation Assistance

Jurisdiction	Permanent Relocation	Temporary Relocation
San Pablo (Proposed)	Amount would be equal to four times the monthly Fair Market Rent for the rental unit being vacated, per tenant household, or \$8,000, whichever is more. Additional \$4,000 if any tenant is 62+, disabled, or terminally ill	Amounts would be \$150 per household for hotel expenses, \$30 per day per person for meal expenses
Alameda	Amount ranges from \$6,004 for studio apartments to \$15,900 for qualified tenants living in 4+ bedroom units	Amounts are \$228 per household for hotel expenses, \$66 per day per person for meal expenses, \$1 per day per household for laundry expenses, \$36 per day per cat and \$67 per day per dog
Berkeley	Amount ranges from \$18,011 for eligible households and an additional \$6,003 for qualifying households Amounts increase annually in accordance with the CPI adjustment	Amounts are \$120 to \$166 per day up to three people, and \$15 for each additional person per day. Per diem rates for cats and dogs are \$20 and \$50, respectively, per day per pet
Hayward	One month of rent, or waiver of the final month of rent	Amounts are \$161 per day per household for hotel/motel, \$32 per day per person for meal expenses, \$1 per day per household for laundry, \$31 per day per cat and \$56 per day per dog
Richmond	Amount ranges from \$4,177.01 to \$20,147.05 depending on bedroom count, qualified status, and reason for termination of tenancy	Amounts are \$178.24 per day per household for hotel/motel, \$35.88 per day per person for meal expenses, \$1.19 per day per household for laundry, \$34.69 per day per cat and \$62.21 per day per dog
East Palo Alto	Relocation assistance is not established specifically in the RSO. However, other Housing policies require landlords to pay to tenants residing on property for less than two years an amount of \$7,500 OR residing on property for two years or longer an amount of \$10,000 Additional qualified tenants are entitled to an additional \$2,500	Relocation assistance is not established specifically in the RSO. However, other Housing policies require landlords to waive or pay Tenant's rent during the period of temporary relocation, pay actual costs of moving and storage, and pay the actual costs for daily boarding of all pets lawfully occupying the unit.

All five jurisdictions interviewed require landlords to provide permanent relocation assistance in the event of no-fault terminations such as owner move-in or withdrawal from the rental market. The range of relocation assistance across these jurisdictions spans from one month's rent in Hayward to over \$20,000 in Richmond, contingent upon factors such as bedroom size and special circumstances.

All five jurisdictions also require that landlords provide temporary relocation assistance to tenants when they are required to temporarily leave their residences for reasons such as temporary displacement due to code compliance or government order. Temporary relocation assistance amounts vary and are often based on actual and reasonable temporary housing expenses. Provisions are often included that require landlords to allow tenants to move back in once repairs are complete.

It is important to note that in some jurisdictions, relocation assistance requirements are established through separate ordinances, distinct from the rent stabilization ordinance, and may be administered by different housing staff. This is the case in two of the five jurisdictions studied (Richmond and East Palo Alto).

Withdrawal from Rental Market

The Ellis Act (1985) allows landlords to exit the rental housing market and withdraw their units from rental use, permitting eviction of all tenants for purposes like converting units into condominiums or other ownership forms. Under the Ellis Act, local entities may impose various restrictions on landlords going out of business, such as requiring a notice of intent to withdraw, providing information about tenancies, offering relocation assistance, and imposing limits on future rental use of the property, including offering units to displaced tenants at former rental rates within specific timeframes. Three of the five sample jurisdictions include provisions in their ordinance or have a separate ordinance that regulates the withdrawal of rental units from the housing market.

The proposed Ordinance in San Pablo would implement regulations for landlords who wish to exit the rental business or demolish rental units. Landlords would be required to notify the City of their intent to withdraw or demolish and record a memorandum summarizing these provisions with the County Recorder. Landlords must provide tenants with a minimum 120-day notice of termination, or a one-year notice if the tenant is 62 or older, or disabled, along with other noticing requirements. If landlords re-rent the units after withdrawal, they would be liable to any displaced tenants and must offer the unit back to the tenant who was displaced. The rent that can be charged if the unit is re-rented to the displaced tenant would also be regulated. Additionally, the City would be responsible for maintaining a register of all units withdrawn from rent or lease and recording the applicable rent at the time of withdrawal.

Buyout Agreements

Some cities with rent stabilization ordinances include guidelines or provisions for tenant buyout agreements, where a landlord offers a financial incentive for a tenant to voluntarily vacate a rental unit. Among the sample jurisdictions surveyed, two of the five include provisions in their ordinance

or have a separate ordinance that regulates buyout agreements to ensure that tenants are well-informed about their rights in these situations. These provisions often require landlords to provide a written disclosure document outlining tenants' rights before making an offer and may specify the timeframe within which the tenant can rescind the agreement, typically ranging from 25 to 45 days.

The proposed Ordinance in San Pablo would require landlords to use a City-authorized form for written disclosures related to buyout agreements, informing tenants of their rights and their opportunity to rescind the agreement within 30 days after signing. Additionally, the City would be responsible for maintaining confidential records of buyout agreements and collecting and publishing data on all filed buyout agreements.

Administrative Considerations

Implementing robust eviction protection provisions such as those included in the proposed Ordinance may require a high level of staff oversight. Staff will collect and review eviction notices submitted by landlords to ensure they comply with the ordinance, verifying that all required documentation is included and that the reasons for eviction meet the criteria set forth in the Ordinance. Additionally, staff will review and approve Tenant Safety Plans within five working days, requiring a thorough understanding of the requirements and the ability to assess the adequacy of submitted plans. Maintaining and analyzing records for withdrawals from the rental market and tenant buyout agreements will also be a key responsibility, involving data entry into a secure database, monitoring trends, and generating reports to identify potential issues or patterns of non-compliance.

These tasks involve extensive education and outreach efforts. Staff will develop and distribute informational materials to landlords and tenants, conduct workshops and training sessions, and provide ongoing support to ensure all parties understand their rights and responsibilities under the new regulations. Tracking and documentation will be critical, necessitating the establishment and maintenance of comprehensive records of all eviction notices, Tenant Safety Plans, market withdrawals, and buyout agreements. Tenant support services will also be significant, with staff assisting tenants facing eviction in understanding their rights, navigating the process, and accessing available resources. Finally, compliance and enforcement efforts will involve regular audits of landlord submissions, investigating complaints, and taking necessary enforcement actions to address non-compliance, potentially including issuing warnings, fines, or other penalties, and coordinating with the City Attorney's Office for legal action if necessary.

