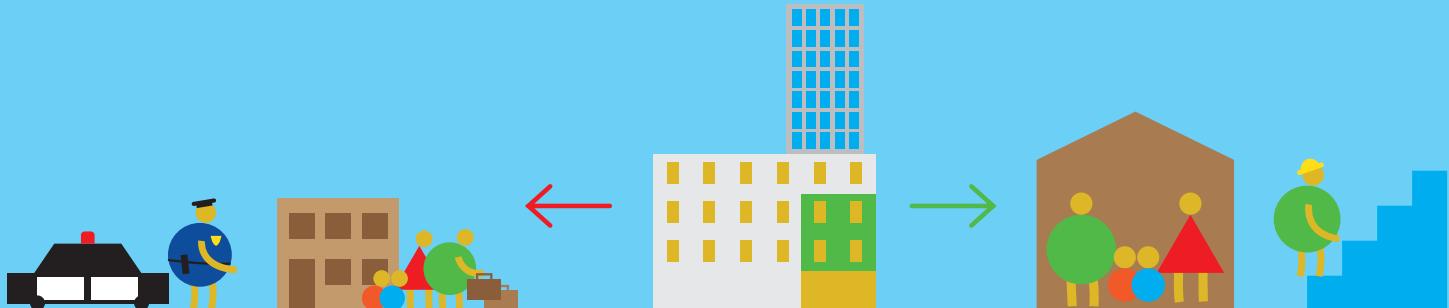


# Assessing Health and Equity Impacts of the Proposed Reef Development Project in South Central Los Angeles



# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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**We wish to acknowledge and thank additional members of our Advisory Committee, many of whom represent participating organizations in the UNIDAD Coalition. Our Advisory Committee contributed to the guidance, direction, content, and framing of this report:**

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**We also deeply appreciate the expertise and time of those who contributed to the findings of this study, including focus group participants:**

Amparo	Esperanza	Moisés
Amir	Flavia	Natividad
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Antonia	Josefina	Patricia
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Carthon	Lourdes	Verónica
Concepción	Margarita	Victor
Cynthia	María	Wallace
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## Suggested citation:

Human Impact Partners. October 2015. Assessing Health and Equity Impacts of the Reef Development Project in South Central Los Angeles; Oakland, CA.

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This report was supported by funding from The California Endowment.

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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

## INTRODUCTION

The Reef Development Project plans for the total renovation and expansion of a commercial area in South Central Los Angeles – an area that is located in the Southeast Los Angeles Community Plan Area and the City's 9th Council District. The project would cover 9.7 acres, and would include a 208-room hotel, two high-rise condominium towers, 528 mid-rise residential units, and 21 low-rise live/work residential units.

This research project, informed by a Health Impact Assessment framework, was conducted to provide empirical data on the potential health and equity impacts that the proposed Reef Development Project could have on the South Central Los Angeles community, and to propose recommendations to the developers and the City. The study was conducted with the additional goal to engage and empower community members, including neighborhood residents and stakeholders, to participate in the development process.

**Key Finding:** The Reef Development Project will place thousands of South Central Los Angeles residents at high or very high risk of financial strain or displacement.

## FINDINGS

Gentrification often results when developments like the Reef Development Project occur in neighborhoods like South Central. Gentrification can lead to financial strain and **indirect displacement** – a kind of displacement that occurs when residents and businesses are gradually priced out of the area and must involuntarily leave.

An estimated 4,445 renters who live within  $\frac{1}{2}$  mile of the proposed Reef Development Project are already experiencing housing cost burdens and could be at high or very high risk of financial strain or displacement as a result of the development. An additional 39,311 renters who live between  $\frac{1}{2}$  mile and 2 miles of the project could be at moderate risk. Overall, 52% of the nearly 84,000 residents living within 2 miles of the project could be at risk of financial strain or displacement as a result of the Reef Development Project.

Some focus group participants from the area anticipate they may become homeless.

*"I keep thinking, 'What am I going to do if this doesn't work out? Where am I going to go? Am I going to see my neighbors again? Where am I going to find this kind of community again? Going to have to start over. Going to be homeless, without a family.'"*

– Anayetzy

## WHY THIS MATTERS TO HEALTH

Community residents who experience financial strain and/or displacement may experience a wide variety of chronic stress-related physical and mental illnesses, including anxiety, depression, hypertension, heart disease, obesity, diabetes, and sleep disorders. Additional constraints on health-protecting resources and exposures to health-damaging environments such as substandard and overcrowded housing could further contribute to a variety of negative health outcomes. Disruption of social networks can lead to additional health challenges, including exposure to fragmented social environments that have higher rates of violence and sexually transmitted diseases.

Multi-generational traumas can result from serial forced displacement resulting in a condition called "**root shock**". Black and Latin@ residents who located to South Central Los Angeles to escape racial and political discrimination and violence brought with them the memories and traumas of previous displacements, which could be exacerbated by this project.

## THE CONTEXT

Displacement and financial pressures from the Reef Development Project will happen within the context of ongoing challenges with housing affordability and homelessness that are happening in the area.

- Los Angeles lost 65% of state and federal funding for affordable housing between 2009 and 2014
- Over half a million affordable rental homes are needed in the city
- Lack of affordable housing is the main cause of homelessness in the U.S.
- Los Angeles has the largest homeless population of any urban area in the U.S.

Most South Central Los Angeles households are occupied by renters and nearly half of residents are in poverty. On average, neighborhood residents earn half the household income as the City as a whole. Many businesses do not have leases for their business spaces, or have leases that will expire soon.

	<b>South Central</b>	<b>City of Los Angeles</b>
<b>Average household income*</b>	\$36,830	\$77,000
<b>Residents in poverty*</b>	45%	22%
<b>Renters*</b>	79%	62%
<b>Median monthly rent for 1 bdrm apt**</b>	\$1000	\$1830
<b>&gt; 1 person per room (overcrowded)*</b>	41%	14%
<b>Workers who took transit to work*</b>	26%	11%
<b>Workers who drove alone to work*</b>	49%	67%

\* 2009-2013 American Community Survey

\*\* Zumper.com, Sept. 2015

Residents are already struggling intensely to afford housing, and are engaging in a variety of methods to address this problem: by making difficult choices on what necessities to do without, by living in overcrowded and substandard housing, and by looking for additional sources of income.

Despite these challenges, residents and small business owners in the neighborhood have developed strong social ties and a sense of attachment to the area, and they want to stay. Many of the residents and businesses in South Central have been in the neighborhood for 10-20 years or more.

Residents of the neighborhood came to South Central seeking economic opportunity, and built a thriving community. Over time, however, the city began to engage in a variety of different policies that led to increased segregation, concentrated poverty, and limited opportunity. This was followed by prolonged civic disinvestment that has perpetuated poverty and segregation to this day.

## **RECOMMENDED ACTIONS**

The developers of the Reef Development Project and the City of Los Angeles have a unique opportunity to develop this property in a way that reduces the potential to further traumatize and harm the physical and mental health of current residents through increased financial strain and displacement.

Rather than continuing the legacy of racism and segregation through the replacement of current residents with those who hold more economic and political power, the developers and the City have an opportunity to engage in a cutting-edge trauma-informed approach to community development. Trauma Informed Community Building (TICB) is a new innovative approach to development that recognizes the existing community as assets and uses these assets as the building blocks for the future. Developers and the City of Los Angeles should work together to ensure that the Reef Development Project is developed using the four guiding principles of TICB: 1) Do no harm, 2) Acceptance, 3) Community empowerment, and 4) Reflective process. Findings from this study show that the community already has assets such as social cohesion among community members and among small business owners and the community. The development should be structured in a way that honors and enhances these assets.

The project should be developed in collaboration with community members to ensure that economic opportunities and affordable housing options are incorporated into the plan. As Benjamin Torres, President and CEO of CDTech states, “South LA residents aren’t trying to keep outsiders out of their backyards; they just want a fair opportunity to be able to stay.” In addition to these overarching recommendations to take a TICB approach and to develop the project with community members, we also recommend a number of specific actions for the developers to implement directly and/or through a community benefits agreement, and also for the City to consider.



*"If they're going to go forward with [the Reef development], ... take us into account and [have] opportunities for us. Don't leave us out. Don't discriminate against us. We're human beings and we have needs. We are not living for free. We are paying our rent with the sweat from our brows. Right now, we aren't making it. We aren't even living day-to-day. I want this to be considered. But they're not going to take us into account. They're pushing us to the brink."*

– Natividad



*"We gotta remember that this used to be a healthy community. We gotta work on rebuilding up what we used to have." – Cynthia*

## ABOUT THIS REPORT

This study is based on a Health Impact Assessment (HIA) framework. HIA is a public engagement and decision-support tool that can be used to assess project plans and make recommendations to improve health outcomes associated with those plans. The fundamental goal of HIA is to ensure that health and health inequities are considered in decision-making processes using an objective and scientific approach, and engaging stakeholders in the process.

The following methods were employed in this project:

- Review of the scientific (peer-reviewed) and grey (non peer-reviewed) literature;
- Analysis of existing data sources, such as the American Community Survey and from the Los Angeles County Department of Public Health;
- Focus groups with residents of South Central Los Angeles; and
- Interviews with small business owners, the principal of a local school, a researcher from the University of Southern California, and a pastor from a local church.

This project was conducted by Human Impact Partners of Oakland, CA in partnership with Esperanza Community Housing Corporation and Strategic Actions for a Just Economy. Further guidance, direction, content, and framing was provided by advisory committee members from: Community Development Technologies, TRUST South LA, Physicians for Social Responsibility – Los Angeles, Natural Resources Defense Council, Public Counsel, St. Francis Center, Advancement Project, All People's Community Center, Los Angeles County Public Health Department, Occidental College, and a community advocate/column writer.

This project was supported by funding from The California Endowment.

Human Impact Partners works to transform the policies and places people need to live healthy lives by increasing the consideration of health and equity in decision-making.

For more about Human Impact Partners or to access the full report and sources cited in this summary, visit: [www.humanimpact.org](http://www.humanimpact.org).

## RECOMMENDATIONS



### Produce and Protect Affordable Housing:

Affordable housing should be provided, with a diverse strategy of both producing new on- and off-site units and preserving old units. An emphasis should be put on providing housing for families, and a significant portion of housing should be set aside for extremely low income people.



#### *Through Developer*

New on-site units at levels of affordability that reach very low income and extremely low income residents.

Example: On-site housing: 25% of units affordable to very low income households.

Total rental apartments for renters: 15% for residents with very low incomes (those who make less than 50% of the area median income) and 10% for residents with extremely low incomes (those who make less than 30% of the area median income).



#### *Through Developer & Community Benefits Agreement*

Funds for acquiring land and building new off-site units.

Funds to preserve and rehab existing units.

Example: \$20,000,000 paid to City Affordable Housing Trust Fund or community benefits fund for affordable housing.



#### *City*

Target new investments and policies to achieve new off-site affordable units.

Preserve old/existing affordable units.



### Prevent Displacement:

Programs should be put in place to prevent the displacement of local residents from their homes. Measures should include staffing for renter advocacy and organizing initiatives, funds for tenant associations and emergency rental assistance, enforcement of existing renter protections,

and the establishment of new renter protections in the surrounding neighborhoods.

To achieve neighborhood stabilization goals, resources should prioritize residents who are most vulnerable to displacement in the areas closest to the project site.



#### *Through Developer & Community Benefits Agreement*

Funds for staffing tenant organizing/advocacy and legal services initiatives.

Funds for tenant associations and emergency rental assistance.



#### *City*

Funds for tenant associations and emergency rent relief.

Enforcement of existing renter protections.

Establish enforceable “anti-displacement/no net loss” zones within a 1-mile radius of the project site. Create a community-City partnership to monitor and collaborate around anti-displacement efforts.



### House and Protect the Homeless:

Funding should be provided to house and protect the homeless in the area. In addition to producing/financing permanent supportive housing, their rights to rest and to maintain possessions in encampments must be protected and they should be provided with facilities and case management services.



#### *Through Developer*

Provide on-site rent-free facilities for case management services. Maintain rent-free status for 20 years.



#### *Through Developer & Community Benefits Agreement*

Funds for permanent supportive housing for chronically homeless residents.

Funds for case management services.



#### *City*

Provide facilities and case management services.

Enforce/enact policies to protect the rights of the homeless.



## Create Good Jobs and Career Pathways for Local Residents:

A Community Jobs Training and Placement program should be created to provide jobs for local residents, including construction jobs created by the development and permanent jobs with the businesses located on site after construction.

Funding should be provided for workforce development and job pipelines. Local high schools should be partners in developing career pathways for students, and the community should have an ongoing role in monitoring jobs programs.

### Through Developer



#### Examples:

Construction jobs for the development: 40% local hiring, with 20% for disadvantaged residents including those who are homeless or aged-out foster youth.

Future retail jobs: 50% local hiring, with 30% for disadvantaged residents.

Maintenance jobs: 100% local residents and require a living wage.

### Through Developer & Community Benefits Agreement



Establish a policy through the CBA for community-based monitoring and enforcement of local and targeted hiring policies. Provide funding to support this activity.

Funds for workforce development and job pipelines, including community-based training and placement programs.

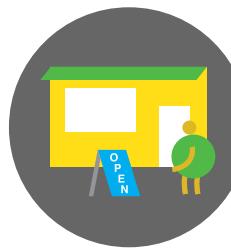
Example: \$300,000 to community benefits fund to support Jobs Coordinator and the creation of a Community Jobs Training and Placement program.

### City



Funds for workforce development and job pipelines to supplement project-related funds.

Leverage existing City services to bolster Community Jobs Training and Placement program.



## Support Small Businesses:

Small businesses, both on- and off-site, should be supported with funding, support, and technical assistance. Care should be taken to support existing community-serving small businesses in the neighborhood. Innovative models that enhance economic security for residents vulnerable to displacement – such as cooperative businesses run by local residents – should be supported.

### Through Developer



Example: Create incubator space for local and community-based small businesses.

Provide a percentage of retail space at discounted rent levels for community-serving businesses that are culturally and economically accessible to local residents.

### Through Developer & Community Benefits Agreement



Funds for support and technical assistance for both on-site and off-site small businesses.

Example: 10% of retail space for community-serving businesses at discounted rent.

\$300,000 for small business support fund.

### City



Support and technical assistance for both on-site and off-site small businesses.

Establish programs/policies to protect off-site businesses from displacement due to rising rents.



### Maintain Public Transit Use by Local Residents:

Access to public transit should be maintained for those who most utilize it and depend upon it – the current residents of the neighborhood. Utilize actions listed above for housing and economic development to avoid replacing current transit-users living in a transit-oriented neighborhood with new residents who will be less likely to use transit.



#### Through Developer

Provide monthly transit passes to tenants living in affordable housing units on site.



#### Through Developer & Community Benefits Agreement

Funds to provide monthly transit passes to tenants living in affordable housing units off site.



#### City

Maximize City, County and transit agency services for low-income transit riders in the area.



