



Roots, Roof, Refuge: Urgent Need for Renter Protections on the Frontlines of Climate Crisis

North Bay Organizing Project

Lina Blanco Ogden (she/they)



The North Bay Organizing Project is a multiracial, multi-issue coalition of twenty community based organizations rooted in working class and communities of color in Sonoma County.

We build power by:

- Training community leaders
- Organizing for structural change
- Advancing regional and national coalitions
- Canvassing neighbors for Deep Democracy
- Developing systems of mutual aid

We are the home of the Sonoma County Tenants Union, UndocuFund, Latinx Student Congress, Rapid Response Network and Queer Asylum Accompaniment Team.



NORTH BAY ORGANIZING PROJECT



Although the beauty and wealth of our region is marketed worldwide, this image of Sonoma County masks the tremendous exploitation that lies just beneath the surface. We face ridiculously high rent costs, unlivable wages, continued attacks on immigrant families and environmental degradation.

We believe a healthy community begins with secure shelter, where renters are safe from the threat of eviction, skyrocketing rents, or the next climate-fueled crisis that could drive us from our homes.



Key Questions

Immediate

- How have **rents increased** across five years of climate disasters?
- Where are the neighborhoods that are **most rent-burdened** and who lives there?
- Which neighborhoods are facing the **highest rate of evictions** in Sonoma County communities?

Longterm

- What opportunities do we see for **base-building** when mapping communities facing the strongest threats to their housing?
- What data do we know about renter conditions in specific Supervisor districts as we **power map key decision-makers** in our campaigns?
- What neighborhoods **face future threats of displacement** due to climate change?



Grassroots Partners & Coalition

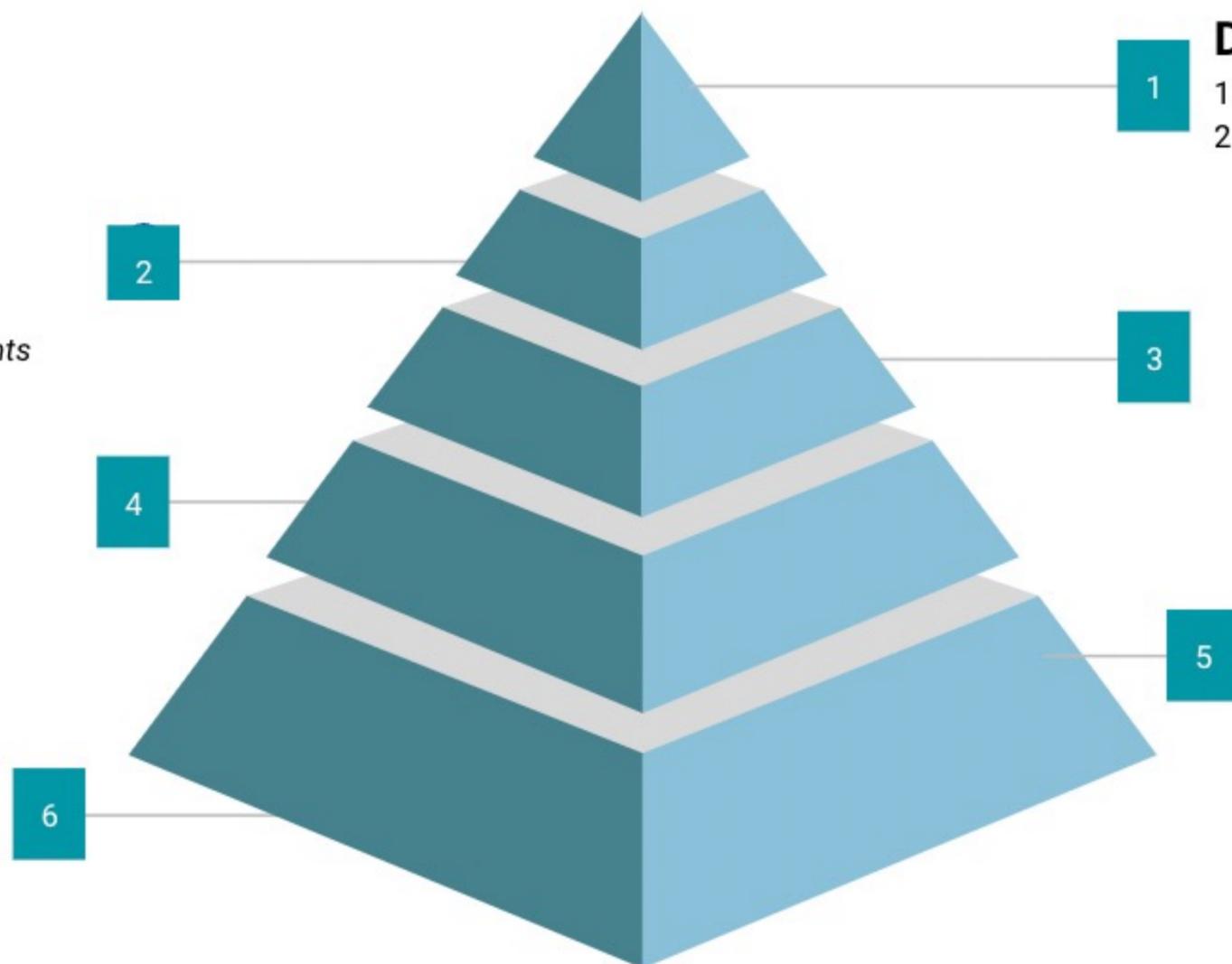
Sonoma County Tenants Union
Local Tenant Associations
Legal Aid of Sonoma County
Fair Housing Advocates of Northern CA
Just Recovery Partnership
Urban Habitat, RTO, Housing NOW!, Tenants Together, Right to the City