Registration and Compliance

To achieve the intended goals of a rent stabilization policy, it is essential to establish clear procedures to monitor and enforce compliance. Effective compliance tools are crucial for ensuring that landlords and tenants adhere to a policy's provisions. Compliance tools may include the implementation of a rental registry and a rental registry fee and imposing administrative penalties and fines.

Annual Registration and Fee

A rental registry is a centralized database that contains information about rental properties within a particular jurisdiction. The registry typically includes details about the properties, landlords, and current tenancies. The primary purpose of a rental registry is to provide transparency, facilitate effective regulation, and ensure compliance with local housing laws. Typically, landlords incur a fee when enrolling their unit(s) in a rental registry software system. The rental registry fee is collected to cover costs associated with administering the program, including maintaining the registry, administering the program, responding to inquiries, processing petitions, coordinating public awareness efforts, and conducting compliance and enforcement activities. Table 9 provides a summary of rental registries and fees in each of the jurisdictions that were interviewed.

Table 9: Comparison of Rental Registry and Fee

Jurisdiction	Fee	Pass Through Fee	Penalties for Nonpayment
San Pablo (Proposed)	Controlled Rental Unit: \$120/unit Partially Exempt: \$84/unit	Not allowed	Tenant may withhold all or a portion of the Rent for the Rental Unit until such time as the Rental Housing Fee is paid or proper notice is filed Complete defense to an unlawful detainer
Alameda	Fully Covered: \$162/unit Partially Covered: \$109/unit	50% pass through to tenants	Cannot increase rent 10% late penalty with additional 10% added each successive month up to 60%
Berkeley	Fully Covered: \$290/unit Partially Covered: \$178/unit	Not allowed	Cannot increase rent or evict tenant 100% penalty
Hayward	Covered Rental Units: \$66/unit Non-Covered Rental Units: \$32/unit	50% pass through to tenants	Cannot increase rent
Richmond	Fully Covered: \$220/unit Partially Covered & Subsidized Units: \$125/unit	Not allowed	Late penalties ranging from 10% - 50% depending on length of time past-due Tenant may withhold all or a portion of the Rent for the Rental Unit until such time as the Rental Housing Fee is paid or proper notice is filed Complete defense to an unlawful detainer
East Palo Alto	Fully Covered: \$234/unit	Not allowed	Late penalties ranging from 15% - 100% depending on length of time past-due Cannot increase rent

Each of the five jurisdictions surveyed require landlords to register their rental units on an annual basis. All but one jurisdiction (East Palo Alto) implemented a rental registry for this annual requirement. The City of East Palo Alto indicated that they keep manual records and are in the process of establishing a rental registry, noting that they recommend avoiding manual record keeping if possible due to the administrative burden on staff.

The proposed Ordinance does not specifically mandate the establishment of a rental registry. However, several provisions of the Ordinance suggest that the City may need to develop a centralized database to collect fees and maintain records. For instance, the proposed Ordinance requires the Program to:

- Maintain a register of all Rental Units withdrawn from rent or lease, along with the rent applicable to each unit at the time of withdrawal.
- Collect data from filed Buyout Agreements, including the compensation paid for the Buyout Agreement and the neighborhood of the affected Rental Unit, and make that data public without revealing personally identifying information.
- Collect and maintain a database of unlawful detainer filings and termination, rent increase, and change in terms notices received.
- Charge and collect the Rental Housing Fee, including penalties for late payments.

Each of the five jurisdictions also impose fees for registering residential rental properties, with fee amounts varying from \$32 to \$290 annually per unit. Some jurisdictions establish separate registration fees for fully and partially covered units and/or make certain units exempt from paying a registration fee, such as units with rent-subsidized tenants. Generally, a fully covered unit refers to rental units where both rent stabilization and just cause eviction protections apply, and partially covered units refer to units where only the just cause eviction protections apply. Four of the five jurisdictions charge fees depending on whether the property is fully covered or partially covered. Two of the jurisdictions allow landlords to pass through up to 50% of the registration fee to tenants as a rent surcharge prorated over 12 months to balance the interests of landlords and tenants since registration benefits both parties.

The proposed Ordinance requires an annual Rental Housing Fee to cover the costs to administer, enforce, and enact the Ordinance, which will be determined by the City Council after the Program provides a recommendation. Until the fee is established by the City Council, the Ordinance calls for a fee amount of \$120 per Controlled Rental Unit per year and \$84 for Units that are partially exempt, with no mention of an allowable pass-through cost to tenants.

Administrative Penalties and Fines

To discourage noncompliance with the law, jurisdictions may grant authorities the power to impose punitive measures on landlords and their representatives in the event of violations. These measures, comprised of administrative fines and penalties, are managed by the department overseeing the program and are categorized as either civil or judicial penalties, with the latter

involving court proceedings and often requiring legal representation. It is important to note that jurisdictions typically offer appeal mechanisms, allowing those issued citations or suspected of violations to contest the allegations and seek a fair resolution. Table 10 provides a summary of administrative penalties and fines in the Ordinance and comparison jurisdictions.

Table 10: Comparison of Administrative Penalties and Fines

Jurisdiction	Type(s) of Penalties	Limits on Penalties
San Pablo (Proposed)	Damages for relocation payments, wrongful eviction, excess rent, harassment	Damages not less than three times actual damages Additional fines ranging from \$1,000 - \$5,000 for harassment damages
Alameda	Fines Misdemeanor and/or jail time Public nuisance designation	\$250 to \$1,000 depending on number of offenses in a year Misdemeanor may include fine up to \$1,000, jail time not to exceed six (6) months Designation may apply to any rental business
Berkeley	Tenant may file suit for damages with the city Misdemeanor and/or jail time	\$750 in addition to any damages \$500 fine and/or 90 days in jail for the first offense and \$1,000 fine and/or six (6) months jail time
Hayward	Administrative citation Misdemeanor and/or jail time	Liable for tenant damages and attorneys' fees Liable for civil penalty that is the greater of \$500 or three times the amount of money more than the maximum rent \$100 to \$500 depending on number of offenses in a year. After four offenses, misdemeanor and fine of no more than \$1,000 and/or six (6) months jail time
Richmond	Administrative hearing	All rent received, demanded, retained, or accepted more than the maximum allowable rent plus damages and being found guilty of a misdemeanor
East Palo Alto	None stated	None stated

Four of the five jurisdictions surveyed have some type of administrative hearing or direct citation, with maximum fines per violation ranging from \$500 to \$1,000. Some jurisdictions implement penalties and fines based on the existing administrative citation process set forth in the municipal code, while others adopt tailored fines for violations of the ordinance. These jurisdictions emphasize that robust penalties provide authorities with effective enforcement tools to address violations swiftly and decisively, and to help protect the rights and interests of the community.