### Protect the Safety and Security of the Community:

The safety and security of the community should be protected. Police should be available to protect the residents of the area, but at the same time, programs should be put in place to make sure that neighborhood residents, including homeless residents, are not criminalized or targeted by police or other security staff.



#### Through Developer

Create event programming on site to raise awareness and build capacity among community members and security professionals around anti-criminalization practices.

Rules and regulations should be put in place so that low-income residents are not discriminated against, by management or other residents, within the development.



### Through Developer & Community Benefits Agreement

Programs should be put in place to make sure that neighborhood residents are not criminalized or targeted by security staff.

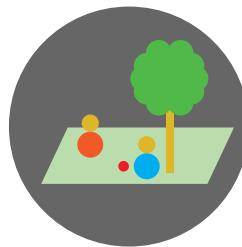
Establish a community board overseeing the policies and practices of on-site and off-site security.



#### City

Work in collaboration with the on-site community oversight board to extend the anti-criminalization policies and practices to include City and County police forces.

Police should be available to protect the residents of the area, but at the same time, programs should be put in place to make sure that neighborhood residents are not criminalized or targeted by police or other security staff.



### Provide Green Space for Neighborhood Residents:

Green space created by new development should be made public and open to neighborhood residents, with space planned for community gardens and local produce sales. Funding should be provided to create and improve off site parks and to carry on active programming for children and families.



#### Through Developer

Green space created by the development should be made public and open to neighborhood residents, with space planned for community gardens and local produce sales.



#### Through Developer & Community Benefits Agreement

Funding should be provided to create and improve off site parks and to carry on active programming for children and families.



#### City

Funding should be provided to create and improve off site parks and to carry on active programming for children and families.

# ABOUT THIS STUDY

## GOALS AND PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to provide empirical data on the potential health and equity impacts that the proposed Reef Development Project (also called the “Reef Project”) could have on the South Central Los Angeles community and to propose recommendations to developers and the City to address those impacts. An additional goal is to engage and empower community members, including neighborhood residents, and stakeholders to participate in the development process.

## FRAMEWORK

This study is based on a Health Impact Assessment (HIA) framework. HIA is a public engagement and decision-support tool that can be used to assess policy proposals and make recommendations to improve health outcomes associated with those proposals. The fundamental goal of an HIA is to ensure that health and health inequities are considered in decision-making processes using an objective and scientific approach, and engaging stakeholders in the process.

## METHODS

This report focuses on understanding the effects of the proposed development on gentrification, financial strain, and displacement. We employed the following methods:

- Review of the scientific (peer-reviewed) and grey (non peer-reviewed) literature;
- Analysis of existing data sources, such as the American Community Survey (2009-2013) and data from the Los Angeles County Department of Public Health (2011);
- Focus groups with 41 residents of the South Central Los Angeles neighborhood; and
- Interviews with six subject matter experts, including small business owners, the principal of a local school, a researcher from the University of Southern California, and a pastor from a local church.

The data collection area for what is referred to as South Central for this study was established through consultation with community partners that work in the area. Partners from Esperanza and SAJE

identified census tracts to use, and a contact from the Office of Health Assessment and Epidemiology at the Los Angeles County Department of Public Health identified the community planning area most closely aligned with the collection of their health data.

Additional data was obtained, analyzed, and utilized from a survey of South Central neighborhood residents conducted by SAJE in 2015 and a survey of small business owners conducted by CDTech in 2015.

See Appendices A-C for more information on the HIA, stakeholder engagement, and methods used.

The report will be submitted in response to the Draft Environmental Impact Report that was released on September 17, 2015.

## OUR PERSPECTIVE ON HEALTH

This project brings a public health and equity perspective to the decisions about the Reef Development Project in South Central. Given this, it is important to understand what is meant by “health” in this report. We use the World Health Organization’s definition: “Health is a state of complete physical, mental, and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity.”<sup>1</sup>

While health is influenced by our genes and the personal choices we make, **over 50% of our health and well-being** is determined by social and environmental conditions, such as where we live, whether we have a job, and larger social and political forces like racism and sexism.<sup>2</sup> The public health community calls these the social determinants of health, or the circumstances in which people are born, grow up, live, learn, work, and age and the systems in place to deal with illness. These circumstances are shaped by a wider set of economic and social policies, and there are many opportunities for such policies to promote health and build healthy communities.<sup>3</sup>

In this context, we recognize that the social and economic factors that influence housing conditions, gentrification and displacement could also influence the health and equity impacts of new development on the residents currently residing in the community. Therefore, this report includes a discussion of the social and economic factors that determine our health.

# HISTORICAL CONTEXT OF SOUTH CENTRAL LOS ANGELES

The City of Los Angeles, which was once a part of Mexico, has always included Latin@<sup>i</sup> residents. In more recent history, the neighborhood of South Central Los Angeles has reflected changing demographics and city landscapes. For at least the last 80 years, residents of South Central have primarily been people of color who relocated to the neighborhood to seek economic opportunity and to escape discrimination and violence in other areas.

Los Angeles became a major destination for African Americans during the 1940s, with the increase in demand for wartime manufacturing jobs drawing people away from areas of discrimination and violence in other parts of the U.S.<sup>4</sup> The African American population in Los Angeles leaped from 75,000 in 1940 to 650,000 in 1965.<sup>5</sup> Leading up to WWII, South Central developed into the most predominant of several concentrated African American regions in Los Angeles, home to primarily middle-class homeowners. South Central was one of the only parts of Los Angeles where African Americans could own property, owing to the existence of racially restrictive covenants on property in most of the city.<sup>6</sup> After race-based zoning was found unconstitutional in 1917, these covenants, enforced by law, became one of the primary mechanisms to produce segregation.<sup>4</sup>

African American residents developed South Central into an active community, with thriving businesses, including many jazz and R&B clubs.<sup>6</sup> Pastor Epps, who leads the Second Baptist Church, located in South Central Los Angeles approximately one mile southeast of the Reef project area, describes the context of when his church was built and what the African American community was like at the time, and for the decades to follow.

*“[Second Baptist Church was] organized in 1885 – it is the oldest black Baptist church in LA, uninterrupted for the last 130 years.... [The current] location was built in 1926 by noted black architect Paul Williams... It is a cultural landmark and it is designated by the Department of the Interior as a historic site... When the property was purchased and the building was erected, this was the hub of the black community. The only hotel where black entertainers could stay when they came to the City was nearby, there was a black newspaper in the area... People would walk to church... there was involvement in civil rights, and MLK spoke here...”*

– Pastor Epps, Second Baptist Church

White residents, fueled by fears about declining property values and enticed by public subsidies available for suburban homeownership, began to move to suburban areas farther away from the urban core in a migration pattern that became known as “white flight”.<sup>7,8</sup> The shift in population resulted in a further concentration of low-income people of color in increasingly disinvested urban centers, with African American residents making up the majority population of South Los Angeles<sup>ii</sup>, and Latin@s concentrating primarily throughout East Los Angeles cities.<sup>8</sup> As a result, inner-cities like South Central came to represent areas of isolation for low-income communities of color in neighborhoods that lacked viable economic and social opportunities and services that are “critical for full participation” in society.<sup>9</sup>

Though the U.S. Supreme Court struck the right to enact restrictive covenants on real estate based on race in 1948, allowing African Americans some movement into the more suburban areas of Los Angeles, public and private entities continued to segregate people of color in the inner cities of South and East Los Angeles.<sup>8</sup> The U.S. postwar period and the decades to follow were infused with programs that relied on practices such as redlining and slum clearance to ‘clean up’ disinvested urban neighborhoods.<sup>10</sup> These urban renewal programs were and are widely criticized for being fundamentally discriminatory against low-income people and people of color, as so many of these programs revolved around the razing of low-income residential areas to construct residential, retail, entertainment, and office spaces that were unaffordable to existing residents.<sup>10</sup> These

<sup>i</sup>Latin@ is used throughout this report to represent Latino/Latina

<sup>ii</sup> For the purposes of this report, the terms South Central Los Angeles and South Los Angeles are considered to reflect the same general area, though South Los Angeles may incorporate more area than the study area defined as South Central.

## HISTORICAL CONTEXT OF SOUTH CENTRAL LOS ANGELES

unaffordable amenities were developed amidst inner city public housing dwellings that were not maintained and did not meet the housing demand that was left as a result of slum clearance and the razing of blighted areas. This “persistent civic neglect, compounded by the postwar outmigration of much of the community’s middle and upper middle classes” further developed South Central into an area of concentrated poverty and social isolation for its predominantly African American population.<sup>11</sup>

The 1965 Watts uprising occurred in South Central over a span of nearly one week. The uprising was in response to an incident of police brutality that took place in the Watts neighborhood on the night of August 11. The McCone Commission, however, released a report that focused on other factors that led to the uprising such as the “spiral of failure” that Los Angeles and other urban zones in the U.S. were producing.<sup>5</sup> The report referred to the lack of adequate education and employment opportunities in neighborhoods like Watts and other areas in South Central that led to a spiral of frustrations, stress, violent outbreaks, and a lack of social success or mobility for those who lived in such disinvested and disadvantaged areas. The report addressed the “de facto segregation in the urban core,” and the difference in life outcomes that segregation produces for low-income people of color in relation to their wealthier White counterparts.<sup>5</sup> Another response to the Watts uprising was the outmigration of some African Americans to more eastern parts of the county like Compton, which was at the time a suburban, middle class area.<sup>4</sup> This then sparked the migration of Latin@ residents into South Central, which took place gradually over the next couple of decades.<sup>8</sup>

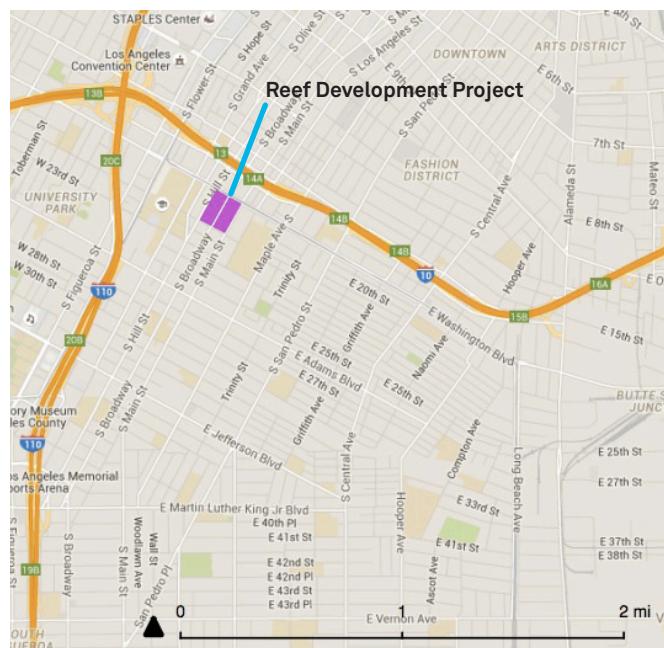
Nearly thirty years later, the pattern repeated. The area experienced continued extreme economic inequality and racial tension due to persistent civic disinvestment. Another act of police brutality – this time the beating of Rodney King and the complete acquittal of all LAPD officers involved in the incident – was met with the 1992 Los Angeles uprising.<sup>12</sup> Author Joy DeGruy explained that these actions could be a manifestation of “post traumatic slave syndrome” when people experience hopelessness, depression, and anger as a result of multigenerational trauma and oppression, coupled with a lack of opportunity to heal or access resources available in society.<sup>13</sup>

In the 1980s, South Central once again became a neighborhood where people of color relocated to seek economic opportunity and to escape discrimination and violence in other areas. As African Americans moved away from the inner cities to developing suburban areas like Riverside and Palmdale,<sup>14</sup> South Central became a primary destination for incoming Latin@ immigrants seeking refuge from domestic political violence that was largely a result of U.S. intervention.<sup>15</sup> South Central transformed from a demographic comprised of 20% Latin@ in 1980 to nearly 40% Latin@ in 1990.<sup>12</sup> These migrants were in search of affordable housing and work, which they could only find in manufacturing and low-wage service jobs—the two industries most accessible in South Central. Therefore, Latin@ residents came to represent the majority of the working poor in South Central and other inner cities of Los Angeles.<sup>11</sup> Today, South Central is home to a resident population that is over 80% Latin@,<sup>16</sup> primarily representing families originating from México and Central America. Los Angeles’ history of discriminatory zoning that led to segregation, along with prolonged civic disinvestment in its urban core, has had deep and sustained impacts on the current state of poverty and social isolation in South Central Los Angeles.<sup>11</sup> Consequently, the City of Los Angeles—and the South Central neighborhood, in particular—continues to be an area of racial and ethnic tension and inequality, that perpetuates residential segregation and poverty concentration, specifically for low-income people of color.<sup>7,9,17</sup>

# THE REEF DEVELOPMENT PROJECT IN THE CONTEXT OF SOUTH CENTRAL LOS ANGELES TODAY

The Reef Project plans for the total renovation and expansion of the existing Reef building which is located in the City's 9th Council District in a commercial area in South Central Los Angeles. Currently the Reef is a 12-story building with 860,000 square feet of space located at 1933 S. Broadway (see Figure 1). It houses LA Mart, a showroom for premium "gift, home furniture, and lifestyle lines," Maker City LA, a co-working space with access to shared media and design tools, and the Magic Box, an event venue.<sup>18</sup>

**Figure 1: Location of proposed Reef Development Project**



The expanded Reef Project proposes modifications to the existing Reef building, along with construction of 1.7 million square feet of new development on space currently occupied by surface parking lots and a warehouse, which would be demolished.<sup>19</sup> As described in the Initial Study for environmental review, the proposed mixed-use development would contain multiple buildings ranging from 85 to 420 feet in height, and a wide variety of uses, including residential, commercial, retail/restaurant, hotel, grocery store, public open space, and at least 2,733 off-street parking spaces.<sup>19</sup> In total the Project would cover 9.7 acres, and would include a 208-room hotel, two high-rise condominium towers, 528 mid-rise residential

units, and 21 low-rise live/work residential units.<sup>19</sup> According to a local real estate blog, the development of the Reef Project has the potential to bring an "Arts-District-style reboot" to the neighborhood.<sup>20</sup>

**Figure 2: Location of the proposed Reef Development Project. Currently zoned industrial, the project will require numerous public entitlements, including a general plan amendment and zone change.**



To help understand the larger social context that the Reef project is taking place in – and the needs of the immediate community – in this section we describe who lives in the area and their health status; transit and housing characteristics of residents; and homelessness, disinvestment, and policing.

