

# Bay Area Equity Atlas

## Summarizing the State of Equity in Contra Costa County

January 24, 2023

to the Contra Costa County Board of Supervisors

by Ryan Fukumori, Ph.D., Senior Associate, PolicyLink

# How do we measure community health and wellbeing from an equity perspective?

## TODAY'S GOALS

- Offer a high-level summary of equity concerns in Contra Costa County to inform Supervisors' considerations re: budget allocation
- Support government and community efforts to operationalize the county's Office of Racial Equity and Social Justice in 2023

- Data snapshots from US Census & American Community Survey
- Excerpts from our analytical reports and data tools ([Bay Area Equity Atlas](#) and [National Equity Atlas](#))
- Testimonials from Contra Costa County community members

**MAIN  
DATA  
SOURCES**

# Bay Area Equity Atlas ([bayareaequityatlas.org](http://bayareaequityatlas.org))

A comprehensive data support system to track the state of equity across the region and equip community leaders with data to inform solutions for inclusive prosperity.

- 23 equity indicators for 272 geographies (cities, counties, Census tracts, etc.)
- Policy solutions
- Original demographic & socioeconomic research/analysis
- Training
- Data support for advocacy campaigns



People	Place	Power
Race/ethnicity	Extreme commuting	Diversity of electeds
Nativity and ancestry	Housing burden	Voting
College readiness	Homeownership	Linguistic isolation
Educational attainment	Market rent	Economic gains: Eliminate rent burden
Disconnected youth	Gentrification risk	Economic gains: Racial equity in income
Employment	Affordable housing production	
Median earnings	Neighborhood opportunity	
Income growth	Business ownership	
Police use of force	Business revenue	

# THREE KEY TRENDS

## #1: THE ENDURING LEGACY of RACIAL EXCLUSION

Despite a more diverse population, significant racial disparities in housing have persisted in the County despite the enactment of fair housing laws in the 1960s.

## #2: THE INEQUITABLE LANDSCAPE BEFORE COVID-19

Existing housing, employment, and health disparities in Contra Costa County led to residents of color facing higher financial and health risks during, and after, the shelter-in-place order.

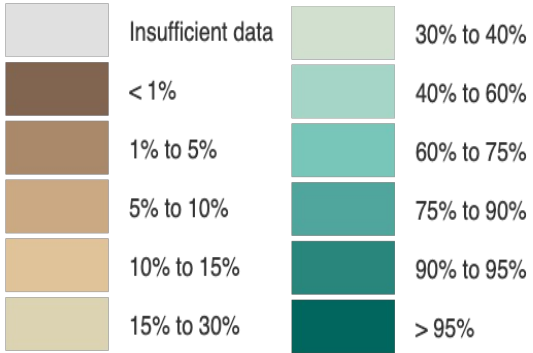
## #3: ONGOING DISPARITIES IN COVID-19 RECOVERY

Residents of color have been slower to financially recover from the COVID-19 pandemic, reinforcing if not worsening these longstanding inequities.