The proposed Ordinance includes robust remedies for non-compliance, including damages for relocation payments, wrongful eviction, excess rent, and harassment in an amount equal to at least three times actual damages.

Administrative Considerations

Implementing a rental registry and collecting an annual fee requires careful administrative planning and coordination. Initially, staff will develop and set up a secure database to manage rental registry data and create both online and physical forms for landlord registration. The creation of a rental registry may be contracted out to a third party but will require staff oversight and collaboration. Staff will also conduct outreach and education for landlords, providing guidance on registration requirements, processing applications, verifying submitted information, and addressing any discrepancies.

Ongoing responsibilities include maintaining accurate and up-to-date records by entering and updating rental unit information, including changes in tenancy and ownership. To achieve high compliance rates, staff will develop and implement enforcement procedures, such as issuing notices of non-compliance and taking necessary enforcement actions. Additionally, staff will handle the fee collection process, which involves generating and distributing invoices, receiving and processing payments, and issuing receipts to landlords.

Implementing these administrative structures may require coordination with other City departments, such as Finance, IT, and the City Attorney's Office. The Finance Department may assist with streamlining the fee collection process with other fees collected at the City. The IT Department will be needed to implement robust IT infrastructure and security measures for data collection. Lastly, close coordination with the City Attorney's Office is essential to ensure that enforcement mechanisms are implemented, and the Program operates in compliance with the Ordinance.

Petitions and Petition Process

Petitions in rent stabilization programs serve as a formal mechanism through which landlords and tenants can seek redress or request adjustments based on specific circumstances. In rent stabilization programs that impose rent increase limits that are more restrictive than the limits set by State law, petitions are a required component of due process, ensuring that legal and procedural rights are upheld, conflicts are addressed fairly, and decisions are based on thorough evaluations of relevant factors. Each type of petition plays a vital role in maintaining a balanced relationship between tenants and landlords and promoting stability and fairness within the rental market. Table 11 provides a summary of petition types and fees in the Proposed Ordinance compared to each of the jurisdictions studied.

Table 11: Comparison of Petition Provisions

Jurisdiction	Tenant Petitions Received in the Past Year	Capital Improvement Petitions Received in the Past Year	Fair Return Petitions Received in the Past Year	Separate Petition Fee	Party Conducting Hearing	Party Overseeing Appeals
San Pablo (Proposed)	N/A	N/A	N/A	None	Hearing Examiner	City Council
Alameda¹	18	2	1	None	Hearing Officer	Court of appropriate jurisdiction
Berkeley	100-130	0	0	None	Hearing Examiner	Board
Hayward	31	24	0	None	Rent Review Officer	Court of appropriate jurisdiction
Richmond	228	50		None	Hearing Examiner	Board
East Palo Alto	7	N/A	0	\$25 per application, may waive for tenant if qualified	Hearing Examiner	Board

¹The City of Alameda received one additional type of Petition in the past year.

Petition Types and Fee

Generally, there are three types of petitions that a jurisdiction may include in their program: 1) fair return petitions, 2) tenant petitions, and 3) capital improvement petitions. Some jurisdictions include additional types of petitions depending on the community need. Depending on the type of petition, they may be submitted by the tenant or the landlord to a program administrator or decision-making body for consideration and approval.

1) Fair Return Petitions

A landlord is entitled under the law to receive a fair return on their rental property. If a landlord believes that the maximum allowable rent increase under the ordinance does not constitute a fair return, they have the right to file a fair return petition requesting an increase greater than what the ordinance provides. This is a legal requirement and as such, the proposed Ordinance and all comparison jurisdictions have a fair return petition available to landlords.

2) Tenant Petitions

All five jurisdictions have provisions in their ordinance that allow a tenant to file a petition asserting various types of claims against a landlord. Examples include requesting a rent decrease due to a substantial decrease in housing services, failure to repair or maintain a unit, or rent increases in excess of the allowable amount.

3) Capital Improvement Petitions

Four of the five jurisdictions studied allow for a petition to request a capital improvement pass-through to the current tenants. A capital improvement is one that materially adds to the value of the property (this is often detailed as a specific amount in the ordinance) or appreciably prolongs its useful life or adapts it to new uses. The improvement is typically amortized over the useful life. As such, these rent increases are temporary. In general, a capital improvement petition would allow a landlord to recover the cost of capital improvements when the improvements benefit the units in question and the improvements were not necessitated by the current landlord's neglect or failure to maintain the property. Examples of capital improvements include new windows, a roof replacement, and exterior painting to the entire building.

4) Other

Although less common, some jurisdictions have developed additional petitions to allow for tailoring policies to community needs. Examples include petitions to determine exempt status, petitions for a rent increase for additional occupants, and petitions to determine occupancy status.

In some programs, a petition fee is required by the governing authority or agency overseeing the petition process. The purpose of the fee is to cover administrative costs associated with processing the petition, conducting analysis, and organizing hearings or other proceedings. This fee is typically levied on landlords or tenants who wish to file a petition related to rent stabilization. The specific purpose and amount of the petition fee can vary depending on the jurisdiction and the provisions of the ordinance. Only one of the comparison jurisdictions, East Palo Alto, imposes a petition fee of \$25, however, a low income waiver is available for tenants that may be unable to pay the associated fee. The proposed Ordinance does not implement a fee to submit or process petitions.

Petition Review and Hearings

Petitions are submitted to provide a ruling or decision over disputed matters, which typically takes place during a hearing. Hearings are formal procedures where landlords and tenants present evidence and testimony before a hearing officer, board, or designated arbitrator. The party who files the petition bears the burden of proof of all relevant factors in the petition.

It can take several months from the time a petition is submitted to reach a decision from a hearing officer. The duration is attributed to the time needed to review the submitted petition and supporting documents, obtain any necessary additional documentation, provide noticing, schedule a hearing with both parties and/or their representatives, and if applicable, administer appeals of decisions. The general steps involved in the hearing process are as follows:

1. Landlord or tenant submits a petition
2. Staff reviews petition for completeness
3. Notice of and scheduling for the hearing is provided to all parties
4. Petitioner and responding party gather and submit evidence
5. Hearing takes place
6. Petition authority makes a legally binding decision

7. Appeals process (if applicable)

Petition authority refers to a designated entity or governing body responsible for overseeing and managing the process of receiving, reviewing, and addressing petitions related to rent stabilization. Program staff, an elected or appointed board, a third-party hearing officer/examiner, or some combination of these typically serve the function of petition authorities. The primary role of a petition authority is to provide a formal ruling on submitted petitions regarding rent stabilization matters. The petition authority typically has the responsibility to review and evaluate each petition, ensuring they comply with the established guidelines and requirements, as well as to conduct hearings on contested matters and provide a determination to resolve the dispute. All five of the jurisdictions interviewed designate a hearing officer or examiner to make decisions on petitions, which is in alignment with the proposed Ordinance.

