

An aerial photograph of a city, likely South Los Angeles, showing a massive, dark plume of smoke or fire rising from the right side of the frame, partially obscuring the sky. The city below is densely packed with buildings and streets. A sign for 'SHOPPERS MARKET' is visible on the left side of the image.

South Los Angeles

SINCE the SIXTIES

half a century of progress?



SOUTH LOS ANGELES | SINCE THE SIXTIES

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South Los Angeles

SINCE THE SIXTIES

This report examines the socioeconomic changes in South Los Angeles since the Sixties to shed light on what, if any, progress has been made toward addressing issues of access, equity, and justice. The Sixties were filled with historical accomplishments and with promises for the future. It was also a time rife with discontent at the pervasive and persistent injustice many people of color experienced. This consequential decade set into motion both progressive and reactionary movements that define reality in South Los Angeles today.

Los Angeles was a major site of protest and expressions of discontent, as evidenced by the 1965 Watts Riot and the 1968 Chicano Blowout. This publication begins with an overview of the massive societal changes in the 1960s brought on by the convergence of multiple forces. It introduces the context of South Los Angeles and evolution of inequality in the region. The next four parts examine the trajectory of South Los Angeles relative to the Los Angeles County along four dimensions over the last fifty years: employment and earnings, housing, transportation, and education.

The 1965 McCone and 1968 Kerner reports provide a backdrop against which to evaluate change. The reports were commissioned in the aftermath of the Watts Riots and the 'Long Hot Summer' that rattled the nation. Those publications capture the sense of urgency to redress centuries of racism. The reports included extensive recommendations, and we summarize the most relevant to each domain at the beginning of each section. Their recommendations highlight the priority policy concerns of the time. We use these as reference points for tracing the changes over the following fifty years.

The 1960s

The 1960s was a pivotal historical period. During this decade, our most enduring Civil Rights heroes and icons inspired generations of activism. In that era, several monumental pieces of legislation were enacted: the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the Voting Rights Act of 1965, the Immigration and Naturalization Act of 1965 (which ended racially biased immigration quotas), and the Fair Housing Act of 1968. At the same time, parallel movements outside of politics materialized: the Counter Culture movement beginning in 1967's Summer of Love and peaking at Woodstock in 1969, the Anti-War movement, second-wave feminism, and the Third World Strike that ushered in ethnic studies at universities nation-wide.

It was a period of growing disenchantment with justice delayed. Material and economic improvements failed to match legislative gains, falling far short of rising expectations. This disjuncture and the resulting frustration boiled over in the form of massive urban unrest. The first major riot took place where few expected, in Watts. In a 1964 report by the Urban League on the socioeconomic

status of Blacks, Los Angeles was ranked as the best among sixty-eight cities. Physically, Watts, with its low housing density and opens spaces, did not share many of the stereotypical images of an inner-city ghetto. It was relatively free from oppressive Jim Crow-style laws. The McCone Commission noted "in Los Angeles [...] there was a tendency to believe, and with some reason, that the problems which caused the trouble elsewhere were not acute in this community (3)". Despite Los Angeles's reputation as a "Black Mecca," Watts was plagued by problems boiling below the surface. The riot resulted in 34 deaths, over a thousand injured, 4,000 arrests, and \$300 million in damage (in 2016 dollars), more than all other episodes of unrest in that year combined. Unlike the Kerner Commission, the McCone Commission recognized that many of the same issues also afflicted Latino neighborhoods.

Two summers after Watts, the nation witnessed an explosion of unrest and rioting in mostly Black neighborhoods. Forty-one large scale episodes of disorder rocked 39 cities throughout the nation, with Detroit and Newark being the sites of highest intensity.

More than a half century since the Kerner Commission, the history of South Los Angeles continues to be laden with broken promises and only modest improvements. Despite the huge efforts of residents, activists and others, the burden of under-investment and neglect continue to limit economic opportunity for too many Angelenos. This prescient report serves as an important reminder of the profound challenges that remain.

GARY M. SEGURA

Dean, UCLA Luskin School of Public Affairs

— **1954** Brown v. Board of Education rules “separate but equal” facilities “inherently unequal”

— **1960** JFK elected **1963 California passes Fair Housing Act** • JFK assassinated in Dallas **1964** Civil Rights Act passed • LBJ launches Great Society • **CA voters nullify state’s Fair Housing Act** **1965** Malcolm X assassinated in NYC • Immigration & Nationality Act passed • Voting Rights Act passed • **Watts Riots break out in Los Angeles** • **Delano Grape Workers Strike begins, initiated by Filipino American-led Agricultural Workers Organizing Committee** **1966 McCone Commission releases “Violence in the City” report** **1967** wave of unrest across American cities during “Long Hot Summer” • “Summer of Love” springs up in San Francisco **1968** Kerner Commission Report on Civil Disorders released • **Chicano Blowouts, East LA students protest educational inequality** • MLK assassinated in Memphis • Fair Housing Act passed • Robert Kennedy assassinated in LA • Third World Strikes, leading to creation of Ethnic Studies departments

— **1970s** **1979** tensions flare in LA around desegregation busing plan; voters pass Proposition 1, prohibiting court-ordered busing

— **1990s** **1992** Civil Unrest following acquittal of LAPD officers tried for the beating of Rodney King **1994** voters pass anti-immigrant Prop 187 **1996** passage of CA Civil Rights Initiative (Prop 209)

— **2000/10s** **2013** Black Lives Matter movement born following fatal shootings of unarmed black men by police **2018** Trump Administration announces formal end to Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program

The committee in charge of investigating the unrest counted 83 deaths and close to 2,000 injuries in addition to tens of millions in damages (estimates vary widely). In response to what would become known as the “Long Hot Summer,” the Johnson Administration assembled the Kerner Commission in July of 1967. Like the McCone Commission, it was called upon to conduct an inquiry into root causes and provide policy recommendations, only at the federal level.

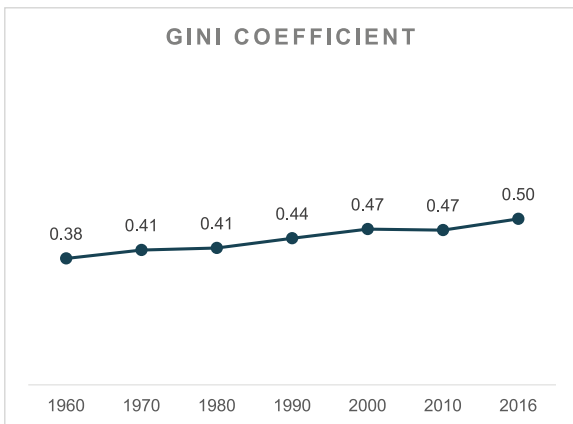
The McCone and Kerner commissions exposed a society that was ignorant of the depth and extent of inequality. Johnson expressed a profound sense of disbelief, asking “How is it possible after all we’ve accomplished? How could it be? Has the world gone topsy-turvy?” (as quoted in Baradaran, 2017, 154).

However, this confusion betrays a detachment from the realities of many Black urban residents. “I doubt that a single Negro in Los Angeles would agree that conditions are improving”, James Baldwin observed at the time, “we don’t walk down the same street. [...] The real Negro leaders have been trying to speak to you for years.... You won’t listen” (as quoted in Joseph, 2006, 47).

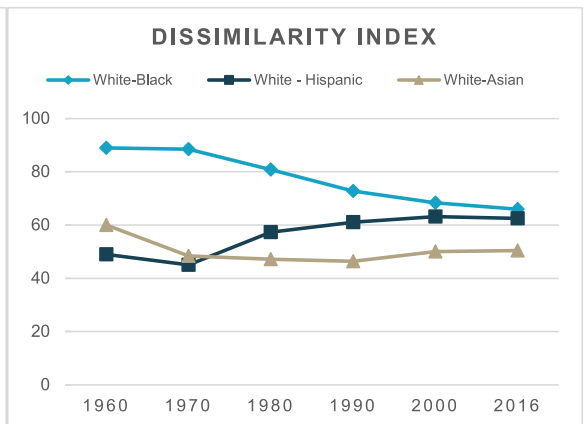
The risk of inaction is the development of an increasingly separate and deeply unequal society.

