D.4 Disparities in Access to Opportunity

REGIONAL CONTEXT

Access to opportunity was assessed in both the regional and local context. In their July 2020 Assessment of Fair Housing data release, HUD provided a set of opportunity indices to quantify disparities in access to opportunity at the local and regional scale for seven categories: Environmental Health, Jobs Proximity, Labor Market, Low Poverty, Low Transportation Cost, School Proficiency, and Transit. The index score is first computed at the neighborhood level (which can vary from census tract to block group cluster, depending on the variable). The higher the index score, the better an area's access to opportunity. The index score then goes through a second computation that weights it based on the distribution of a given racial/ethnic group in that area. While these indices do not identify opportunity by tract or block group within the city, they can show the relative standing of Oakland compared to the San Francisco-Oakland-Hayward region. Chart D-3 shows the indices by race/ethnicity across the entire population of Oakland and the San Francisco-Oakland-Hayward region. Below are the descriptions for each opportunity index value, along with findings for the city and region:

- **Environmental Health** measures potential exposure to carcinogenic, respiratory, and neurological hazards as determined by the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) National Air Toxics Assessment. The higher the value, the less exposure to airborne toxins. The white and Asian/Pacific Islander populations at the regional level have the best environmental health scores and the Black population at the regional level has the worst score. Within Oakland, scores do not differ much across groups, though the score for the Hispanic population is slightly better than the other groups. It is difficult to draw conclusions from this within-city result. Similar to HCD/California Tax Credit Allocation Committee (TCAC) Opportunity Maps data, which appears later in this section, this index only accounts for exposure to toxins and does not account for other environmental justice factors, such as socioeconomic and health disparities across racial/ethnic groups. Additionally, the EPA notes that their assessment is not ideal for measuring differences across small areas; therefore, looking at within-city differences across racial/ethnic groups may not be an idea application for this tool. The State HCD/TCAC Opportunity Maps, featured later in this section, are a better tool for examining environmental differences across census tracts in Oakland.
- **Jobs Proximity** quantifies accessibility of a neighborhood to job locations, with major employment centers weighted more heavily. The higher the value, the better access to jobs. Proximity to jobs is slightly higher in Oakland than the region at large, except for the Hispanic population, for which it is roughly the same. While the index focuses on proximity, it does not consider job accessibility based on educational level. Further analysis on job access will be included in the Economic Trends and Prospects report released in June 2022, available at https://cao-94612.s3.amazonaws.com/documents/FINAL-Economic_Trends_Prospects_EPS_2022.06.02.pdf
- **Labor Market** measures the intensity of labor market engagement and human capital (i.e. the economic value of a worker's experience and skills) in a neighborhood based on unemployment,

labor force participation, and educational attainment. The higher the value, the higher the labor market engagement and human capital. Within Oakland, the labor market index is much higher for the white population than for other groups. Regionally, the Asian/Pacific Islander population has a notably higher index score than within Oakland, the white population has a similar index score between the region and Oakland, and all other racial/ethnic groups have a slightly higher score at the regional level.

- **Low Poverty** measures poverty in a neighborhood. The higher the value, the less exposure to poverty. Exposure to poverty is lower for all groups regionally compared to Oakland. Asian/Pacific Islander and white groups have the least exposure to poverty regionally. Within Oakland, the white population has notably less exposure to poverty than all other groups.
- **Low Transportation Cost** quantifies transportation costs by neighborhood based on the estimated cost for a low-income, single-parent family of three. The estimate considers a host of variables, such as access to public transit and density of homes, services, and jobs in a neighborhood. The higher the value, the lower the cost of transportation in the neighborhood. Low transportation cost is almost equal for all groups at the city and regional level.
- **School Proficiency** measures access to elementary schools with higher academic proficiency based on the performance of 4th grade students on state exams. The higher the value, the higher the quality of the school system in a neighborhood. School proficiency is higher for all groups at the regional level than at the city level, and highest for white and Asian/Pacific Islander groups. Within Oakland, school proficiency is higher for the white population than other groups.
- **Transit** measures transit use in a neighborhood based on estimates of transit trips taken by low-income, single-parent families of three. The higher the value, the more likely residents in the neighborhood use public transit. The transit index is high in Oakland and about equal across all groups, while in the region it is slightly lower with slight discrepancies between groups.

