US Metropolitan Area Housing Affordability Indicators by Ethnicity: 2007

Metropolitan Areas Over 1,000,000 Population



DEMOGRAPHIA)

HOW SMART GROWTH DISADVANTAGES AFRICAN-AMERICANS & HISPANICS

It was more than 45 years ago that Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. enunciated his "Dream" to a huge throng on the Capitol Mall. There is no doubt that substantial progress toward ethnic equality has been achieved since that time, even to the point of having elected a Black US President.

The Minority Home Ownership Gap: But there is some way to go. Home ownership represents the core of the "American Dream" that was certainly a part of Dr. King's vision. Yet, households in the United States can be distinguished ethnically by their degree of home ownership. Of course, this is largely a function of differing income levels between White-Non-Hispanics, African-Americans and Hispanics or Latinos. Today, approximately 75% of white households own their own homes. Whites have a home ownership rate fully one-half higher than that of African-Americans and Hispanics or Latinos at 47% and 49% (Figure).

Setting the Gap in Stone: A key to redressing this difficulty will be convergence of minority household incomes with those of whites, and that is surely likely to happen. However, there is another important dynamic in operation: house prices in some areas have risen well in advance of incomes, so that convergence all by itself will not narrow the home ownership gap in a corresponding manner. It is an outrage for public policy to force housing prices materially higher so long as home ownership remains beyond the incomes of so many, especially minorities.

The Problem: Land Use Regulation: The problem is land use regulation. The economic evidence is clear: more restrictive land use regulation raises house prices relative to household incomes. This can be seen with a vengeance in the house price increases that occurred during the housing bubble. As we have previously described

(http://www.newgeography.com/content/00369-root-causes-financial-crisis-a-primer), metropolitan markets with more restrictive land use regulation (principally the more radical "smart growth" policies) experienced house price escalation out of all proportion to other areas in the nation, topping out at nearly four times historical norms in some areas. On the other hand, in the one-half of major metropolitan area markets where land use regulations were less severe, house prices tended to increase to little more than historic norms, at the most.

How Smart Growth Destroys Housing Affordability: This difference is principally due to the price of land, which is forced upward when the amount of land available for building is artificially limited, as is the case in smart growth markets. At the peak of the bubble, there was comparatively little difference in house construction costs per square foot in either smart growth or less restrictive markets. However, the far higher land prices drove house prices in smart growth far above those in less restrictively regulated markets. Where house prices rise faster than incomes, housing affordability is necessarily retarded and is subject to destruction where the prices rise at escalated rates.

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Wishing Away Reality: It is not surprising that the proponents of smart growth undertake Herculean efforts to deflect attention away from this issue. Usually they pretend there is no problem. Sometimes the produce studies to indicate that limiting the supply of land and housing does not impact housing affordability, which is akin to arguing that the sun rises in the West. Even the proponents, however, cannot "walk a straight" line on this issue, noting in their most important advocacy piece (*Costs of Sprawl---2000*) that their more important strategies have the potential to increase the cost of housing (Reference:

http://www.newgeography.com/content/00810-housing-downturn-update-we-may-have-reached-bottom-but-not-everywhere).

The Assault on Home Ownership: Worse, well connected Washington interest groups (such as the *Moving Cooler* coalition) and some members of Congress seek to universalize smart growth land rationing throughout the nation, which would create the type of demand exceeding supply problem that was at the heart of the smart growth house price increases since 2000. Moreover, even after the crash (Reference: http://www.newgeography.com/content/00810-housing-downturn-update-we-may-have-reached-bottom-but-not-everywheres), house prices remain generally higher relative to incomes in smart growth markets than in traditionally regulated markets.

House Price Increases and Minorities: House price increases relative to incomes weigh most heavily on ethnic minority households, because their incomes tend to be less. This is illustrated by an examination of the 2007 data from the American Community Survey, in our special report entitled *US Metropolitan Area Housing Affordability Indicators by Ethnicity: 2007* (Reference: http://www.demographia.com/db-ushsgethn.pdf). The year 2007 was the peak of the housing bubble, but represent a useful point of reference for the future in which policies are skewed by Washington against affordable housing.