LA since the Sixties

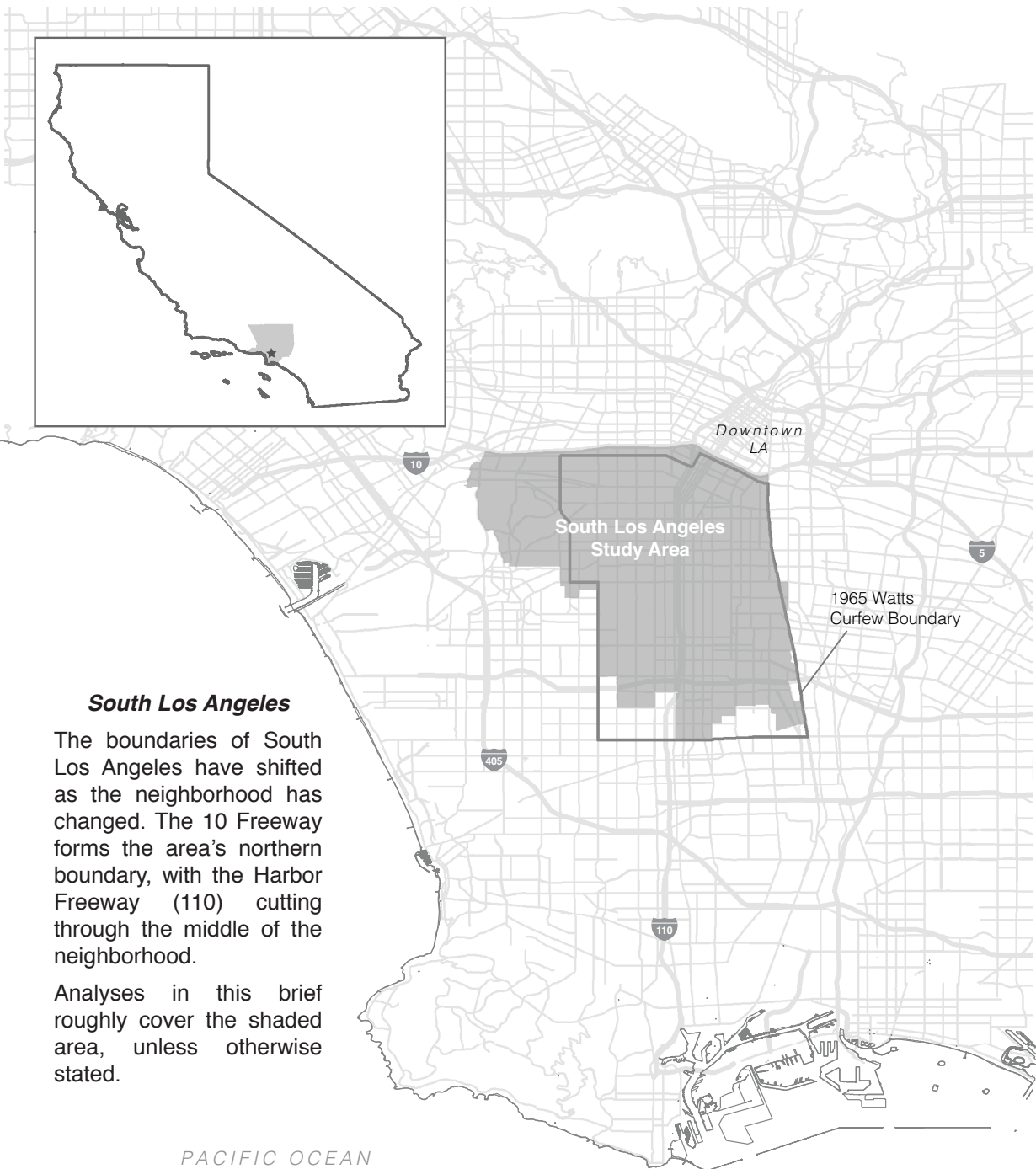
Tragically, implementing the call for action by the McCone and Kerner commissions proved problematic. Addressing the socioeconomic crises in the inner city was not universally embraced, a response rooted in a broad



The GINI coefficient is used to measure inequality. The above is calculated using income. A measure of 0 indicates perfect equality (where all individuals make the same amount), whereas a score of 1 indicates total inequality (i.e. one person earns all incomes). The trend over the last half decade has been increasing inequality.



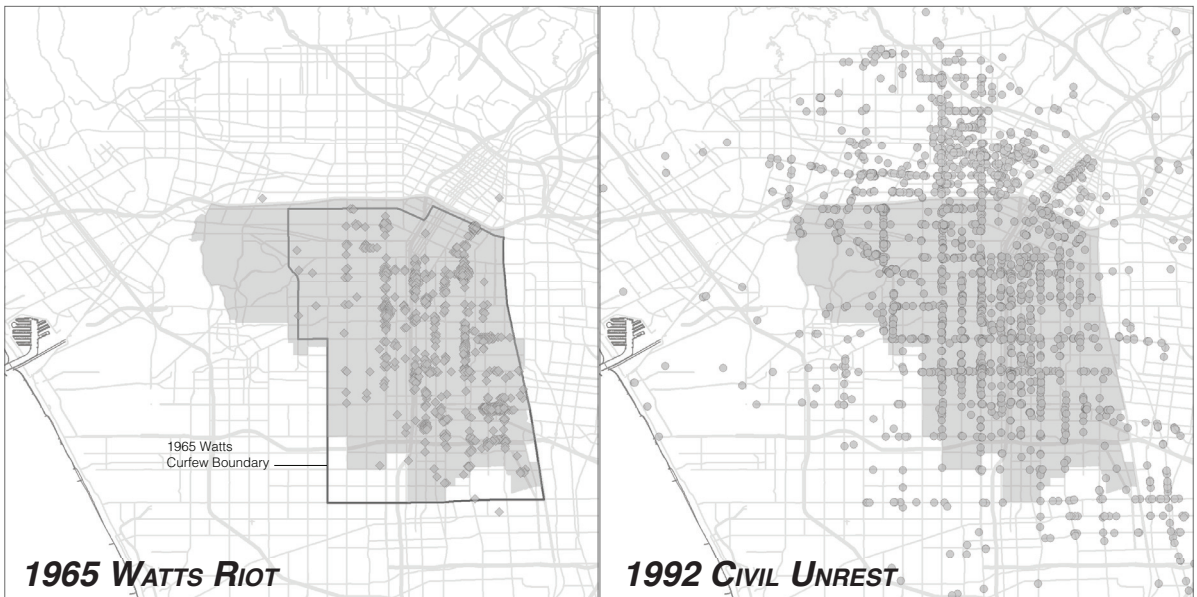
A dissimilarity index shows the degree of clustering among members of different groups. A high score indicates a high degree of segregation. Segregation between Blacks and non-Hispanic whites has decreased, however, it remains high. Segregation between non-Hispanic whites and Hispanics, however, has increased in the last decades.



South Los Angeles

The boundaries of South Los Angeles have shifted as the neighborhood has changed. The 10 Freeway forms the area's northern boundary, with the Harbor Freeway (110) cutting through the middle of the neighborhood.

Analyses in this brief roughly cover the shaded area, unless otherwise stated.



The above map shows instances of damage and/or violence which took place during the Watts Riots. Thirty-four lives were lost, and 977 buildings were looted, damaged, or destroyed.

Compared to the Watts Riot, recorded damages resulting from 1992's Civil Unrest were more widespread. After several days of protest, 63 people had been killed and damages totaled upwards of \$1 billion.

reactionary movement against the events and social movements of the Sixties. The subsequent decade saw the emergence of Richard Nixon's "Southern Strategy" of courting historically white Democratic voters by appealing to racial resentment among the "silent majority." Over time, this countervailing movement embraced attacks on affirmative action and race-based equity policies, both in the courts and in politics.

historical moment. The first time point, 1960, captures the rising unease with the status quo that relegated people of color to second-class citizens. It depicts the dire conditions that served as the context in which the altercation between a driver and a police officer would ignite the 1965 Watts Riots.

South Los Angeles because of its historical significance illustrates stark inequalities better than most places. The rest of the report compares the socioeconomic status of this neighborhood for three time periods: 1960, 1990, and 2016. Each corresponds to a key

The second time point, 1990, is roughly the midpoint of the analysis. Equally important, it is just two years before the 1992 Uprising in South LA. The acquittal of the police officers charged in the beating of Rodney King was the catalyst for the protest. Over five days, the Los Angeles civil unrest resulted in 50 casualties and upwards of a billion dollars in damage (UCLA Center for Neighborhood

Knowledge, 2017.) The maps on the Watts Riot and the Civil Unrest show the greater geographical extent of damages and violence in 1992 compared to 1965. This growth is indicative of a mounting frustration with persistent marginalization of the community and its people.

The most recent year of this study is 2016, giving us a measure of the present. The statistics reveal a continuation of the same socioeconomic inequalities that generated many of the anxieties and frustrations that gave rise to the 1965 and 1992 uprisings. Disparities in earnings among South LA workers have persisted, driving income inequality. At the same time, homeownership, a primary vehicle for wealth accumulation, remains low. The community also has a higher concentration of low wage jobs than the County. Among other reasons, residents are, on average, less able to access higher quality jobs because of lower rates of automobile ownership. In the area of education, gaps in school performance between South LA and the most affluent neighborhoods of West LA have persisted. History taught us that continued socioeconomic marginalization and alienation were the root causes of 1965 and 1992. There has been no large-scale violence in Los Angeles over the last quarter century, but the findings should give us pause.

We look at the sum of the analyses with ambivalence. While the data paint a bleak picture, there are other areas that we do not cover which offer brighter prospects. In the aftermath of the 1992 Civil Unrest, many community members mobilized and

many community organizations were born. The ability to shape a South LA that works for its residents lies in the dedication of the community and organizations on the ground. But, they, alone, cannot alter the trajectory of the area. As the Kerner Commission emphatically opened their report, an alternative path “will require a commitment to national action—compassionate, massive, and sustained, backed by the resources of the most powerful and the richest nation on this earth.” It is time to renew that commitment.



"Inside a Garment Shop" [Herald-Examiner Collection]/Los Angeles Public Library

EMPLOYMENT

The McCone Commission aptly captured the importance of employment and earnings: “The most serious immediate problem that faces the Negro in our community is employment—securing and holding a job that provides him an opportunity for livelihood, a chance to earn the means to support himself and his family, a dignity, and a reason to feel that he is a member of our community in a true and very real sense” (Governor’s Commission on the Los Angeles Riots, 1965, 38). At the same time, the Kerner Commission emphasized the role of underemployment in precipitating unrest. They noted “unemployment and underemployment are among the persistent and serious grievances of disadvantaged minorities. The pervasive effect of these conditions on the racial ghetto is inextricably linked to the problem of civil disorder” (U.S. National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders, 1968, 413). The importance of employment to well-being makes it an important measure of progress; however, improvements in employment rates since the 1990s have failed to close the gap in earnings between South Los Angeles and the County.

If a man doesn't have a job or an income, he has neither life nor liberty nor the possibility for the pursuit of happiness. He merely exists.