**Figure 3: A rendering of the proposed Reef Development Project, showing a mix of low-rise and high-rise buildings.**

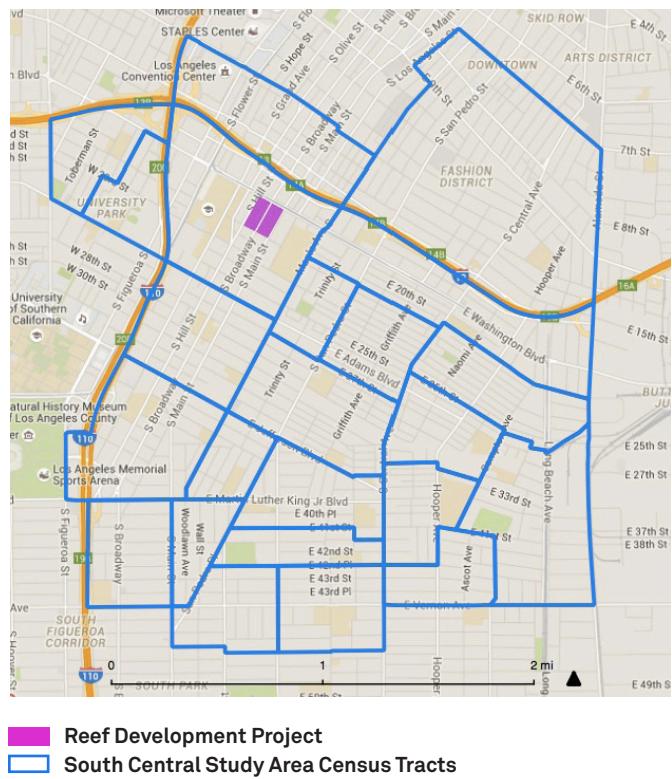


# THE REEF DEVELOPMENT PROJECT IN THE CONTEXT OF SOUTH CENTRAL LOS ANGELES TODAY

## DEMOGRAPHICS

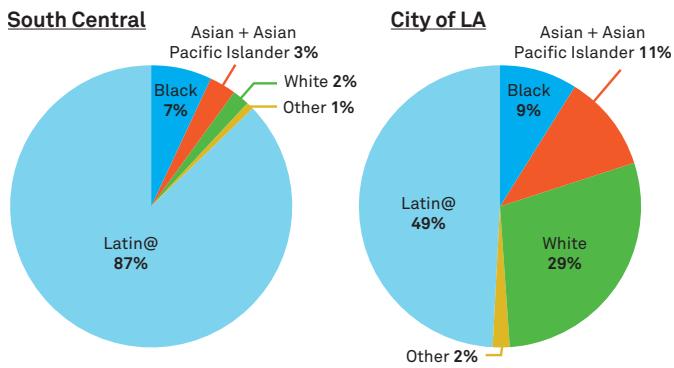
Demographics for the area surrounding the project are based on the census tracts shown in Figure 4. Collectively, these census Tracts comprise the area known as South Central.

**Figure 4: Project area census tracts and Southeast Community Planning Area**



South Central has a significantly higher population of Latin@ residents (87%) as compared to Los Angeles as a whole (49%) (Figure 5).

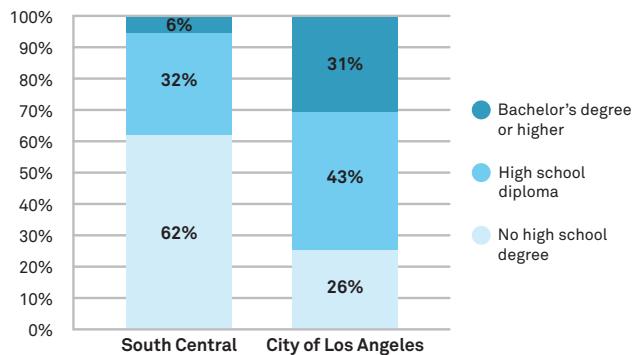
**Figure 5: Race/Ethnicity in South Central and City of Los Angeles, 2009-2013**



Source: U.S. Census, American Community Survey 2009-2013

Educational attainment is lower in South Central than in Los Angeles, with 62% of residents having no high school diploma and only 6% with a Bachelor's degree (Figure 6).

**Figure 6: Educational Attainment in South Central and City of Los Angeles, 2009-2013**



Source: U.S. Census, American Community Survey 2009-2013

South Central residents also earn less than half of their Los Angeles counterparts. From 2009-2013 the mean household income in South Central was about \$36,830 as compared to \$77,000 in Los Angeles. Respondents to the survey conducted by SAJE reported very low incomes, with 45% of the 131 respondents reporting making under \$10,000 a year (Table 1).

**Table 1: Incomes Reported by Respondents to SAJE survey (N = 131)**

Annual income	Percent of responses
Less than \$10,000	45%
\$10,001-\$20,000	40%
\$20,000-\$30,000	15%

Poverty rates are also high in the South Central: 45% of residents were in poverty compared to 22% in Los Angeles from 2009-2013.

## HEALTH STATUS

The Los Angeles County Health Survey, conducted in 2011 by the County Department of Public Health, provides data on the health status of South Central residents.<sup>21</sup> Health outcomes are reported for the Southeast Community Planning Area (CPA) and compared to the County of Los Angeles (rather than the City.) The Southeast CPA covers a considerably larger area than the census tracts used to report demographic data, and also does not include several of the northern tracts, as shown below in Figure 7.

# THE REEF DEVELOPMENT PROJECT IN THE CONTEXT OF SOUTH CENTRAL LOS ANGELES TODAY

**Figure 7: Southeast Community Planning Area (CPA) in relation to South Central census tracts**

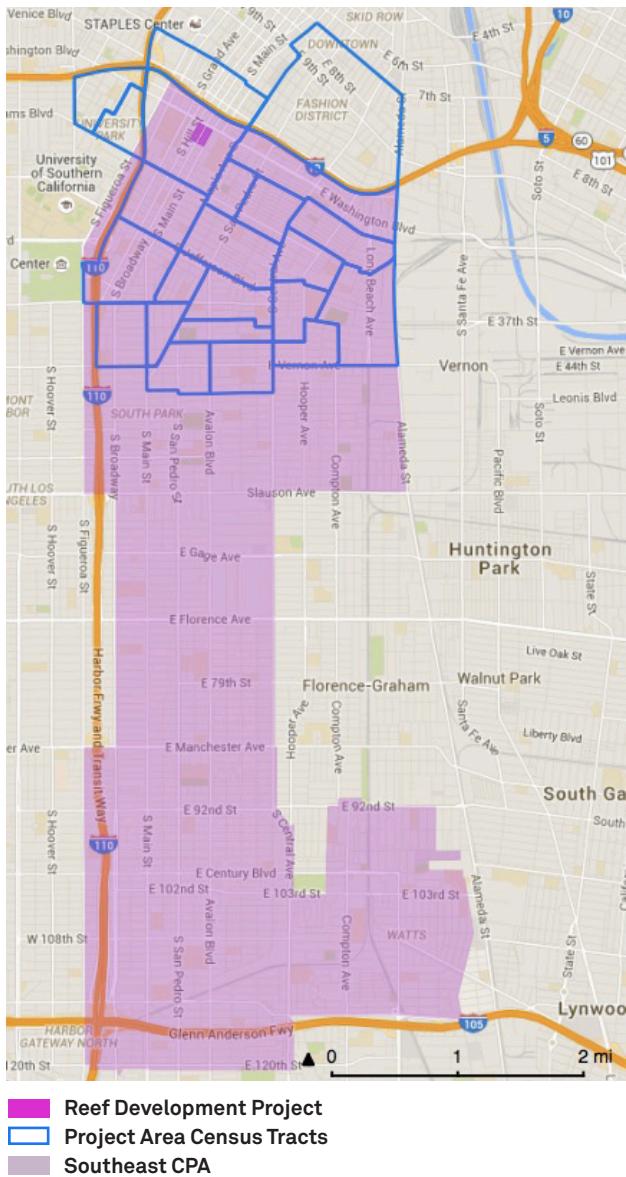


Table 2 describes the health of residents in the Southeast CPA and the County for several common measures of well-being. While there are little differences for chronic diseases such as diabetes and hypertension, a much higher percentage of adults report that their health is “fair” or “poor” (rather than “excellent,” “very good,” or “good”) in the Southeast CPA than in the County as a whole. Self rated health status is widely considered to be a good predictor of illness and death.<sup>22</sup>

Indeed the death rate is also significantly higher for the Southeast CPA than in the County, with 698 deaths per 100,000 people as compared to 581 deaths.

**Table 2: Health Indicators for the Southeast Community Planning Area and Los Angeles County**

	Southeast CPA	Los Angeles County	Year
Adults diagnosed with diabetes	8.3%*	9.5%	2011
Adults diagnosed with hypertension	24.6%	24.0%	2011
Adults reporting “fair” or “poor” health status	34.5%	20.7%	2011
Death Rate per 100,000 people	698	581	2012

\* Estimate is statistically unstable

## TRANSIT AND COMMUTING

The 2014 Southeast Los Angeles Community Plan states that mixed-use areas, especially those developed in public transit rich neighborhoods, are designed to produce a “community where people can shop, live and work with reduced reliance on the automobile.”<sup>23</sup> The neighborhood is served by the Metro Blue Line, the most heavily used light rail line in Los Angeles,<sup>24</sup> with the Line station located one block from the site.



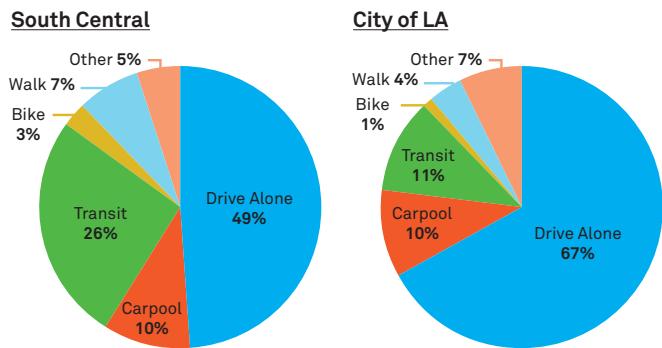
*“I like that everything is accessible and everything is around me. Laundromat, stores... I don’t need a car, I can walk everywhere... the buses are accessible.”*  
– Verónica

*“I don’t even have a car. I walk everywhere. Fortunately things are close by.”* – Flavia

Census data confirms that residents of South Central are much more likely to take transit, and less likely to drive alone when commuting to work than residents of Los Angeles as a whole. As shown in Figure 8, 26% of workers in South Central took transit to work, as compared to 11% in the City as a whole. These data do not capture how residents travel for other purposes, such as running errands, although residents in focus groups discussed their reliance on walking and transit for a variety of trip types.

# THE REEF DEVELOPMENT PROJECT IN THE CONTEXT OF SOUTH CENTRAL LOS ANGELES TODAY

**Figure 8: Commute Mode in South Central and the City of Los Angeles, 2009-2013**



Source: U.S. Census, American Community Survey 2009-2013

## HOUSING

Renter households dominate South Central, to a much greater extent than the City of Los Angeles. From 2009-2013, 79% of occupied housing units in South Central were home to renters, compared to 62% in Los Angeles. Among the households surveyed by SAJE, 93% rented their homes, and many respondents reported having lived in their homes for many years.

Table 3 shows that of the 104 respondents, more than half have lived in their homes for over 10 years. The average length of residency in the neighborhood for focus group participants was 21 years.

**Table 3: Years Living in Home Reported by Respondents to SAJE survey (N = 104)**

Years living in home	Percent of respondents
<2 years	17%
5-10 years	34%
10-15 years	14%
15-20 years	14%
>20 years	21%

Zumper, a rental real estate market trend and real estate listing company, reports that rents in the City of Los Angeles reached an all time high in September of 2015. Median asking rent for one-bedroom apartments in Los Angeles was \$1,830.<sup>25</sup> In comparison, median rent for a one-bedroom in South Central was \$1,000, one of the lowest neighborhood rents in the City. Respondents to the SAJE survey reported lower rents: an average monthly rent of \$852, for a variety of apartment sizes. This is likely a reflection of the fact that many respondents live in rent stabilized apartments, and have been living in these apartments for many years.

## HOUSING AFFORDABILITY

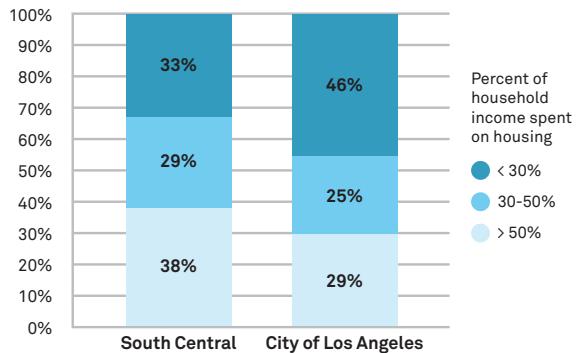
Housing affordability is generally defined by how much income a household pays towards their housing costs (e.g. rent or mortgage, utilities, etc.) According to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), households are considered housing “cost burdened” if over 30% of their income is used to pay for housing, and extremely cost burdened if over 50% of income goes to housing.<sup>26</sup> Generally housing is referred to as affordable if a household pays under 30% of their income towards housing costs, whether they live in market rate or subsidized housing. While these definitions are used in public policy contexts, they have serious limitations. This definition does not account for differences in household composition (e.g. single adults vs. families with children) and also does not consider how much money a household has left over after paying for housing.<sup>27</sup> For a wealthy household, paying 30% or more of income towards housing could leave them with plenty of money to cover other needs, while a very low income household is likely to have trouble making ends meet.<sup>27</sup>

In early 2015, the Southern California Association of Non-Profit Housing estimated that a family would need to earn \$34 an hour, or almost \$72,000 per year, to rent the average apartment in Los Angeles County and pay no more than 30% of their income.<sup>28</sup> While the city of Los Angeles recently voted to bring its minimum wage up to \$15 over the next five years, the current minimum wage is \$9 an hour. At this rate, it would require about 3.75 full-time minimum wage jobs to pay for the average Los Angeles County apartment.

Los Angeles is the 9th most expensive rental market in the country.<sup>29</sup> As rents have been rising, renter household income has been declining: after adjusting for inflation, rents in Los Angeles County increased 27% from 2000 to 2013, while median renter incomes declined by 7%.<sup>30</sup> In order to meet the needs of the lowest income households, over half a million affordable rental homes are needed. Due to cuts in state and federal funds, Los Angeles lost 65% of funding for affordable housing between 2009 and 2014.<sup>30</sup> In South Central the majority of households experience housing cost burdens, and many face extreme cost burdens, a reflection of both low incomes and rising housing costs. Figure 9 shows that 38% of households pay over half their income towards housing costs in South Central, compared with 19% in Los Angeles.

# THE REEF DEVELOPMENT PROJECT IN THE CONTEXT OF SOUTH CENTRAL LOS ANGELES TODAY

**Figure 9: Percent of Cost-Burdened Households in South Central and the City of Los Angeles, 2009-2013**



Source: U.S. Census, American Community Survey 2009-2013

Focus group participants report that people in the neighborhood are already struggling to pay for housing.