Appeals

Appeals allow a landlord or tenant to challenge a decision on a petition. While any decision may be appealed in a court, specific ordinances may permit an appeal to a hearing officer, board, or arbitrator. Conversely, in some cases, the initial ruling is deemed final within the City's jurisdiction, requiring an appeal to be escalated to a court of local jurisdiction for further review.

Among the five jurisdictions examined, three permit the appeal of a petition decision within their respective programs, which is entrusted, either entirely or partially, to their rent board or commission. The formation of a board or commission allows city councils to maintain a more hands-off role while fostering community involvement and garnering support. Rent stabilization boards offer a forum for diverse stakeholder representation, including landlords, tenants, and other community members without financial interests in real estate. These boards are typically supported by dedicated program staff to carry out their various duties. In lieu of a board hearing appeals to the hearing examiner's decisions, the proposed Ordinance states that appeals will be heard by the City Council to affirm, reverse or modify the decision of the hearing examiner.

Administrative Considerations

When implementing a rent stabilization program, city staff will need to handle a range of administrative tasks to ensure the smooth processing of petitions, hearings, and appeals. At the onset, staff will create standardized petition forms and enact rules and regulations to govern the hearing and appeals process. This foundational work ensures clarity and consistency for all parties involved. Additionally, a qualified hearing officer will be identified to preside over the hearings, ensuring impartiality and adherence to legal standards. The hearing officer is typically an attorney from a law firm contracted by the City for that specific purpose.

Once the program becomes operational, staff will be responsible for reviewing petitions submitted by tenants or landlords and verifying all required documentation and evidence. This process involves checking the completeness and accuracy of petitions, serving as a point of contact for the petitioner and responding party, and preparing documentation for further action. Staff will assist with scheduling hearings, coordinating dates, times, and venues, and notifying all involved parties. Additionally, staff will prepare and distribute hearing notices, including detailed information about the hearing procedures, the issues at stake, and any pre-hearing requirements. Staff may

also need to prepare detailed reports that summarize the petitioner's claims and analyze the relevant evidence. The City may contract out petition review and analysis to a third-party consultant if needed, however staff will need to provide oversight and collaboration.

During the hearings, staff will support the hearing officer by managing logistics, recording proceedings, and handling any administrative tasks that arise. They will compile and organize all submitted evidence, testimonies, and relevant documents into a comprehensive case record. In cases where appeals arise, staff may assist with reviewing the appeal submissions for compliance with procedural requirements, preparing the appeal case files, and coordinating the scheduling of appeal hearings before the City Council. Throughout the process, staff must maintain meticulous records, provide regular updates to involved parties, and ensure compliance with applicable laws, regulations, and city policies.

Enhanced Tenant Protections

In addition to tenant protections previously detailed that are commonly included in rent stabilization ordinances, some jurisdictions incorporate additional tenant protections into their ordinances. Enhanced tenant protections may include granting tenants the right to organize and implementing robust anti-harassment measures.

Right to Organize

The right to organize in the context of tenant protections refers to the ability of tenants to gather to act on shared collective interests as tenants. This may include, but is not limited to, engaging with other tenants for the purpose of mutual aid and protection, convening meetings in a space accessible to tenants, informing other tenants of their rights, and advocating for government action or legislation addressing tenant issues.

The proposed Ordinance includes provisions regarding a landlord's non-interference in organizing activities, the right for tenants to establish a tenant association, a requirement for landlords and tenant associations to confer in good faith, the right to tenant representation, and establishes a requirement for landlords, at the request of a tenant association, to attend association meetings once per calendar quarter. It should be noted that none of the sample jurisdictions include provisions regarding a tenant's right to organize.

Anti-Harassment / Retaliation provisions

Anti-harassment and retaliation protections refer to provisions that prevent landlords from engaging in harassing and retaliatory behaviors towards tenants. California state law includes a number of anti-harassment and retaliation provisions, most notably Civil Code Section 1942.5, which prohibits a landlord from raising rent, reducing housing services, forcing a tenant to move out involuntarily, or attempting to evict a tenant because the tenant has exercised any legal rights, such as raising habitability concerns or being involved in a tenants' rights organization.¹³ However,

¹³ California state law also provides additional tenant protections, including but not limited to, outlining only specific reasons a landlord may enter a dwelling unit, establishing the requirement for landlords to provide reasonable notice in writing of the intent to enter the dwelling unit, preventing the interruption or termination of utility services, prohibiting landlords from preventing the tenant to gain reasonable access to the property, and preventing landlords from removing tenant personal property without prior written consent (Source: CA Civil Code Sections 789.3, 1940.2, and 1954).

some jurisdictions implement additional provisions that protect a tenant's right to quiet enjoyment of the premises.

All five sample jurisdictions include provisions regarding harassment and/or retaliation at varying levels of detail. The proposed Ordinance takes a comprehensive approach to regulating harassment by prohibiting landlords, as well as their agents, from engaging in actions that are either negligent or in bad faith. The Ordinance details 28 specific acts that constitute bad faith, while also providing for the creation of regulations to further define and guide the identification of bad faith conduct.

Administrative Considerations

Adopting additional tenant protections such as the right to organize and anti-harassment provisions within a rent stabilization framework requires thorough planning and coordination. Initially, city staff must educate both landlords and tenants about the new regulations to clarify the legal nuances of organizing rights and assist the community in understanding harassment. Additionally, staff may need to establish clear policies and procedures for enforcing these protections, which involves setting up standardized complaint reception processes, including a dedicated email and phone line.

On an ongoing basis, staff may investigate complaints, which involves collecting evidence and maintaining records of all complaints and investigations to identify patterns that may require regulatory adjustments or additional educational efforts. Furthermore, staff may collaborate with other city departments or external legal experts to handle complex cases or prosecute persistent offenders, ensuring that the protections are enforceable and effectively enhance tenant security in the community.