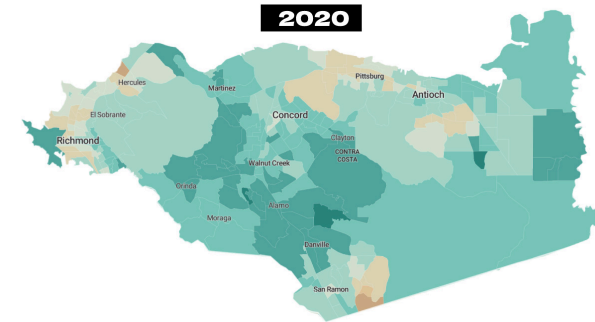
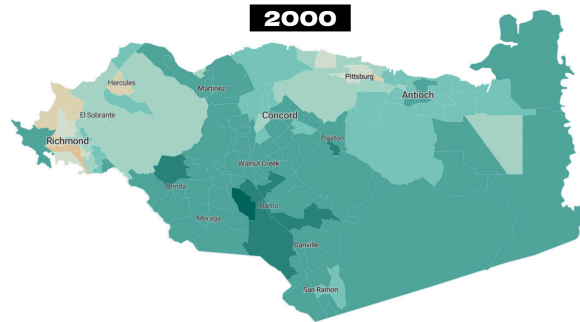
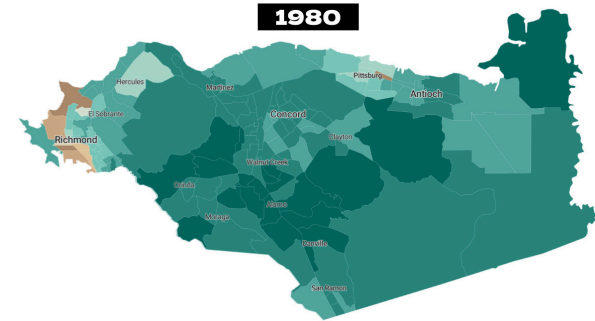
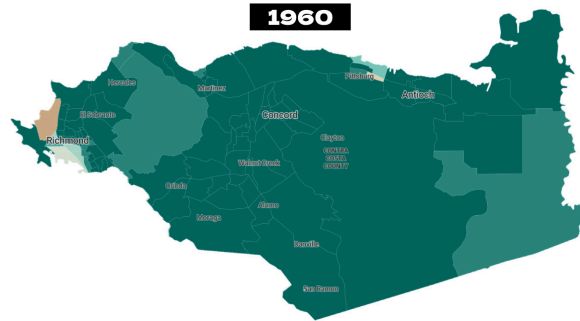
# TREND #1 : THE ENDURING LEGACY of RACIAL EXCLUSION

Since the 1960s, Contra Costa County has become more racially diverse.

## Percent of White Residents by Census Tract, 1960 - 2020



(includes Hispanic/Latino residents who identify as white)

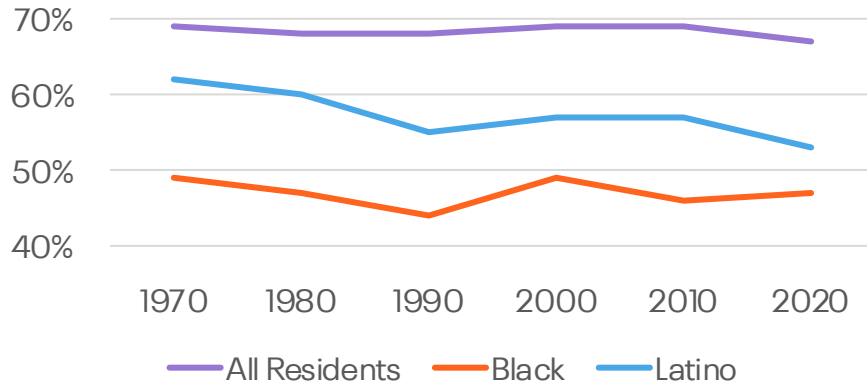


Source: 1970 US Census & 2016-2020 American Community Survey Data, mapped on Social Explorer

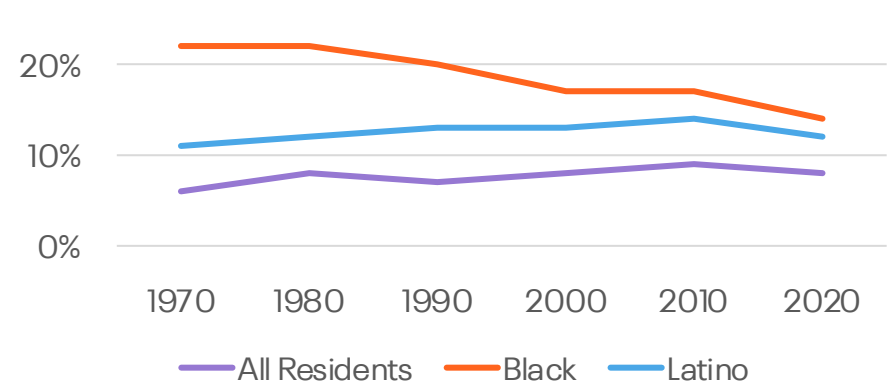
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However, major racial inequities have persisted in Contra Costa County since the Civil Rights Era.