Martin Luther King, Jr. (1968)

Racial discrimination is a persistent reason for labor-market disparities. The Kerner Commission was more forthcoming than the McCone Commission in addressing discrimination. They forcefully argued for removing any remaining barriers to equal employment, particularly in recruitment practices. Employers hire candidates based on skills and location, but are also influenced by race, gender, and ability as factors. Evidence points to employers relying on a racial ordering in their hiring practices that systematically disadvantages Black and Latino workers (Moses and Tilly, 2001). In California, employment discrimination was legal until 1959. In 1946, Assemblyman Augustus Hawkins championed Proposition 11 to expand on the inroads made by the federal government during World War II, but the proposition was defeated by a wide majority (HoSang, 2010). No other comparable effort would emerge until the 1959 California Fair Employment Practices Act, which prohibited discrimination in employment (Ward and Garrett, 1999).

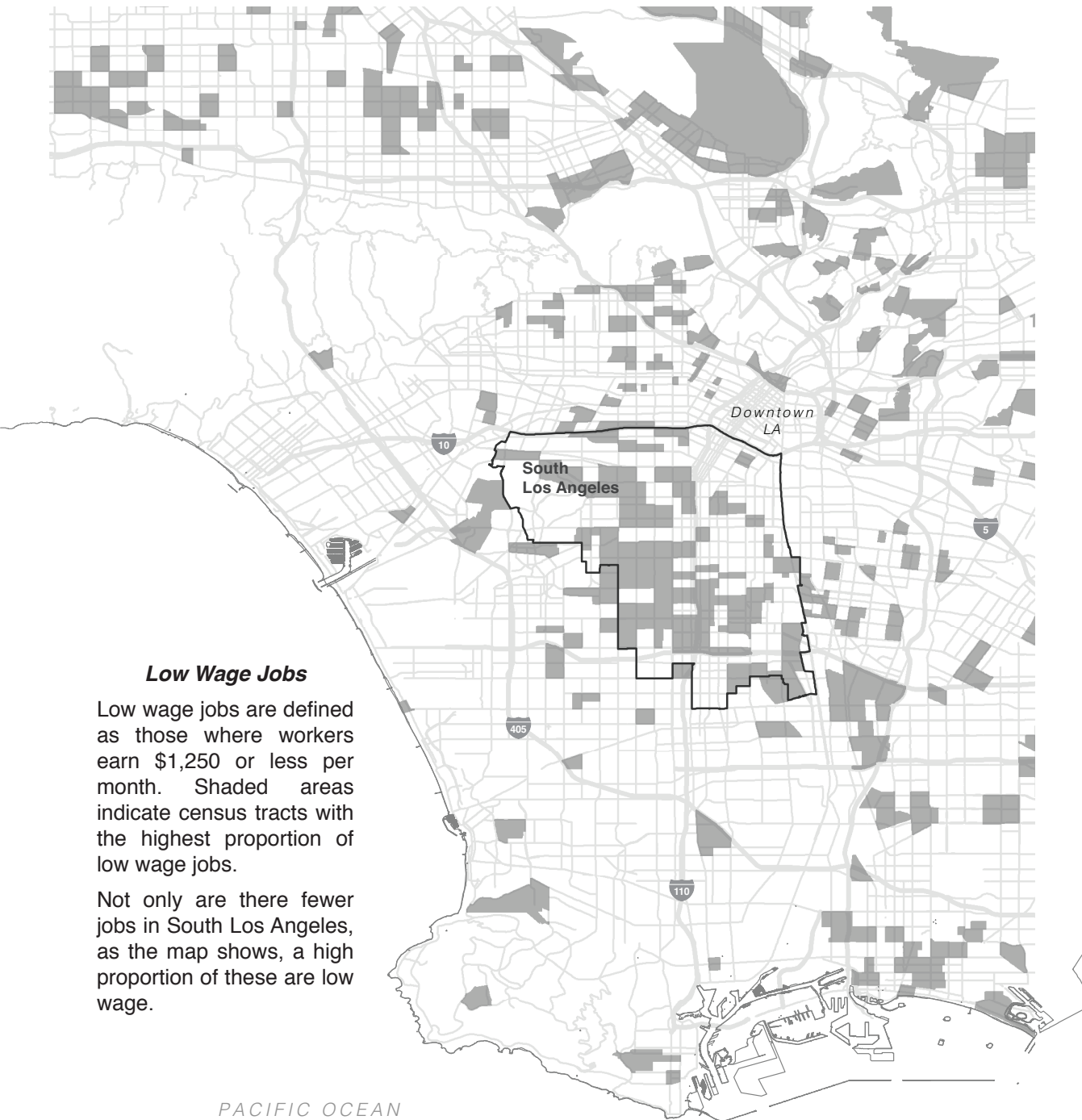
The Kerner and McCone reports emphasized job readiness and training as key areas for policy interventions. While training is crucial, as the reports note, the main challenge is in reaching the population that would benefit the most and in matching them to employers. This parallels the courts' greater willingness to address employment discrimination

rather than to engage in affirmative action arguments. This has created a legacy of racial disparities in educational attainment, work experience, and networks, which have a multi-generational ripple effect. Further, because discrimination extended to union membership and on-the-job training, opportunities to remediate educational disparities were scarce. Immigration was limited in the 1960s, but it has been central to the economy of Los Angeles and South LA since then. In many ways, immigrant workers face similar constraints based on educational attainment and skills, but those are compounded by language ability and other signifiers of work culture assimilation (Ong, 2018).

Changes to the structure of the economy complicate the trends in employment and earnings. One of the major recommendations in both the Kerner and McCone reports was to incentivize the creation of more jobs in the private and public sectors. The evidence

McCONE/KERNER RECOMMENDATIONS

- Job training and placement involving residents, employers, labor unions, and government
- Strengthen anti-discrimination institutions
- Increase public sector employment and incentivize job creation in private sector



Low Wage Jobs

Low wage jobs are defined as those where workers earn \$1,250 or less per month. Shaded areas indicate census tracts with the highest proportion of low wage jobs.

Not only are there fewer jobs in South Los Angeles, as the map shows, a high proportion of these are low wage.

PACIFIC OCEAN

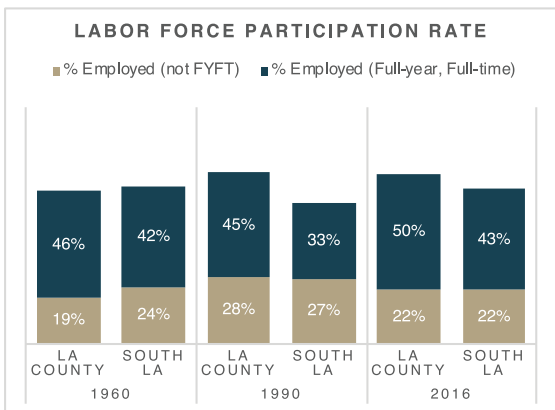
points to the inability of existing programs to account for the radical changes taking place in the economy. The figure depicting labor force participation rates shows that the gap with the County grew between 1960 and 1990. The changes in the local economy at the time left South LA with far fewer options. Over that period, available jobs and the earnings associated with those jobs began to polarize, with wages for high-skill jobs, requiring higher levels of education, growing at a far faster rate than those for low-skill labor. For South LA, the consequences of the loss in good-paying manufacturing jobs was especially pronounced. By 2016, the employment rate in South LA had improved, though it was still lower than in the County and lower than 1960 levels.

For the County, the percent of adults working full-time, full-year remained stable between 1960 and 1990 before increasing to its highest level in 2016. Today, one in two individuals is

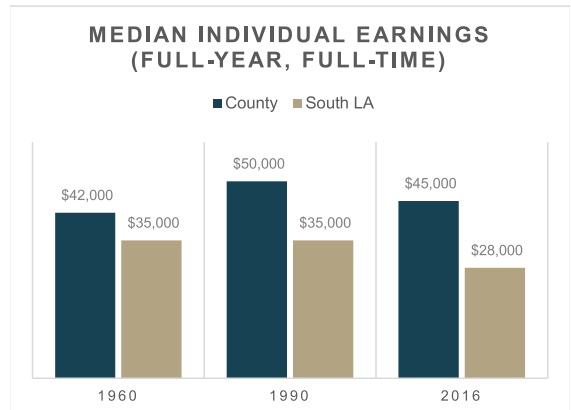
working full-time. Employment in South LA dropped significantly between 1990 and 1960 so that one in three residents was working full time. The area improved over the more recent period, adding one full-time worker for every ten residents. However, the gap with the County remains significant.

One of the reasons for the failure to translate increasing levels of employment at the regional level to similar trends in South LA is the poor connections between the area and centers of employment (see Transportation section). Residents must seek work elsewhere because South LA, where there is only one job for every two workers, is job poor. Most of the jobs in the immediate area are low wage as shown in the map on the previous page.