Median Priced Housing: The data (Table 1 in the report) indicates that median house prices were 75% or more higher for African-Americans than Whites, however that African-Americans in smart growth markets require 84% more to buy the median priced house. The situation was slightly better for Hispanics or Latinos with median house prices at least 50% more relative to incomes than for Whites. House prices relative to Hispanic or Latino median household incomes were 86% higher in smart growth markets than in less restrictively regulated markets.

Lower Priced Housing (Lowest Quartile): I recall being told by an participant at a University of California –Santa Barbara economic forum organized by newgeography.com contributor Bill Watkins that, yes, smart growth increases house prices, but not for lower income residents. My challenger went so far as to say that lower income households were aided economically by smart growth. The facts are precisely the opposite. Comparing the lowest quintile (lowest 25%) house

price to median household incomes indicates that minorities pay even more of their incomes for lowest quintile priced houses than the median priced house. African-Americans in smart growth markets needed 95% more relative to incomes to afford the lowest quartile house. Hispanics or Latinos needed 98% more.

Rental Housing: The problem carries through to rental housing. There is a general relationship between rental prices and house prices, though rental prices tend to "lag" house price increases. In the smart growth markets, minorities must pay approximately 20% more of their income for the median contract rental in smart growth metropolitan areas relative to less restrictively regulated markets. Similar results are obtained when comparing minority household median incomes with lowest quintile contract rents, with African-Americans paying 17% more of their incomes in smart growth markets and Hispanics or Latinos paying 18% more.

Moreover, it is important to recognize that all of the above data is *relative*, based on shares or percentages of incomes. Varying income levels are thus factored out. Minority and other households in smart growth markets face costs of living that are approximately 30% higher than in less restrictively regulated market, according to analysis by US Department of Commerce Bureau of Economic Analysis economists (Reference:

http://www.newgeography.com/content/00998-high-cost-living-leaves-some-states-uncompetitive). Some, but not all of the difference is in higher housing costs.

Social Costs of Smart Growth: In 2004, the Tomas Rivera Policy Institute, which focuses on Latino issues, noted concern about the homeownership gap in California, which has been ground zero for land use regulation driven house price increases for decades:

Whether the Latino homeownership gap can be closed, or projected demand for homeownership in 2020 be met, will depend not only on the growth of incomes and availability of mortgage money, but also on how decisively California moves to dismantle regulatory barriers that hinder the production of affordable housing. Far from helping, they are making it particularly difficult for Latino and African American households to own a home (Reference: http://www.trpi.org/PDFs/housing_ca_latinos.pdf).

Examples of the restrictions cited by the Tomas Rivera Policy Institute are restrictions on the supply of land, high development impact fees and growth controls.

California has acted decisively, but against the interests of African-Americans and Hispanics or Latinos. The state enacted Senate Bill 375 in 2008, which will impose far stronger state regulations on residential development, increasing the likelihood that minorities in California will always be disadvantaged relative to White-Non-Hispanics. At the same time, the state attorney general has forced some counties to adopt more restrictive land use regulations through

legal actions. California, which had for decades been considered a state of opportunity, is making home ownership and the pursuit of the "American Dream" far more difficult. All the while, the same officials scurry about seeking ways to solve the state's housing affordability problem, which is a direct consequence of the land use policies in operation in the states.

Stopping the Plague: The goal of increasing African-American and Latino home ownership rates to match those of white-non-Hispanics probably may have been put beyond reach in California by radical smart growth policies. However, the "Dream" continues to "hang on" in many metropolitan markets. It is to be hoped that Washington will not put a barrier in the way of African-Americans and Hispanics or Latinos that further entrenches the gap.

US Metropolitan Area Housing Affordability Indicators by Ethnicity: 2007 includes Tables 2-5. with data for each major metropolitan area in the United States (Reference: http://www.demographia.com/db-ushsgethn.pdf)

Photo: Starter house in Atlanta suburbs (by the author)