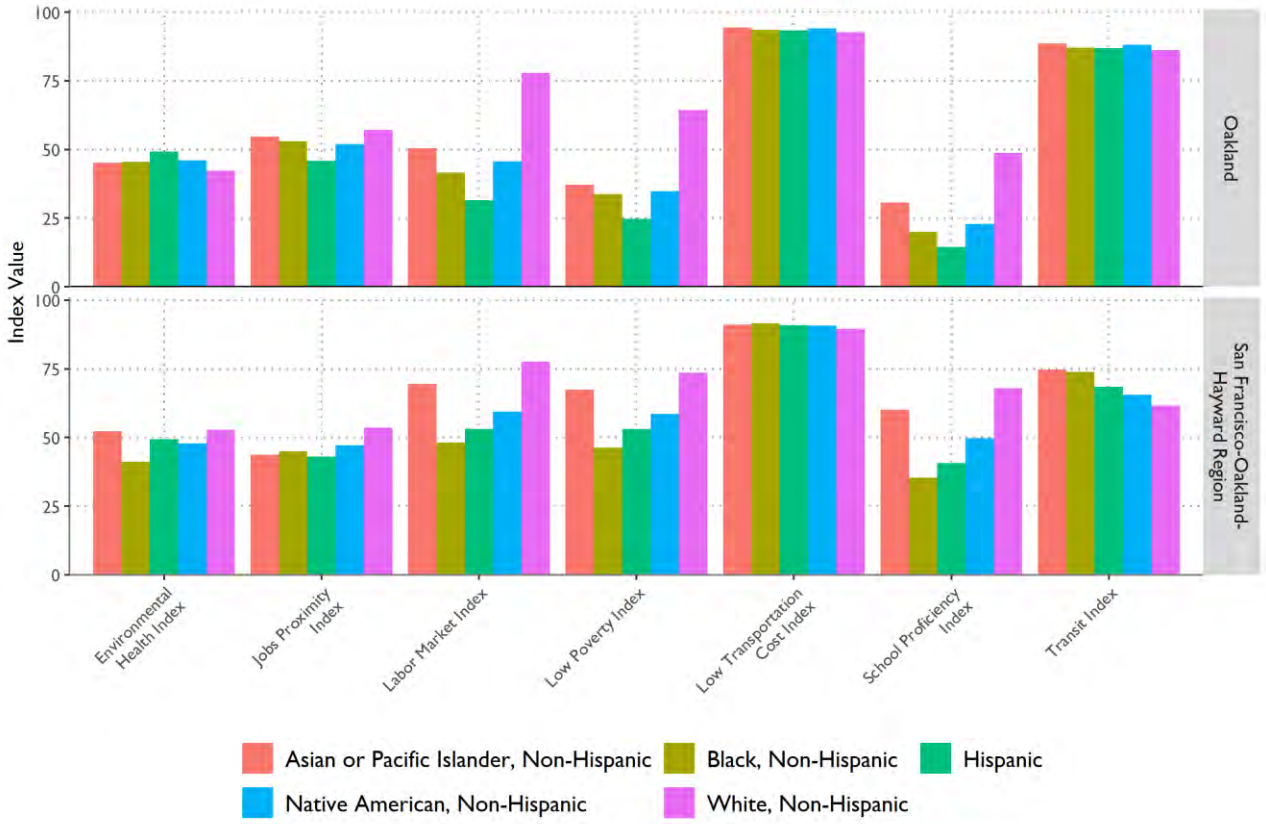


Chart D-3: Opportunity Indices for Total Population, 2020

Source: HUD, AFFHT0006 Table 12, July 2020

Chart D-4 examines these same indices but for the population living in poverty only. The city and regional scores for all groups are similar between the entire population and those living in poverty for environmental health, jobs proximity, low transportation cost and transit. For labor market, low poverty, and school proficiency, patterns are similar relative to racial/ethnic groups and to the geographic areas, but index scores are lower overall in these categories for those living in poverty.

