

Confronting the Real Barriers to Housing Affordability: Using Research to Assemble Durable Coalitions and Expand Political Capacity

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Barriers to Housing Policy: Technical or Political Problem?

Los Angeles Times

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HOUSING & HOMELESSNESS

Californians once again reject bid to expand rent control in the state



Landlord groups convinced voters rent control measure Prop. 21 was not a solution to the state's housing woes. (Justin Sullivan/Getty Images)

By LIAM DILLON | STAFF WRITER

NOV. 3, 2020 | 8:31 PM UPDATED NOV. 4, 2020 | 7:42 AM

Cuomo signs landmark rent regulation reform bill

Governor immediately signed the bill

TRD New York / By [Georgia Kromrei](#) and [Kathryn Brenzel](#)



Assembly Speaker Carl Heastie and Senator Andrea Stewart-Cousins

Minneapolis, Tackling Housing Crisis and Inequity, Votes to End Single-Family Zoning



Janne Flisrand at her home in the Lowry Hill neighborhood in Minneapolis on Wednesday. She is part of the group Neighbors for More Neighbors, which is pushing for greater housing density in the city. Jenn Ackerman for The New York Times

By Sarah Mervosh

Relationship between political organizing and housing policy

- Longer-term historical and structural transformation of community development and housing policy advocacy in the post-Civil Rights era
- Political organizing around displacement and gentrification
- Housing policy as a problem of technical expertise, somewhat divorced from analysis of power and therefore circumscribing policies from a perceived political window of possibility

What is the relationship between political organizing and housing policy?

- 1** What influences the breadth of coalitions (e.g. broad coalitions that include housing developers and landlords, tenants and advocates) and what kind of policy change can various coalitions achieve?
- 2** What policy changes can bolster coalitions and/or lead to capacity-building among groups, leading to further policy change?
- 3** What is the role of data and research in these campaigns and coalitions?

**Answer these
questions through
three case studies of
campaigns and
coalitions for
housing policy
change**

Housing Preservation Network
Washington, DC

Upstate-Downstate Housing Alliance
New York City / New York State

Campaign to Reduce Evictions
Richmond / Virginia

Housing Preservation Network

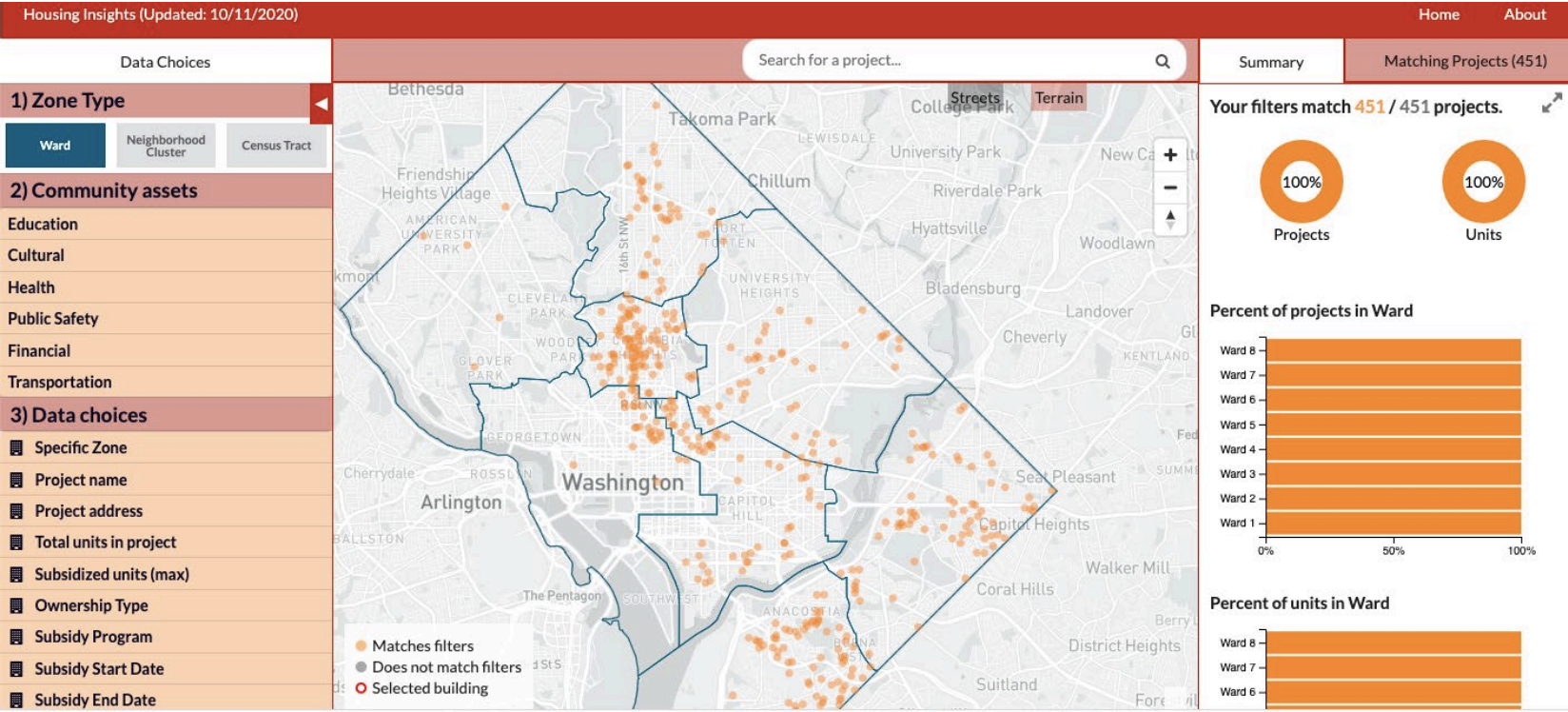
Washington, DC

Maintaining Economic Diversity and Affordability

A Strategy for Preserving Affordable Rental Housing in the District of Columbia

DC Preservation Network
Preservation Strategy Working Group

December 2014



Housing Preservation Network

Washington, DC


- Developed in 2008 in response to expiring Section 8 contracts
- Growing affordable housing movement
- Tenant organizers, pro bono legal, policy advocates, local/federal government staff, nonprofit funders and nonprofit developers
- Preservation policy; preservation fund, preservation officer, \$100m
- Data (qual and quant) central to documenting lived experience, trusted source

