

4. Housing



RESEARCH TEAM: Affordable housing development strategies

Grand Challenge: Affordable Housing

Key Terms:

Affordable housing, Latino new urbanism, sustainability, public health, nonprofit, Barrio Logan, redevelopment project area, community development corporations, redevelopment, revitalization, greening, green urbanism, NIMBYism, market-rate housing, profit incentives

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Student Members:

- Nohelia Patel - Rebuilding a Border Town: The case for developing affordable housing in San Ysidro, California
- Jason R. Goltiao - The Impact of the Nonprofit Sector on Affordable Housing in Barrio Logan
- Kendra M. McBean - Revitalization, Redevelopment, Greening: The Practices Shaping the Transformation of Affordable Housing
- Claire Tuttle - The Private Developers Role in Creating Single Family New Construction Affordable Housing

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Research Team Narrative

There is a shortage of affordable housing in the United States, especially in San Diego

and other high growth parts of California. There are many reasons for this. For example, NIMBYism, “Not In My Back Yard”, a prominent feeling among property owners, described by Fulton as “the attitude of residents and homeowners who oppose new development simply because it would be located nearby” (pg 412). By reducing development opportunities Nimbyism effectively increases housing costs. Most new development today is beyond the means of even middle class families. “Middle-income Americans in many parts of the country are finding that high housing costs deny them the opportunity to own a home, the classic and enduring symbol of the American Dream” (Schwartz et al: 1992:535). There is insufficient affordable rental housing for low income families in San Diego and, in addition, existing housing in low income communities, which is generally more affordable, is often located in the vicinity of environmental hazards.

Our research group analyzed affordable development strategies that could be utilized to promote the development of affordable housing, and regenerating low income communities, The main methods used to conduct this research were: interviews with non-profit and government experts, direct observation, analyzing case studies, and GIS mapping. Our research introduces new and innovative strategies of affordable housing that have proved successful.

Nohelia Patel examined the poor conditions of low-income housing in San Ysidro. The city is not adequately meeting the needs of the growing population. To address this problem, Casa Familiar, a community development organization, engaged in an extensive planning process. Nohelia hypothesized that affordable housing could benefit the community as well as provide affordable housing opportunities for the low-income families of San Ysidro. Findings of this study were that urban infill housing could represent a development strategy that would revitalize San Ysidro's historic center and increase the urban vitality of a low income Latino neighborhood while also empowering current residents.

Jason Goltiao examined a case study of nonprofit organizations working within the blighted low income community of Barrio Logan. The community is situated along the harbor of San Diego, beneath the Coronado Bridge and Interstate 5. Residents are subjected to high levels of air pollution and there is very little outside investment in the community. The Environmental Health Coalition spearheaded a campaign, which resulted in the closure of a heavy air polluter located right next to residential homes. Together with other nonprofit organizations, , residents have successfully organized dynamic coalitions to organize, empower and advocate for environmental improvements in the community.

Kendra McBean examined Community Development Corporations (CDCs). The development of environmentally efficient affordable housing that increase the longevity of affordable housing has been on the agendas of various non-profit organizations and community development corporations. To help address the need for affordable housing, and uplift minorities living in impoverished communities and create more sustainable communities, Community Development Corporations and other non-profits housing

organizations have responded with a number of strategies such as economic redevelopment, innovative development, and mixed-use housing.

Claire Tuttle examined the role of the private developer in meeting the need for affordable housing. There is profit to be made in new construction single-family homes when developers make full use of government subsidy programs, to make them more affordable. Claire examined a case study in Orange Cove, CA that contracted with a private developer to construct affordable single-family detached dwellings. The project was a success for the developer, the city and the new residents.

Evidence of positive outcomes from affordable housing projects and programs is evident throughout our research. The negative stigma attached to affordable housing needs to be erased. This change in attitude can come from the exposure of positive housing programs. People fear that allowing the development of affordable housing in their neighborhood, will negatively affect property values because affordable housing is associated with tacky construction and the fear that more crime will come to the neighborhood. Can attitudes change about affordable housing by showing people those new-development strategies break the negative stereotypes? Our research examines development strategies for affordable housing programs and projects that demonstrate the negative stereotypes are not always correct.

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