US Home Ownership: 2008

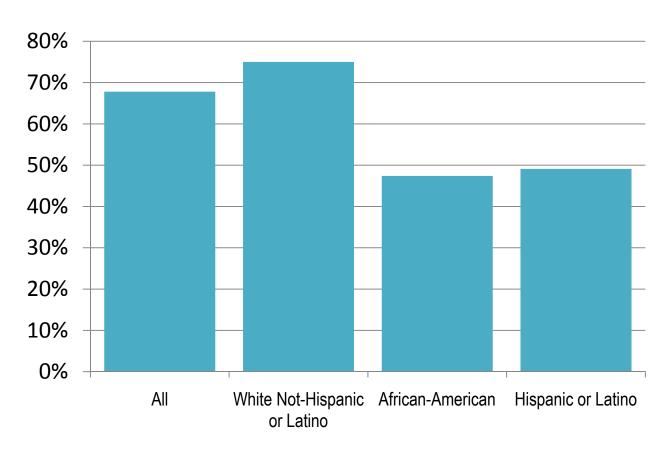


Table 1 SUMMARY OF HOUSING INDICATORS BY LAND USE REGULATION CATEGORY

Metropolitan Areas over 1,000,000 Population: 2007

HOUSING INDICATOR	Less Restrictive Land Use Regulation Markets	More Restrictive Land Use Regulation Markets	All Markets	More Restrictive Markets Compared to Less Restrictive Markets
MEDIAN VALUE MULTIPLE				
All	3.1	5.8	4.5	1.89
	2.7	5.0 5.1	3.9	1.90
White Non-Hispanic or Latino African-American	4.9	3.1 8.9	6.9	1.84
	4.9	6.9 7.9	6.1	1.86
Hispanic or Latino	4.2	7.9	0.1	1.00
LOWEST QUARTILE VALUE MULTIPLE				
All	2.1	4.2	3.2	2.01
White Non-Hispanic or Latino	1.8	3.7	2.8	2.01
African-American	3.3	6.5	5.0	1.95
Hispanic or Latino	2.9	5.7	4.4	1.98
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MEDIAN RENT/MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD I	NCOME			
All	13.8%	17.1%	15.5%	1.24
White Non-Hispanic or Latino	12.1%	15.1%	13.6%	1.25
African-American	21.9%	26.1%	24.0%	1.19
Hispanic or Latino	19.1%	23.0%	21.1%	1.20
LOWER QUARTILE RENT/MEDIAN HOL	JSEHOLD INC	OME		
All	10.8%	13.1%	12.0%	1.22
White Non-Hispanic or Latino	9.4%	11.6%	10.5%	1.23
African-American	17.0%	20.0%	18.5%	1.17
Hispanic or Latino	14.9%	17.5%	16.2%	1.18

NOTES

Median Value Multiple: Median House Value divided by Median Household Income Low Quartile Value Multiple: Low Quartile House Value divided by Median Household Income 2007 Data

Calculated from American Community Survey (US Bureau of the Census) Data

Table 2 OVERALL OWNED HOUSING INDICATOR

		White Not			Land Use
Metropolitan Area	All	Hispanic or Latino	African- American	Hispanic or Latino	Regulation Category
Atlanta	3.4	2.9	4.5	4.6	1
Austin	3.1	2.7	5.0	4.0	1
Baltimore	4.9	4.2	7.3	5.9	2
Birmingham	3.0	2.6	4.4	3.9	1
Boston	5.8	5.4	9.7	10.8	2
Buffalo	2.4	2.2	4.6	4.5	1
Charlotte	3.1	2.7	4.4	4.4	1
Chicago	4.4	3.8	7.3	5.5	2
Cincinnati	3.0	2.8	5.9	3.7	1
Cleveland	3.2	2.8	5.4	4.8	1
Columbus	3.2	3.0	4.9	4.7	1
Dallas-Fort Worth	2.7	2.1	3.7	3.7	1
Denver	4.1	3.7	6.1	6.4	2
Detroit	3.3	2.8	5.3	4.1	1 2
Hartford	4.0	3.6	5.9	7.1	1
Houston	2.6	1.9	3.9	3.5	1
Indianapolis	2.7	2.5	4.2	4.1	
Jacksonville Kongo City	3.9	3.4	5.7 5.2	4.4	2 1
Kansas City	3.0 5.6	2.7 5.1	5.2 8.0	4.6	2
Las Vegas	10.6	8.4	15.1	6.8 13.5	2
Los Angeles Louisville	3.1	2.8	5.3	3.8	1
	2.9	2.0	4.2	3.6 2.7	1
Memphis Miami	6.3	5.3	8.0	7.2	2
Milwaukee	3.9	3.4	7.8	5.4	2
Minneapolis-St. Paul	3.8	3.6	7.0	5.8	2
Nashville	3.3	3.0	5.1	4.2	1
New Orleans	3.8	3.2	5.6	4.8	2
New York	7.6	6.1	11.1	11.5	2
Oklahoma City	2.7	2.4	4.1	4.1	1
Orlando	4.8	4.3	6.1	5.9	2
Philadelphia	4.1	3.5	6.7	6.9	1
Phoenix	4.8	4.3	7.0	6.3	2
Pittsburgh	2.5	2.4	4.8	3.1	1
Portland	5.4	5.2	9.9	7.2	2
Providence	5.6	5.2	8.1	9.4	2
Raleigh	3.3	2.9	5.1	5.2	1
Richmond	3.9	3.4	5.5	4.4	1
Riverside-San Bernardino	6.9	6.3	7.6	7.8	2
Rochester	2.4	2.2	4.3	4.0	1
Sacramento	6.7	6.2	10.7	8.6	2
Salt Lake City	4.2	4.0	6.5	5.7	1
San Antonio	2.6	2.0	3.1	3.3	1
San Diego	9.0	7.9	12.5	12.2	2
San Francisco	9.6	8.2	19.0	13.0	2
San Jose	9.0	8.1	16.4	13.5	2
Seattle	5.9	5.6	9.9	8.0	2
St. Louis	3.0	2.8	5.2	3.3	1