Upstate-Downstate Housing Alliance

New York City and New York State

**CUOMO'S
HOUSING CRISIS**

*Homelessness & Unaffordability
in New York State*



Upstate-Downstate Housing Alliance

New York City and New York State

- Long standing displacement, gentrification, and unaffordable housing
- Coalition of 70 tenant organizations, community-based orgs in NYC and across state
- Rent stabilization reform in 2019
- Earlier work in NYC produced critical data infrastructure
- Future goals include statewide just cause eviction law, social and public housing investment, progressive state taxation

Campaign to Reduce Evictions (CARE)

Richmond and Virginia

Evictions in Virginia

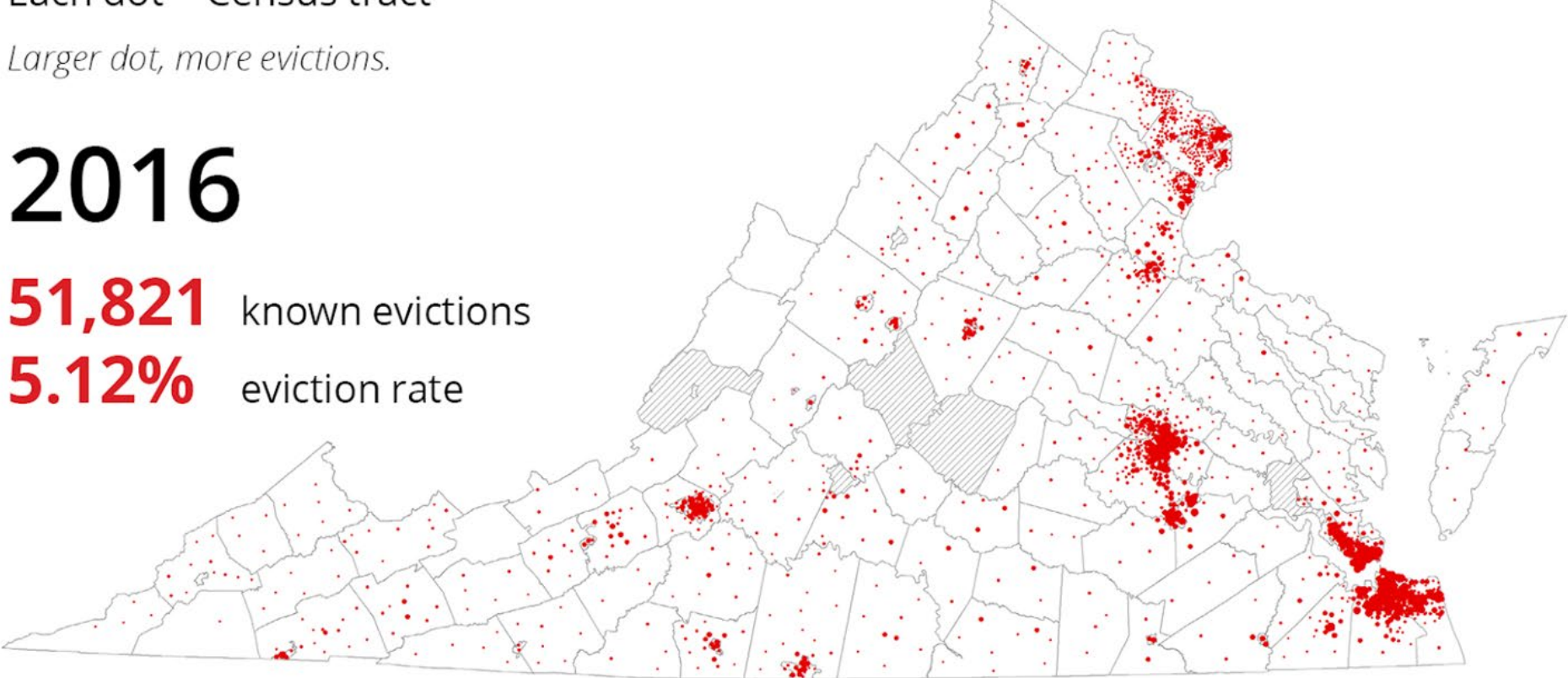
Each dot = Census tract

Larger dot, more evictions.

2016

51,821 known evictions

5.12% eviction rate



Data from Eviction Lab, 2000-2016
Crosshatched localities = data unavailable

Campaign to Reduce Evictions (CARE)

Richmond and Virginia

- Statewide coalition formed in 2018 after Princeton Eviction Lab data release
- Broad coalition of legal aid attorneys, affordable housing providers, private landlords, social service providers
- Initially limited data and research capability
- Reforms to state tenant-landlord laws, eviction diversion program
- New groups, data and research support through RVA Eviction Lab

Coalitions and Housing Policy

- Competing Theories of Change
- Data and Power
- Political Opportunity and Scale

“Lessons for Practice”

- Knowing what counts as success
- Elected officials
- Organizational investment
- Research should be connected and purposeful
- Housing policy design that emphasizes material impacts *and* strategic value



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