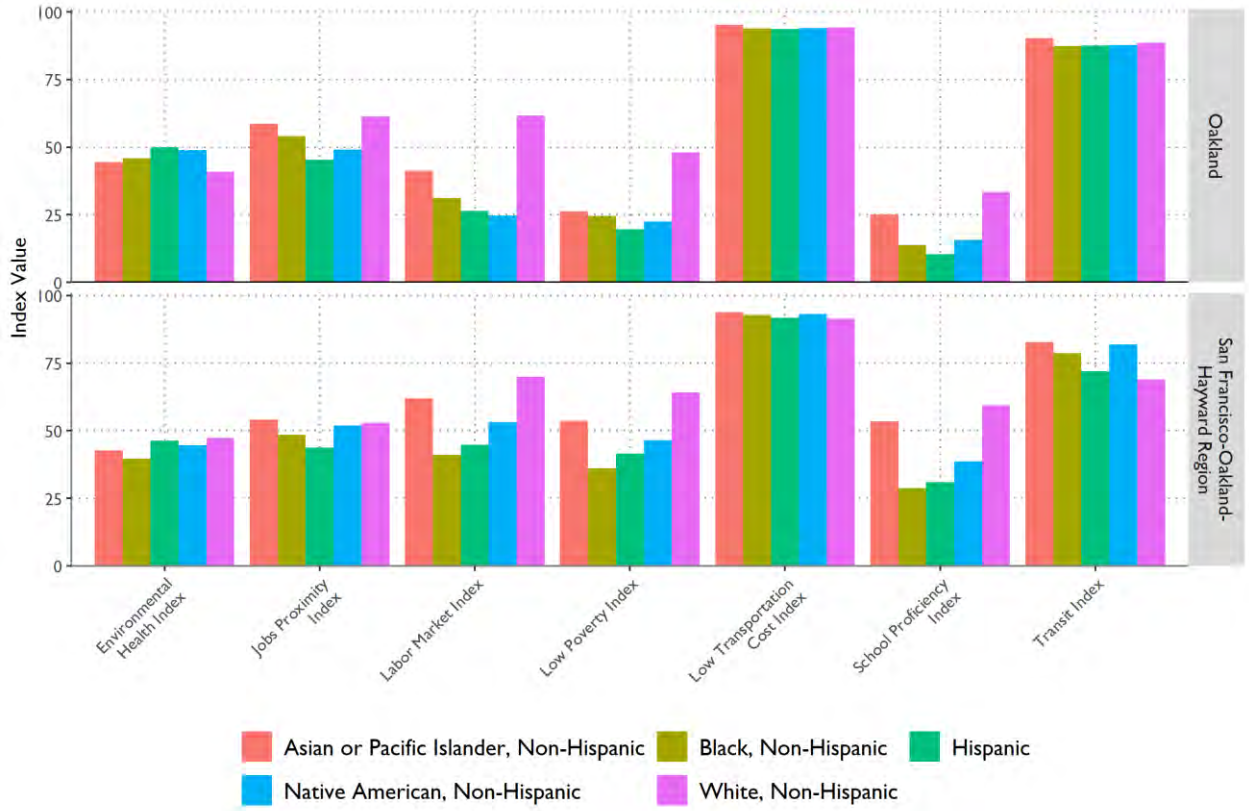


Chart D-4: Opportunity Indices for Population Living Below the Federal Poverty Line, 2020

Source: HUD, AFFHT0006 Table 12, July 2020

LOCAL CONTEXT

To quantify access to opportunity at the neighborhood level, State HCD and TCAC convened to form the California Fair Housing Task Force to develop Opportunity Maps that visualize accessibility of low-income adults and children to resources within a jurisdiction. High Resource areas are those that offer low-income adults and children the best access to a high-quality education, economic advancement, and good physical and mental health. Table D-5 below outlines the domains of the Opportunity Maps. The economic, environmental and education domains were further aggregated to create a composite index.

While Opportunity Maps are used as an analytical tool in this Housing Element to best frame disparities in a context that statewide audiences would understand, the City has severe concerns about the current calculation of Opportunity Maps. The current scoring formula fails to adequately account for recent investments into community, cultural assets, or access to transit. The formula also includes several inputs- such as home value and educational attainment- that are legacies of racism and could lead to communities of color being systemically rated as lower-opportunity.

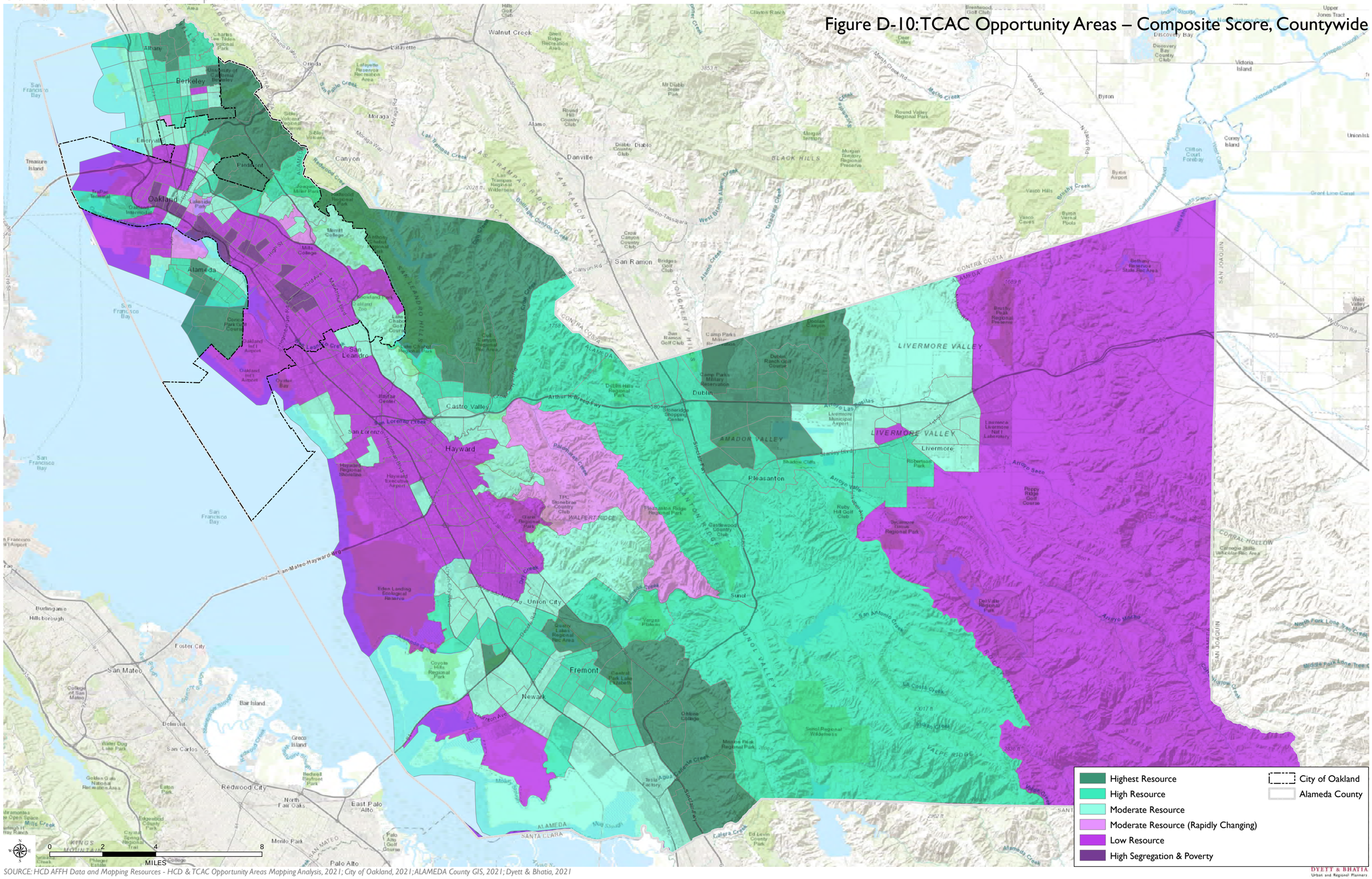
Table D-5: Domain and Indicators for State HCD/TCAC Opportunity Maps, 2020