Tampa-St. Petersburg	4.4	4.1	5.9	4.9	2
Virginia Beach	4.4	3.7	5.9	5.2	2
Washington	5.5	4.6	7.7	7.2	2

2007 Data

Calculated from American Community Survey (US Bureau of the Census) Data

Land Use Regulation Categories: 1=Less Restrictive 2=More Restrictive

Table 3 LOWER INCOME OWNED HOUSING INDICATOR

		White Not	A f	Ullemente	Land Use
Metropolitan Area	All	Hispanic or Latino	African- American	Hispanic or Latino	Regulation Category
Atlanta	2.5	2.1	3.3	3.4	1
Austin	2.3	1.9	3.7	2.9	1
Baltimore	3.2	2.7	4.7	3.8	2
Birmingham	1.8	1.5	2.6	2.3	1
Boston	4.5	4.2	7.5	8.3	2
Buffalo	1.7	1.5	3.3	3.2	1
Charlotte	2.1	1.9	3.0	3.0	1
Chicago	3.0	2.6	5.0	3.8	2
Cincinnati	2.1	2.0	4.2	2.6	1
Cleveland	2.3	2.0	3.9	3.5	1
Columbus	2.3	2.1	3.4	3.3	1
Dallas-Fort Worth	1.8	1.5	2.5	2.5	1
Denver	3.2	2.8	4.7	4.9	2
Detroit	2.2	2.0	3.7	2.8	1
Hartford	3.0	2.7	4.5	5.4	2
Houston	1.8	1.3	2.7	2.4	1
Indianapolis	1.9	1.8	3.0	2.9	1
Jacksonville	2.6	2.3	3.9	3.0	2
Kansas City	2.1	1.9	3.6	3.2	1
Las Vegas	4.1	3.7	5.8	5.0	2
Los Angeles	7.7	6.1	10.9	9.8	2
Louisville	2.2	2.0	3.8	2.7	1
Memphis	1.8	1.4	2.7	1.7	1
Miami	4.1	3.4	5.3	4.7	2
Milwaukee	2.9	2.5	5.8	4.1	2
Minneapolis-St. Paul	3.1	2.9	6.3	4.7	2
Nashville	2.3	2.2	3.6	3.0	1
New Orleans	2.7	2.2	3.9	3.4	2
New York	5.4	4.3	7.9	8.2	2
Oklahoma City	1.8	1.6	2.7	2.7	1
Orlando	3.5	3.1	4.4	4.2	2
Philadelphia	2.7	2.3	4.4	4.6	1
Phoenix	3.4	3.1	5.0	4.5	2
Pittsburgh	1.7	1.6	3.1	2.0	1
Portland	3.9	3.7	7.2	5.2	2
Providence	4.3	4.0	6.2	7.2	2
Raleigh	2.2	1.9	3.4	3.5	1
Richmond	2.8	2.4	3.9	3.1	1
Riverside-San Bernardino	5.1	4.7	5.7	5.8	2
Rochester	1.7	1.6	3.0	2.8	1
Sacramento	5.2	4.9	8.3	6.7	2
Salt Lake City	3.1	2.9	4.8	4.2	1
San Antonio	1.6	1.2	2.0	2.1	1
San Diego	6.7	5.9	9.3	9.1	2
San Francisco	7.1	6.0 6.1	14.0	9.6	2 2
San Jose Seattle	6.8 4.2	4.0	12.3 7.0	10.1 5.7	2