Target: Decisionmakers

1. SOCO Board of Supervisors
2. SOCO Staff & Office of Equity
3. SOCO Community Organizations
Active in Disasters

Philanthropy

1. Foundations that fund NBOP's work
2. Regional Subgranting Partners
3. Large individual donors



1 Directly Impacted Community

1. Sonoma County renters
2. Sonoma County low-wage workers who rent

3 NBOP Members

1. NBOP Member organizations (church, labor, immigrant, cultural institutions working with people who rent)
2. Grassroots base of leaders/individual members, monthly sustaining donors

5 Media

1. Local press
2. Regional press



#1: Core Audience

Community Leaders & Grassroots Power Organizations

What we want them to do:

- Embolden and educate community leaders and partners in connecting their lived experiences to data that agitates them to action (joining our campaign, giving public comment, joining our tenants union).

Using What Data?

- Point to disparities across major local historical events – 5 years of climate disasters and local emergencies by zip code and County district.





#2: Core Audience

Sonoma County Board of Supervisors and County Staff

What we want them to do:

- Pass a local package of stronger renter protections like Just Cause that includes emergency/disaster-triggered protections. We also want them to understand how their district fares in terms of renter disparities.

Using What Data?

- Data will be disaggregated by Zip Codes and County Supervisorial Districts that heighten tension on specific decision-making targets (SoCo Board of Supervisors).

For example: “Did you know, your District experienced X evictions in 2018 after the fires?”



The Data

By Zip Code > County District

Race & Ethnicity of Sonoma County Renters

Income of Sonoma County Renters

Rent Burden (i.e. spending +30% on rents)

Evictions by Zip Code:

- Unlawful Detainers
- Sheriff Lockouts

Median Cost of Rents over the last 6 years

Disaster Maps in the last 5 years

- Wildfires**
- Floods**

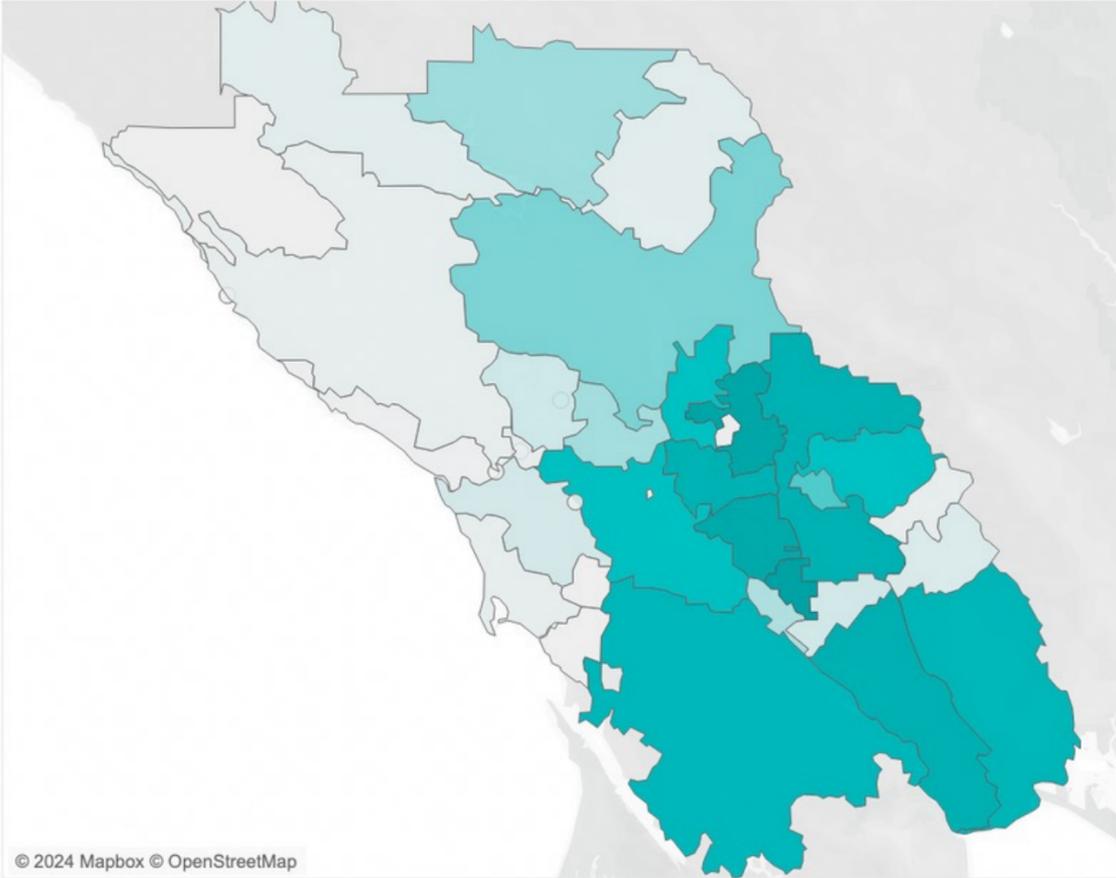
Source: Census, Public Records Requests from Legal Aid of Sonoma County, ARCGIS Online

*** Still working on accessing these shapefiles*



Renters On The Map

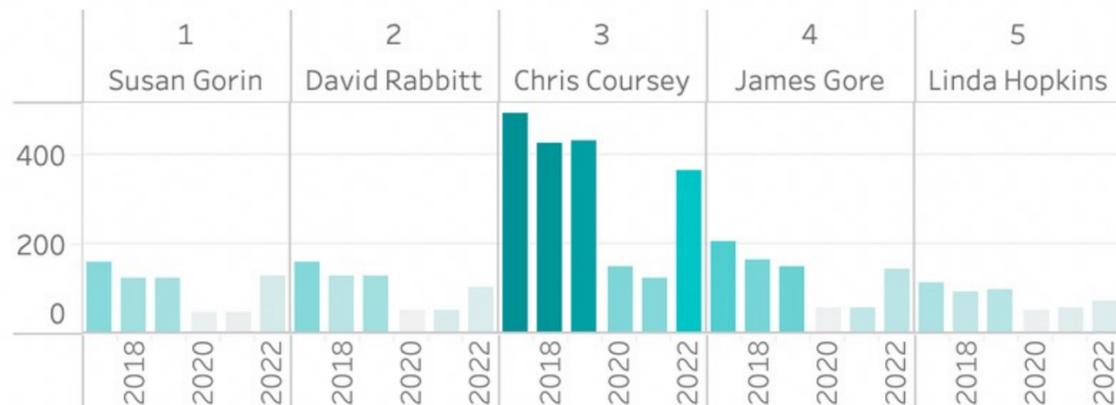
Sonoma County is home to nearly 74,000 renters. Click and explore the map below to learn more about the renters who live in our County.