Domain	*Indicator*
Economic	Poverty Adult Education Employment Job Proximity Median Home Value
Environmental	CalEnviroScreen 3.0 exposure and environmental effects indicators
Education	Math Proficiency Reading Proficiency High School Graduation Rates Student Poverty Rate
Filter	Poverty and Racial Segregation

Source: California Fair Housing Task Force, Methodology for the 2021 TCAC/HCD Opportunity Map, December 2020

Alameda County (Figure D-10) contains a variety of opportunity areas, with the Highest Resource areas generally located farther away from urban centers – except in Berkeley, northeast Oakland, parts of Alameda, and Fremont, which also have High Resource areas located in/near urban centers. All of the census tracts in Alameda County that are designated High Segregation and Poverty are in Oakland. This is potentially due in part to Oakland's racial diversity- areas of high poverty that are primarily white are not designated as "High Segregation and Poverty"

Figure D-10: TCAC Opportunity Areas – Composite Score, Countywide



SOURCE: HCD AFFH Data and Mapping Resources - HCD & TCAC Opportunity Areas Mapping Analysis, 2021; City of Oakland, 2021; ALAMEDA County GIS, 2021; Dyett & Bhatia, 2021

DYETT & BHATIA
Urban and Regional Planners

There is a confluence of varying resource levels (except for Highest Resource) in and surrounding Downtown Oakland and Lake Merritt (Figure D-11). Otherwise, most of Oakland's census tracts are considered Low Resource, and these areas surround the High Segregation and Poverty areas. These areas are primarily located in Downtown, West Oakland and East Oakland. As described in Section D2, these communities, which have been historic enclaves for communities of color, have faced a history of disinvestment, redlining, discriminatory policies, and predatory lending. The Highest Resource areas are clustered in the North Oakland Hills and adjacent to Piedmont and these are surrounded by High Resource areas. Census tracts with concentrations of protected groups are limited in access to resources as these tracts do not overlap with the High and Highest Resource Areas, as discussed below.

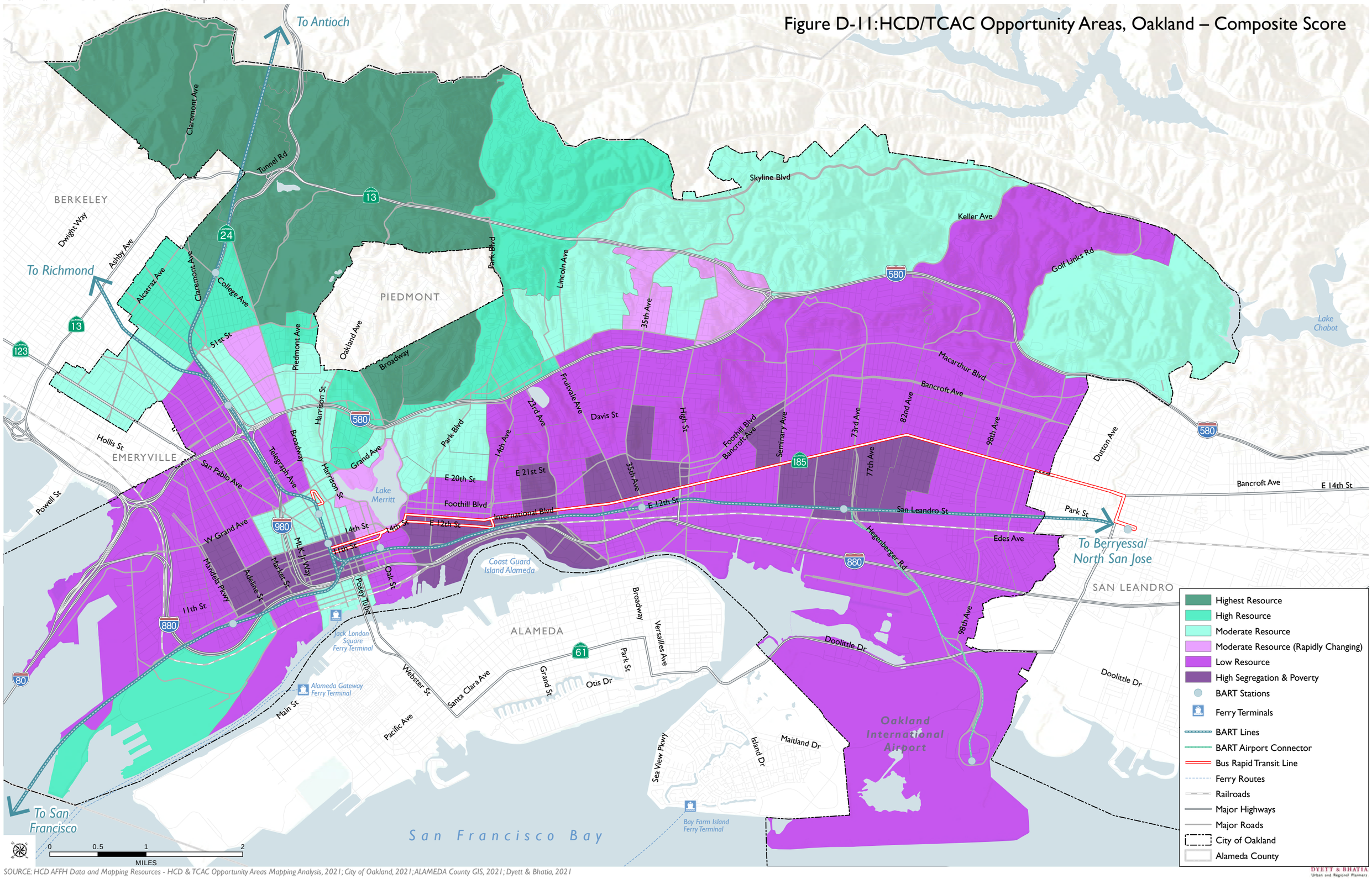
Those living in Oakland's R/ECAPs have less access to opportunity as these tracts greatly overlap with High Segregation and Poverty and Low Resource areas (Figures D-9 and D-11). These areas are primarily located in Downtown and West Oakland and various census tracts in East Oakland, particularly around Fruitvale and along International Boulevard.

