



## Using HUD's Data and Mapping Tool for Advocacy

### **What is HUD's Data and Mapping Tool?**

As part of HUD's Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing (AFFH) Rule, the federal government commissioned a dynamic, online [mapping and data-generating tool](#) to aid communities in their completion of Assessments of Fair Housing. The tool consolidates several public data sources to develop a comprehensive analytical instrument to track and identify socioeconomic dynamics, racial disparities, as well as neighborhood-level indicators of opportunity. The data sources include:

Demographics: *Decennial Census (2000, 2010), American Community Survey (2011-2013), Brown Longitudinal Tract Database (2010)*

Housing: *Tenant Rental Assistance Certification System (2013), National Low Income Housing Tax Credit Database (2013), Comprehensive Housing Affordability Strategy (2007-2011), HUD 50058 Family Report (covering Public Housing, Section 8 and Housing Choice Voucher Programs)*

Education: *Great Schools (2012), Common Core of Data (2012), School Boundary Information System (2012)*

Other: *Location Affordability Index (2008-2012), Longitudinal Employer-Household Dynamics (2010), National Air Toxics Assessment (2015)*

### **Is this data useful?**

The tool can provide detailed census-tract level information that is disaggregated by national origin, which could be helpful for advocates representing diverse AAPI immigrant communities. For example, it can generate:

- Maps of concentrations of households by National Origin
- Maps of concentrations of Limited English Proficient persons by National Origin
- Maps of concentrations of households facing high housing cost burdens by National Origin
- Maps of concentrations of households facing severe housing problems (such as overcrowding and lack of adequate facilities) by National Origin

### **Mapping areas of "opportunity"**

HUD analyzed data sources to create "Opportunity Indices" for each census tract in the country. This is an attempt to quantify the degree in which a neighborhood offers features commonly viewed as "opportunity" indicators such as education, employment, transportation, low poverty and environmental health. The result of this analysis is a ranking mechanism for each neighborhood on these dimensions. The tool allows users to display a neighborhood's "score" on each opportunity indicator; and generate maps that can also be overlaid with Race/Ethnicity and National Origin concentrations. However, there is a lack of consistent neighborhood-level data across all geographies. Consequently, community groups and local advocates can supplement HUD's data with any robust locally-available data source, as well as local insights.



## Understanding Opportunity Indicators

Low Poverty Index: The higher the score, the less exposure to poverty in a neighborhood (on the map display, a “lighter” census tract indicates higher poverty in that tract)

School Proficiency Index: The higher the score, the higher the school system quality in a neighborhood (on the map display, a “darker” census tract indicates the presence of better performing schools in that tract)

Jobs Proximity Index: The higher the score, the better the access to job opportunities in a neighborhood (on the map display, a “darker” census tract indicates more job opportunities in that tract)

Labor Market Engagement Index: The higher the score, the higher the labor market engagement in a neighborhood (on the map display, a “darker” census tract indicates higher human capital, educational attainment and lower unemployment in that tract)

Low Transportation Cost Index: The higher the score, the lower the cost of transportation in a neighborhood (on the map display, a “lighter” census tract indicates higher transport costs in the tract, either due to lack of public transport options, housing density, or distance from employers)

Environmental Health Index: The higher the score, the better the environmental quality of the neighborhood, and less the exposure to harmful toxins (on the map display, a “darker” census tract indicates an environmentally healthier neighborhood)

## Other Data

HUD also provides a range of other data that can be downloaded from the AFFH website, but much of this is not disaggregated by National Origin—just by Race/Ethnicity. However, useful information about demographics in public housing, housing cost burdens, and local homeownership and rental rates can be accessed using the “Export Table” function on the online tool.

## How can I use this information?

Maps generated by the tool can help inform program design and community outreach activities for nonprofit groups serving AAPI communities and neighborhoods—as they allow users to easily create visual representations of concentrations of immigrant communities by national origin; Limited English Proficient households; and households with severe housing needs. Similarly, they can serve as powerful evidence for advocacy efforts: whether making the case for more affordable housing, improved air quality, better public transit options, or upgrades to local school systems.

Finally, understanding how the tool “represents” your community is an important first step to identifying where “gaps” may be, or if information is outdated. This understanding will help inform—and may even provide the impetus for—meaningful and proactive engagement with local planning processes, policymakers, as well as the philanthropic sector.