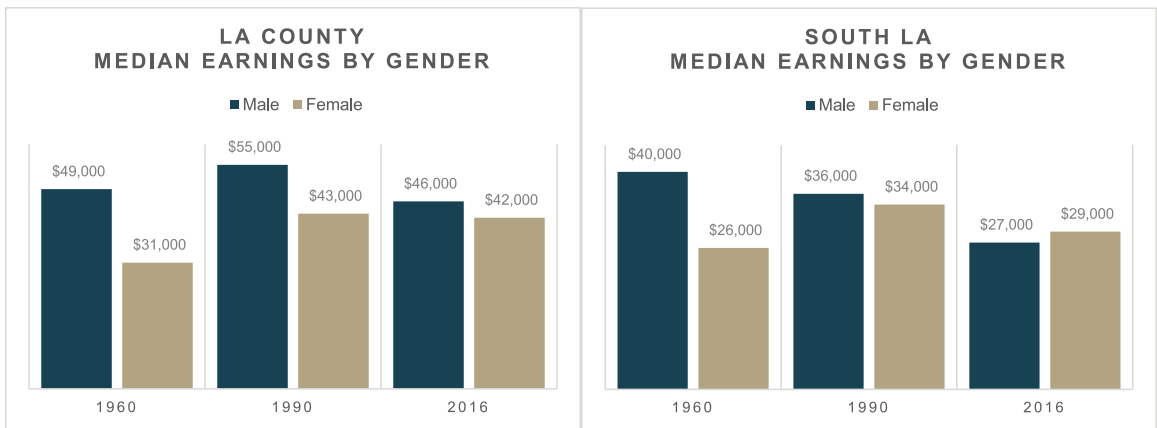
The disparities in the types of jobs available are compounded by unequal earnings. In 1960, South LA workers made 80 cents on the dollar, compared to the average County



Full-year, full-time workers are those working at least 35 hours a week for at least 50 weeks out of the year. The gap between the LA County and South LA persists, but the employment ratio is at its highest since 1960.*



Earnings are the sum of wages and other compensations for employment. The decreasing trend in earnings reflects the increasing number of workers in low-paying jobs.



Male earnings have dropped since 1990. As a result of this drop and slight increases in female wages, the gender gap has decreased. This shift is even more dramatic in South LA.

resident. The figure on median individual earnings shows that the gap continues to widen. Today, the average South Los Angeles worker who is employed full time, earns about 60 cents on the dollar. However, this trend is not solely the product of differences in skills, knowledge and experience. Comparing workers with similar job-preparedness, substantial differences in earnings remain. A large part of the disparity is associated with race and ethnicity, that is, workers are penalized for being people of color, even after accounting for educational attainment.

Beyond shifts in the composition of the labor force, the most stunning development is in the trend in male earnings. Male earnings have decreased dramatically in South LA since 1990. They are now lower, after adjusting for inflation, than they were in 1960. At the same time, female wages have increased such that the gap between men and women has nearly closed at the County level (see above figure). Comparing men and women's wages shows the extent of the drop in men's earnings, which is now below that for women.

Despite some welcome narrowing of the gender gap, employment outcomes across LA remain starkly unequal, and by many measures are more unequal than in decades past. The state of the labor market is, quite frankly, a humanitarian and civic crisis. If we do not respond with equal urgency, the corrosion of human potential will continue, and another explosion will be just a matter of time.

CHRIS TILLY

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Former Director, UCLA Institute of Research on Labor and Employment



"Neighborhood Friends" [Shades of L.A.: African American Community]/Los Angeles Public Library

HOUSING

Deplorable housing was cited by the two commissions as a root cause of urban unrest. According to the Kerner Commission, for people of color “condemned by segregation and poverty to live in the decaying slums of our central cities, the goal of a decent home and suitable environment is as far distant as ever” (U.S. National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders, 1968, 467). In Watts, “Houses are old and require constant maintenance if they are to remain habitable. Over two-thirds of them are owned by absentee landlords” (Governor’s Commission on the Los Angeles Riots, 1965, 79). Moreover, renters were financially over-burdened, often paying a “high proportion of their income” for shelter that “is more deteriorated than housing in the total country” (Governor’s Commission on the Los Angeles Riots, 1965, 79). Both commissions prioritized rental housing in their recommendations. The Kerner Commission, in particular, focused on increasing the supply of rental housing by providing low-interest loans and subsidies to developers. Rental housing, which has been the dominant housing type in South LA, is crucial to the provision of flexible and affordable housing options. However, homeownership is the better long-term strategy because it is a principal mechanism for asset accumulation for the middle-class and a key element of the American Dream (Pfeiffer et al., 2014). In contrast to the Kerner Commission, The McCone Commission included recommendations to make home loans more accessible, thus promoting greater community ownership of this key asset.

Housing is a very sensitive area and there was much misinformation...I am not too sure this was an era of good feelings, so to speak.

William Byron Rumford (1971)

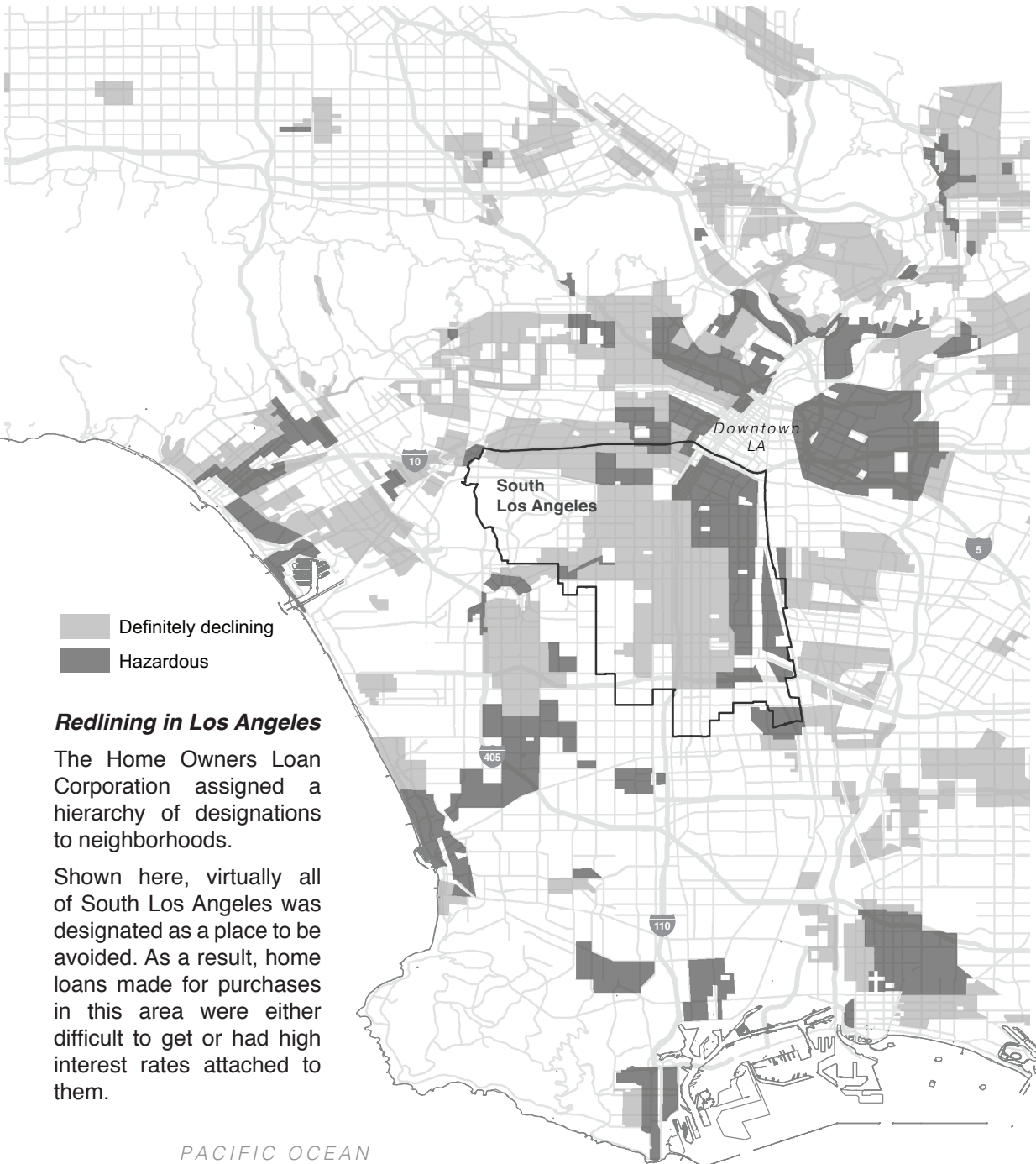
The issues highlighted by the commissions were the product of a long history of housing discrimination by individuals and institutions. The California Real Estate Association, established in the early 1900s, monitored real estate agents to ensure that they “should never be instrumental in introducing into a neighborhood a character of property or occupancy, members of any race or nationality, or any individual whose presence will clearly be detrimental to property values in the neighborhood” (HoSang, 2010, 40).

The exclusionary housing market confined minorities to neighborhoods such as Watts. The resulting residential segregation enabled the government to practice another form of institutionalized racism, the redlining of home mortgages insurance. The Home Owners Loan Corporation designated minority neighborhoods (those shaded in black and gray in the map in this section) as being unfit for home financing, which, with racially restrictive covenants, excluded people of color from the housing boom that afforded many white households their first house (Katznelson, 2005; Rothstein, 2017). This place-based discrimination created major barriers for people of color to build home equity even within racially isolated neighborhoods, and was a contributor to the racial wealth gap (Oliver and Shapiro, 2006).

The post-World War II era saw a chipping away at residential segregation. In 1948, the U.S. Supreme Court ruling on *Shelley v. Kraemer* rendered racially restrictive covenants illegal thus removing the most pervasive legal tool of segregation. This, however, did not prevent whites from utilizing informal methods of exclusion such as terrorizing neighbors of color and the private enforcement of discriminatory rules (Robinson, 2010; Rothstein, 2017). California’s first major attempt to promote fair housing was the Rumford Act of 1963, which sought to prevent discrimination in both

McCONE/KERNER RECOMMENDATIONS

- Ensure equitable access to financing and expand below-market interest rate programs
- Rent and ownership supplement programs
- Mass provision of low- and moderate-income housing units, including public housing, and encourage location outside ghetto areas. Needs to be paired with reforms of urban renewal programs and obsolete building codes

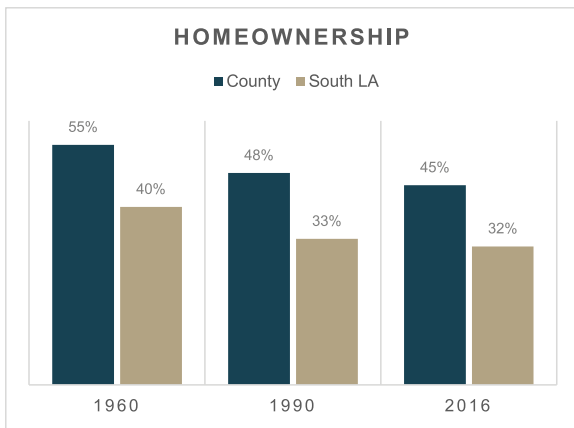


Redlining in Los Angeles

The Home Owners Loan Corporation assigned a hierarchy of designations to neighborhoods.

