

Berkeley City Council Meeting Tuesday 2/23/2021
Item 29 - Resolution to End Exclusionary Zoning in Berkeley -
Passed Unanimously: 9-0-0

Thank you Vice Mayor Droste, Councilmembers Taplin, and Robinson for putting this together. Thank you Councilmembers Harrison, Hahn, Kesarwani and Wengraf for your additions and Mayor Arreguin for unifying it all.

Let's be honest, with Building and land costs being what they are, legalizing housing inclusion may not lead to an explosion in housing. Still, its importance is greater than the material benefit: it's existential.

Trump's Border Wall was so important to him and he spent so much political capital on it because the wall symbolized the continuation of division and hierarchy. Anti-racism requires us to look deeply into not only our behavior but into the design of our institutions.

If the foundation of the institution is corrupt, no amount of good intent piled on top of it will change its predetermined outcomes. We see this in policing, prison complex, education, healthcare, business, and most certainly in housing.

We cannot ignore that from the onset, zoning's sole purpose was to segregate by race, to the detriment of people of color. They even called it Race Zoning! And it succeeded!

Even after the racist part was outlawed, it kept working because racism is inherent in the design. People found a way for race zoning to legally continue under a different name: Single Family Zoning.

We don't need to show continuing intent. The continuing effect is more than enough. As for Redlining, it was simply a market validation of the prior race zoning's edict to wall people off from opportunity.

It is Important to Note: Not only are we the birthplace of race zoning, but we are also the birthplace of the Fair Housing Act authored by Berkeley's own Byron Rumford, which became the Federal Fair Housing Act— a seminal piece of legislation Guaranteeing Equal Access to Housing. As such, we have a dual responsibility to address this long-standing and entrenched iniquity.

We talk about wealth inequality, and we focus on billionaires and CEOs. But we can closer to home — the true basis of all wealth is land. Land is inherited, and so is landlessness, and the land is being hoarded. And it is getting worse. California has had an 8.8% decrease in home building permits from 2019, which was itself a 3.8% decrease from 2018.

We know that where you live is the greatest single determinant of well-being. This is why we fight so hard to keep people in Berkeley and to allow people in.

Carl Jung taught, "When you don't face your shadow, it becomes you." **My friends, we have to face our shadow and Tear Down the Wall. Let's lead once again and set the next generation up for success!**