FISCAL IMPACT ANALYSIS

RSG has conducted a detailed fiscal impact analysis on the implementation of a rent stabilization program, including an in-depth review of key factors such as program staffing and budgeting, as well as start-up and ongoing costs associated with such initiatives. These factors are crucial in shaping the administrative and financial demands of the program and play a significant role in determining the resources needed for its effective management at the local level.

Program Staffing and Budget

There are several critical factors that must be considered to effectively estimate the required budget and staffing levels necessary to support a rent stabilization program. These factors include the total number of covered rental units within the City, the scope of regulatory oversight, and the City's existing staffing framework.

Table 12 provides an overview of the program staffing and budgets of each of the five sample jurisdictions and includes an estimate of the budget required to effectively manage the demands of a rent stabilization program in San Pablo. RSG estimates **San Pablo would require an annual budget of approximately \$1.21 million** to implement the Ordinance proposed by the Initiative. The estimated fiscal impact for San Pablo's program assumes that it will initially operate at a moderate capacity. In the early stages, the program will likely concentrate on basic compliance due to staffing and resource limitations. However, the proposed Ordinance necessitates a high level of regulatory oversight, which will drive the program towards more comprehensive enforcement and community engagement over time. Assumptions are detailed in Table 13 and the subsequent sections.

Table 12: Comparison of Program Staffing and Budget

Jurisdiction	FTE	Annual Budget Allocation ¹	Number of Rental Units	Registry Fee per Unit	Cost Per Rental Unit ²	Division of Work ³
Low-Capacity³						
East Palo Alto	2 + Temp Staff as needed	\$615,000	2,500 Rent Stabilized Units	Covered Rental Units: \$234	\$246	Administration, Compliance, Hearings, Petitions, Public Information, Registration, Termination of Tenancy
Hayward	3.5	\$642,000	Fully Covered Units: 11,580	Covered Rental Units: \$66/unit Non-Covered Rental Units: \$32/unit	\$55	Administration, Hearings, Mediation, Petitions, Termination of Tenancy

Jurisdiction	FTE	Annual Budget Allocation ¹	Number of Rental Units	Registry Fee per Unit	Cost Per Rental Unit ²	Division of Work ³
Moderate-Capacity						
San Pablo	5	\$1.21M	~5,608 Rental Units	Fully Covered: \$120 ⁴ Partially Covered: - \$84 ⁵ <i>(Preliminary)</i>	\$215	Administration, Compliance, Hearings, Petitions, Public Information, Data Collection, Termination of Tenancy
Alameda	7.5	\$1.99M	Fully Covered Units: 13,741 Partially Covered Units: 2,838	Fully Covered: \$162/unit Partially Covered: \$109/unit	\$120	Compliance, Hearings, Petitions, Public Information, Registration, Termination of Tenancy
High-Capacity						
Berkeley	26	\$7.51M	Approx. 25,000 Registered Units	Fully Covered: \$290/unit Partially Covered: \$178/unit	\$300	Administration, Compliance, Counseling, Hearings, Housing, Mediation, Petitions, Public Information, Termination of Tenancy
Richmond	14	\$3.00M	Approx. 18,000 Registered Units	Fully Covered: \$220/unit Partially Covered & Subsidized Units: \$125/unit	\$167	Compliance, Counseling, Hearings, Housing, Legal Assistance, Petitions, Public Information, Registration, Termination of Tenancy

¹ Based on 2023-24 program annual budgets. Amounts are rounded. Cost per total units shown in the “Number of Rental Units” column.

² Division of work refers to the allocation of responsibilities and tasks among staff and the various parties engaged in the implementation, maintenance, and oversight of the program.

³ See the “Scope of Regulatory Oversight” section for a description of Low-, Moderate-, and High-Capacity classifications.

^{4,5} Proposed Rental Housing Fee that would go in effect until the Rental Housing Fee is determined by the Council.

Table 12 provides data on program costs per rental unit, calculated by dividing each jurisdiction's annual budget allocation by the estimated number of rental units covered under their rent stabilization provisions. This figure varies greatly between jurisdictions, ranging from \$55 to \$300, and demonstrates the amount of funds ‘allocated’ to each rental unit from a program’s annual budget. A lower cost per rental unit may be due to a lower level of services required by an ordinance, but it may also point to programs with limited financial resources and program capacity. For instance, the City of Hayward, with the lowest cost per rental unit at \$55, is a largely complaint-based program with minimal enforcement procedures.

Higher costs per rental unit may correlate to higher complexity and operational demands of the program, but it may also point to a baseline level of resources required to administer a program regardless of the number of covered units. The City of East Palo Alto, for example, is considered a low-capacity program, however, costs per rental unit are relatively high. This suggests that regardless of the jurisdiction, certain fundamental costs are inherently associated with operating these programs, even with limited staffing and constrained resources.

It should be noted that although the cost per unit offers a general overview of financial allocation across the jurisdictions surveyed, it is not a definitive metric for evaluating the budgetary adequacy or financial management of a rent stabilization program. The following sections will explore the key factors influencing the administrative and financial requirements of program implementation. Additionally, after adopting a rent stabilization ordinance, a formal fee study may offer more precise insights into the operational costs tied to the ordinance as adopted, enhancing understanding and enabling more accurate budget planning.

Number of Rental Units

The number of rental units in a city plays a critical role in determining the budget and staffing needs of a rent stabilization program. As the number of rental units increases, the scope and complexity of managing the program also grows. This expansion requires more staff to handle a variety of tasks such as processing registration and petitions, managing data, conducting enforcement, and engaging with the community. Each of these tasks demands dedicated personnel to ensure the program operates smoothly and complies with legal standards. Accordingly, a larger rental market necessitates a correspondingly larger administrative structure, which, in turn, increases the budget for salaries, benefits, and operational costs to support the additional staff.

The size of the rental market affects the resources needed for effective program implementation. A city with a larger number of rental units might also see more disputes and a greater number of submitted petitions, requiring specialized staff and third-party hearing officers or legal experts. On the other hand, in cities with fewer rental units, the program might operate with fewer staff and lower budgetary allocations. Thus, city officials must carefully analyze the rental housing market's size to tailor the rent stabilization program's staffing and budget, ensuring it is both effective in its enforcement and efficient in its use of public funds.

Scope of Regulatory Oversight

The scope of regulatory oversight in a rent stabilization program significantly impacts its budget, primarily by defining the breadth and depth of required staffing activities. A comprehensive set of regulations demands a robust budget to support detailed compliance checks, diverse tenant-landlord services, and extensive documentation collection and monitoring. This necessitates increased staffing, robust training, and technology resources. Additionally, an assertive enforcement strategy requires more resources for legal support, enforcement officers, and ongoing training to handle complex legal issues effectively. Furthermore, extensive regulatory oversight often involves significant community outreach and education efforts to ensure landlords and tenants understand their rights and responsibilities. This includes funding public workshops, informational campaigns, and dedicated support lines, which all require substantial investment in materials, event coordination, and personnel.