Shown here, virtually all of South Los Angeles was designated as a place to be avoided. As a result, home loans made for purchases in this area were either difficult to get or had high interest rates attached to them.

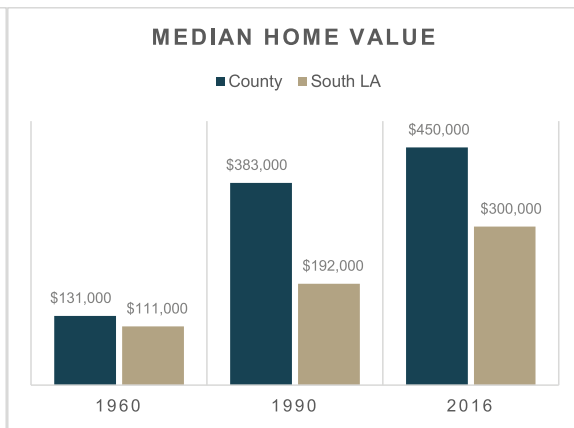
PACIFIC OCEAN



South LA continues to lag behind the County in terms of homeownership. Today, less than a third of South LA residents own a home.

housing financing and the rental market. The act narrowly passed the legislature only to be nullified the following year by Proposition 14, an initiative passed by nearly two-thirds of the voters. In the subsequent years, both the California Supreme Court and the U.S. Supreme Court invalidated the proposition. In 1968, the federal government enacted its own fair-housing legislation, and today minorities have the right to file complaints against acts of housing discrimination. It is, however, an empirical question about whether these laws have had a significant impact on ameliorating the housing problems identified in the 1960s.

We examine this question by first assessing home ownership. The available data show homeownership in South LA has lagged behind that for the whole County throughout the half century (see figure above). Today, fewer than one in three residents own their home in South LA. While lower income contributes to the disparity in home ownership, South LA also



Home values have been rising in Los Angeles. The disparity in home values between South LA and the County has grown significantly in the last fifty years.

suffers from a modern version of redlining in the form of predatory subprime lending and resulting high rates of foreclosures. Equally important is the fact that home ownership has become more unattainable for both South Los Angeles and the County, signaling a deeper structural problem of a lack of affordable homes. Home prices have sky rocketed, nearly tripling in South LA and more than tripling in the County. This places financial strain on new buyers and puts ownership further out of reach.

There have been comparable problems in the rental sector. While the McCone Commission and the Kerner Commissions rightfully stress the need for more subsidized housing, they failed to consider tenant protection rights. Instead, they relied on a housing supply solution, implicitly assuming that government support and market forces would improve quality and keep rents reasonable. This bias has had dire consequences. The hoped-

The staggering housing disparities identified in this analysis should urge us to find policies that can help narrow the racial wealth gap... If the high cost of housing (e.g., higher rents and home prices), and neighborhood upscaling continue to drive gentrification and displacement, Los Angeles may be headed into a new round of problems given growing economic inequality and declining housing affordability.

MELANY DE LA CRUZ-VIESCA

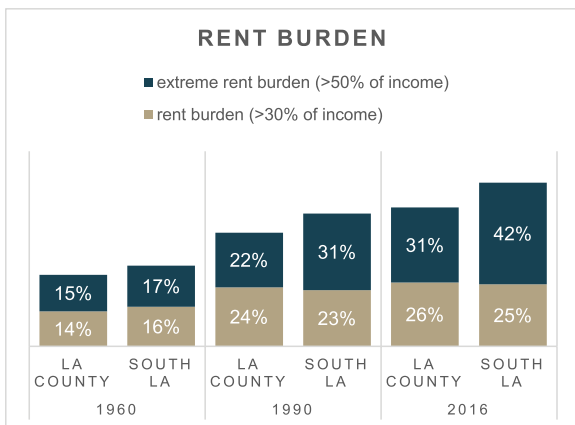
Co-Principle Investigator, UCLA Project on Building Economic Security over a Lifetime
Los Angeles City Human Relations Commissioner*

for supply never fully materialized. The combination of an undersupply of new and affordable rental housing and a growing low-income population has translated into an increasing rental burden.

burden (50% or more on rent) has increased even faster, more than doubling since 1960. Today two out of five renters in South LA fall into this category. The trend for the County is similar, but the levels remain lower.

The figure below on rental burden shows that high rent burden, as defined by spending more than 30% of income on rent, has become the norm in South LA. Extreme rent

Although we analyze the two housing sectors separately, they are linked. The high financial burden locked many families out of the American dream because they could not save enough to transition to homeownership (Dawkins, 2005). At the same time, many home owners are in a precarious situation because of high mortgage payments tied to risky loans. In other words, today's housing in South LA remains too similar to the housing crisis identified in the 1960s.



Most South LA residents are renters. Among renters, an overwhelming majority of South LA residents currently live under rent burden. Over the past fifty years, residents of South LA have been consistently more likely to be under rent burden and extreme rent burden, compared to County residents.



"Bus lane on the freeway" [Joe Messinger], [Herald-Examiner Collection]/Los Angeles Public Library

TRANSPORTATION

In their findings, both the Kerner and McCone Commissions recognize the need to increase mobility in order to address unequal access to economic opportunities and resources. Unfortunately, the recommendations of each commission focused primarily on building out and increasing public transit service without considerations for automobile ownership. These recommendations proved to be fundamentally flawed because of LA's auto-centric growth.

Access to private transportation is critical for accessing employment and other opportunities because modern cities are geographically structured around the automobile. The construction of the interstate freeway system enabled the suburbanization of people and jobs, and Los Angeles was at forefront of this transformation. The car took hold of the city in the early part of the twentieth century, with Los Angeles having the highest number of registered automobiles of all major American cities. The region constructed America's first freeway, the Arroyo Seco Parkway connecting Pasadena to downtown LA. Construction during the 1950s and 1960s produced much of today's road network, which in turn facilitated urban sprawl and the development of multiple job centers. While Los Angeles was in the lead in reconfiguring urban space, the transformation was not unique to this region.

Freeway-driven dispersion also affected other places and had racial consequences. For instance, in Detroit, the suburbanization of jobs increased underemployment among Black workers trapped by housing discrimination in inner-city neighborhoods (Kain, 1968). The problem is not just a growing geographic separation of minorities from economic opportunities. Distances are mediated through access to different types of transportation resources. Spatial barriers are less daunting if an individual can travel by car rather than being confined to public transit (Taylor & Ong, 1995; Ong & Blumenberg, 1998; Raphael, Stoll, Small, & Winston, 2001).

As the prototypical auto-centric metropolis, car ownership is particularly critical in Los Angeles. One of the collateral damage of freeway-centric developments was mass transportation. LA once had an extensive public transit system, but its historical light rail lines closed as the inter-state system expanded (Adler, 1991). These impacts hit South LA hard. In the age of the streetcar (in the first half of the 20th Century), South LA residents could access much of the region through Pacific Electric lines (Avila, 2004). With the dismantling of these lines and the rise of the freeway, South LA not only lost these older transit lines as a resource but