Tampa-St. Petersburg	2.9	2.7	3.9	3.3	2
Virginia Beach	3.1	2.7	4.2	3.7	2
Washington	4.0	3.3	5.6	5.2	2

2007 Data

Calculated from American Community Survey (US Bureau of the Census) Data

Land Use Regulation Categories: 1=Less Restrictive 2=More Restrictive

Table 4 OVERALL RENTAL HOUSING INDICATOR

		White Not			Land Use
		Hispanic	African-	Hispanic	Regulation
Metropolitan Area	All	or Latino	American	or Latino	Category
Atlanta	15.2%	12.8%	20.2%	20.6%	1
Austin	14.8%	12.7%		19.2%	1
Baltimore	14.7%	12.6%	21.8%	17.7%	2
Birmingham	12.8%	11.2%	19.1%	16.7%	1
Boston	16.7%	15.6%	27.8%	31.1%	2
Buffalo	12.8%	11.6%	24.6%	23.9%	1
Charlotte	14.2%	12.3%	19.8%	19.9%	1
Chicago	15.2%	13.0%	25.2%	19.0%	2
Cincinnati	12.3%	11.5%	24.3%	15.1%	1
Cleveland	14.1%	12.3%	24.0%	21.5%	1
Columbus	13.3%	12.2%	20.2%	19.6%	1
Dallas-Fort Worth	14.3%	11.5%	20.1%	20.1%	1
Denver	14.6%	13.1%	21.5%	22.6%	2
Detroit	14.3%	12.5%	23.3%	17.9%	1
Hartford	13.8%	12.4%	20.7%	24.7%	2
Houston	14.1%	10.4%	21.4%	19.0%	1
Indianapolis	13.1%	12.0%	20.3%	20.1%	1
Jacksonville	16.7%	14.8%	24.5%	18.9%	2
Kansas City	12.9%	11.6%	22.4%	19.8%	1
Las Vegas	18.7%	16.9%	26.6%	22.7%	2
Los Angeles	21.0%	16.6%	30.0%	26.8%	2
Louisville	13.5%	12.3%	23.2%	16.6%	1
Memphis	14.7%	11.2%	21.4%	13.7%	1
Miami	22.1%	18.4%	28.1%	25.0%	2
Milwaukee	14.3%	12.3%	28.3%	19.8%	2
Minneapolis-St. Paul	13.9%	13.0%	28.8%	21.2%	2
Nashville	14.2%	13.1%	21.9%	18.4%	1
New Orleans	17.9%	14.9%	26.3%	22.3%	2
New York	18.2%	14.5%	26.5%	27.4%	2
Oklahoma City	13.1%	11.9%	20.0%	20.2%	1
Orlando	19.5%	17.5%	24.7%	23.8%	2
Philadelphia	15.1%	12.9%	24.6%	25.4%	1
Phoenix	16.6%	14.9%	24.4%	21.7%	2
Pittsburgh	12.9%	12.2%	24.1%	15.6%	1
Portland	15.2%	14.5%	27.9%	20.4%	2
Providence	15.2%	14.3%	22.0%	25.6%	2
Raleigh	13.6%	11.9%	21.1%	21.6%	1
Richmond	14.6%	12.7%	20.5%	16.3%	1
Riverside-San Bernardino	19.5%	17.8%	21.4%	22.1%	2
Rochester	14.2%	13.1%	25.1%	23.7%	1
Sacramento	17.4%	16.2%	27.6%	22.2%	2
Salt Lake City	14.2%	13.3%	21.9%	19.3%	1
San Antonio	15.3%	11.7%	18.7%	19.5%	1
San Diego	21.1%	18.5%	29.3%	28.7%	2
San Francisco	18.7%	15.9%	36.9%	25.3%	2
San Jose	17.7%	15.9%	32.3%	26.5%	2
Seattle	15.3%	14.5%	25.5%	20.6%	2
St. Louis	12.3%	11.2%	20.9%	13.2%	1