Recalling Figure D-3, persons with disabilities may have varied access to opportunity depending on where they live. Persons with disabilities are most highly concentrated in tracts in Downtown Oakland, one tract in West Oakland, and one tract in North Oakland. These tracts overlap with High Segregation and Poverty Areas, Low Resource Areas, and Moderate Resource Areas.

In Oakland, female-headed households have disproportionately less access to opportunity. Census tracts with higher concentrations of female-headed households similarly overlap with High Segregation and Poverty Areas, Low Resource Areas, and Moderate Resource Areas in Downtown and West Oakland (Figures D-5 and D-11).

None of the census tracts with higher concentrations of protected groups are High Resource tracts.

Figure D-11:HCD/TCAC Opportunity Areas, Oakland – Composite Score



SOURCE: HCD AFFH Data and Mapping Resources - HCD & TCAC Opportunity Areas Mapping Analysis, 2021; City of Oakland, 2021; ALAMEDA County GIS, 2021; Dyett & Bhatia, 2021

Economic Opportunity

The Economic Score map is similar to the Composite Score map (Figure D-11) with more positive economic outcomes in the northeastern part of the city, the Port industrial area, immediately surrounding Lake Merritt, and one tract in the Jack London District (Figure D-12). Downtown and West Oakland contain a mix of economic outcomes, though none fall into the more positive category. East Oakland falls entirely into the lowest outcomes category. The findings from Figure D-12 align with the Gentrification and Displacement map (Figure D-19) shown later in this chapter. In general, there is more access to economic opportunity in tracts that are in advanced gentrification stages, stable, or exclusive/becoming exclusive and less access to economic opportunity in tracts that are not yet gentrified. Gentrification tends to bring substantial economic development and rising housing costs, which both factor into the economic score.

Those living in Oakland's R/ECAPs have less access to economic opportunity, particularly those living in East Oakland, where census tracts are associated with the least positive economic outcomes; those living in Downtown and West Oakland census tracts may be geographically near access to economic opportunity as some of these tracts have been recently gentrified, but that does not mean that BIPOC populations or people living in poverty can access the opportunities available in these areas (Figures D-9 and D-12).

Residents with disabilities may have more difficulty in finding employment. In Oakland, according to 2019 ACS estimates compiled by ABAG, approximately 14.2 percent of the civilian non-institutionalized population 18 years to 64 years in the labor force with a disability were unemployed, while only 5.6 percent of those with no disability were unemployed. So, while there are a greater proportion of persons with disabilities living in and adjacent to census tracts with varied access to economic opportunity (Downtown, near Piedmont Avenue, and West Oakland), that does not outweigh general employment challenges for those with disabilities (Figures D-3 and D-12).

Female-headed households with children typically have greater need for affordable housing and accessible day care, health care, and other supportive services. Therefore, these challenges might outweigh geographic access to economic opportunity. In fact, according to findings from Appendix B, 39.72 percent of female-headed households with children live below the poverty line. So, while there are a greater proportion of female-headed households with children living in and adjacent to census tracts in Downtown and West Oakland with varied access to economic opportunity, ranging from less positive to more positive outcomes, that does not outweigh other challenges, such as finding affordable childcare, that female-headed households must balance (Figures D-5 and D-12).