© 2024 Mapbox © OpenStreetMap

Evictions Filed by County District

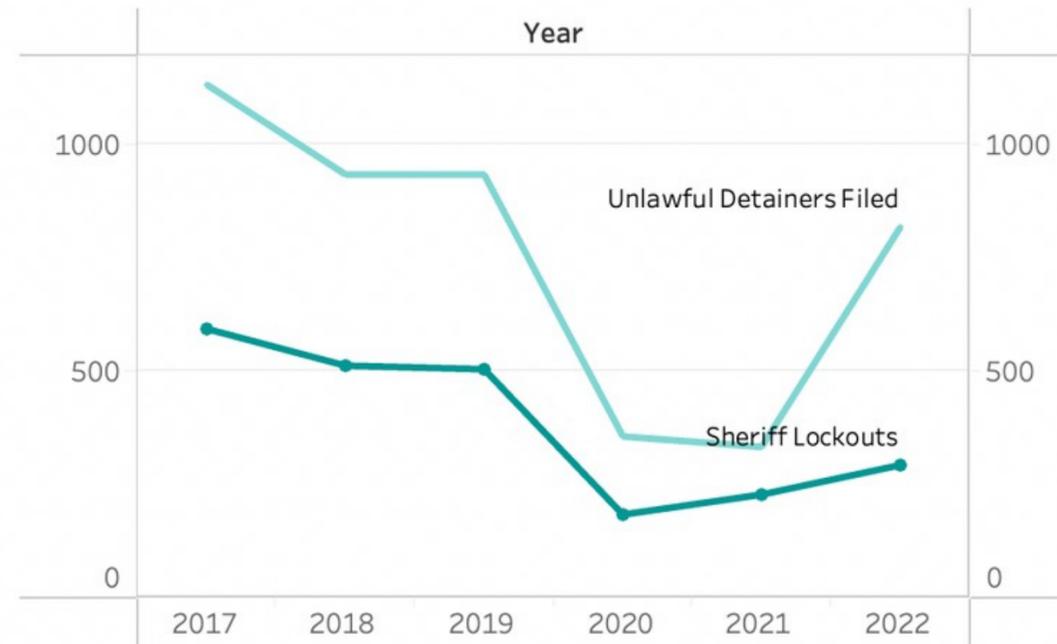
The majority of evictions occur in rent-burdened areas that are home to Sonoma County's largest percentage of working class families and people of color.



Search Zip Code

Sonoma County Evictions Over Time

Though renters fought for and won COVID-era eviction moratoriums in 2020, evictions are once again on the rise.