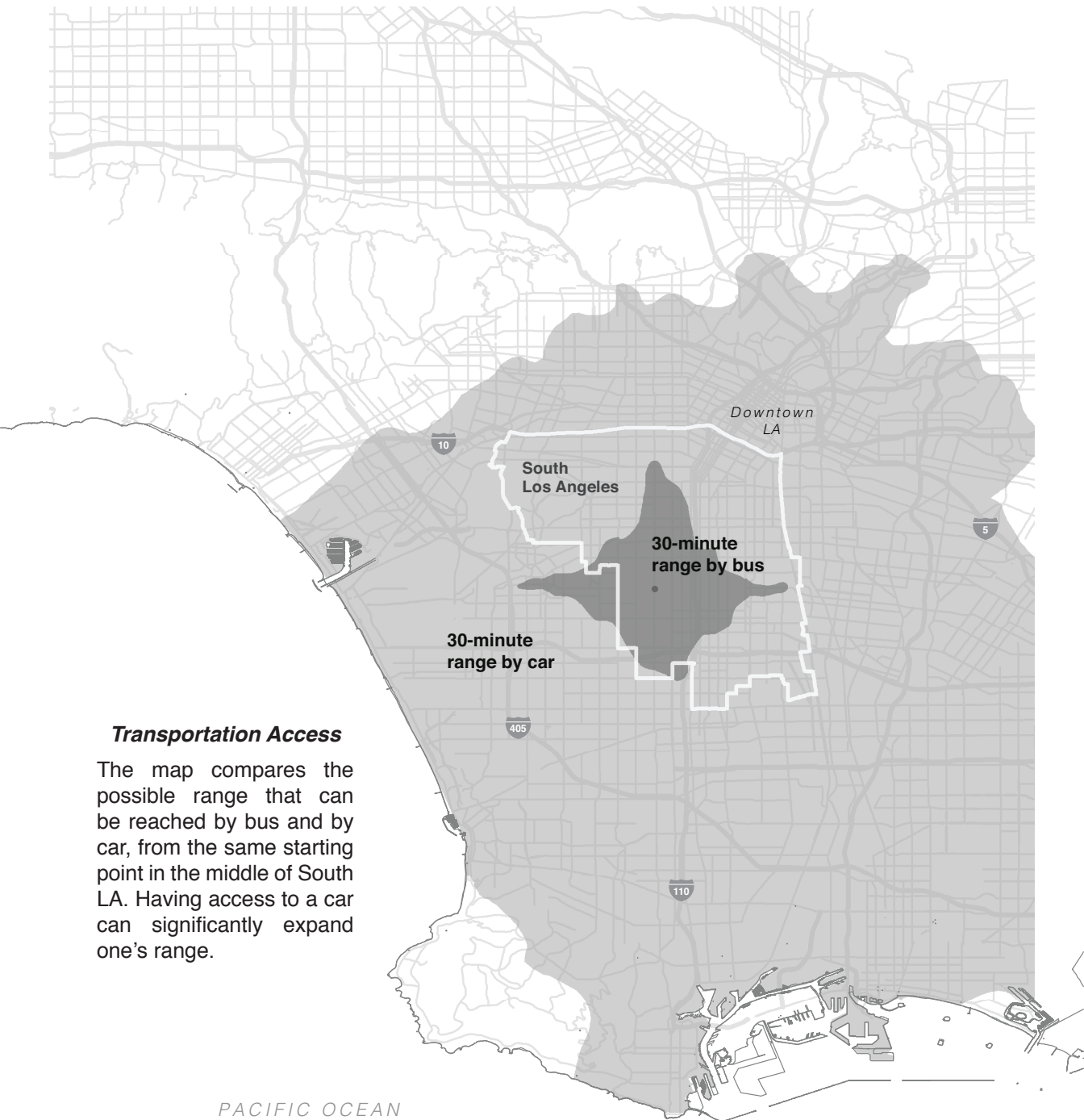
McCONE/KERNER RECOMMENDATIONS

- Consolidate small private transit entities under metropolitan umbrella
- Streamline and increase government funding and subsidies to increase accessibility and ease transfers
- Increase number of locations locally and reach of connections

also became physically divided by major roadways routed through and around it. Despite recent investments in public transit, the reality remains that lacking a car can severely limit access to job opportunities, as well as educational and learning opportunities for young children (Ong & Ong, 2017). Having good transportation resources is particularly critical in South Los Angeles since there are very few jobs within the area due to disinvestment and underinvestment (Ong, et al., 2008). Relying on public transportation to find employment and hold a job can be extremely problematic. Transit simply cannot match the range (and flexibility) of a personal car, even in congested Los Angeles.

The lack of adequate transportation...has had a major influence in creating a sense of isolation, with its resultant frustrations, among residents of south central Los Angeles...

McCone Commission (1965)



Transportation Access

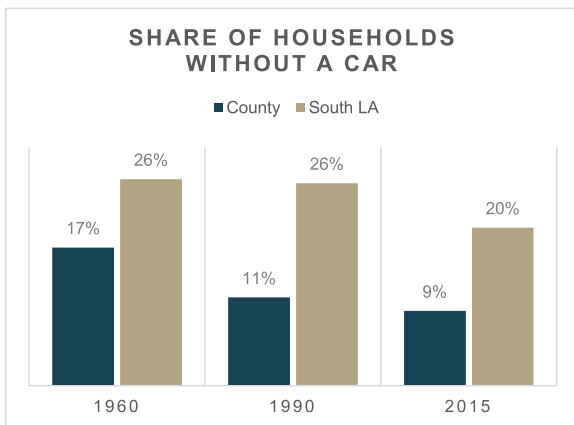
The map compares the possible range that can be reached by bus and by car, from the same starting point in the middle of South LA. Having access to a car can significantly expand one's range.

This disparity in the usefulness of the two modes of transportation is evident in the map on the previous page. The map compares the geographic area that can be reached from a location in South LA on a thirty minute bus or car ride. In the same thirty-minute travel time, the average distance from the center that could be traversed by a car is about five times that of a bus. The resulting total area range in a car is nearly twenty-four times that which could be covered on a bus. Relying solely on transit mean trips can take more time and one's range may be significantly constrained, compared to driving.

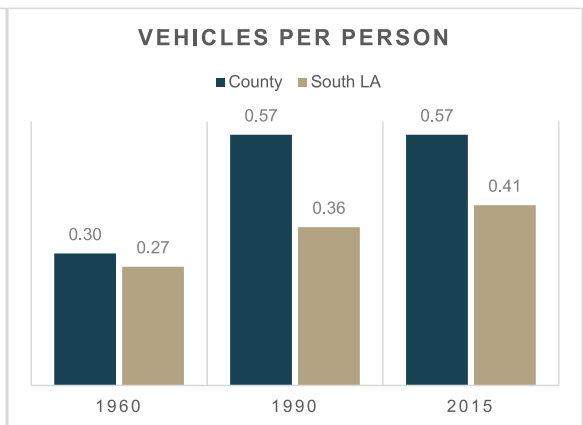
We examine the degree of transportation mismatch facing South LA residents by examining three indicators over time, as depicted in the graphs in this section. The data shows that in 1960 nearly a quarter of South Los Angeles households did not own a car.

Today, the proportion of carless households has decreased. However, one in five families still do not have regular access to a car. This makes South Los Angeles residents only half as likely to have access to a car, compared to others in the region. Although there has been minor improvement overtime, the gap in ownership rates between South LA and LA County has persisted. Examining the number of vehicles per person in South Los Angeles, compared to LA County, reveals a similar story. There has been a growth in vehicles per person over the years; however, since 1990, South Los Angeles has had one less car for every five people, compared to the County. Racial discrimination has also played a significant role in these trends.

Insurance redlining and segregation practices push up the cost of buying and owning a car in Los Angeles. The lower rates of car ownership



In 1960, one in four South LA households did not own a car. Today this number has fallen to one in five. However, the gap in the availability of a private automobile between South LA and LA County persists, making South LA households nearly twice as likely to be carless.



The count of vehicles per person in South Los Angeles has increased since 1960. Because LA County stabilized by 1990, South LA has gradually closed the gap.

For households without automobiles, access to high-quality transit service is essential. But, given the substantial benefits of car ownership, policymakers must help low-income households gain access to them. These efforts could include reducing the costs of auto purchases (e.g. subsidies, low-interest vehicle loans), offsetting operational costs (e.g. repairs, auto insurance), and promoting shared mobility services (e.g. car sharing, ride sharing).

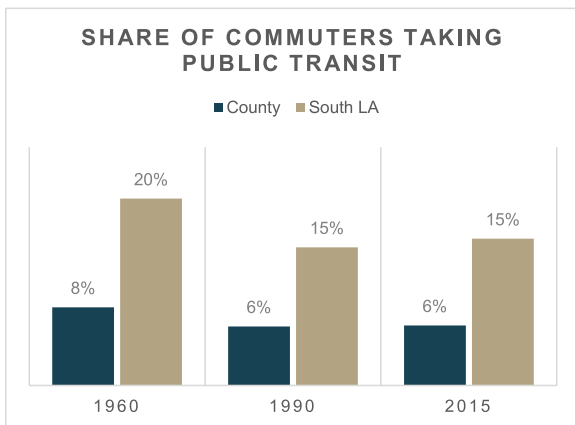
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Recognized by Obama White House as a Champion of Change

in poor and minority neighborhoods are driven by lower incomes, higher costs of financing a vehicle (Cohen, 2003; Charles, Hurst, & Stephens, 2008), and higher insurance premiums for comparable coverage (Ong & Stoll, 2006). These factors increase the costs of purchasing and maintaining a car, creating financial barriers to ownership. The problem

is further compounded by disproportionate policing in minority communities (Grogger & Ridgeway, 2006), which has resulted in unfairly high rates of traffic ticketing, fines, and suspensions of drivers licenses.

As a consequence of the disparity in car ownership, a disproportionate number of South Los Angeles workers rely heavily on public transit; they are nearly three times as likely to use public transit for their work commute. Having a car can significantly improve labor-market outcomes, and conversely, not having an automobile limits an individual's ability to search for a job, worsens the odds of successfully finding a job, obtaining higher earnings, and limits access to other opportunities. In South LA, the gap in transportation resources translates into decreased ability to reliably access these. Worse yet, that gap has persisted over the last fifty years.



Since 1960, reliance on public transit has decreased and then remained largely unchanged in the last twenty-five years; however, South Los Angeles workers have consistently used public transit at higher rates than LA County workers as a whole.

EGRATION



"School board hears segregation protest" [George Brich], [Valley Times Collection]/Los Angeles Public Library

EDUCATION

Public education is critical to prepare children to be successful and productive adults. Unfortunately, not all are afforded a quality education. The Kerner Commission noted "... for many minorities and particularly for children of the racial ghetto, the schools have failed to provide the education experience which could help overcome the effects of discrimination and deprivation" (U.S. National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders, 1968, 424-25). The McCone Commission recognized the potentially powerful role of public education to disrupt intergenerational racial inequality, labeling it as "the greatest promise for breaking the cycle of failure which is at the core of the problems of the disadvantaged areas" (Governor's Commission on the Los Angeles Riots, 1965, 49). The findings in this section sadly show that public schools have continued to be "separate and unequal." South Los Angeles remains trapped at the bottom end in terms of school performance.