Transportation Opportunity

State HCD/TCAC does not map access to opportunity with regards to transportation, but All Transit explores metrics that reveal the social and economic impact of transit, specifically looking at connectivity, access to jobs, and frequency of service.[15] Oakland's All Transit Performance score of 8.3 (on a scale of 0 to 10) reflects a high number of transit trips taken per week combined with the number of jobs accessible to transit. On average, 15 transit lines (bus and rail) are accessible within a half mile of Oakland households, 388,553 jobs (96.7 percent of jobs in Oakland) are accessible in a 30-minute transit trip, and 22.82 percent of commuters use transit. This score is consistent with the HUD Opportunity Indices for Jobs Proximity and Transit. Oakland's score is highest in the flatlands, along the BART corridor, and decreases towards the Hills, where scores fall into the 4-6 range. This means that transit is accessible to those living in R/ECAPs, tracts with high concentrations of female-headed households, and tracts with high concentrations of

[15] AllTransit Metrics. https://alltransit.cnt.org/metrics/. Accessed April 2022.

persons with disabilities (Figures D-3, D-5, and D-9). 83.9 percent of households earning an annual salary of less than $50,000 live within a half-mile of high-frequency transit.

Education Opportunity

Disparities in access to quality education is a significant fair housing issue. As shown in Figure D-13, most census tracts in Oakland are associated with the lowest educational outcomes. The more positive educational outcomes are clustered in the northeastern part of Oakland, particularly the North Oakland Hills and tracts immediately south of Piedmont, which is also where predominantly non-Hispanic white tracts are located (Figures D-13 and D-1B). All R-ECAP tracts have lower educational outcomes, with slightly better (but still low) outcomes in Downtown tracts (Figures D-9 and D-13). Female-headed households with children and persons with disabilities are also concentrated in tracts with lower educational outcomes (Figures D-5, D-3, and D-13).

Table D-6 summarizes test score results from the 2018-2019 Smarter Balanced assessments of math and English language arts, which forms part of the State's California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress (CAASPP). These data reflect public schools; private schools are not mandated to take standardized tests. While Alameda County outperforms the state, Oakland's scores are notably lower than those of the state and county.

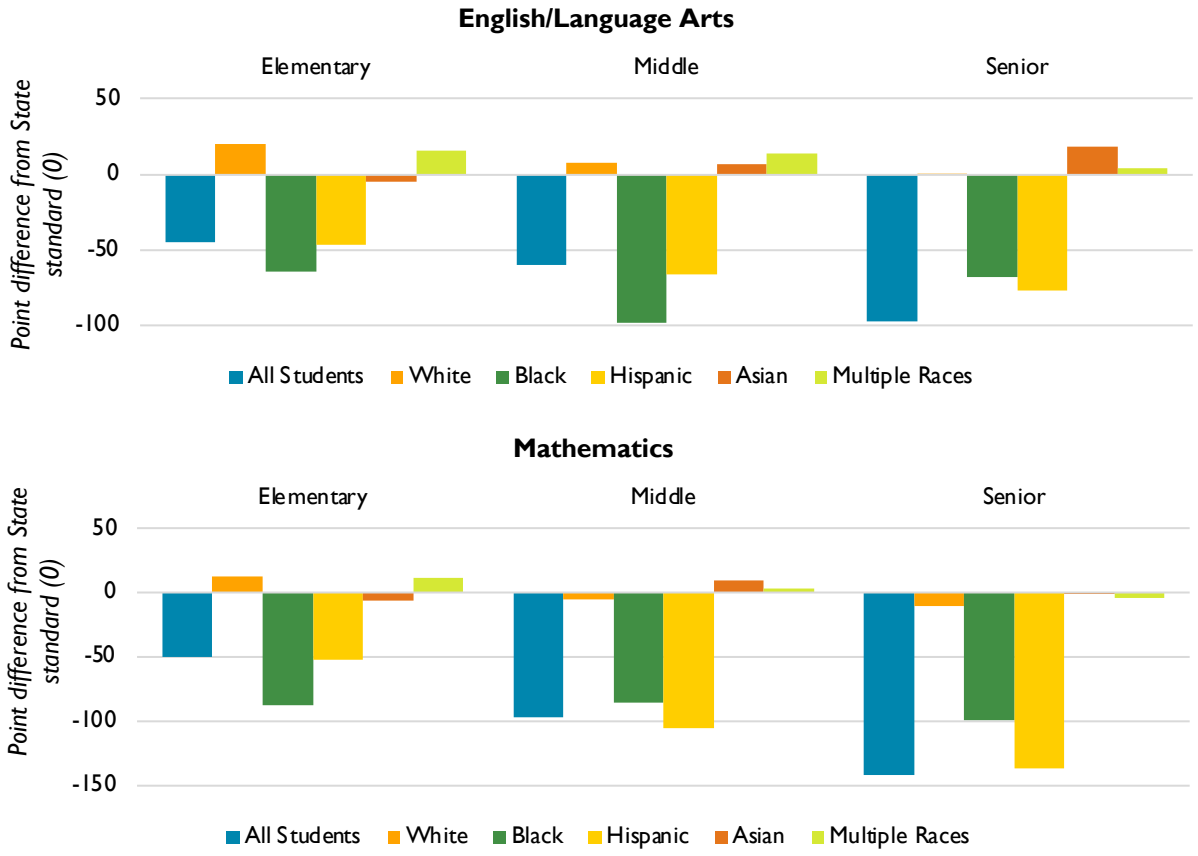
Table D-6: CAASPP Smarter Balanced Test Results, 2018-2019

District/Region	*Percent Met or Exceeded Standard*	
	English Language Arts	*Mathematics*
State of California	51.10%	39.73%
Alameda County	56.84%	48.98%
Oakland Unified School District	33.46%	27.00%