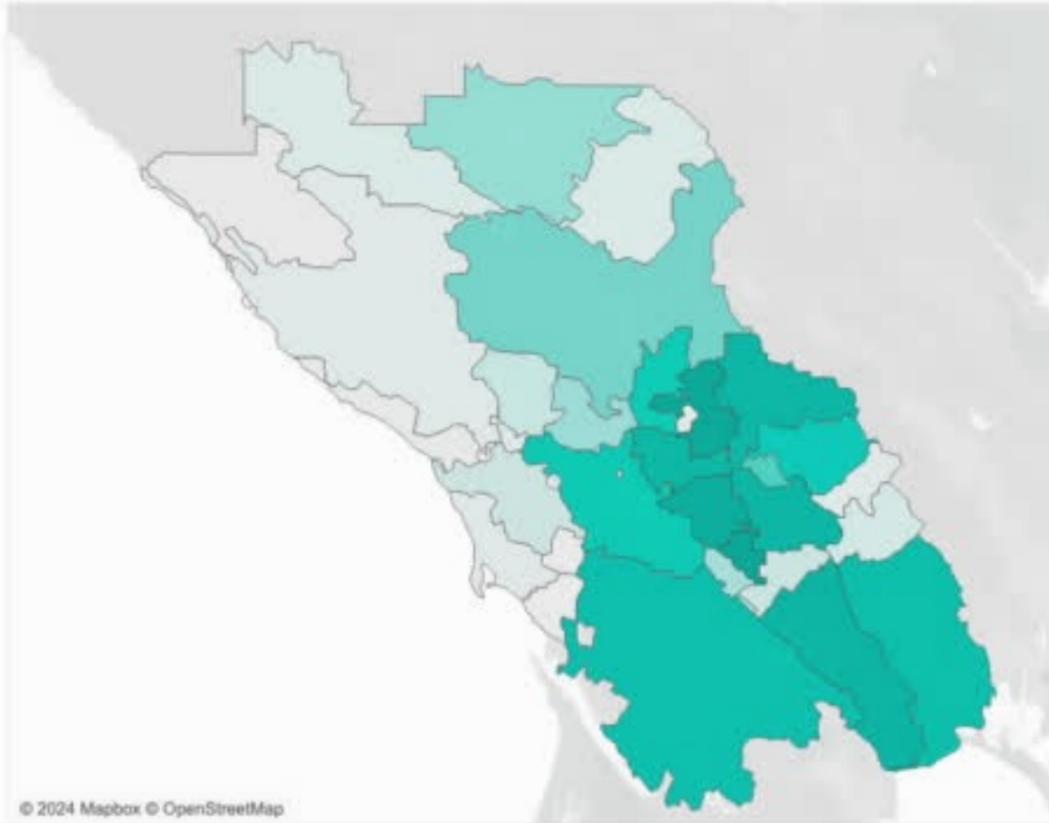
Rent Burden by Sonoma County District

In 2020, nearly 55% of renters were rent-burdened, meaning they spent more than 30% of their income on rent.