Homeownership Rate in CCC by Decade



Poverty Rate in CCC by Decade



In 2020, **45% of all county residents living in families** met HUD standards for **low-income or very low-income status**, vs. **59% of Black** and **60% of Latino family household members**.

Source: 1970 US Census & 2016-2020 American Community Survey Data, via Social Explorer and IPUMS

## TREND #1 : THE ENDURING LEGACY of RACIAL EXCLUSION

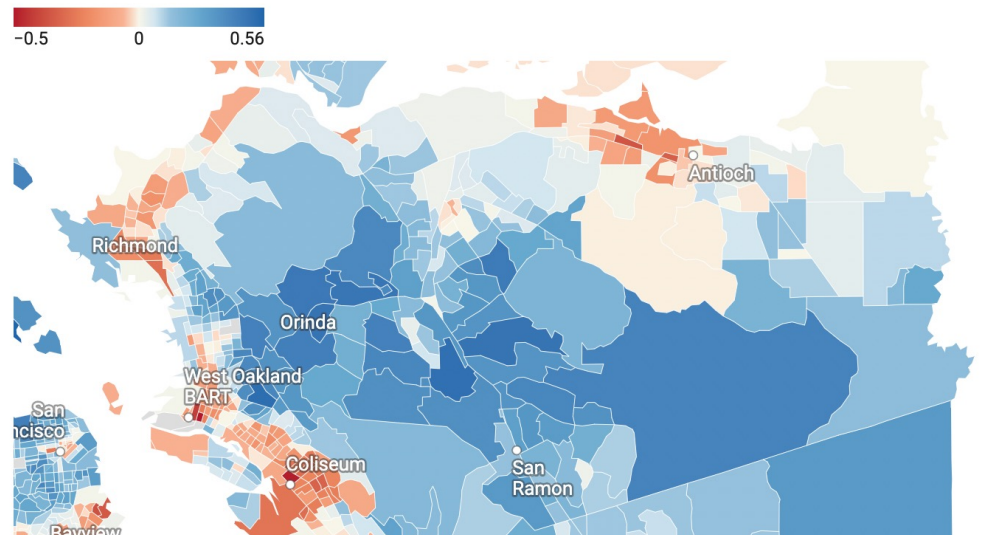
Contra Costa County is home to 5 of the 20 most segregated wealthy, white Census tracts\* in the 9-County Bay Area, per a recent Bay Area Equity Atlas study.

**One in 10 Bay Area Neighborhoods are Segregated Areas of White Wealth**

July 27, 2022

*\*These neighborhoods make up parts of Orinda, Lafayette, and Alamo.*

Black-White Index of Concentration at the Extremes, 2019



Source: Bay Area Equity Atlas, [“One in 10 Bay Area Neighborhoods are Segregated Areas of White Wealth”](#) (2022)

## TREND #2 : THE INEQUITABLE LANDSCAPE BEFORE COVID-19

In the decades leading up to the COVID-19 pandemic, renters in Contra Costa County faced growing challenges with housing affordability.

- Between 2000 and 2020:
  - The county's median rent increased by 42%, while the median household income for renters increased by just 11%.
  - The share of rent-burdened households\* grew by 9 percentage points (41% to 50%).
- Compared to white households, Black households were twice as likely to be overcrowded in 2020. Latino households were 8 times as likely to be overcrowded.\*\*

*It's not fair that working people have to [struggle] for a roof over their head that is literally crumbling.*

EDITH PASTRANO, ALLIANCE of CALIFORNIANS for COMMUNITY EMPOWERMENT, to the [EAST BAY TIMES](#) (2022)

**ALL MONETARY FIGURES WERE INFLATION ADJUSTED TO 2021 DOLLAR VALUES.**  
Source: 2000 US Census & 2016-2020 American Community Survey Data, via Social Explorer

\* Defined as spending more than 30% of income on rent and utilities.