Table 12 summarizes program staffing and budget in each of the sample jurisdictions. To better understand the implementation of rent stabilization across different jurisdictions, we have classified sample jurisdictions into three distinct levels of regulatory oversight based on their capacity and approach to enforcement and outreach. These classifications help identify how different cities allocate resources and prioritize rent stabilization within their administrative frameworks.

Low-capacity programs are characterized by limited staffing and constrained resources. These jurisdictions typically exhibit less proactive enforcement and minimal outreach efforts, focusing primarily on basic compliance and reactive measures. Moderate-capacity programs possess sufficient staffing levels and resources to conduct moderately proactive enforcement and outreach. These programs balance reactive measures with preventive actions and maintain a moderate level of community engagement. Finally, high-capacity programs represent jurisdictions with the most extensive resources and staffing levels, characterized by high levels of proactive enforcement and comprehensive outreach efforts. These jurisdictions prioritize rent stabilization highly within their policy agendas and invest significantly in ensuring broad compliance and active community involvement.

For the purposes of this report, San Pablo is classified as a moderate capacity program because, despite having a lower number of rental units, the proposed Ordinance outlines a high level of regulatory oversight. This classification assumes that a moderate level of operation will need to be established initially to address provisions of the ordinance such as collecting and reviewing eviction notices, approving Tenant Safety Plans, maintaining and analyzing records for rental market withdrawals and tenant buyout agreements, conducting education and outreach efforts, developing and setting up a secure database, monitoring compliance, and processing petitions.

Existing Staffing Framework and Efficiency

When determining the staffing needs and budget for a rent stabilization program, the existing staffing framework and efficiencies within the local jurisdiction are crucial factors to consider. The City does not currently have the staffing required to manage and enforce a rent stabilization program and would need to hire new staff or reallocate existing personnel to support the program. Without an adequate staffing framework already in place, the City must invest in training new hires or existing staff to ensure they understand the complexities of rent stabilization laws and can

effectively implement and enforce the program. This initial investment in staffing and training can significantly impact the program's start-up and ongoing budget. The City must ensure the team is well-equipped to manage the program's demands efficiently and effectively.

The existing administrative efficiency within the local jurisdiction also plays a significant role in determining program staffing. Cities that already have streamlined and efficient administrative processes in place may require fewer staff for the rent stabilization program, as their existing frameworks can more easily adapt to the new regulatory demands. In contrast, cities with less efficient systems might find that more personnel are necessary to handle the administrative load effectively. This difference can lead to variations in how resources are allocated. For example, when RSG interviewed the City of East Palo Alto, their staff expressed that many of the City's processes, including annual registration, tracking complaints and inquiries, and collecting fees, are tracked manually, which consumes a significant amount of staff time. Staff indicated that this lack of program efficiencies means that a significant portion of staff time is devoted to administrative tasks and noted that implementing automated processes would reduce the time spent on routine tasks and allow staff to focus on other critical aspects of the program. Therefore, enhancing administrative efficiency is crucial for optimizing staffing levels and ensuring that the program operates smoothly within the available budget.

Estimated Staffing Needs

RSG estimates that the City would need to hire five full-time equivalent staff members to efficiently administer the rent stabilization program proposed by the Initiative. This is based on a thorough analysis of the size of the rental market, the scope of regulatory oversight in the proposed Ordinance, and the existing staffing framework within the City. The suggested team composition includes a Rent Stabilization Manager, who would oversee the program's overall operations, policy enforcement, and strategic planning. Two Management Analysts would support the manager and handle a variety of essential functions, including data and policy analysis, processing applications and petitions, monitoring compliance, coordinating outreach efforts, and collecting program fees. Lastly, two Administrative Clerks would be responsible for public correspondence to address queries and concerns about the program, maintaining accurate records, coordinating meetings and preparing minutes, and providing general administrative support to ensure the smooth operation of the rent stabilization program.

The inclusion of these roles is crucial for managing the complex demands of a rent stabilization program, which requires not only ongoing monitoring and regulation of rental units but also effective communication with both landlords and tenants to ensure compliance and address issues. The Rent Stabilization Manager's strategic oversight ensures that the program aligns with city policies and goals while adapting to evolving housing market conditions. Meanwhile, the Management Analysts provide the necessary support to implement policies, analyze program data, and engage with the community, thereby facilitating the smooth operation of the program. The Administrative Clerks play a crucial role in facilitating communication and ensuring all program-related activities are documented and managed efficiently. This staffing plan, derived from our detailed assessment of the City's needs and current capabilities, ensures that the program has the dedicated and specialized resources it requires to be successful. The costs associated with these five positions are further detailed in the following section.

Cost Breakdown and Considerations

The consideration of start-up and ongoing costs is essential in projecting the budget required to implement a rent stabilization program. This report considers the annual budgets of sample jurisdictions that currently administer rent stabilization programs, offering a broader perspective on varying cost structures. It also considers the City of Concord's budget, which is currently in its first year of program implementation. The insights from Concord are particularly valuable as they provide real-time data and practical experiences related to launching a rent stabilization program. These combined sources provide a detailed overview of both initial and recurring financial commitments necessary to sustain such a program effectively.

Proposed Ordinance Cost Estimate

Implementing a new program or division requires an initial investment to establish the infrastructure, resources, and personnel necessary to support the program's objectives. Understanding these start-up costs is essential to ensure that the program is adequately funded and equipped to meet its regulatory responsibilities from the outset.

When planning the budget for a rent stabilization program, it is crucial to account for various start-up and ongoing cost categories to ensure a comprehensive and functional implementation. The major expense categories can be broadly classified into salaries and benefits, city department charges, professional and administrative services, and miscellaneous costs.

Table 13 details cost estimates to implement the Ordinance proposed by the Initiative as a potential model. These estimates are derived from data from other jurisdictions and a review of the City budget. Start-up costs include one-time costs to implement the program, such as the creation of a rental registry, setting up a City webpage, drafting program documents, and outreach to educate landlords and tenants. Additional expenses in the first year of program implementation should also be accounted for, including legal consultation fees, staff training, office setup, public awareness campaigns, professional services, printing and distribution of materials, software licensing, community workshops, and translation services. Ongoing costs include maintaining the rental registry and fees, reviewing tenant petitions, holding hearings, and monitoring compliance. Ongoing costs are subject to change based on the volume of public inquiries, complaints, and petitions, as well as salary and professional service contract negotiations.