Renters On The Map

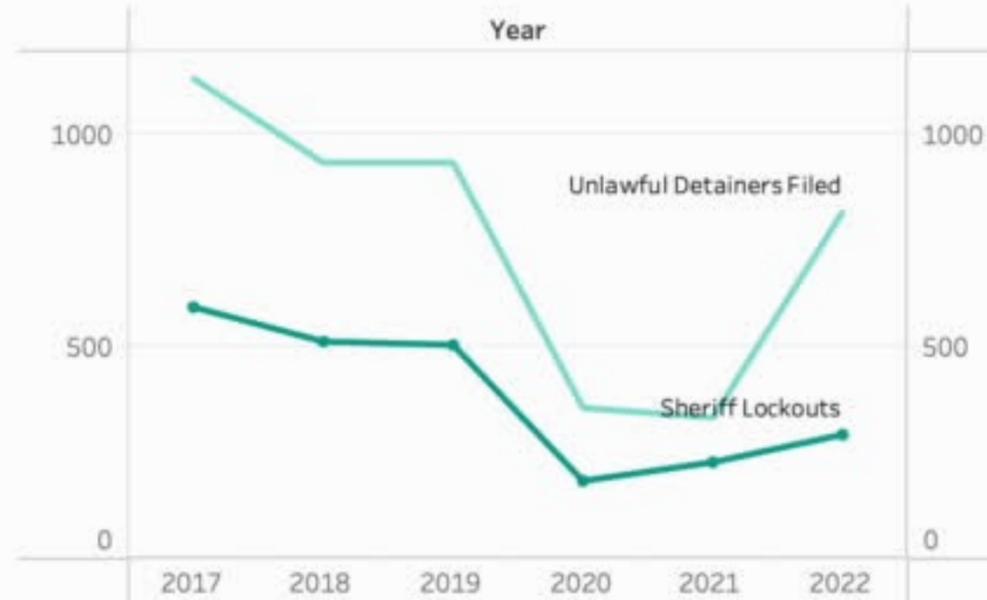
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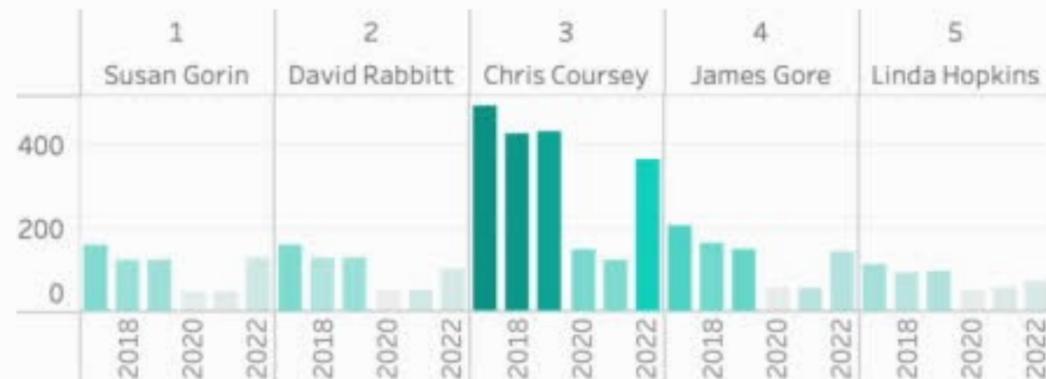
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