\*\* Defined as more than one occupant per room in the unit, minus kitchens and bathrooms.

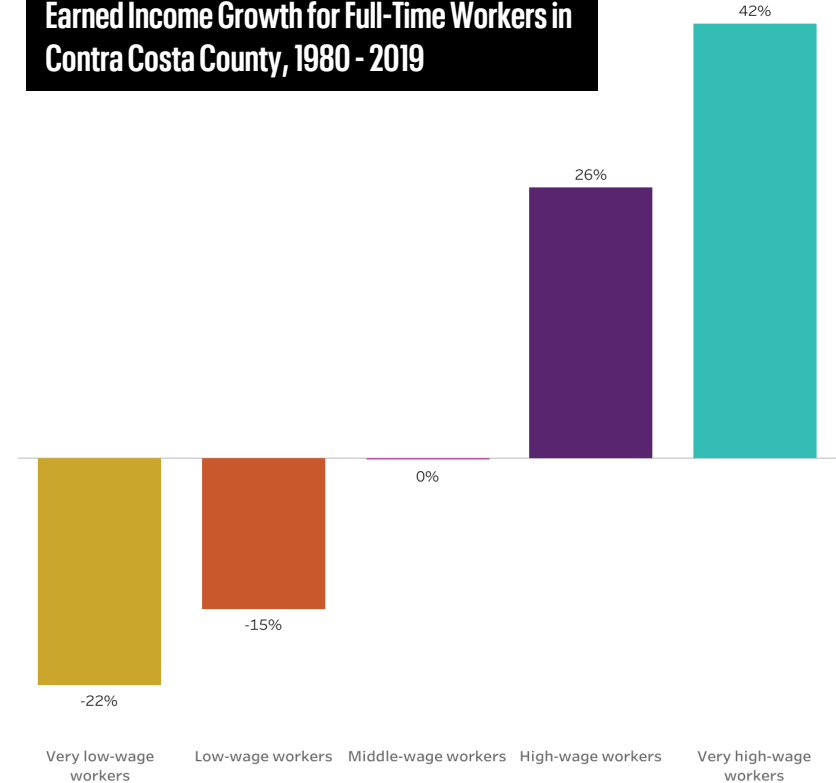


## TREND #2 : THE INEQUITABLE LANDSCAPE BEFORE COVID-19

### Income inequality in Contra Costa County has worsened over the past two generations.

Since 1980, pay for the highest-wage workers has increased, while earned income has decreased for those with the lowest paying jobs.

Earned Income Growth for Full-Time Workers in Contra Costa County, 1980 - 2019



Source: ReWork the Bay [Data Dashboards for Contra Costa County](#)

## TREND #2 : THE INEQUITABLE LANDSCAPE BEFORE COVID-19

Prior to COVID-19, local residents of color were disproportionately represented in occupations that predisposed workers to COVID-19 risk.

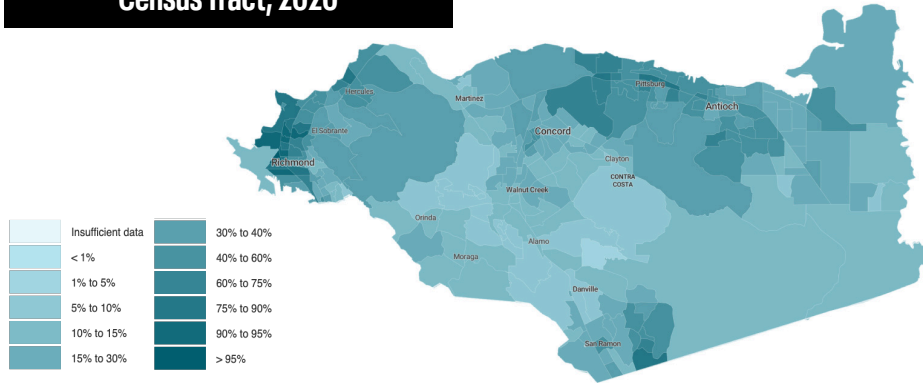
Contra Costa County Residents by Race/Ethnicity (2020 Data)	% of Workforce in Service, Manufacturing, & Transportation	% of Workforce in Business, Finance, STEM, and Arts
Non-Hispanic White	18%	55%
Asian American	22%	55%
<b>ALL RESIDENTS</b>	<b>26%</b>	<b>46%</b>
Black	32%	37%
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	37%	26%
Latino	41%	25%
American Indian/Alaskan Native	41%	26%