Ongoing costs are typically higher than start-up costs based on a review of peer jurisdictions that implemented rent stabilization in the last ten years. For example, Richmond expended \$2.0 million in fiscal years 2016-17 (partial) and 2017-18 and \$2.0 to \$2.5 million annually in each of the next five years. Alameda expended approximately \$611,000 in fiscal year 2016-17, \$958,000 in 2017-18, and \$1.5 million in each of the next two years. Concord anticipates \$700,000 in start-up costs and \$850,000 annually thereafter, excluding inflation. These figures underscore the importance of prioritizing sustainable funding for ongoing operations to ensure the effectiveness and stability of rent stabilization programs.

If rent stabilization is enacted in the future, RSG recommends conducting a more detailed fee study to accurately determine costs that are specifically tailored to the scope and requirements of the program as adopted.

Table 13: Estimated Annual Costs and Start-Up Considerations

Category	Estimated Annual Budget	Assumptions	Start-Up Cost Considerations
Salaries and Benefits			
Program Manager (1 FTE)	\$173,113	Community Services Manager position with Step C classification and 35% benefit allocation as indicated on City's Salary Schedule (FY 2023-24)	There may be more personnel involved in year one to establish frameworks, integrate systems, and handle the increased administrative workload associated with launching new operational processes. Initial costs may be higher to provide comprehensive training to staff
Management Analyst (1 FTE)	\$146,286	Management Analyst position (confidential employee criteria) with Step C classification and 35% benefit allocation as indicated on City's Salary Schedule (FY 2023-24)	Same as above
Management Analyst (1 FTE)	\$146,286	Same as above	Same as above
Administrative Clerk (1 FTE)	\$78,991	Administrative Clerk I position with Step C classification and 35% benefit allocation as indicated on City's Salary Schedule (FY 2023-24)	Same as above
Administrative Clerk (1 FTE)	\$78,991	Same as above	Same as above
<i>Salaries and Benefits Subtotal</i>		\$623,667	
City Department Charges¹			

Category	Estimated Annual Budget	Assumptions	Start-Up Cost Considerations
City Attorney	\$73,502	Assumes 0.25 FTE of City Attorney position staff time at Step E hourly classification as indicated on City's Salary Schedule (FY 2023-24)	Increased time in year one to develop policies and procedures and ensure program and messaging is legally sound
Paralegal	\$39,394	Assumes 0.25 FTE of Paralegal II position staff time at Step C hourly classification and 35% benefit allocation as indicated on City's Salary Schedule (FY 2023-24)	Same as above
Finance Department	\$66,355	Assumes 0.5 FTE of Accountant position staff time at Step C classification and 35% benefits allocation as indicated on City's Salary Schedule (FY 2023-24)	Increased time in year one to integrate financial processes specific to the new rent stabilization program (e.g. collection of fees, budget development)
<i>City Department Charges Subtotal</i>	<i>\$179,251</i>		
Professional and Administrative Services			
Rental Registry Contract	\$140,000 to set up in first year, \$80,000 thereafter	Based on City of Concord annual contract costs. Aligns with costs in other jurisdictions. Actual cost will vary based on unit volume, scope of services, degree of customization and automation, and the chosen management firm (e.g. 3di, Tolemi, etc.). Costs may increase if integration with other municipal systems of data migration from older systems is necessary.	Significant initial costs in year one, including software acquisition, system integration, staff training, and outreach efforts Although San Pablo will have a rental registry in place, the City will likely require a new registry with more features to effectively administer the provisions outlined in the proposed Ordinance

Category	Estimated Annual Budget	Assumptions	Start-Up Cost Considerations
Hearing Officer Fees	\$40,000	Based on the City of Alameda Fee Study Update (FY 2020-21) that assumes \$200 fully burdened hourly rate at 200 annual billable hours Actual costs will vary depending on the number and type of petitions received	Costs may be lower in year one, particularly if the rollout of the petition process is phased over an extended period
Consultant Fees	\$200,000	Depending on the volume of inquiries and petitions received, external consultants may be contracted if workload cannot be addressed by in-house staff. Estimate assumes creation of program documents, 3 public workshops, responding to public inquiries, and reviewing up to 25 tenant petitions. Actual costs will vary depending on scope of services and volume of inquiries and petitions. Landlord fair return petitions are more time intensive and therefore more costly than tenant petitions.	Year one costs may be greater due to higher volume of inquiries with initial program implementation
Translation Services	\$4,000	Based on City of Alameda Fee Study Update (FY 2020-21); reflects the City of Alameda's anticipated cost per covered unit times the number of rental units in San Pablo Services include translation services for public inquiries, cases, meetings, and written materials Actual costs will vary depending on number of public inquiries, petitions received, and level of community outreach efforts	Increased costs in year one due to the need for translating newly developed forms and outreach materials, along with increased community outreach initiatives that may require translation

Category	Estimated Annual Budget	Assumptions	Start-Up Cost Considerations
<i>Professional and Administrative Services Subtotal</i>	<i>\$384,000</i>		
Miscellaneous			
Office Supplies	\$3,000	Based on average office supplies costs from City of Alameda Fee Study Update (FY 2020-21), Richmond Rent Program budget (FY 2023-24), and Berkeley Rent Stabilization Program Budget (FY 2024) times the number of rental units in San Pablo	Increased costs in year one due to the setup of new offices and the procurement of essential equipment and materials necessary for program operations
Outreach / Mail Services	\$13,000	Based on average outreach and mail services costs from City of Alameda Fee Study Update (FY 2020-21), Richmond Rent Program budget (FY 2023-24), and Berkeley Rent Stabilization Program Budget (FY 2024) times the number of rental units in San Pablo	Increased costs in year one due to the need to establish awareness of the program (e.g. extensive mailing campaigns, production of informational materials, and hosting community meetings)
Phone/Fax/Internet	\$6,000	Based on average phone/fax/internet services costs from City of Alameda Fee Study Update (FY 2020-21), Richmond Rent Program budget (FY 2023-24), and Berkeley Rent Stabilization Program Budget (FY 2024)	Increased costs in year one to establish new communication lines and support increased inquiries and operational demands
<i>Miscellaneous Subtotal</i>	<i>\$22,000</i>		
Total	\$1,208,918		

¹Other central City departments (City Clerk, Information Technology, and Human Resources) may be involved periodically in administering the program but RSG does not believe these staff requirements will impact staffing levels.