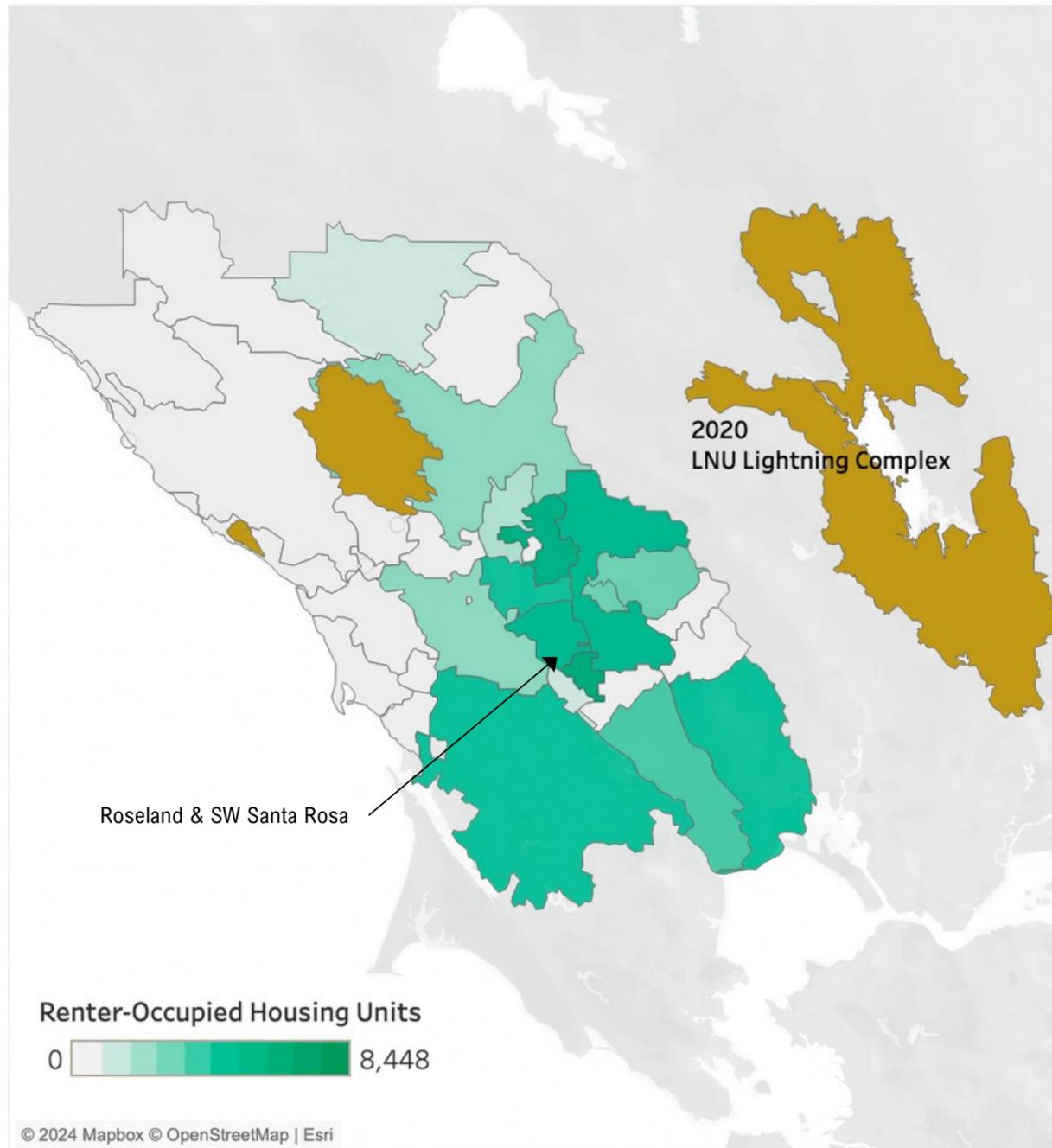
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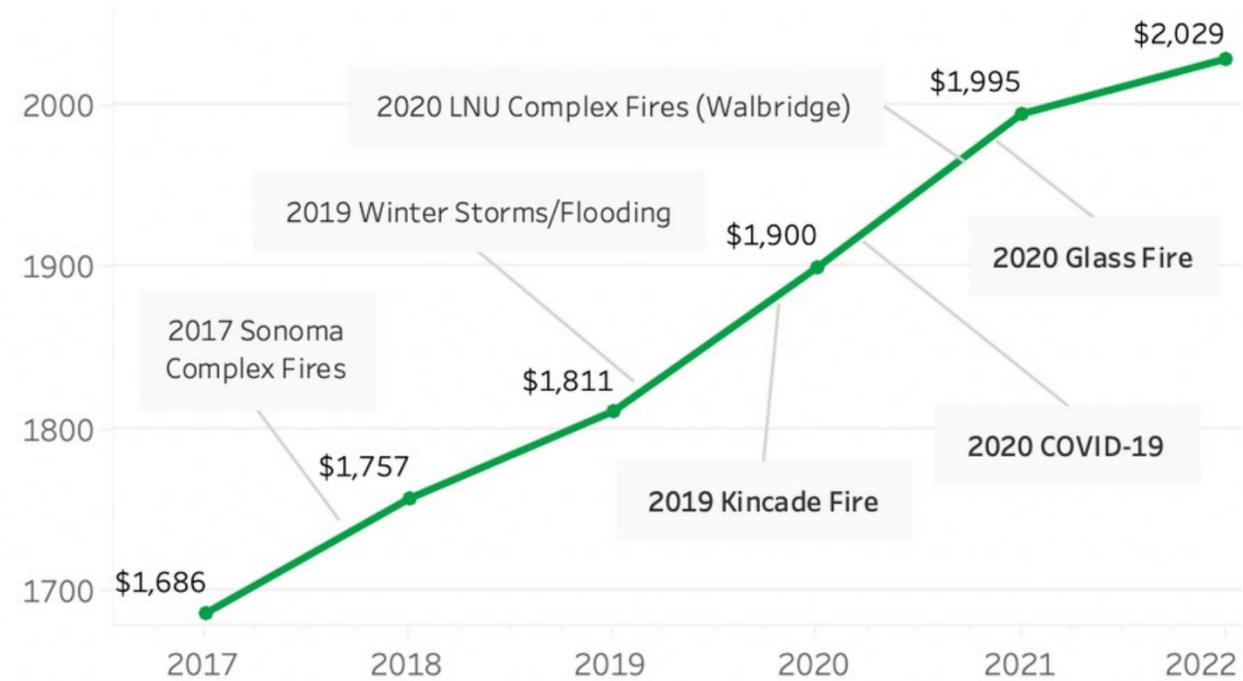
On The Frontlines: Renters and Fire