*"I regularly have to ask to borrow money to cover rent, otherwise I don't pay other bills ... I usually ask friends, relatives, acquaintances." – Ana*

*"Rent is totally out of this world... The rent for a single is \$800. When you're only bringing home ... minimum wage, it's a rat race. Constantly chasing our tails." – Yolanda*

*"I look at what home costs are now, even rental prices, its nearly impossible for a person to work in the community and purchase a home, especially for young people. And a lot of the homes are ... so expensive." – Angélica*



*"Sometimes it takes two or three months to pay rent, but they know that the income isn't stable. They don't come knocking on our door or anything because they know that when we have money we will pay it. We're not not paying because we don't want to. But either way, the worry is there. I feel terrible. Sometimes, when I see them I rush inside because I'm embarrassed. But I've been here for 35 years and they know I'll pay." – Antonia*

## HOMELESSNESS

Los Angeles County has the largest homeless population of all urban areas in the U.S., with a disproportionately large percentage of the population remaining unsheltered.<sup>31</sup> The City of Los Angeles estimated that 52% of their City's recorded need for shelter went unmet in 2014.<sup>32</sup> Though Los Angeles officials state that they expect the overall homeless population to "decrease moderately" in the next year, they also expect that the emergency resources that they have to provide shelter to homeless individuals and families will "decrease substantially."<sup>33</sup>

In 2015, 25,686 people were counted as homeless in the City of Los Angeles, which represents a 12% increase since 2013.<sup>33</sup> Council District 9 has the second largest Council District homeless population in the City, counted at 2,395 people. Council District 9 includes both the Reef Development Project area and Skid Row (an area said to contain nearly 3% of the County's homeless population, while only making up .0001% of its land area).<sup>34</sup> Seventy percent of those who are homeless in Los Angeles County remain unsheltered and makeshift shelters (e.g. tents and vehicles) have increased by 85% in the past four years.<sup>33</sup> The standard monthly public cost for homeless individuals is \$2,879, a cost five-times greater than their counterparts who have received housing.<sup>31</sup>

## PROLONGED CIVIC DISINVESTMENT

People who live in the neighborhood report experiences that represent prolonged and sustained civic disinvestment in South Central, indicating that the historical context is still relevant today.



*"The city's out there giving out all these parking tickets. As long as they're getting their ticket money out of South Central, it's alright. The City's perpetuating the whole thing. They don't make sure that people are doing their jobs and picking up the trash. Its institutional racism, and its directed at South Central." – Wallace*

# THE REEF DEVELOPMENT PROJECT IN THE CONTEXT OF SOUTH CENTRAL LOS ANGELES TODAY

*"They need to sweep the streets, especially around the commercial places, for there to be more lights, more security. They need to paint all the tagged streets. Our neighborhood looks terrible... We do pay our taxes, but they don't do anything."*

**– Georgina**

*"They tell us that we can call a phone number and they'll come pick that old sofa you don't need, but if 2-3 weeks pass and no one picks up the sofa? We need an answer to our calls, we need to make sure those services are there."* – Patricia

## **POLICING/SECURITY**

The issue of policing and security in the neighborhood is complex, with many residents mentioning that they would like a greater sense of security in the neighborhood, and at the same time acknowledging that sometimes the greatest threat they feel in the neighborhood comes from the police. Some reflect on how they have seen a greater police presence in the neighborhood now that higher income groups have started to move in.

*"They don't police these streets enough."*  
– Carthon

*"I do like to see that other people are moving in here in the neighborhood because you do see more protection, safety, more police patrolling."*  
– Salvador

*"I'm worried about getting harassed and shot. And that's by the police. Every time I pass the corner store, I'm thinking, 'Don't shoot.'"* – Wallace



*"If we recall how downtown LA looked 20-30 years ago... now it's completely different... there's more security, perhaps because the capitalists have the funds to improve security and we don't have that."*  
– Julio

# THE EFFECTS OF THE REEF DEVELOPMENT PROJECT ON GENTRIFICATION, FINANCIAL STRAIN, AND DISPLACEMENT



Based on the current Reef Development Project proposal, data about the current context of South Central where the development is proposed to occur, and the research on the relationships between gentrification, financial strain, and displacement that is detailed in the chapters that follow, we predict that the Reef Development Project would have the effects that are described below.

## INCREASE IN FINANCIAL STRAIN AND DISPLACEMENT OF CURRENT RESIDENTS

Large developments like the Reef project in neighborhoods like South Central often result in gentrification, which can drive housing costs up, and add to the financial strain of those in the area. Residents are already struggling immensely to afford housing, and are engaging in a variety of methods to address this problem, by making difficult choices about what necessities to do without, by living in overcrowded and substandard housing, and by looking for additional sources of income.

Despite these challenges, people in the neighborhood have developed strong social ties and a sense of attachment to the area. Business owners have also developed strong ties to their customers. Gentrification driven by the Reef Project could lead residents and businesses to be displaced as they are priced out of the area. Many of the residents of South Central have likely experienced serial forced displacement, perhaps even through multiple generations. This experience can have a cumulative impact resulting in a condition called root shock that is a source of trauma. Recent research indicates that intergenerational trauma can have such significant health impacts that it can alter genes to make them more susceptible to stress in subsequent generations.

When focus group participants were asked what they thought about developments like the Reef Project, some reflected on the context discussed above.



*"There has to be an impact, whatever it is. Of course there's gonna be a lot of changes. And it would be great if those changes happened in a way that was going to help the neighborhood, like creating jobs for example. But it doesn't usually happen that way... makes you feel like they don't care." – Francisco*



*"It's frustrating when you see people move in and just drop the cash. It's privilege." – Anayetzy*

In order to assess vulnerability to rising housing costs and displacement, we calculated the number of cost-burdened renter households living in proximity to the Reef Project. Specifically, we looked at households located within  $\frac{1}{4}$  mile,  $\frac{1}{2}$  mile, 1 mile and 2 miles of the development, in South Central, as shown in Figure 10.

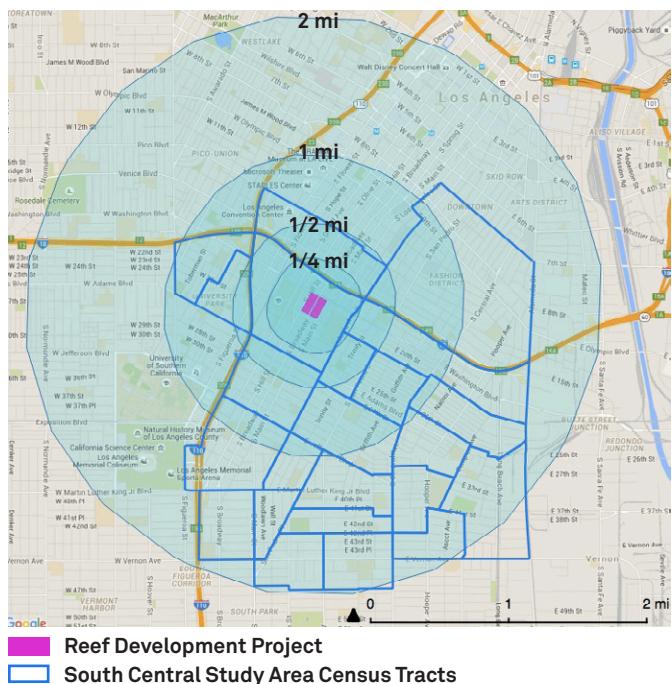
We found that an estimated 4,445 renters who live within  $\frac{1}{2}$  mile of the proposed Reef Development Project are already experiencing housing cost burdens and could be at high or very high risk of financial strain or displacement as a result of the development. An additional 39,311 renters who live between  $\frac{1}{2}$  mile and 2 miles of the project could be at moderate risk. Overall, 52% of the nearly 84,000 residents living within 2 miles of the project could be at risk of financial strain or displacement as a result of the Reef Development Project. (See Table 4).

# THE EFFECTS OF THE REEF DEVELOPMENT PROJECT ON GENTRIFICATION, FINANCIAL STRAIN, AND DISPLACEMENT

Table 4: Rent-burdened households in proximity to the Reef Development Project

Likelihood of property value increase	Reef tracts in buffer	All cost burdened renter households	All people in cost burdened renter households	Risk Level for financial strain and/or displacement	Total people per risk category
Very high	1/4 mile	403	1,294	Very High	1,294
High	1/4 - 1/2 mile	976	3,151	High	3,151
Moderate	1/2 - 1 mile	3,469	12,799	Moderate	39,311
Moderate	1 - 2 miles	6,172	26,512	Moderate	
<b>Total</b>					<b>43,756</b>

Figure 10: Buffer Zones Surrounding the Reef Project



Another category of people who could be vulnerable to displacement are those who live in currently deed-restricted housing that is at risk of converting to market-rate units because of expiring subsidies. We analyzed data provided by the California Housing Partnership Corporation<sup>35</sup> on subsidized affordable housing and identified 1,068 units in South Central funded through federal and state programs. This does not include public housing or any housing that may have been funded exclusively through local programs. **Of these units, 152 are potentially at risk of converting to market-rate within the next 10 years.** For-profit owners of currently subsidized units are likely to have greater incentives for converting those units to market-rate as rents appreciate.

This study has demonstrated the significant housing affordability challenges that residents in South Central

are already facing, and the increased pressures residents will face as a result of the Reef project.

Project sponsors, however, do not see it as their responsibility to respond to these challenges. The Reef Development Project plan currently contains “no mention of affordable housing for this low-income neighborhood.”<sup>36</sup> Furthermore, the Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR)<sup>37</sup> states the following: “...Because no residential units currently exist on-site, development of the Project would not remove existing housing; thus, no housing would be displaced. Therefore, impacts related to housing growth and housing displacement would be less than significant,” (p. IV.L-10). The DEIR also states, “The Project would not displace substantial numbers of people, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere,” (p. IV.A-9).

This approach to measuring displacement is woefully inadequate. Given the extensive research indicating how the process of indirect displacement occurs through financial strain and lack of affordable housing options, the project cannot only look at its effects on direct displacement – even if that is in compliance with the local law. With thousands of people at risk of displacement due to this project – and the historical context of development, segregation, and trauma experienced by the community – project sponsors have a responsibility to examine how their project can mitigate its potential effects through the provision of affordable housing in response to the existing need and through displacement prevention strategies.

Many residents have already engaged in many different strategies to help them afford housing at current prices. When asked where they would move if they could no longer afford to stay, many people said they could not think of another place.

# THE EFFECTS OF THE REEF DEVELOPMENT PROJECT ON GENTRIFICATION, FINANCIAL STRAIN, AND DISPLACEMENT

*"We've gone to look at houses in Lancaster. How far are we gonna go? We get so far to the point where it just makes no sense. It would take me 2 hours to get home, 2 hours to get back, and it just makes no sense." – Angélica*

*"They're pushing everyone out to Palmdale, Lancaster—I don't know about the rest of you but I'm not going to San Bernardino. I grew up in the hood." – Yolanda*



*"There's really no place to go. If we move, we have to pay for two months of rent plus that same month's rent, so there's no other option of where to go." – Margarita*

Some said they would move out of the City.

*"I would move out of LA to another city." – Ana*

*"I would move from the area." – Juana*

And some anticipated they would become homeless.

*"I can't work because nobody will be with [my son, who is sick]. I live off of SSI. Medical doesn't cover diabetes medication. It comes out of pocket. My son is 3 years old. If the rent goes up and this continues I'm gonna be homeless." – Berenice*

*"I keep thinking, 'What am I gonna do if this doesn't work out? Where am I gonna go? Am I gonna see my neighbors again? Where am I gonna find this kind of community again? Gonna have to start over. Gonna be homeless, without a family.'" – Anayetzy*

*"You ask where are we going? A lot of us say: the streets." – Yolanda*

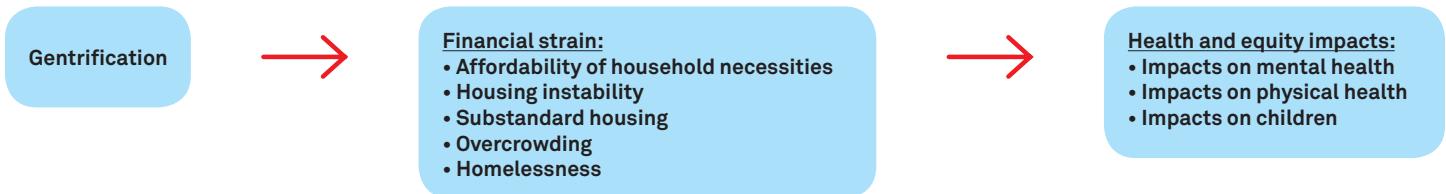
## INCREASES IN PHYSICAL AND MENTAL ILLNESS

Community residents who experience financial strain and/or displacement may experience a wide variety of chronic stress-related physical and mental illnesses, including anxiety, depression, hypertension, heart disease, obesity, diabetes, and sleep disorders. Additional constraints on health-protecting resources and exposures to health-damaging environments such as substandard and overcrowded housing could further contribute to a variety of negative health outcomes, including hunger, inadequate childhood nutrition, and poor childhood growth, higher risks for respiratory diseases, infectious disease, lead poisoning, injuries, and mortality. Disruption of social networks through forced serial displacement and root shock can lead to additional health challenges including exposure to fragmented social environments that have higher rates of violence and sexually transmitted diseases. Multi-generational traumas of this nature can potentially influence the genetic makeup of future generations, leaving them more physiologically susceptible to the impacts of stress.

This study demonstrates that communities surrounding the proposed project are vulnerable to financial strain and displacement and associated adverse impacts to physical health and mental health. While these relationships are well documented, Reef project sponsors do not consider the indirect effects of the project on physical and mental health in the DEIR.

The following chapters provider greater detail on the relationship between gentrification, financial strain, and displacement, followed by recommendations for the developer and the City to mitigate the predicted harmful effects just discussed.

# UNDERSTANDING THE RELATIONSHIP: GENTRIFICATION, FINANCIAL STRAIN, AND HEALTH



The following chapter summarizes research that explains the relationship between gentrification and financial strain, and the relationship between financial strain and health.