Source: California Department of Education, CAASPP, Smarter Balanced Summative Assessments, 2018-2019

Chart D-5 illustrates how school performance among students for the 2018-2019 school year significantly differs by race. In the Oakland Unified School District (OUSD), Black and Hispanic/Latinx students' average scores are less than the State standards for the Smarter Balanced Summative Assessments and California Alternative Assessments as reported by the California Department of Education (CDE). Moreover, students of all races fall further behind as they progress in their education (i.e., senior/high school performance is worse than elementary school level performance). At a school level, Hillcrest Elementary has the overall highest achieving levels for both English/language arts and mathematics. Hillcrest Elementary is located in a Highest-Resource, predominantly white census tract, miles from any R/ECAPs, where less than 10 percent of the population lives in poverty and less than 20 percent of children live in female-headed households. The lowest-performing elementary school for both subjects is Markham Elementary. Markham Elementary is located in a Low Resource census tract, adjacent to a R/ECAP tract, where 20-30 percent of the population lives in poverty and 41-60 percent of children live in female-headed households. Notably, this school is located in the one Oakland census tract that has no racial/ethnic majority population, but adjacent to tracts with slim Hispanic/Latinx and Black/African American majorities. These outcomes are typical of patterns in race and income; schools in majority-white and more affluent areas (such as Hillcrest Elementary) tend to score higher and often are supported by Parent Teacher Associations (PTAs) with substantial budgets for enrichment activities than schools in lower income and/or majority-BIPOC neighborhoods (such as Markham Elementary).

Chart D-5: OUSD Student Performance by Race (2018-2019 School Year)



Notes: Other categories not shown due to insufficient data: Pacific Islander, Filipino, Native American/Alaskan. Elementary includes K-8; Middle includes 6-12; Senior includes Alternative. Charter schools and Independent Study not included.

Sources: California Department of Education, 2019; Oakland Unified School District, 2021; Dyett & Bhatia, 2022.

OUSD school enrollment is based on a lottery. This technically allows students and families access to more proficient schools. However, applications for students applying to schools in their own neighborhoods are prioritized. Additionally, students applying to Chabot Elementary, Edna Brewer Middle School, and Sequoia Elementary who live in Priority Census Blocks (based on the concentration of Latinx and Black/African American residents, median household income, and number of students participating in free and reduced-price lunch) are prioritized in the application process. Regardless, having to travel across the City to access a better resourced than one's neighborhood school is a deeply inequitable situation.

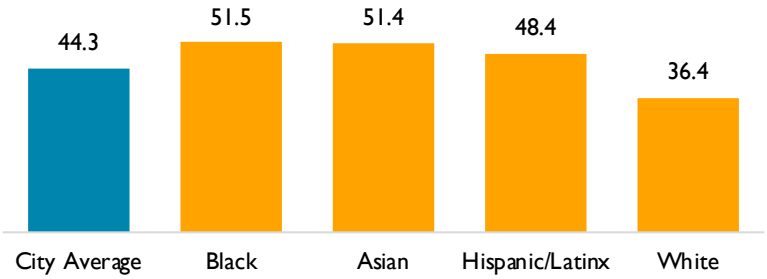
Environmental Opportunity

Environmental health is another key consideration in fair housing. Today's persistent environmental injustices result from not only recent action or inaction but from historical decisions that determined the city's land use patterns, industrial base, and transportation network. The racial inequities in levels of air pollution, ground contamination, noise, and other environmental problems reflect ineffectively or differential enforcement of environmental protection laws, as well as the siting of residential areas in proximity to noxious industrial uses and the routing of truck traffic through low-income, Port-adjacent

communities and on I-880 but not I-580. By recognizing the impacts of this history in Oakland, the City can better focus efforts on starting to address the negative impacts of past decisions.

As discussed in detail in the Environmental Justice and Equity Baseline March 2022 Report, The City of Oakland has an overall CalEnviroScreen 4.0 Pollution Burden percentile score of 44.3, meaning that it is less impacted by environmental effects and exposures than almost 56.7 percent of tracts in California. However, this relatively low citywide value hides the disproportionate pollution burden experienced by some Oakland census tracts. Although seven out of 113 census tracts in the city have a score of less than 10, four tracts are among the top 10th percentile in the entire state for pollution burden. Chart D-6, below, shows that there are higher concentrations of BIPOC communities living in tracts that have higher pollution burden scores, meaning that they are more at risk than white populations.

Chart D-6 CalEnviroScreen 4.0 Pollution Burden Scores by Race, 2021



Source: CalEnviroScreen 4.0, CalEPA, 2021

The State HCD/TCAC Opportunity Areas- Environmental Score map (Figure D-14) visualizes environmental health opportunity based on specific exposure and environmental effect indicators from CalEnviroScreen 3.0 (3.0 was the latest data when the 2021 State HCD/TCAC Opportunity Maps were created): ozone, PM2.5, diesel particulate matter, drinking water, pesticides, toxic release, traffic, cleanup sites, groundwater threats, hazardous waste, impaired water bodies, and solid waste sites. This methodology produces a distinctly different map than one composed of CalEnviroScreen scores, which additionally account for health and socioeconomic factors (e.g., Jack London Square has a lower, or better, CalEnviroScreen Score of 55 than the adjacent Chinatown census tract, which scores 91, because the latter tract's population experiences higher socioeconomic burdens, such as the lack of health care, which could lead to more emergency room visits for asthma). Therefore, the State HCD/TCAC Opportunity Areas - Environmental Score map purely reflects environmental exposure and is not weighted in any way; the Economic and Education HCD/TCAC Opportunity Maps account for many of the socioeconomic factors that CalEnviroScreen scores do. Therefore, the State HCD/TCAC Opportunity Areas - Composite Score map will appear more similar to a CalEnviroScreen score map than the Environmental Score map.