Source: 2016-2020 American Community Survey Data, via Social Explorer

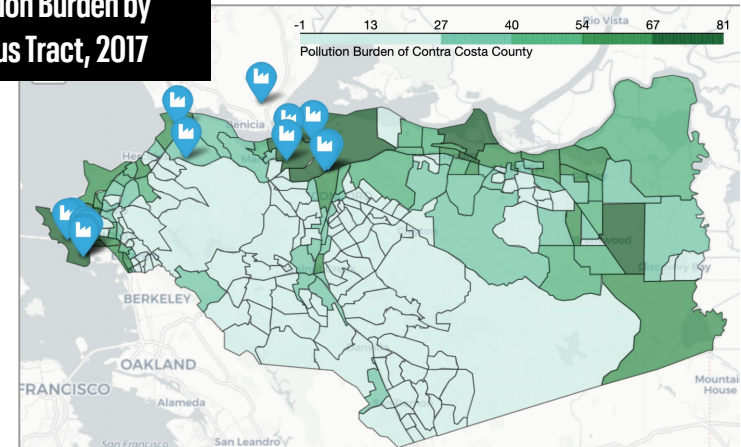
## TREND #2 : THE INEQUITABLE LANDSCAPE BEFORE COVID-19

Residents of color are concentrated in areas adjacent to the refineries, which elevate asthma rates. These respiratory disabilities can make COVID-19 more dangerous.

Percent of Nonwhite Residents by  
Census Tract, 2020



Pollution Burden by  
Census Tract, 2017



Source: 2016-2020 American Community Survey Data, mapped on Social Explorer; Reina Rau, "[Asthma rates near oil refineries and terminals in Contra Costa County](#)" (2017)

*A few people in my family have respiratory issues. The elderly people in my family, my mom and my auntie – they can't breathe and they're always sick.*

BRANDY KHANSOUVONG, ASIAN PACIFIC ENVIRONMENTAL NETWORK & RICHMOND RESIDENT, to [THE GUARDIAN](#) (2022)

## TREND #3 : ONGOING DISPARITIES IN COVID-19 RECOVERY

**Black and Latino residents in Contra Costa County died from COVID-19 at elevated rates before vaccines became widely accessible.**

### COVID-19 Cases and Deaths Relative to White Residents, Contra Costa County (Through December 2020)

	African-American	Latino	Asian
Cases	2.5x	6.0x	1.4x
Deaths	1.3x	1.7x	0.9x

Source: Contra Costa County COVID-19 Coordinating Body: December 19, 2020 Equity Presentation Summary

Increased spread of the disease can also lead to increased levels of long COVID, which threatens to remove people from the workforce and imperil households dependent on the incomes of newly disabled family members.

## TREND #3 : ONGOING DISPARITIES IN COVID-19 RECOVERY

Thousands of residents in Contra Costa County still face rental debts incurred during the COVID-19 pandemic and eviction moratorium.

We estimate that, as of December 2022:

- There are **11,700 households** in Contra Costa County that are behind on rent.
- The cumulative rental debt totals **\$51.2 million**, or an average of **\$4,400 per household**.
- Roughly **6,600 children** live in these households behind on their rent.

For these families (and many others), surging inflation and the looming threat of a recession can only compound their ongoing financial burdens.