## GENTRIFICATION

This history of South Central Los Angeles has resulted in prolonged public and private disinvestment from infrastructure, social services, and economic opportunities. Gentrification is a process that often begins at this place - when an urban neighborhood has experienced long periods of public and private disinvestment. Vacant or underutilized land and relatively low housing costs may exist in an area that still has some desirable qualities, such as access to job centers or transportation.<sup>38,39</sup> This produces a rent gap, or "an economic gap between actual and potential land values in a given location."<sup>39</sup> One driver of gentrification is when developers purchase inexpensive land in disinvested areas and then use the land to construct new, higher-quality amenities. This leads to increased value of the newly developed property and the surrounding properties in the neighborhood.<sup>39,40</sup> These new amenities – which often do not respond to the immediate needs of the local community – whether they are retail-related, residential, educational, or other occupational developments, have the potential to attract an influx of new consumers, workers, and residents.<sup>39,41,40</sup>

Gentrification can refer to shifts in the socio-economic, physical, and cultural characteristics of an area, but generally entails a shift to wealthier residents, workers, and/or consumers.<sup>40</sup> With this introduction comes the potential for displacement of existing residents, workers, and/or consumers.<sup>42</sup> Original residents can be directly or indirectly pushed out of their neighborhoods as a result of the rising costs of living, growing cultural irrelevance, illegal practices by residential and commercial property

owners, and/or the forcible removal from or destruction of original housing that can result from redevelopment and revitalization projects.<sup>41,43</sup>

## GENTRIFICATION AND FINANCIAL STRAIN

A core part of gentrification is that it puts upward pressure on property values and housing costs and, as a result, housing becomes even less affordable for lower income residents.<sup>39,40</sup> Increases in property values and policies that benefit land and homeowners can benefit property owners and increase property tax revenues within a city. However, low-income renters, who make up the majority of South Central households, may instead experience rising rents that lead to greater cost burdens. Urban economists argue that luxury residential development that attracts wealthy residents to an area can spur other property owners to disinvest from more affordable properties, converting them to higher-end and higher-priced units.

Megaprojects such as the Reef Development Project and other large-scale mixed-use revitalization projects in urban areas have been found to increase surrounding property values, even before actual construction begins. Researchers have shown increased property values in proximity to the Atlanta Beltline, which includes both transit, greenway, and residential and commercial development; Baltimore's Inner Harbor redevelopment;<sup>44</sup> and in proximity to large scale mixed-use redevelopment in downtown Oakland.<sup>45</sup> These analyses have generally found that property values increase the most in the immediate vicinity of revitalizations projects, for example within 1/8 – 1/4 of a mile, but that price premiums can extend for up to two miles.<sup>46</sup> Economic analyses in Portland, Oregon have also shown that upscale retail amenities, including grocery stores and coffee shops, are associated with housing price premiums.<sup>47</sup>

# UNDERSTANDING THE RELATIONSHIP: GENTRIFICATION, FINANCIAL STRAIN, AND HEALTH

Once financial strain occurs, it can start to influence a variety of determinants of health by contributing to: reduced ability to afford other household necessities, housing instability, living in substandard housing, overcrowding, and homelessness.

## Financial Strain and Affordability of Household Necessities

When a person or household undergoes financial strain due to an increased housing cost burden, they are forced to sacrifice other vital necessities. Housing—shelter—is one of the most basic human needs for survival. Therefore, when faced with unaffordable housing costs that leave an individual with an inadequate amount of income left to allocate to the cost of other needs, lower income people must make difficult trade-offs for themselves and their families.<sup>48</sup>

Focus group participants confirmed that when people in the neighborhood do not have enough money for everything they need, they have to make difficult choices.



*“My older son gets two pairs of shoes for the entire year, my daughter also gets two pairs of shoes a year. The little one, when he gets home, he takes off his shoes, puts on the old ones and goes out to play.” – Lourdes*

*“What are our options? Stop paying the bills, borrow money, don’t purchase our kids’ school uniform, or the supplies that teachers ask us to get them when school is about to begin?... I need internet for my job, but I have to make the choice between paying for internet or my children’s uniform...” – Patricia*

*“My daughter ... wanted ... ballet lessons, ballet is her dream, but I can’t give her that. I can’t even provide clothes.” – Juana*

## Financial Strain and Housing Instability

Unsustainable housing cost burdens and a lack of affordable housing can lead low-income households to move more often, through what researchers have called “churning moves,” frequent moves to similar or lower quality housing.<sup>49</sup> Housing instability often leads to additional housing problems for families, who may temporarily double up or experience periods of homelessness.<sup>50</sup> Less extreme types of instability, such as getting behind on rent, mortgage, or utility payments, can also lead to stress and lower levels of well being.<sup>50</sup>

## Financial Strain and Substandard Housing

When quality housing is made unaffordable and thus, inaccessible to lower income people, residents (and in particular, low-income people of color) are forced to inhabit substandard housing at a disproportionately high level.<sup>51</sup> The California Health and Civil Code defines housing as substandard or ‘uninhabitable’ if it lacks working utilities, if the housing infrastructure and fixtures are in disrepair, or if the dwelling lacks maintenance to the extent that it provides unsanitary and unsafe living conditions.

Thirty percent of the respondents in the SAJE resident survey (47/155) mentioned problems with housing conditions.

- 83% - roaches
- 38% - holes
- 34% - defective plumbing
- 32% - mold
- 26% - rats
- 17% - humid walls
- 17% - defective electrical wiring

### *Other problems mentioned:*

- Damaged floor and walls
- Peeling paint

# UNDERSTANDING THE RELATIONSHIP: GENTRIFICATION, FINANCIAL STRAIN, AND HEALTH

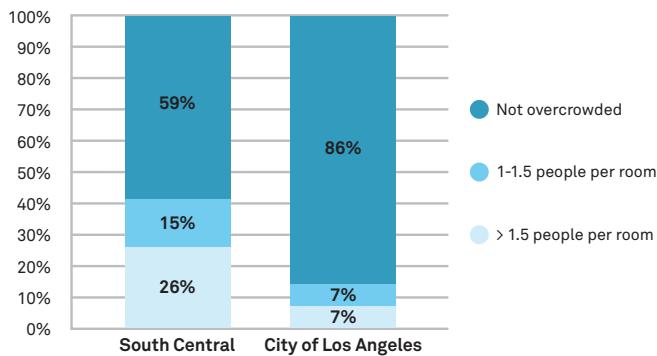
## Financial Strain and Overcrowding

When an individual or family has difficulty paying the cost of rent, they may decide to move into housing that is smaller and more affordable, but not adequately large enough to accommodate the size of their household. In other instances of overcrowding, multiple families decide to live together to combine incomes to help afford the cost of rent.

Overcrowding or ‘housing consolidation’ is a perpetual issue in Los Angeles. The Los Angeles Department of Housing and Urban Development defines crowding as any living quarters consisting of more than two persons per bedroom or more than one person per room.<sup>52</sup> Immigrant households experience the greatest rate of overcrowding in Los Angeles.<sup>17</sup> Based on these HUD criteria, 54% of those who responded to the 2015 SAJE survey are living in overcrowded living conditions, with 29% of the households surveyed renting rooms within apartments.

Overcrowding is especially prevalent in South Central. A Los Angeles Times analysis of 2008-2012 census data found that zip code 90011, which aligns closely with the census tracts used for the area defined as South Central, had the highest rate of overcrowding *in the entire United States*. Figure 11 shows that in South Central, 26% of households were severely overcrowded, with over 1.5 people per room.<sup>53</sup>

**Figure 11: Percent of Households Experiencing Overcrowding in South Central and the City of Los Angeles, 2009-2013**



Source: U.S. Census, American Community Survey 2009-2013

Focus group participants shared personal experiences of people in the neighborhood living with others in overcrowded conditions to be able to afford housing.

*“I pay about 40% of my personal income and split bills with the other person. It’s not stable since I’m a day laborer and my income also fluctuates.”*  
– Moisés

*“In our apartments we’re piled on top of each other—imagine, two families have to live under one roof and split the rent. With my 5 children, I put them in the bedroom and their dad and I sleep in the living room.”* – Lourdes

*“I used to live with three other people at the apartment, we used to split the rent. But one day they just left and I stayed there alone with no help. That same month, the landlord raised the rent. At one point I lived with other families in the same apartment to share rent.”* – Juana

People in the neighborhood also take on multiple jobs or look for other sources of income to help pay for housing and other bills.

*“I recycle stuff like bottles and cans.”* – María

*“I found myself recycling cans, and I realize that everyone does that, so there’s not even cans anymore.”* – Berenice

*“I rented out a property that I have in the back, have considered renting rooms out, anything I can possibly do to make extra income with taking on new jobs and taking in strangers to my home.”* – Cynthia

*“I gotta make extra money just to get the eggs that I want. People are trying more and more ways to make some extra income. We ain’t got no choice but to try it cause we’re suffering down here.”*  
– Yolanda

Some people in the neighborhood also do without certain necessities in order to make ends meet.

*“I limit my food consumption and what I earn is for rent and food.”* – María R.



*“After food and rent, we had \$20. Then we had to wash clothes, so I washed them by hand.”* – Berenice

# UNDERSTANDING THE RELATIONSHIP: GENTRIFICATION, FINANCIAL STRAIN, AND HEALTH

## Financial Strain and Homelessness

One of the most extreme results of financial strain is homelessness. Research in New York has found that increases in homelessness are associated with the rapid rise in housing costs in gentrifying neighborhoods.<sup>54</sup> Homelessness is directly tied to what the National Law Center on Homelessness and Poverty has called an ‘affordable housing crisis,’ in which the demand for affordable housing far outweighs the supply.<sup>55</sup> For example, the 2008 U.S. housing market provided approximately 37 affordable units for every 100 households in need.<sup>56</sup> Across the 25 cities cited in the Conference of Mayors 2014 Report on Homelessness, 83% of the cities reported a lack of affordable housing as a driver of homelessness.<sup>32</sup> This same report estimated that 22 percent of the need for emergency shelter went unmet.<sup>32</sup>

The quality of life for those who are able to receive emergency shelter is quite low. Officials remark that in order to accommodate a growing demand for emergency shelter services, shelter management resorts to “increasing the number of persons or families that can sleep in a single room; consistently having clients sleep on overflow cots, in chairs, in hallways, or using other subpar sleeping arrangements; and distributing vouchers for hotel or motel stays because shelter beds were not available.”<sup>32</sup> Therefore, emergency shelter environments also cause some of the same negative health impacts as those discussed in our section on substandard housing, such as over-crowding and more.

## HEALTH AND EQUITY IMPACTS OF FINANCIAL STRAIN

Studies show that housing is a major social determinant of health for individuals and communities.<sup>56</sup> Access to housing that is secure, habitable, and affordable has far-reaching positive health impacts for family and public health.<sup>56-58</sup> Affordable housing helps to free up family resources that can then go toward health promoting needs like nutritious foods and healthcare services.<sup>56</sup> When quality housing is stable, households experience a greater sense of control, security, and sense of attachment, all of which leads to positive mental health outcomes especially in terms of reducing overall stress level for adults and children.<sup>56,58</sup> Access to affordable, quality housing also means that households are less exposed to physical hazards and toxins and are thus at a lower risk of disease and injury.<sup>56,59</sup> The reverse of all of these things can also be true. Reduced ability to afford other household necessities, housing

instability, living in substandard housing, over-crowding, and homelessness are all determinants of poor health that can be caused by the financial strain of gentrification. These health determinants can have negative impacts on mental and physical health for adults, and can also specifically impact children.

## Mental Health Impacts

The pressures of making involuntary concessions on vital necessities create a living situation filled with stress for struggling households. Housing instability — having to change residence multiple times without the ability to settle into one home for an extended period — also perpetuates high stress levels in adults and children. Substandard housing can further impact stress and anxiety levels as a result of uninhabitable living conditions. This stress has a direct impact on overall health, including mental health problems such as anxiety and depression.<sup>60,57 61 62</sup>

Focus group participants provided personal descriptions of the stress and depression that can result from chronic financial strain of unaffordable housing.

*“In my case, my husband had two heart attacks. Now with this situation, neither of us sleep. That’s called depression, that’s what I’ve been told. My hair is also falling out... How are we going to continue? Well, burning the midnight oil trying to think how we’re going to get out of this situation.”*

**– Natividad**



*“It’s hard, I feel impotent and I get depressed. I don’t know where I would go if rent increased. I feel terrible because I can’t meet the basic needs of the children and family. I’m also very sad... The other thing about stress is that it increases my sense of desperation. I also tend to overeat when I’m feeling this way. Right now I just ate, in a little bit I’ll want to eat again. My eye twitches and my hands tremble and I always want to cry.” – Juana*

## Physical Health Impacts

The financial strain of unaffordable housing causes lower income people to make trade-offs regarding such things as food and healthcare needs, insurance, and other activities and resources that support

## UNDERSTANDING THE RELATIONSHIP: GENTRIFICATION, FINANCIAL STRAIN, AND HEALTH

their physical and psychological health.<sup>57,60,63,48</sup> These trade-offs negatively impact physical health in the form of cheaper, less nutritious foods, infrequent or no healthcare, the inability to afford activities that serve as emotional and physical outlets. There are significant associations between high housing costs and hunger, inadequate childhood nutrition, and poor childhood growth.<sup>64,65,66</sup>

Overcrowding can lead to higher risks of mortality, infectious disease, poor child development and school performance, poorer self-rated health, increased stress, noise, and fires, poor mental health, developmental delay, heart disease, and even short stature.<sup>67,51,68,69</sup> People with housing instability have poorer access to health care and higher rates of acute health care utilization than other populations with stable housing.<sup>70</sup>

When a housing unit is substandard it may be infested with pests and mold, it may contain lead poisoning hazards and other hazardous materials and have poor quality air filtration systems. Also, dependence on substandard facilities and household utilities that are meant to provide such crucial needs as water and air filtration negatively impacts physical health and childhood development. Mold, for example, is linked to cases of asthma, pneumonia, and other respiratory diseases.<sup>51,60</sup> Lead poisoning can cause brain damage, and behavioral disorders such as hyperactivity and heightened aggression, plus other learning disabilities, all of which can go relatively undiagnosed and untreated.<sup>60</sup> In addition to respiratory disease and neurological and behavioral disorders, much research connects substandard housing features to high incidence of malnutrition, slow or impeded physical development, and physical injury.<sup>58,60</sup> Studies also link poor housing quality to a host of neurological, behavioral, and psychological deficiencies, as well as infectious and chronic disease.<sup>51,59,60</sup>

Each of the impacts above can lead to chronic stress, leaving residents vulnerable to a variety of stress-related physical health problems, in addition to the mental health challenges mentioned above. Research suggests that chronic stress is strongly linked to the development of hypertension and other chronic diseases, and may cause physical problems including cardiovascular phenomena, such as hypertension; metabolic disorders, such as obesity, type-2 diabetes, and cardiovascular disease; osteopenia and osteoporosis; and sleep disorders, such as insomnia or excessive daytime sleepiness.<sup>61,62</sup>

Focus group participants shared how stress and limited choices have been harming their physical health too.

*“Definitely, all this impacts health tremendously... it does cause worry and stress, one can’t even concentrate 100% on their children or work. There are too many worries on the mind. But the emotional impacts also affect the physical health... So this does affect the emotional health, physical health, and even family relations. They’re stressed, they’re worried, they don’t have that patience, so all this affect family relations.”*

– Patricia

*“When I was a little kid and the mortgage started going up, my mom’s idea was, ‘Well, just cook beans and rice for as long as we have to.’ Nowadays, eggs are so expensive and milk is so expensive. I just wonder – what kind of diet/nutrition do you have? ... You don’t eat.”* – Pat

### Impacts on Children

The long work hours that parents must put in to pay for rent often result in limited transportation options for students to get to school.<sup>71</sup> Teenagers may have to work to supplement family income. Overcrowded homes can over stimulate children and lead to withdrawal, psychological distress, decreased motivation, patterns of helplessness, and behavioral problems.<sup>72</sup>

Focus group participants shared how their children and other children in the neighborhood feel the effects as well.