First-Year Implementation

As cities plan to implement rent stabilization programs, understanding the financial and administrative demands in the first year is crucial for effective program roll-out. This is highlighted by an interview with the City of Concord, which is implementing its own rent stabilization program after adopting an ordinance in April 2024. The information provided by Concord is summarized in Table 14 and provides insights on anticipated and actual expenses, staffing configurations, and the challenges and strategies of starting such a program.

Concord's experience highlights that the first year of implementing a rent stabilization program requires substantial start-up costs and careful consideration of staffing needs. The City has budgeted approximately \$700,000 in start-up expenses for the initial year. Expenditures include, but are not limited to, rental registry software administration, hearing officer fees, and community outreach and education. Concord has contracted with a third-party to set up a rental registry and is in the process of identifying a contracted hearing officer. Concord is planning an extensive public outreach campaign to ensure that both landlords and tenants are well-informed about the new regulations. Notably, Concord has budgeted for increased costs in subsequent years, estimating approximately \$850,000 annually to administer petition hearings.

Concord's strategy includes critical timing decisions, such as delaying the acceptance of petitions until October 2024 to allow city staff ample time to fully understand the ordinance and put necessary systems in place. This approach ensures that systems and staff are adequately prepared to effectively handle the program's requirements. The City of Concord's experience emphasizes the importance of strategic planning in budgeting and staff allocation to manage the workload and meet the program's goals in its formative phase.

Table 14: City of Concord Program Implementation Costs

FTE		Start-Up Budget Allocation	Annual Budget Allocation	Number of Rental Units	Registry Fee per Unit	Cost per Rental Unit ¹	Division of Work
Concord	3	\$700,000	\$850,000 (anticipated)	Fully Covered Units: 9,200	Fully Covered Units: \$47	\$47	Administration, Hearings, Petitions, Public Information, Registration
				Partially Covered Units: 8,900	Partially Covered Units: \$29		

¹Amounts are rounded to the nearest whole dollar.

Reasons for Potential Deficits

The goal of rent stabilization programs is to adopt an annual fee structure to cover all administrative costs associated with the program. However, achieving this balance can be challenging. Factors such as non-compliance with annual fee payments directly impact the program's primary revenue stream, leading to budget shortfalls. Additionally, incorrect assumptions about the number of rental units or underestimating the demand for services, such as petition processing, can result in unanticipated expenses. An increase in public records requests, legal challenges, and the need for extensive community outreach can further strain a

program's budget. In cases where shortfalls persist, it may be necessary to cover program deficits from the City's general fund or other sources.

Strategies for Managing Ongoing Costs

Several strategies can be implemented to effectively manage ongoing costs of a rent stabilization program. Regular financial reviews are crucial as they enable program administrators to modify the budget in response to actual expenditures and compliance rates. This flexibility ensures the program remains responsive to changing financial landscapes. Additionally, building in the ability to adjust the fee structure annually allows the program to adapt based on actual costs, maintaining operational effectiveness without jeopardizing its goals, even amidst financial unpredictability. Such adaptability not only stabilizes funding but also secures the long-term sustainability of the rent stabilization program. Lastly, investing in technology to streamline administrative processes can significantly cut labor costs and improve service delivery. By implementing these strategies, the City can maintain the financial health of the rent stabilization program to effectively serve the community.

WORK PROGRAM

This section presents key considerations and a comprehensive list of steps with corresponding timelines to implement rent stabilization. This approach is designed to encourage a smooth rollout and effective management of a rent stabilization program.

Key Considerations

To ensure the successful implementation and sustainability of a rent stabilization program, RSG presents the following key considerations derived from our research and analysis of similar programs in other jurisdictions:

1. **Establish Clear Priorities:** Identify and prioritize the community's key concerns through community engagement such as enforcement of annual rent increase limits and landlord ability to make a fair return on investment.
2. **Create a Comprehensive Staffing Plan:** Develop a staffing plan that not only covers the initial implementation phase but also considers long-term needs for program maintenance and expansion.
3. **Conduct a Thorough Fee Study:** If a rent stabilization program is adopted, carry out a detailed fee study based on the scope of the adopted ordinance. Analyze Citywide staffing, supply, and overhead costs to ensure the program's rental registry fees are accurately aligned with operational costs and community economic conditions. Regularly prepare updated fee studies to refine budgets and rental registry fees based on actual rent registry and petition data.

Implementation Steps and Timelines

The implementation process can be strategically segmented into five key phases:

1. **Preparation and Planning (2-6 months):** Develop detailed project plans that define the roles and responsibilities for all involved personnel. Conduct a comprehensive fee study to determine the appropriate fee structure.
2. **Recruitment and Training (2-4 months):** Hire the necessary staff and provide them with specialized training on rent stabilization policies and administrative procedures.
3. **System Development and Testing (3-6 months):** Build or procure necessary IT systems for registration, complaint management, and enforcement tracking. Ensure thorough testing of these systems to prevent potential disruptions.
4. **Public Outreach and Education (Ongoing with emphasis at launch):** Begin outreach efforts to inform landlords and tenants about the new regulations. Implement continuous educational programs to maintain awareness and compliance.
5. **Program Launch and Initial Operations (6-12 months):** Officially launch the program. Start the registration process, begin collecting program fees, accept and process petitions.

Implementation of a rent stabilization program is a significant and multifaceted undertaking that requires careful planning, significant resources, and ongoing management to ensure its success and sustainability. The report's recommendations for administrative practices, financial planning, and community engagement offer a roadmap for effective implementation. It is crucial to engage with stakeholders, refine strategies based on emerging needs, and monitoring outcomes to adapt and evolve a rent stabilization program.

APPENDIX A – DEFINED TERMS

City	City of San Pablo
Costa-Hawkins	Costa-Hawkins Rental Housing Act of 1995 (Civil Code Sections 1954.50-1954.535)
CPI	Consumer Price Index established by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics
DOF	California Department of Finance
HCD	California Department of Housing and Community Development
Initiative	<i>San Pablo Rent Stabilization and Tenant Protections Initiative</i> proposed by Movement Legal in a Notice of Intent to Circulate dated December 14, 2023
Ordinance	Rent Stabilization and Tenant Protections Ordinance proposed by the San Pablo Rent Stabilization and Tenant Protections Initiative
RSG	RSG, Inc., a community development consulting firm retained by the City to prepare this independent fiscal analysis report
RHNA	Regional Housing Needs Allocation as determined by the California Department of Housing and Community Development and Association of Bay Area Governments