Tampa-St. Petersburg	18.8%	17.5%	25.4%	21.1%	2
Virginia Beach	16.5%	14.1%	22.2%	19.5%	2
Washington	15.8%	13.1%	22.0%	20.6%	2

2007 Data

Calculated from American Community Survey (US Bureau of the Census) Data

Land Use Regulation Categories: 1=Less Restrictive 2=More Restrictive

Table 5 LOWER INCOME RENTAL HOUSING INDICATOR

		White Not			Land Use
Matronalitan Araa	Λ.ΙΙ	Hispanic	African- American	Hispanic	Regulation
Metropolitan Area	All	or Latino	American	or Latino	Category
Atlanta	12.1%	10.2%	16.2%	16.5%	1
Austin	12.1%	10.3%	19.4%	15.6%	1
Baltimore	10.8%	9.3%	16.1%	13.1%	2
Birmingham	8.9%	7.8%	13.3%	11.6%	1
Boston	11.1%	10.4%	18.5%	20.7%	2
Buffalo	9.9%	8.9%	18.9%	18.4%	1
Charlotte	11.2%	9.7%	15.5%	15.6%	1
Chicago	12.0%	10.3%	20.0%	15.0%	2
Cincinnati	9.4%	8.8%	18.6%	11.5%	1
Cleveland	11.1%	9.7%	18.8%	16.9%	1
Columbus	10.5%	9.7%	16.0%	15.5%	1
Dallas-Fort Worth	11.4%	9.2%	16.0%	16.0%	1
Denver	11.5%	10.3%	16.9%	17.8%	2
Detroit	11.0%	9.6%	17.9%	13.8%	1
Hartford	10.4%	9.3%	15.5%	18.5%	2
Houston	11.2%	8.3%	17.0%	15.1%	1
Indianapolis	10.3%	9.5%	16.1%	15.9%	1
Jacksonville	13.0%	11.5%		14.7%	2
Kansas City	9.9%	8.9%		15.2%	1
Las Vegas ์	14.9%	13.5%		18.1%	2
Los Angeles	15.9%	12.6%		20.3%	2
Louisville	10.5%	9.6%		12.8%	1
Memphis	11.1%	8.4%		10.3%	1
Miami	17.2%	14.3%		19.5%	2
Milwaukee	11.7%			16.2%	2
Minneapolis-St. Paul	11.0%	10.3%		16.8%	2
Nashville	11.1%	10.3%		14.4%	1
New Orleans	13.7%	11.4%		17.1%	2
New York	12.9%	10.3%	18.7%	19.4%	2
Oklahoma City	10.3%	9.4%	15.7%	15.9%	1
Orlando	15.6%	14.0%	19.8%	19.0%	2
Philadelphia	11.2%	9.6%	18.3%	18.8%	1
Phoenix	13.2%	11.9%	19.4%	17.3%	2
Pittsburgh	9.5%	9.0%	17.9%	11.5%	1
Portland	12.6%	12.0%	23.0%	16.8%	2
Providence	10.5%	9.9%	15.2%	17.7%	2
Raleigh	11.0%	9.7%	17.1%	17.5%	1
Richmond	11.3%	9.9%	15.9%	12.7%	1
Riverside-San Bernardino	14.6%	13.3%	16.0%	16.5%	2
Rochester	11.2%	10.3%	19.9%	18.8%	1
Sacramento	14.0%	13.0%	22.2%	17.8%	2
Salt Lake City	11.6%	10.9%	17.9%	15.8%	1
San Antonio	11.8%	9.0%	14.4%	15.0%	1
San Diego	16.3%	14.2%	22.5%	22.1%	2
San Francisco	13.7%	11.6%	27.1%	18.5%	2
San Jose	13.3%	11.9%	24.2%	19.8%	2
Seattle	12.0%	11.4%	20.0%	16.2%	2
St. Louis	9.3%	8.5%	15.9%	10.2%	1

Tampa-St. Petersburg	15.0%	14.0%	20.2%	16.8%	2
Virginia Beach	12.5%	10.7%	16.8%	14.8%	2
Washington	11.9%	9.9%	16.6%	15.5%	2

2007 Data

Calculated from American Community Survey (US Bureau of the Census) Data

Land Use Regulation Categories: 1=Less Restrictive 2=More Restrictive