*“It has harmed my kids. My husband earns very little, so my kids have even said they want to get out of school so they can work and they can help us with bills and rent. My husband tells [them] to keep studying, but they see how pressured we feel so they want to leave school so they can help us work and pay for expenses.”* – Ruth

*“The mental stress that people go through, that’s pretty tangible. It will affect how you are with people. It hurts me so much when I see a parent smack a kid on the bus cause they don’t move fast enough...they need a break.”* – Pat

## UNDERSTANDING THE RELATIONSHIP: GENTRIFICATION, FINANCIAL STRAIN, AND HEALTH

Housing instability and inconsistent living environment negatively impact childhood environment, and this includes one's school environment. When a child undergoes repeated changes in living location and conditions, they are often less able to form connections with their peers and teachers, and less likely to feel connected with their neighborhood and home environment in general.<sup>73</sup>

*"There's also the change of school for children. I saw it when I changed my kids' schools. They were stressed. They arrived at a school where they didn't really know anyone. They're finally getting adjusted, so to have to move again doesn't sound like a good idea. It's stressful for them and it's stressful for us. We have to worry if there'll be good teachers, a safe school, everything." – María Elena*



*"It's more stressful to move, especially for the kids, they already know their teachers and they have their friends." – Oscar*

*"We've seen transiency, families are coming in and out..." – Martín Gómez, Principal of Santee Education Complex*

# UNDERSTANDING THE RELATIONSHIP: GENTRIFICATION, DISPLACEMENT, AND HEALTH

Gentrification



Displacement impacts on the social environment:

- Social cohesion
- Place attachment
- Serial forced displacement
- Root shock

Health and equity impacts:

- Health impacts
- Impacts on schools
- Impacts on businesses

The following chapter summarizes research that explains the relationship between gentrification and displacement, and the relationship between displacement and health.

## GENTRIFICATION AND DISPLACEMENT

One of the most damaging effects of gentrification is displacement. For the purposes of this report, we use the definition of displacement developed by Causa Justa::Just Cause (CJJC), a grassroots organization working toward housing and racial justice. CJJC defines displacement as “the out-migration of low-income people and people of color from their existing homes and neighborhoods due to social, economic, or environmental conditions that make their neighborhoods uninhabitable or unaffordable”<sup>15</sup>

As was mentioned previously, research on the relationship between gentrification and displacement has so far been mixed.<sup>41</sup> In other words, not all research showed a relationship between gentrification and displacement. However, this research has also been constrained, with many studies limited by scope, available data and brief time horizons for analysis.<sup>41</sup> Findings did consistently show that the financial strain of rising rents predicted displacement, and policy tools that helped protect residents from these rising costs, such as rent stabilization and public housing programs, helped to limit displacement.<sup>72,41</sup>

Some researchers have suggested that one reason current gentrification research might not consistently show a relationship between gentrification and displacement could be that current residents might try harder to stay in the neighborhood when they begin to benefit from the new amenities that are brought to the area, even as rent prices increase. However, these authors also suggested that higher rent burdens are ultimately unlikely to be sustainable and might still lead to displacement, and current

studies have not used a long enough timeframe to capture this delayed effect.

When gentrification does lead to displacement, it can happen directly or indirectly.<sup>41</sup> Direct physical displacement can occur when an individual’s home or an entire community is demolished or converted to another use and not adequately replaced following public or private redevelopment projects.<sup>43</sup> Commercial space can also be directly, physically displaced by chain stores and new building developments. Los Angeles has a vast history of this type of forced individual and community relocation, including the clearance of the Chavez Ravine neighborhood in the 1950s to develop a public housing project that was never fully built. This clearance forcibly displaced an entire community of over one thousand mostly Mexican-American farmers and their families from Chavez Ravine and made way for the construction of the Los Angeles Dodgers Stadium in 1962.<sup>75</sup>

Indirect displacement occurs when property values and rent costs rise to unaffordable levels and residents and business owners are forced to leave.<sup>43</sup> The same can be said for indirect commercial displacement, including the impacts of losing customer base and product relevancy, coupled with the inability to compete with newer developments.<sup>42,43</sup> Since the Reef Development Project and other projects in South Central Los Angeles have the potential to attract a wealthier set of residents to the neighborhood, landlords may experience a growing incentive to evict low-income renters from their homes in order to rent to higher-income residents with the ability to pay more.<sup>15,39</sup> Evictions are “landlord-initiated forced moves from rental property” that most heavily impact the urban poor as a result of an inability to pay rent.<sup>76</sup> Evictions can also include varying levels of landlord harassment.<sup>15</sup>

# UNDERSTANDING THE RELATIONSHIP: GENTRIFICATION, DISPLACEMENT, AND HEALTH

Displacement can also occur gradually as a process of *replacement*, driven by a systematic “process of housing turnover and succession”.<sup>77</sup> As wealthier residents gradually replace existing residents, who are often lower-income people of color, previously accessible neighborhoods can become exclusionary.<sup>77</sup> One consistent finding across studies of gentrification is the finding that when neighborhoods gentrified, the people who were moving in were “wealthier, whiter, and of higher educational attainment”, and those who were moving out were more likely to be “renters, poorer, and people of color”.<sup>42</sup> In turn, developers and planners construct amenities that speak to the preferences of the socially and economically empowered. Therefore, the introduction of wealthier residents to a community can place lower income people into new places of disadvantage and community exclusion.<sup>78</sup>

Changing neighborhood demographics and landscapes may lead existing residents to relocate as a consequence of the disintegration of social networks and cultural relevance that leads to community disconnectedness and alienation.<sup>15</sup> Though this sort of relocation may appear to result from the resident's choice to move to a new area, it is ultimately an involuntary displacement that is the result of changes that were outside of that resident's control.<sup>41</sup>



*“If we can't pay, who is going to come and live here? Well, those that have the money and can pay those prices. So then it does impact the neighborhood, it's going to look different because it'll only be benefitting those who have economic power. Meanwhile those of us who can't pay that will have to leave, so we're socially marginalized, and it gets worse each time and it affects us a lot.” – Patricia*

## DISPLACEMENT IMPACTS ON THE SOCIAL ENVIRONMENT

Displacement has damaging impacts on the social environment of existing residents and business owners by negatively impacting the protective factors of social cohesion and place attachment that the community has developed. When a single event of displacement is experienced within the context of serial forced displacement, the impact can have even stronger negative impacts, producing a type of trauma known as “root shock”.

### Social cohesion

‘Social cohesion’ refers to systems of social support and familiarity and knowledge sharing.<sup>79</sup> Social cohesion develops with the protection and fostering of the connections that one forms when living in a neighborhood that supplies needed resources and community networks. This is what leads to the production of social norms and senses of community responsibility. It is what allows people to connect to their lived environment in a way that promotes a sense of belonging.<sup>79</sup>

People currently living in the South Central neighborhood know each other and feel connected to each other – there is an established social cohesion of neighborhood residents.



*“Where I live, all the neighbors know each other. We work for the same community.” – Flavia*

*“I try to help people as much as I can. When neighbors ask me if I can pick up their kids from school... I tell them of course... I've lived there for 20 years and all the neighbors treat me like family.” – Ruth*

*“I got to meet my neighbors.... I got sick, my appendix burst, and my neighbor checked in on me... if it wasn't for my neighbor looking out for me I could have died... The sense of neighborhood—looking out for each other—that's a sense of community... Community is important.” – Pat*

# UNDERSTANDING THE RELATIONSHIP: GENTRIFICATION, DISPLACEMENT, AND HEALTH



*"I feel connected cause I've done work in the community... We planned a clean up on MLK Day... we had to ... knock on every door ... call the City, got stuff from business owners for the event. It was a huge success. It was nice doing it. ... It's rewarding when you go out and talk with the community... It's all about us, we are the community. We got to talk to each other." – Yolanda*

Social cohesion—the ability to combine networks of capital—can serve as a method for poverty alleviation, since it allows for the bridging and linking of critical resources in a community.<sup>80</sup> It is often the more economically disadvantaged communities that benefit most from connection to place and the resource-sharing that it provides because of what their low socioeconomic status denies them.<sup>81</sup> Research shows that gentrification “threatens the sustainability of community networks” and of the capital relations that lower-income, excluded groups often depend on.<sup>82</sup>

*"It's ironic – we have so many needs, we barely make ends meet, we are stressed and worried, without good health or incomplete health... but the places where we live are the places where we have ties. It's the place where if I'm low on rent I can ask my neighbor, I can ask my sister-in-law who lives near me, or if I don't have enough for groceries, I have a 20-year relationship with people there and I can suck it up and ask if I can take items on credit and pay them next Friday when I get my check. And because they've known me for a long time, they'll let this happen. But when people move to other places ... you're uprooting a large part of your life. Even if everything isn't perfect, at least there's a network of support." – Patricia*

## Place Attachment

Place attachment involves bonds between people and places of value, such as social and physical environments.<sup>83</sup> Place attachments are fostered by regular and habitual encounters with these people and places of value, through activities such as seasonal celebrations and daily routines.<sup>83</sup> Residential place attachments can produce group identity, feelings of pride, stability, familiarity, security, and a general

sense of well-being.<sup>83</sup> Place attachment theory argues that when people feel a sense of attachment and connection to their community, they are more likely to interact with their community in a positive way.<sup>84</sup>

Respondents to the SAJE community survey described the attributes they enjoy about their community, and why they want to stay – essentially describing the reasons they feel attached to this community.

Seventy-eight percent of respondents (121/155) responded to the question, “What do you love about your community?”

30% calm	10% schools
27% neighbors	7% I know it / lived here a long time
14% transit	
14% commercial space	7% safe
11% close to everything	

Thirty-five percent of respondents (54/155) responded to the question, “Why do you want to stay in the neighborhood?”

57% affordability	32% access to public transit
39% schools	
33% close to employment	13% culture of the neighborhood
33% security	

“Other” responses included: “Difficult to find another option”, and “Future of neighborhood”.

## Serial Forced Displacement

Serial forced displacement refers to the repeated, involuntary removal of groups from their community.<sup>85</sup> Policies and processes like urban renewal, segregation and disinvestment supported by state-sanctioned redlining, and ongoing gentrification have contributed to serial forced displacement in U.S.<sup>85</sup> Additional policies might include international trade and immigration policies that contribute to forced migration for economic and safety reasons, as well as policies that repeatedly displace homeless populations. Studies have shown that the cumulative impacts of these types of policies, and the repeated experiences of displacement that ensue, have had progressively more negative impacts on social organization and support.<sup>86,87</sup> Some researchers argue that policies that consistently result in serial forced displacement have produced “a persistent de facto internal refugee population” of African Americans in the U.S.<sup>85</sup>

# UNDERSTANDING THE RELATIONSHIP: GENTRIFICATION, DISPLACEMENT, AND HEALTH

Forty-seven percent of survey respondents from the SAJE resident survey (73/155) provided information on why they had moved from their previous residence, suggesting that many residents came to this residence after already having been displaced from their previous location.

26% Expensive (neighborhood/rent)  
25% Living conditions  
18% Security (building/neighborhood)  
14% Eviction  
\*16% of write-in options also mentioned size, which could indicate living conditions/overcrowding

## Root Shock

When this sense of attachment is lost through the process of gentrification and displacement, an individual may enter a state of trauma known as 'root shock.' Root shock is a state defined as "the traumatic stress reaction to the destruction of all or part of one's emotional ecosystem".<sup>88</sup> It results from the loss of one's known world; it is the result of the disintegration of one's sense of community and attachment to place, and it is a loss of the social cohesion that such an attachment to place provides. Some of the individual impacts that result from such a loss are a decrease in community trust, a lesser sense of neighborhood responsibility and support, and increased levels of stress-related disease. On the community level, we often see a disruption of long-standing social networks and a conversion of the overall social landscape, usually to one that is less cohesive and feels less safe for community members.<sup>88</sup>



*"Me, I go all over the city for resources... I go over there and be homeless. I move around a lot. Cause when you comfortable in one place, you start looking forward to what you've been getting, and when they stop giving, you feel like they don't wanna be bothered with you. So, me, I just move on." – Carthon*

## HEALTH AND EQUITY IMPACTS OF DISPLACEMENT

When social cohesion and place attachment are negatively impacted through displacement, and especially when the added impacts of serial forced displacement lead to the traumatic state of root shock, a variety of negative health impacts can occur. Displacement can also result in negative impacts for schools.

### Health Impacts

Individuals who are burdened with involuntary displacement may experience the high costs of relocation and longer commutes, they may lose their jobs and their healthcare services, and they may relocate to lower quality housing in an area with more violence, all of which could cause chronic stress, which negatively impacts individuals' mental and physical health.<sup>15,89</sup>

*"It's suffocating. Kind of like holding my breath. When are they gonna sell this building out from under our feet?" – Angélica*

*"If they sell, even if we don't want to move we'll have to move." – Margarita*



*I used to live in La Puente. I had to commute here... the time it takes to commute is exhausting... the cost of transportation and the time it takes adds up, and the ties with neighbors are not tight because it's just work back to home, it's monotonous, there's not time for anything else. – Moisés*

Social cohesion is what works against things such as distrust and anonymity that can produce a perception (and a potential reality) of a lack of safety in one's neighborhood. With a perceived lack of safety may come social isolation and a decrease in physical activity.<sup>84</sup> Studies have linked neighborhoods with less social cohesion to higher rates of smoking and depression.<sup>79,90</sup> Disruption of social cohesion and support networks, disintegration of place attachment, and the negative effects of root shock, can exacerbate stress-induced disease mentioned in the last chapter, ranging from depression to heart attack.<sup>15,63,88,61,62</sup>

# UNDERSTANDING THE RELATIONSHIP: GENTRIFICATION, DISPLACEMENT, AND HEALTH

These negative impacts also fall most heavily on low-income people of color due to a lack of socioeconomic empowerment.<sup>7,15,63</sup>



*"I don't wanna go to a place I don't know. The sense of family and community is important to me, as a single person." – Pat*

*"The problem is that I don't know what I'll do if they sell the building. I'm used to this area, I have my customers. Everything is nearby. It hurts me to say that I would have to move, my heart is here...I don't even know where I would move to."*  
– small business owner

Repeated serial displacement has been shown to cause a cycle of fragmentation for the displaced, which is primarily characterized by the disintegration of social networks, the high stress levels of housing instability and weak social ties, and the physical and mental manifestations of that stress.<sup>85</sup> It can cause people to move to neighborhoods with higher rates of substance abuse and sexually transmitted disease and crime, leading to a sort of social disintegration and a forming of an individualist mentality, apart from the community.<sup>85</sup> New research also suggests that people who have experienced intergenerational traumas, such as the populations of color residing in South Central that have experienced serial forced displacement across generations, may experience changes in gene structures that make future generations more susceptible to the impacts of stress.<sup>91,92</sup>

## Impacts on Schools

Santee Education Complex a school located one block from the Reef Development Project that is populated by students from South Central. An interview with Dr. Martín Gómez, the principal of this school, revealed the following insights about the potential impacts of the development on his school and the students he serves.