Educational deficit was a root cause of the riots and both commissions acknowledged the central role of school segregation in creating that deficit, but took different positions to addressing it. In spite of the battle for integration ramping up in Los Angeles, the McCone Commission did not recommend school integration. In contrast, the Kerner Commission advocated for a more school desegregation, but recommended a more pragmatic approach. These recommendations included improvements to infrastructure, the teaching profession, curriculum and financing. The commissions went beyond K-12 education by recommending the establishment of pre-school programs.

We conclude that in the field of public education, the doctrine of ‘separate but equal’ has no place. Separate educational facilities are inherently unequal.

Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka, Kansas (1954)

McCONE/KERNER RECOMMENDATIONS

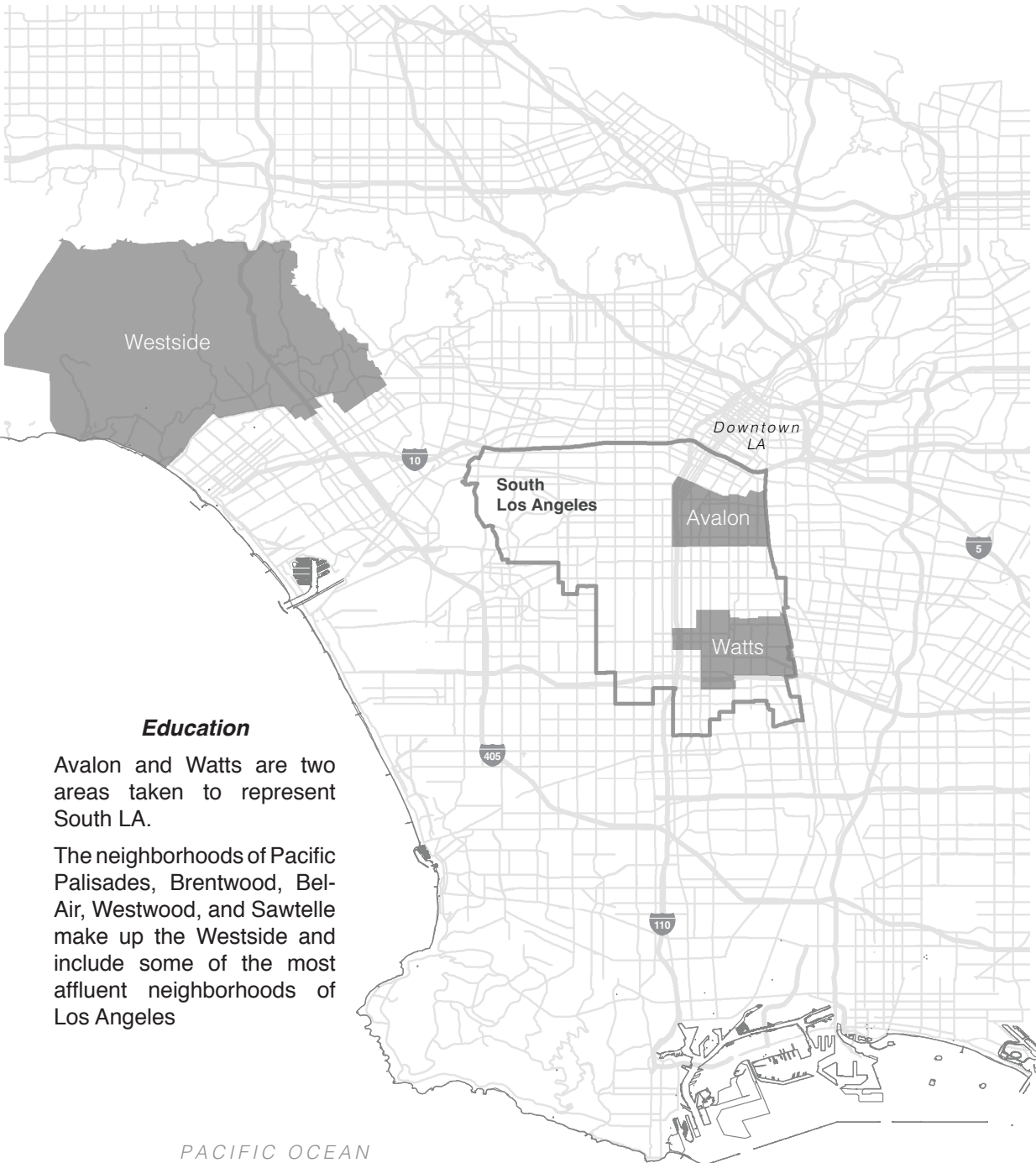
- Emphasis on early education
- Reduce class size and expand services to students with special needs
- Financial incentives for desegregating programs (e.g. busing, expanding attendance areas) and greater support for training teachers to work in disadvantaged areas

The legal struggle by people of color for educational equality pre-dates the 1960s, with limited success. For example, the California’s Supreme Court in *Tape v. Hurley* (1885) allowed the San Francisco School District to create a segregated school for Chinese students. In *Gong Lum v. Rice* (1927), the U.S. Supreme Court refused to outlaw racially motivated exclusion in public schools. Minorities fared better after World War II. The California case *Mendez v. Westminster* (1947) set an important precedent when the U.S. Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals ruled that assigning the Hispanics to inferior schools violated the Equal Protection Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment. Seven years later, in *Brown v. Board of Education* (1954), the U.S. Supreme Court finally struck down

school segregation, ruling that “Separate educational facilities are inherently unequal.” Implementation of the ruling, however, proved to be uneven and incomplete.

Efforts to end segregated schools received a push after *Green v. County School Board of New Kent County* in 1968 (Reardon & Owens, 2014). The case mandated that simply stopping segregationist practices was insufficient and that school districts should be proactive in integrating. However, the rulings on *Brown* and *Green* were predicated on arguments against blatant racism in Jim-Crow states. This left states outside the South in a legal gray zone because public school exclusion was frequently framed in less overt racist forms.

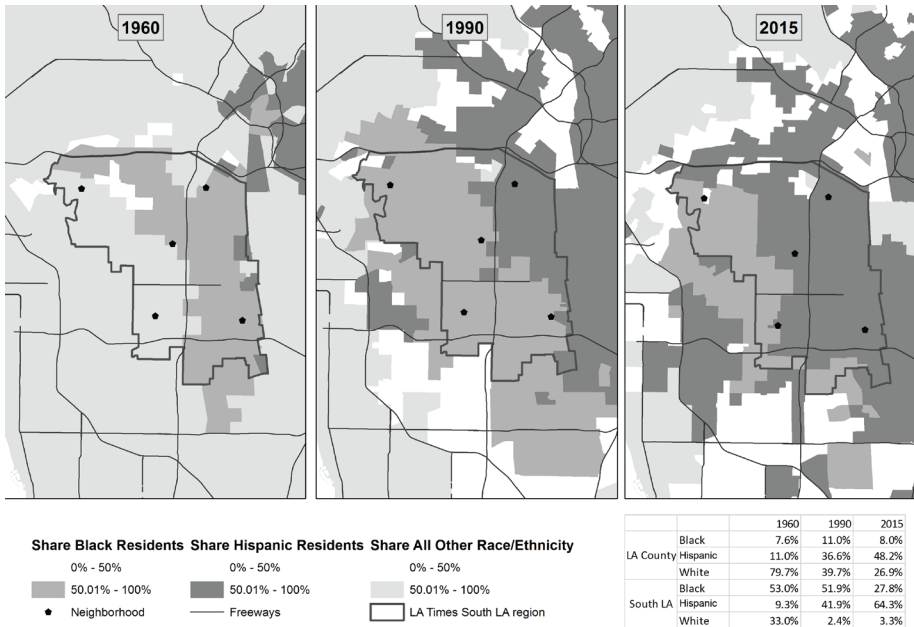
Resistance to school integration was evident in Los Angeles, where the School Board refused the use of busing. *Crawford v. Los Angeles Board of Education*, a case that played out the 1960s and 1970s, captures the degree of opposition that dominated the region at the time. Even establishing the level of school segregation was difficult because school districts were not legally obligated to collect enrollment data by race. Yet, the isolation of minority students in communities such as Watts was unmistakably visible to even the casual observer and readily acknowledged by the McCone Commission.



Education

Avalon and Watts are two areas taken to represent South LA.

The neighborhoods of Pacific Palisades, Brentwood, Bel-Air, Westwood, and Sawtelle make up the Westside and include some of the most affluent neighborhoods of Los Angeles



South LA's population has changed significantly over the last fifty years. The neighborhood's black community has shifted westward since 1960. Additionally, since 1990, the area is becoming home to a growing Hispanic population.

More fundamental was the question of what strategy should be implemented. The debate quickly shifted to integration through busing once data showed that segregation was widespread. In a protracted struggle, anti-integration activists and politicians launched a final assault on integration in 1979 with Proposition 1. The proposed amendment to the state's constitution would prevent integration through forced busing. In 1982, the California Supreme Court and US Supreme Court upheld the amendment, thus severely limiting the tools available to end segregation.

By the 1990s, the inability to implement *Brown v. Board of Education* became evident in a resurgence of school segregation. School attendance is tightly tied to racialized residential patterns, particularly for students

in the lower grade levels (Ong & Rickles, 2004). In South LA, which was evenly divided between white and Black residents in 1960, the rapid demographic shift to predominantly Black in 1990 and majority Latino by 2016 created challenges for schools that have become among the most segregated in the nation. (Orfield et al., 2016). The schools in the three neighborhoods in the map on the previous page are indicative of the failure to integrate. The McCone Commission selected these areas to illustrate educational disparities between those in the affluent and predominantly white Westside and those in South LA.

Not only are schools "separate," they are also "unequal." In 1960, Westside schools were ranked amongst the top performing schools,

Collectively, children in poor neighborhoods continue to be undereducated while children in wealthier neighborhoods excel. The disparities that persist in preschool enrollment and proficiency in elementary school surface as important in determining job readiness and future earnings.