As wildfires claim our housing stock, climate migration from wildland-urban interface areas could displace residents in areas like Roseland and Southwest Santa Rosa – home to mostly immigrant, low-income, working-class families who face rent burden and high rates of evictions. *WATCH: Tenants Rise Up! A Just Recovery*



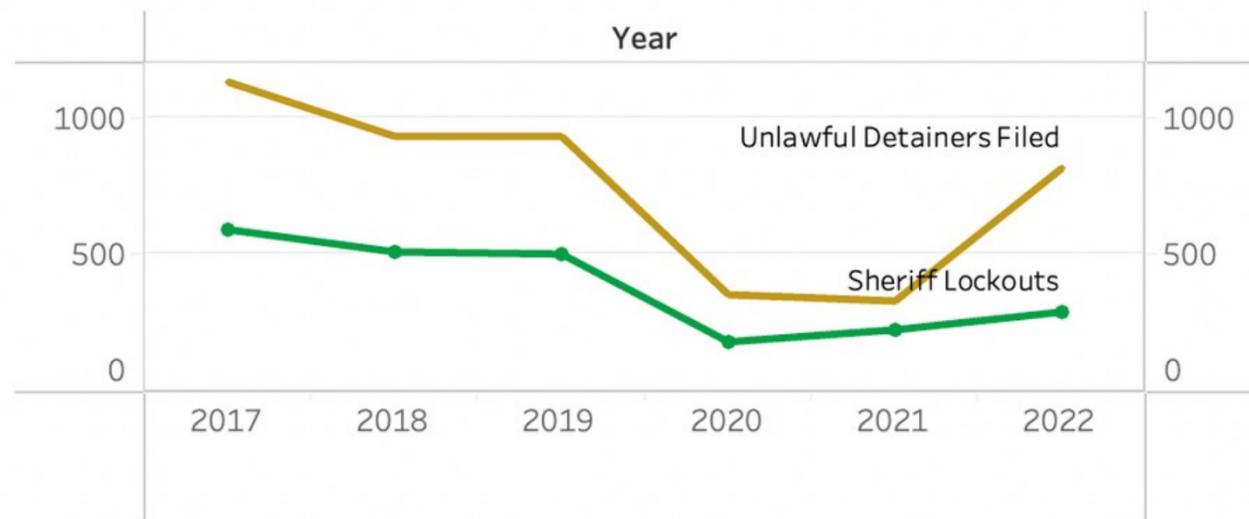
Rents Keep Rising

Median rents have soared by 20% since 2017 – and that’s taking inflation into account.



Renter Protections Keep Folks Housed

The eviction moratoriums that tenants and allies won during COVID-19 curbed evictions. We need stronger, lasting protections like Just Cause to prevent future displacement.



Design Considerations

1. Start with story
2. Make it participatory
3. Center solutions
4. Uphold language justice

We want to embed this interactive dashboard on our organization's website and provide at-a-glance handouts by District for download.

Users will first land on a page that tells the story of our tenant organizing for a Just Recovery on the frontlines of the climate crisis, then they can explore the map.

Lastly, they'll be able to click to see our platform of our policy recommendations.



Next Steps + How We'll Use It

- Leverage this data in our campaign for disaster-triggered renter protections with the Sonoma County Board of Supervisors
- Use findings from data visualizations in our scripts for canvassing and integrated voter engagement
- Share with our member base and spark dialogue with our community leaders and coalition partners
- Pursue new data-driven projects for future campaigns
- Incorporate qualitative data and storytelling



Reflections

Challenges

- Tableau x Esri connector!
- Trying to create an all-in-one tool!
- Not prioritizing your data days!
- Wanting to give up when you hit that wall

Lessons Learned

- You don't have to (and shouldn't) do things on your own.
- Stay organized and get to know your data.
- New questions can emerge from the data viz.
- Stay focused aside time for data days.
- Get inspired by others' brilliance!
- Do data walks with your folks often.
- Lean into your strengths.



ROOTS
ROOF
BELIEVE



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