*"The homes in our areas will... become higher priced, which our parents are not going to be able to afford... as a school, we may see a decline in enrollment. So...35 kids is one teacher, that's 35 families, and I definitely see at least 35 families being displaced. And we're going to lose teachers and we're going to lose staff. We're going to lose support...because with the loss in those resources, how are we supposed to support students the way we have? We want to continue increasing our AP pass rates, our graduation rates. We'll go back to being a typical inner city school with 40 kids in a classroom instead of 30."*

*"I know from experience in San Francisco, that the gentrifying parents don't send their kids to public schools...they're going to send their kids to a private school."*

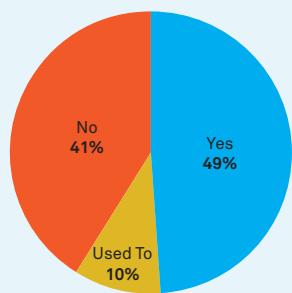
# THE SMALL BUSINESSES OF SOUTH CENTRAL LOS ANGELES: A SIMILAR STORY

In 2015, CDTech conducted a survey of small businesses in the South Central Los Angeles neighborhood.<sup>93</sup> The findings reveal a similar pattern of financial strain and displacement for small businesses in South Central. Highlights from the CDTech report are quoted directly in the boxes below. Please see Appendix D for the full report.

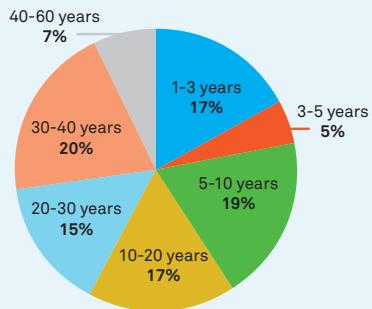
## LONGEVITY OF SMALL BUSINESSES IN SOUTH CENTRAL

The small business establishments in the surveyed project referred to as the “Reef”, represent the diverse population and historical contexts of the neighborhood’s many uses. The variety of affordable goods and services they offer are reflections of the ethnic makeup and economic needs of neighborhood residents. Most small business owners in the area live in the community or used to.

Owners Who Live in the Community



Length of Operation



Fifty-nine percent of the businesses surveyed have been in operation at that location for over 10 years. Of the businesses that have been in operation for 20 to 30 years, 89% of the owners live in the community.

## SOCIAL COHESION AMONG SMALL BUSINESSES AND THE SOUTH CENTRAL COMMUNITY

Small business owners also have a strong sense of social cohesion with residents and customers in the area.

A mobile locksmith has parked in the same spot at Washington Plaza down Washington from the Reef since 1991. Its current owner, son of the original owner, is very proud to be from the area and employ all local community members. He said he wouldn’t have it any other way, and understands how important it is for local people to have local employment opportunities.

A few businesses shared that their commitment to their loyal customers is worth the sacrifice it might take to keep their prices accessible; they identify with the people they serve, each other’s cultural and economic conditions, and the sense of community they have built together.

*“We go out of our way to make our products accessible to the people who live here.”*

*“We’re all here for a reason. We left our countries for a reason... I think it’s important that my customers know me... I don’t know their names, they’ve never told me their names... but I know their faces. They just come in to get their waters, which is what they need the most since they work in the factories.”*

*“I know families that have been in my neighborhood probably for my whole life... People come by, sit and watch games. It’s pretty natural, nobody plans it, it can be pretty social in there.”*

# THE SMALL BUSINESSES OF SOUTH CENTRAL LOS ANGELES: A SIMILAR STORY

## IMPACTS OF GENTRIFICATION AND DISPLACEMENT ON SMALL BUSINESSES

A potential result of urban redevelopment and re-investment projects is the direct or indirect commercial displacement of existing businesses, primarily those that are small and family-run or in the industrial/manufacturing sector.<sup>43</sup> This has to do with redevelopment's impacts on property values, amenities, consumer-base, and job development. Due to the transformative effects that development projects have on community landscapes and demographics, they can cause certain existing businesses to become obsolete or less relevant to their consumer-base.

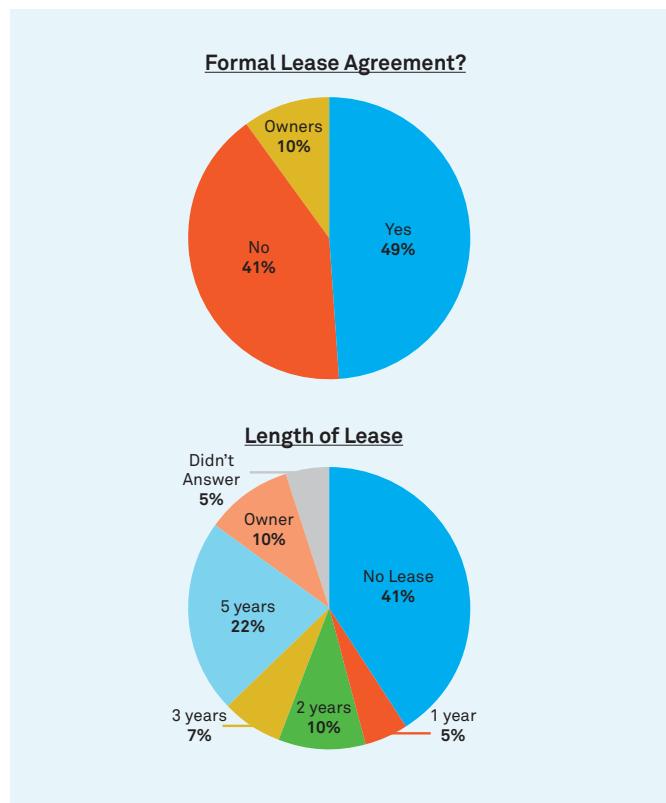
The project construction process alone can harm surrounding businesses by disrupting services and, at times, creating a physical blockade between businesses and their users, restricting over-all accessibility and interaction.<sup>94</sup> Research indicates that small businesses can serve as the primary sources of employment for surrounding, immediate neighborhoods.<sup>7</sup> However, there exists much concern that the increased desirability of an area—related to changes in the amenities that said area provides—will ultimately raise the cost of rent for small businesses to an unaffordable amount, thus pricing owners out of their existing properties.<sup>95,96</sup>

A study conducted in St. Paul, Minnesota found that manufacturing and industrial businesses in particular are often pressured to relocate in instances of rezoning and redevelopment if their business sites are seen as potential profitable spaces for developers.<sup>94</sup> Developers are attracted to industrial properties since they are easily converted into space for residential and retail use.<sup>97</sup> According to the 2014 Southeast Los Angeles Community Plan, industrial land use makes up 15% of the plan area, and the 2000 census reports that 32% of Southeast Los Angeles employment was in the manufacturing sector.<sup>23</sup> A 2010 study conducted by researchers from USC in partnership with the historic Second Baptist Church of South Central Los Angeles, indicated that the top five industries that employ South Central residents are manufacturing, building and household service/maintenance, retail, repair services, and construction. Each of these five industries belongs to an economic tier that provides relatively low wages to a predominantly less-educated class of workers.<sup>17</sup>

Industrial and manufacturing jobs commonly make up the employment opportunities that pay the highest wages and provide the most jobs for populations of

lower educational attainment, usually immigrant communities or members of marginalized racial groups.<sup>97,94</sup> New developments such as the Reef Project look to create a large number of new jobs in the development area. However, rather than creating jobs that are attainable for the existing community, this job creation can lead to what is called an “education and jobs mismatch”.<sup>94</sup> This refers to the phenomenon in which the new jobs being created require a level of educational attainment unmet by local residents. Another outcome of this type of new job creation is that the newly created jobs that do accept employees with lower levels of educational attainment are commonly lower paying jobs--often in the service and accommodation industries--that offer fewer benefits to their workers.

*“The jobs are not for those of us in the community, it’s for those who have papers [documented people].” – Erendira*



# THE SMALL BUSINESSES OF SOUTH CENTRAL LOS ANGELES: A SIMILAR STORY

## THE EFFECTS OF GENTRIFICATION ARE ALREADY HAPPENING FOR MANY SMALL BUSINESSES IN SOUTH CENTRAL

According to the CDTech small business survey from the area, one of the businesses that operated in the neighborhood for 20 years experienced a monthly rent increase from what had been \$1,000 to \$2,000, to \$5,000, all within one month. The business owners had to close their doors immediately.<sup>93</sup> The report also states that many of the landlords and property owners are aware of the proposed development, and are, therefore, only offering short-term leases of between one month and a maximum of 5 years, despite business owners' efforts to try to negotiate for longer terms.<sup>93</sup>

## SMALL BUSINESSES IN SOUTH CENTRAL HAVE EXPERIENCED SERIAL FORCED DISPLACEMENT

Small businesses in the neighborhood have also experienced serial forced displacement, according to the CDTech survey.<sup>93</sup>

Twenty-nine percent of the businesses that have only been in the area 1 to 3 years moved to their current location because they were displaced due to rent increases or evictions when their building sold.



*"I had another business on Washington and Western, it was also a bakery... In 1992 the shopping center was burned down during the Rodney King riots ... Everything was destroyed and I was left with nothing, so I had to find another way to make my business. That's when I came here."*

**– Mama Petra**

*"The problem is that I don't know what I'll do if they sell the building. I'm used to this area, I have my customers. Everything is nearby. It hurts me to say that I would have to move, my heart is here...I don't even know where I would move to."*

**– small business owner**

## HEALTH IMPACTS ON SMALL BUSINESSES IN SOUTH CENTRAL

The CDTech report discusses the potential health impacts that could be experienced if small businesses are displaced.

*"If [local small businesses] are displaced—either by rent increases, lease insecurity, or eviction due to shifting property ownership—the loss would impact the health of this community. In turn, the stress experienced to avoid such outcomes greatly impacts the health of the business owners and staff themselves," (p. 23).<sup>93</sup>*

# RECOMMENDATIONS

The following chapter provides recommendations for the developer and the City of Los Angeles that would help to mitigate the predicted negative impacts of increased financial strain, displacement, and physical and mental illnesses, and provide additional health-protecting resources for current South Central residents.

## **TRAUMA-INFORMED AND ASSET-BASED COMMUNITY BUILDING**

The developers of the Reef project and the City of Los Angeles have a unique opportunity to develop this property in a way that reduces the potential to further traumatize and harm the physical and mental health of current residents through increased financial strain and displacement.

Rather than continuing the legacy of racism and segregation through the replacement of current residents with those who hold more economic and political power, the developers and the City have an opportunity to become stewards for the health and wellbeing of the South Central community, by engaging in a cutting-edge trauma-informed approach to community development. Trauma Informed Community Building (TICB) is a new innovative approach to development that recognizes the existing community as assets and uses these assets as the building blocks for the future. The goals of TICB are to “de-escalate chaos and stress, build social cohesion, and foster community resiliency over time”.<sup>98</sup> TICB strategies have been developed that take into account residents’ emotional needs and avoid re-traumatization triggers, promoting “community healing as part of housing transformation efforts”.<sup>98</sup> This can be achieved by ensuring that the project is developed using the four guiding principles of TICB: 1) Do no harm, 2) Acceptance, 3) Community empowerment, and 4) Reflective process. Additional details and strategies for TICB can be found here: <http://bridgehousing.com/PDFs/TICB.Paper5.14.pdf>

Findings from this study show that community members already have assets such as social cohesion among community members and among small business owners and the community. The development should be structured in a way that honors and enhances these assets.

The project should be developed in collaboration with community members to ensure that economic opportunities and affordable housing options are incorporated into the plan. As Benjamin Torres, President and CEO of CDTech states, “South LA residents aren’t trying to keep outsiders out of their backyards; they just want a fair opportunity to be able to stay.”<sup>99</sup>



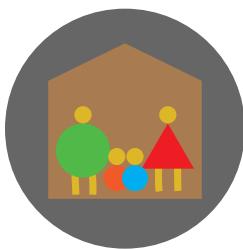
*“If they’re going to go forward with [the Reef development], ... take us into account and [have] opportunities for us. Don’t leave us out. Don’t discriminate against us. We’re human beings and we have needs. We are not living for free. We are paying our rent with the sweat from our brows. Right now, we aren’t making it. We aren’t even living day-to-day. I want this to be considered. But they’re not going to take us into account. They’re pushing us to the brink.” – Natividad*

*“We gotta remember that this used to be a healthy community. We gotta work on rebuilding up what we used to have.” – Cynthia*

The SAJE resident survey asked respondents what changes they would like to see in the neighborhood. Eighty-one percent responded (126/155). Of those, 64% reported that they would like to see city repairs and cleaning (e.g., trash cleanup, road conditions, traffic lights, more parking options and shade structures, and safe city parks). Thirty-two percent of respondents mentioned safety/security (e.g., violence and gang activity). These responses reflect a desire of community residents for the City to reverse its current pattern of disinvestment and provide civic infrastructure support. In addition, a series of community resident engagement sessions have recently been hosted by the UNIDAD coalition with approximately 50 community members from South Central Los Angeles in attendance over the course of five weeks. As a result of these meetings, community members have identified the following priority areas, which align closely with the findings from this report:

## RECOMMENDATIONS

homelessness, displacement prevention, affordable housing, jobs, small business, health and safety, and green space. The following recommendations, which were developed through discussions with the Advisory Committee and informed by other relevant development projects in the area, have the potential to address current community concerns, respond to the health impacts identified in this report, and take advantage of broader regional goals and needs. In addition to these overarching recommendations to take a TICB approach and to develop the project with community members, we also recommend a number of specific actions for the developers to implement directly and/or through a community benefits agreement, and also for the City to consider.



### RECOMMENDATION Produce and Protect Affordable Housing

The Los Angeles County Department of Public Health (LADPH) has produced multiple documents discussing the relationship between health and housing, and the importance of providing and protecting affordable housing for Los Angeles County residents, including their *Community Health Improvement Plan for Los Angeles County 2015-2010*<sup>100</sup> and *Housing and Health in Los Angeles County (2015)*.<sup>101</sup> In both documents they offer recommendations and/or strategies to protect and increase the availability of affordable housing as a means to “achieve equity and community stability”<sup>100</sup> For example, the LADPH recommends:

*“Support plans and policies in Los Angeles County jurisdictions that expand the supply of affordable housing for low-income families and individuals, and protect existing affordable housing that is at risk of conversion to unaffordable market-rate housing,” (p.29).<sup>100</sup>*

The LADPH also recommends that the City align its housing goals with their efforts.<sup>100</sup> Focus group participants also voiced the need for affordable housing in South Central.