As shown in Figure D-14, the least positive outcomes are along the coastal edge of the city, adjacent to the industrial Port areas and I-880. Nearly all of West Oakland, which is bounded by freeways on all sides and includes and is adjacent to industrial areas, falls into the least positive environmental outcomes. Downtown tracts that include or are immediately adjacent to freeways are also among the least positive outcomes. The Hills, which include and abut regional parkland, and some adjacent census tracts, are associated with more positive environmental outcomes, but there are additional tracts scattered throughout the city, not adjacent to parkland, that also are among the more positive outcomes. Some of the tracts associated with the lowest economic and education outcomes, such as those in East Oakland adjacent to International Boulevard, are among the tracts with the best environmental outcomes. While this is surprising, this is where it is important to consider that this environmental score does not account for the socioeconomic and health

factors that the CalEnviroScreen scores do. It should also be noted that CalEnviroScreen extrapolates and models much of their data – some low pollutant scores may be due to the lack of a nearby air monitoring system. Outside of the Hills tracts, which get an environmental score boost from including or being adjacent to parkland, scores for tracts that include or are adjacent to freeways appear to be ultimately more negatively impacted than tracts that do not include freeways, which is why some Deep East Oakland tracts that are not near freeways have better environmental scores than I-580-adjacent tracts in the Grand Lake area.

According to Figure D-14, those living in R/ECAPs have limited access to environmental opportunity; all West Oakland R/ECAPs are associated with the least positive environmental outcomes, and those in Downtown fall into the two lowest environmental outcome categories. East Oakland R/ECAPs have mixed access to environmental opportunity, ranging from the lowest to the highest outcomes. However, these results must be considered along with the race/ethnicity-based data presented earlier in this section (Chart D-6). Even if some East Oakland tracts are associated with more positive environmental outcomes, BIPOC individuals living in these communities still carry a larger pollution burden.

Persons with disabilities may have varied access to environmental opportunity, depending on where they live. Recalling the map showing which tracts have higher concentrations of persons with disabilities (Figure D-3), those who live in the Piedmont Avenue area are in tracts associated with more positive environmental outcomes, while those in West Oakland are in tracts associated with less positive environmental outcomes (Figure D-14). Those living in Downtown are in tracts that fare slightly better environmentally than the West Oakland tracts. Again, however, the environmental health disparities associated with race/ethnicity (Chart D-6) must be considered along with disability status.

Female-headed households with children may have varied access to environmental opportunity, depending on where they live. Recalling the map showing which tracts have higher concentrations of female-headed households with children (Figure D-5), tracts in West Oakland are associated with less positive environmental outcomes, while tracts in Downtown fare slightly better environmentally (Figure D-14).

While more must be done to increase access to environmental opportunity for protected groups, some long-overdue actions have recently been taken to reduce disparities in exposure to air pollution. East and West Oakland are both identified as areas disproportionately impacted by air pollution under the Community Air Protection Program (Assembly Bill [AB] 617). California Air Resources Board (CARB) adopted the West Oakland Community Action Plan (WOCAP) action plan on December 5, 2019, which identified 89 potential community-level strategies and control measures intended to reduce criteria pollutant and TAC emissions and decrease West Oakland residents' exposure to these TAC emissions. Specifically, the plan sets forth equity-based targets for cancer risk, and DPM and $PM_{2.5}$ concentrations in seven "impact zones" with the highest pollution levels in the City.[16] On February 10, 2022, CARB designated East Oakland for the development of an AB 617 Community Emission Reduction Plan which will begin in the spring and summer of 2022 and continue for a year-long planning process followed by implementation.

In conjunction with this Housing Element Update, the General Plan Update will also include a new Environmental Justice Element, which will address Oakland's environmental justice issues in more detail.

As is evident in this section, there is limited utility in assessing access to opportunity using the State HCD/TCAC Opportunity Maps alone. The environmental map does not effectively underscore the environmental justice issues that BIPOC communities face in Oakland, and labeling census tracts as "Low

[16] Bay Area Air Quality Management District and West Oakland Environmental Indicators Project, 2019. Owning Our Air: The West Oakland Community Action Plan – Volume 1: The Plan, October. Available at http://www.baaqmd.gov/community-health/community-health-protection-program/west-oakland-community-action-plan, accessed January 2021.

Resource" or "High Segregation and Poverty" disregards the fact that many communities of color in Oakland are vibrant, ethnic enclaves that deserve the investment that higher resource areas have received and benefited from. It is not enough to shuttle children living in Low Resource/High Segregation and Poverty tracts to higher-performing elementary schools across the City or simply to build more affordable housing in higher resource areas; while the solution may include these strategies, place-based investments in BIPOC communities must be the priority so that existing residents who want to stay where they are have the ability to do so while being able to benefit from access to economic, educational and environmental opportunity.