*Since tenants didn't have lawyers, [landlord] stories became over-simplified, morally and legally, in ways that forced families from their homes.*

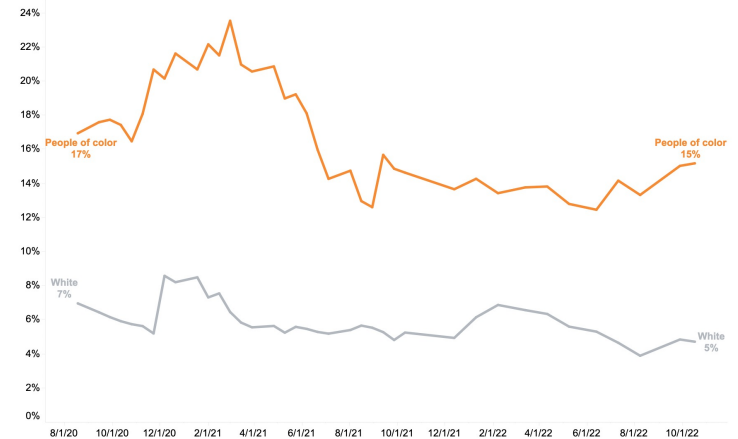
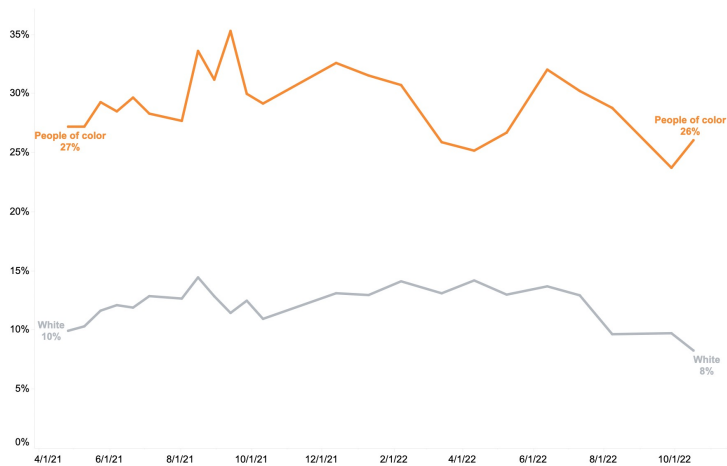
REV. MILLIE PHILLIPS, FAITH ALLIANCE  
for a MORAL ECONOMY,  
RECOUNTING THEIR [EXPERIENCE](#)  
[AS AN EVICTION COURT OBSERVER](#)  
IN CONTRA COSTA COUNTY (2022)

Source: National Equity Atlas, ["Rent Debt in America"](#) interactive dashboard (orig. 2021, updated Dec. 2022)

## TREND #3 : ONGOING DISPARITIES IN COVID-19 RECOVERY

Across the Bay Area, residents of color have been slower to recover financial losses from the pandemic, and still are likelier to struggle with meeting basic needs.

### Percent of Bay Area Households Reporting Employment Income Loss (L) and Experiencing Food Insecurity (R), Aug. 2020 to Oct. 2022



Source: Bay Area Equity Atlas, "[Bay Area Recovery Tracker](#)" interactive dashboard (2022)

# THREE KEY TAKEAWAYS

Antidiscrimination and equal opportunity policies alone have not flattened the racial and class disparities present over the past 60 years. **Advancing racial equity requires long-term commitment and explicit attention to the legacies of historical injury.**

Without equitable recovery efforts, the COVID-19 pandemic threatens to worsen generations-old racial wealth gaps. **The pandemic must be a lesson about how future crises (earthquakes, fires, floods) could also exacerbate long-term inequities.**

**Building equity demands robust data collection and tracking, including the sustained input of residents** who have lived experiences navigating the systems, structures, and institutions we seek to make more equitable.

# Bay Area Equity Atlas

Thank you!

Explore more data about our region on the Bay Area Equity Atlas at:  
<http://bayareaequityatlas.org>

Questions? Contact me at: [ryan@bayareaequityatlas.org](mailto:ryan@bayareaequityatlas.org)