*“Help us build affordable housing especially for low-income populations and for people who truly need it.” – Lourdes*

*“Affordable housing and job opportunities because that’s what we need to afford rent. Rent is too high, it’s the hardest thing.” – Juana*

*“I would like to see more housing and rent lowered...” – Verónica*

Affordable housing should be provided, with a diverse strategy of both producing new on- and off-site units and preserving old units. An emphasis should be put on providing housing for families, and a significant portion of housing should be set aside for extremely low income people.

#### Through Developer



New on-site units at levels of affordability that reach very low income and extremely low income residents.

Example: On-site housing: 25% of units affordable to very low income households.

Total affordable apartments for renters: 15% for residents with very low incomes (those who make less than 50% of the area median income) and 10% for residents with extremely low incomes (those who make less than 30% of the area median income).

#### Through Developer & Community Benefits Agreement



Funds for acquiring land and building new off-site units.

Funds to preserve and rehab existing units.

Example: \$20,000,000 paid to City Affordable Housing Trust Fund or community benefits fund for affordable housing.

#### City



Target new investments and policies to achieve new off-site affordable units.

Preserve old/existing affordable units.

## RECOMMENDATIONS



### RECOMMENDATION Prevent Displacement

The Los Angeles Department of City Planning's Plan for a Healthy Los Angeles (2015) "acknowledges the negative health consequences of displacement," (p.15)<sup>102</sup> and offers mitigation strategies to "create opportunities for existing residents to benefit from local revitalization," (p.32). These include supporting local employment opportunities, protecting and expanding affordable housing options for low-income residents, and maintaining culturally relevant resources, including case management, for Los Angeles residents to "access the benefits created by new development and investment in their neighborhoods" (p. 137).<sup>102</sup> This is in alignment with the LADPH recommendation to:

*"Support housing, land use, and economic development policies that prioritize anti-displacement as new investment enters an area. This includes, but is not limited to, preserving or replacing affordable housing for low-income community members in all neighborhoods and areas undergoing new development," (p. 29).<sup>100</sup>*

Programs should be put in place to prevent the displacement of local residents from their homes. Measures should include staffing for renter advocacy and organizing initiatives, funds for tenant associations and emergency rental assistance, enforcement of existing renter protections, and the establishment of new renter protections in the surrounding neighborhoods.

To achieve neighborhood stabilization goals, resources should prioritize residents who are most vulnerable to displacement in the areas closest to the project site.



#### Through Developer & Community Benefits Agreement

- Funds for staffing tenant organizing/advocacy and legal services initiatives.
- Funds for tenant associations and emergency rental assistance.



#### City

- Funds for tenant associations and emergency rent relief.
- Enforcement of existing renter protections.
- Establish enforceable "anti-displacement/no net loss" zones within a 1-mile radius of the project site. Create a community-City partnership to monitor and collaborate around anti-displacement efforts.



### RECOMMENDATION House and Protect the Homeless

Maintaining housing and preventing homelessness not only helps protect the health of those who are at risk of homelessness, but also makes good economic sense for the region. The standard monthly public cost for homeless individuals is \$2,879 per individual, a cost five-times greater than their counterparts who have received housing.<sup>31</sup> Research shows that public spending focused on social services, including housing subsidies, can produce better health outcomes than healthcare services spending.<sup>103</sup>

The LADPH has made a recommendation to:

*"Expand efforts to increase access to permanent housing with supportive services for homeless individuals and families to help them maintain stability and self-sufficiency," (p. 29).<sup>100</sup>*

One of the focus group participants from South Central shared his thoughts on the need for housing for the homeless through the Reef Development Project.

*"The thing about it is we got 30,000 homeless people, and we just asking for 30 homes, not even getting that." – Wallace*

Funding should be provided to house and protect the homeless in the area. In addition to producing/financing permanent supportive housing, their rights to rest and to maintain possessions in encampments must be protected and they should be provided with facilities and case management services.



#### Through Developer

- Provide on-site rent-free facilities for case management services. Maintain rent-free status for 20 years.



#### Through Developer & Community Benefits Agreement

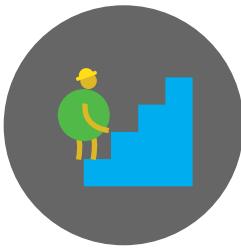
- Funds for permanent supportive housing for chronically homeless residents.
- Funds for case management services.



#### City

- Provide facilities and case management services.
- Enforce/enact policies to protect the rights of the homeless.

## RECOMMENDATIONS



### **RECOMMENDATION** Create Good Jobs and Career Pathways for Local Residents:

The Los Angeles Department of City Planning's *Plan for a Healthy Los Angeles* (2015) cites health-supporting policies in the City's General plan, including one framework element policy to: "support efforts to provide all residents with reasonable access to transit infrastructure, employment, and educational and job training opportunities," (p. 145).<sup>102</sup>

Recent research indicates that lower levels of metropolitan income inequality and segregation are related to sustained regional economic growth.<sup>104</sup> Rather than perpetuating and possibly exacerbating existing income inequalities and segregation in the region, the developers and the City have an opportunity to incorporate economic opportunities into the redevelopment process and outcomes through jobs for those in the community at highest risk, including: those in the geographic vicinity of the development who are likely to be impacted by financial strain or displacement directly or through their employers, and people with multiple barriers to employment such as single mothers, previously incarcerated people, and/or "at risk" youth ages 18-24.

There are multiple opportunities for the City and the developer to partner with other groups to achieve these recommendations, including: coordinating job training among County agencies, working with Unions on labor agreements, working with organized labor (building trades) and City Council to coordinate jobs with housing displacement protections, working with the LA Black Worker Center to assist in hiring Black workers, and providing preference for off-site contractual agreements to minority and woman-owned businesses, and/or businesses that pay a living wage.

Focus group participants also mentioned the need for jobs to be targeted for those who are currently in the neighborhood.

*"More work for those of us who are undocumented. More jobs." – Ruth*

*"I wish there were more investment in my community... investment in businesses, but for the jobs to be for people that live here... for it to be welcoming to the people regardless of immigration status... We also need job training programs so people can be better prepared and for the education to be of quality." – Patricia*

A Community Jobs Training and Placement program should be created to provide jobs for local residents, including construction jobs created by the development and permanent jobs with the businesses located on site after construction.

Funding should be provided for workforce development and job pipelines. Local high schools should be partners in developing career pathways for students, and the community should have an ongoing role in monitoring jobs programs.



#### *Through Developer*

##### **Examples:**

Construction jobs for the development: 40% local hiring, with 20% for disadvantaged residents including those who are homeless or aged-out foster youth.

Future retail jobs: 50% local hiring, with 30% for disadvantaged residents.

Maintenance jobs: 100% local residents and require a living wage.



#### *Through Developer & Community Benefits Agreement*

Establish a policy through the CBA for community-based monitoring and enforcement of local and targeted hiring policies. Provide funding to support this activity.

Funds for workforce development and job pipelines, including community-based training and placement programs.

Example: \$300,000 to community benefits fund to support Jobs Coordinator and the creation of a Community Jobs Training and Placement program.

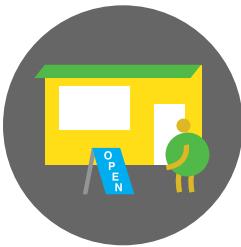


#### *City*

Funds for workforce development and job pipelines to supplement project-related funds.

Leverage existing City services to bolster Community Jobs Training and Placement program.

## RECOMMENDATIONS



### RECOMMENDATION Support Small Businesses:

The CDTech survey of small businesses in South Central reports that of the businesses surveyed who have at least one employee, 52% hire locally, and an additional 24% have at least some local employees.<sup>93</sup> This means that supporting economic development for local residents through jobs also means supporting local businesses that are currently providing many of those jobs, to make sure they are not displaced.

The report goes on to describe these businesses.

*"The small business establishments in the surveyed project area referred to as the 'Reef' represent the diverse population and historical contexts of the neighborhood's many uses. The variety of affordable goods and services they offer are reflections of the ethnic makeup and economic needs of the neighborhood residents. Small businesses are long-term investors in the community – who, in turn, draw their immediate capital from the neighborhood directly, making them a unique element of a neighborhood's DNA."*

*"At the same time, businesses are under-resourced and at high risk of displacement. Rents continue to rise, and leases shorten; the minority percentage of small businesses who have an actual formal lease agreement, still have no long term stability nor rent control, and all find themselves struggling to advocate for their rights/ability to stay if the owner raises their rent too high, forcibly evicts them, or sells the property," (p. 3).<sup>93</sup>*

Supporting these existing small businesses within the context of the Reef Development Project could be achieved through a few concrete efforts, such as supporting physical improvements like improved signage, using promotional reach to support off-site businesses, and establishing an emergency fund for small businesses.

Focus group participants also had suggestions for economic development in the area.



*"Invest in the small business owner and help build them up to the point where they are attractive and customers want them... Help build what is already there and these are the people who are invested in this community. So they are the ones who are going to take care of it." – Cynthia*

*"Affordable economic development. Have a forgivable loan or a forgivable grant... You have to hire locally, hire neighborhood kids, create co-ops... It can be done. It should be done." – Pat*

Small businesses, both on- and off-site, should be supported with funding, support, and technical assistance. Care should be taken to support existing community-serving small businesses in the neighborhood. Innovative models that enhance economic security for residents vulnerable to displacement – such as cooperative businesses run by local residents – should be supported.



#### Through Developer

Example: Create incubator space for local and community-based small businesses.

Provide a percentage of retail space at discounted rent levels for community-serving businesses that are culturally and economically accessible to local residents.



#### Through Developer & Community Benefits Agreement

Funds for support and technical assistance for both on-site and off-site small businesses.

Example: 10% of retail space for community-serving businesses at discounted rent.

\$300,000 for small business support fund.



#### City

Support and technical assistance for both on-site and off-site small businesses.

Establish programs/policies to protect off-site businesses from displacement due to rising rents.

## RECOMMENDATIONS



### **RECOMMENDATION** Maintain Public Transit Use by Local Residents:

The City of Los Angeles Department of City Planning considers public transit to be a key for achieving both environmental and social health and well-being. One of the main goals for the Department of City Planning is to promote a form of sustainable growth that opens access to resources for all Los Angeles residents, particularly for the underserved.<sup>102</sup>

The City's commitment to sustainability is directly associated with its aim to invest in development that is intentionally located along transit corridors and within transit-rich neighborhoods.<sup>102</sup> The City views its public transit system as a primary mechanism for benefiting the environment.<sup>102</sup>

*"There's transit oriented development, and this is the last best chance to get affordable housing in that area and protect it... It's not so much what you're displacing with a big development, but what you're giving up by doing a housing development that does not take into account this huge opportunity." – Manuel Pastor, University of Southern California, Professor*

Los Angeles' 2009 Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) also recognizes the importance of transit in achieving environmental justice. The Transportation Plan promotes transit investment in areas with lower-income populations, as it is lower-income people who are most transit-dependent.<sup>105</sup>

Access to public transit should be maintained for those who most utilize it and depend upon it – the current residents of the neighborhood. Utilize actions listed above for housing and economic development to avoid replacing current transit-users living in a transit-oriented neighborhood with new residents who will be less likely to use transit.

#### *Through Developer*

Provide monthly transit passes to tenants living in affordable housing units on site.

#### *Through Developer & Community Benefits Agreement*

Funds to provide monthly transit passes to tenants living in affordable housing units off site.



#### **City**

Maximize City, County and transit agency services for low-income transit riders in the area.



### **RECOMMENDATION** Protect the Safety and Security of the Community:

The Los Angeles Department of City Planning's *Plan for a Healthy Los Angeles* (2015) lists "safe and just neighborhoods" as one of its primary focus areas and states, "Safe neighborhoods are free from violence and crime and are characterized by a trusting, collaborative relationship between law enforcement and residents," (p. 108).<sup>102</sup> Data from this study suggest that there is still work to do to achieve protection from crime and also achieve a trusting and collaborative relationship between law enforcement and residents, and that sometimes efforts to achieve the former may come at the expense of the latter. The City has an opportunity to renew these efforts in a meaningful, community-oriented way, through the redevelopment process. The City and the developer can also incorporate additional new efforts to ensure safety and security of the residents, making sure to include private security forces into their considerations.

The safety and security of the community should be protected. Police should be available to protect the residents of the area, but at the same time, programs should be put in place to make sure that neighborhood residents, including homeless residents, are not criminalized or targeted by police or other security staff.



#### *Through Developer*

Create event programming on site to raise awareness and build capacity among community members and security professionals around anti-criminalization practices.

Rules and regulations should be put in place so that low-income residents are not discriminated against, by management or other residents, within the development.

## RECOMMENDATIONS



### Through Developer & Community Benefits Agreement

Programs should be put in place to make sure that neighborhood residents are not criminalized or targeted by security staff.

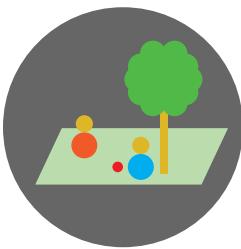
Establish a community board overseeing the policies and practices of on-site and off-site security.



### City

Work in collaboration with the on-site community oversight board to extend the anti-criminalization policies and practices to include City and County police forces.

Police should be available to protect the residents of the area, but at the same time, programs should be put in place to make sure that neighborhood residents are not criminalized or targeted by police or other security staff.



### RECOMMENDATION Provide Green Space for Neighborhood Residents:

The Los Angeles Department of City Planning's *Plan for a Healthy Los Angeles* (2015) also features "beautiful parks and open spaces" as one of its overarching goals to achieve a healthy City.<sup>102</sup> The guidance document specifically states:

*"Abundant and accessible parks and beautified open spaces are fundamental components of healthy neighborhoods... As a top health priority, the Plan for a Healthy Los Angeles strives to improve access to existing parks and open spaces and prioritizing new parks in the most underserved neighborhoods," (p. 53).<sup>102</sup>*

The City already has a process to do this, through the Quimby fee system, though this process is currently being revised. Based on these goals from the City, it would be expected that Quimby fees collected from the development should be spent on constructing and/or maintaining parks within poor areas of South Central.

The focus group participants reported an interest in more parks.

*"I wish there were more parks for the kids." – Ruth*

*"More parks, a big, big one. We just have one." – Maria*

*"There aren't enough parks, on the contrary, they want to close them." – Ana*

*"I would like programs [at the parks] like we used to have." – Lourdes*

Green space created by new development should be made public and open to neighborhood residents, with space planned for community gardens and local produce sales. Funding should be provided to create and improve off site parks and to carry on active programming for children and families.



### Through Developer

Green space created by the development should be made public and open to neighborhood residents, with space planned for community gardens and local produce sales.



### Through Developer & Community Benefits Agreement

Funding should be provided to create and improve off site parks and to carry on active programming for children and families.



### City

Funding should be provided to create and improve off site parks and to carry on active programming for children and families.

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