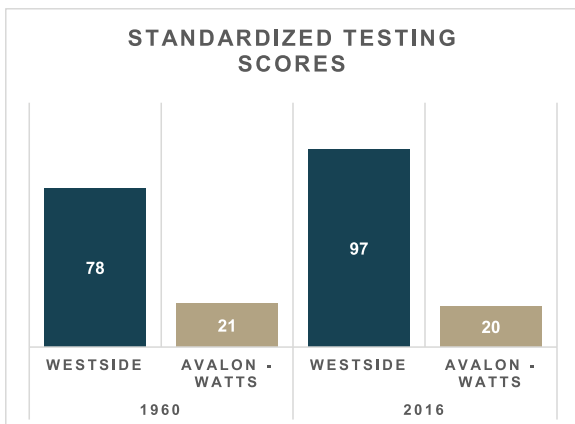
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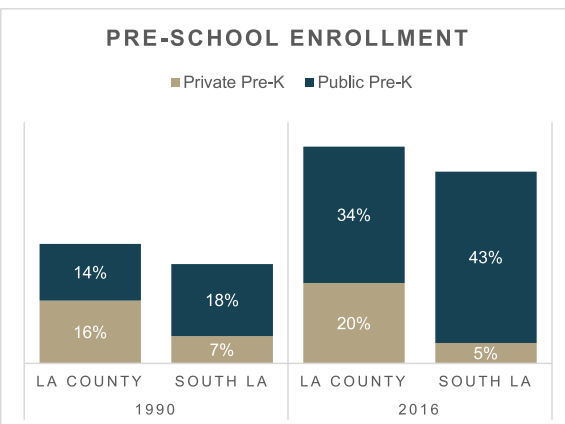
while those in South LA were ranked in the bottom (see technical note for details). Over the next half century, little has changed. The achievement gap remains as wide as ever. One contributing factor to the inequality is a difference in participation in pre-school programs, which the Kerner and McCone Commissions argued was critical important to preparing children before kindergarten, to ensure that all start on equal footing.

The pre-school recommendation has only been partially implemented. While there is no information for 1960, pre-school enrollment

was relatively rare in most communities. For example, Head Start, a program for poor pre-school children, did not start until 1965. Since 1990, South LA has generally followed the trend in increasing enrollment and, today, two out five children between three and four years old is enrolled in pre-school. However, the quality of pre-schools differs depending on providers. Children in the County are four times as likely to be in private school as they are in South LA. This gap is even greater between South and West LA (not shown) where nine in ten children are enrolled, nearly all of them in private school.



The gap in school performance between South LA and the most affluent neighborhoods of Los Angeles was evident in 1960. The same degree of disparity exists today.



South LA has lower rates of pre-school enrollment and even lower rates of private pre-school enrollment. These gaps point to significant differences in the amount of resources available for education.

Technical Notes

There are no definitive boundaries for South Los Angeles. Over time, the boundaries have shifted as the neighborhood has changed. The analyses are based on Public Use Microdata Areas (PUMA) as units of aggregation for the data. The units have changed over time, but not so much that their coverage of the South LA area, as we define it, remains comprehensive and consistent. We chose to use the South LA boundaries, defined by the LA Times Neighborhood mapping Project, because they are a reasonable approximation of the Curfew Area for the 1965 Watts Riot and the post-1992 Civil Unrest Rebuild LA zone. The reporting of PUMS at the level of PUMAs begun in 1990. However, IPUMS have added the PUMA designation to the 1960 data by matching the data disaggregated to the census tract level to the 2000 PUMA boundaries (Ruggles et al, 2007).

The PUMA enables us to match Public Use Microdata Sample (PUMS) data to the South Los Angeles area. Most of our figures rely on PUMS data to define the variables and compute the summary measures. PUMA data includes the full range of variables available in the Census long-form surveys before 2006, and the American Community Survey, at the individual and household level records. This allows us to code the data to match the most relevant definition. In most cases, we chose variables that allowed for consistent definitions over time. The only variable that did not exist in 1960 was pre-school enrollment, as the census did not count enrollment for children under five years old.

Data for 2016 come from the American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates.

All Dollar figures are adjusted for inflation to 2016 values using the Bureau of Labor Statistics Consumer Price Index Research Series Using Current Methods for 1990 and the Consumer Price Index Inflation Calculator for 1960.

Adults refers to individuals between the ages of 24 and 65.

The only additional data source was used to report on elementary school performance. We took advantage of the data that the McCone Report included in the report on reading comprehension and vocabulary to match the Standardized Testing and Reporting data available today. The McCone report did extensive research on school performance, but only reported the data for three sets of neighborhoods: West, South, and East LA.

To be consistent, we used their definition of West and South LA to take the average STAR scores for schools within their boundaries. The McCone report ranks neighborhoods on a national scale. In contrast, the STAR scores are California-specific and we rank the neighborhoods within Los Angeles.

The results concerning the relative influence of skills, experience and knowledge, and race on earning in the employment section relies on an ordinary least square analysis. We regressed a set of variables conventionally associated with earnings (e.g. educational attainment, gender, nativity) on the log of earnings

for adults working full-time full-year. We then group variables into categories corresponding to human capital, race and ethnicity, and place. This enables us to decompose the contribution of each set of variables and get an estimate of their relative influence in explaining gaps in earnings.

Maps

Employment map shows the top tracts (ranked by quintile) for proportion of low wage workers.

Source: 2010 Longitudinal Employer-Household Dynamics dataset

Housing map is created using shapefiles from the Testbed for the Redlining Archives of California's Exclusionary Spaces.

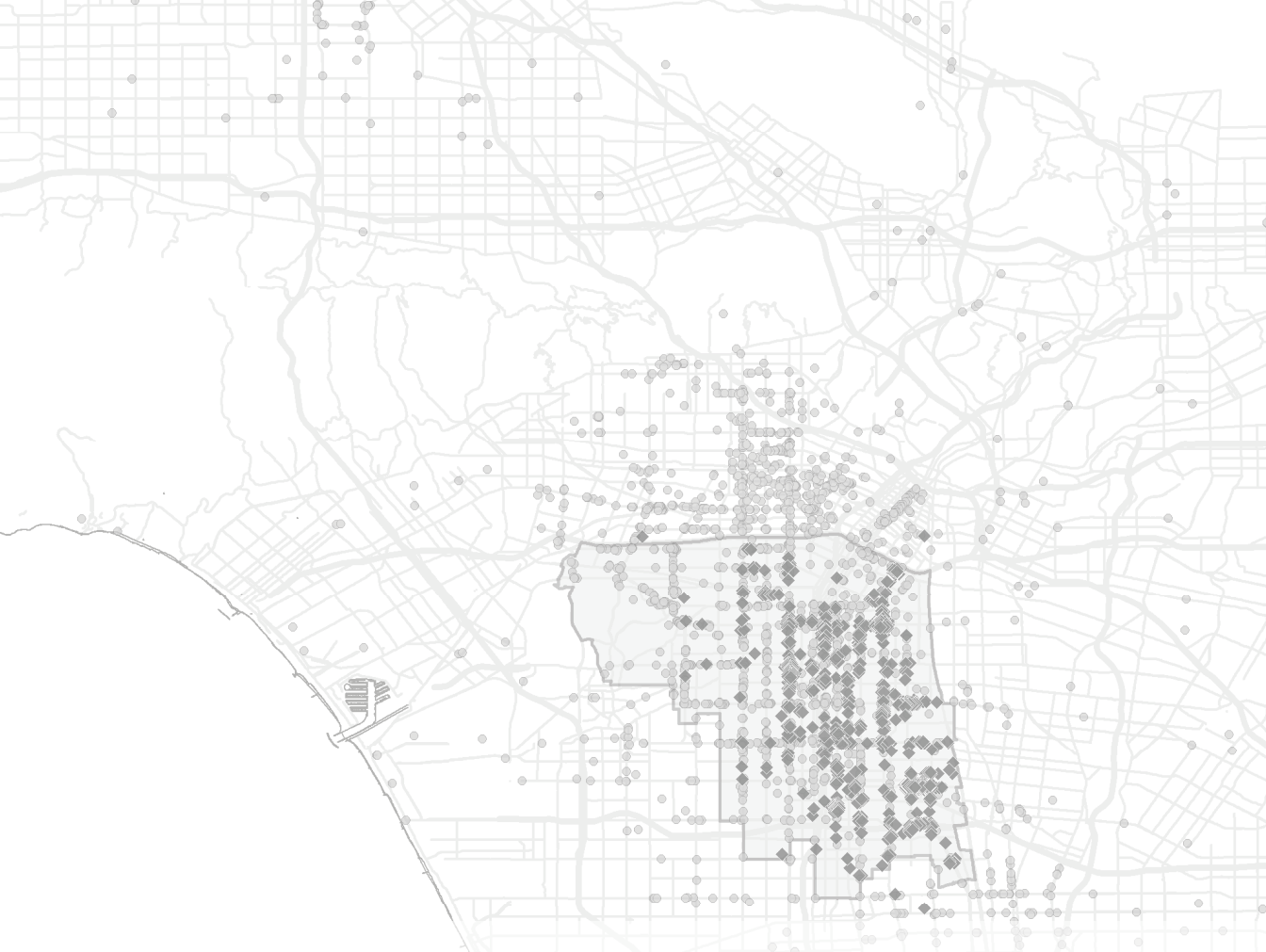
Transportation Access map was created by generating a contour analysis from travel distances generated by inputting destinations into GoogleMaps routing tool.

Education maps are based on the Los Angeles Region Welfare Planning Council's profile areas, which are based on aggregated 1960 census tracts.

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