

The Los Angeles Adaptive Reuse Ordinance and Residential Shifts
in Downtown Los Angeles



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Abstract

This report focuses on the impact of the Los Angeles Adaptive Reuse Ordinance on downtown Los Angeles from its beginning in 1999 through the start of 2020. There is limited extensive research on the specific impacts the policy has had on downtown Los Angeles, although the policy was largely utilized during a period of substantial growth for the central city. During this period downtown shifted from a place of almost strictly business, where not many wanted to live, to a sought-after residential neighborhood. Which widely effects the makeup of the city and the neighborhoods of downtown. This report includes a review of literature surrounding the practice of adaptive reuse, its history, and includes a discussion of gentrification in Los Angeles, because development and gentrification often coincide. The research conducted was primarily based off of a database of adaptive reuse permits provided by the Los Angeles Building and Safety Department. Information from interviews conducted with city officials and developers is also used as supplemental to the data. The permits were analyzed to account for use, location, price, developer, and building owners. These factors were looked at in order to get a sense of how adaptive reuse development impacted downtown Los Angeles, specifically how the policy facilitated the change in buildings uses in downtown Los Angeles to create the residential inventory that exists today.

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Introduction

Los Angeles has gone through many shifts in habitation, having seen multiple changes in the migration of individuals over past decades. In the last decade, however, I would argue, Los Angeles has and is going through another pivotal shift of habitation. The previous suburban sprawl of individuals to outside the city center is reversing on itself (Fulton & Shigley, 1991). Downtown Los Angeles, which was once neglected, has gone through many changes to accommodate this trend (Marino, 2019). This process, known as city revitalization, is occurring throughout America but is especially notable in Los Angeles. This transformation was sparked around the same time that Los Angeles policymakers enacted the Adaptive Reuse Ordinance (ARO), in 1999. The 1999 ordinance encourages development within a set boundary of downtown Los Angeles using building incentives. The allowance of incentives that provide an expedited approval process for older buildings planning to use adaptive reuse caused an increase in development while also encouraged further investment in the area, resulting in an increase in population. The development that has occurred has also shifted the reputation and feel of downtown Los Angeles.

Adaptive reuse is an architectural tactic that has seen an increase in use over the last few decades (Dispenza, 2011). Architecture is expected to progress as times change but adaptive reuse revisits the past instead, uniquely shaping what people think of as modern. The practice takes existing buildings and renovates them, mixing old with new while saving materials and preserving buildings histories in the process. Architecture is meant to reflect the age and cultural context that produced it, with adaptive reuse, we are seeing a mix of different ages and contexts that result in the creation of unique spaces which now reflect this day in age. Due to the original

boundaries of the ordinance the majority of adaptive reuse buildings in Los Angeles are located downtown.

The population shift of DTLA residents has many impacts on the way the city now functions. Downtown has almost doubled its population in 10 years, DTLA is was home to an estimated population of 83,238 residents in January 2019 compared to the 27,849 residents in 2000, the year just after the ordinance was enacted (“Downtown Los Angeles Demographics”) (DCBID 2019 Year-End Residential Inventory Update). This population increase has driven growth and development in downtown and vice versa.

In 2003, four years after being enacted in downtown, the ARO expanded to encompass other communities in Los Angeles through the Adaptive Reuse Incentive Areas Specific Plan. Chinatown, Lincoln Heights, the Hollywood Community Redevelopment Project Area, certain portions of the Wilshire Center/Koreatown Community Redevelopment Project Area, and Central Avenue south of Freeway Number 10 and north of Vernon Avenue all now have areas where the same building incentives apply, Figure. 1.

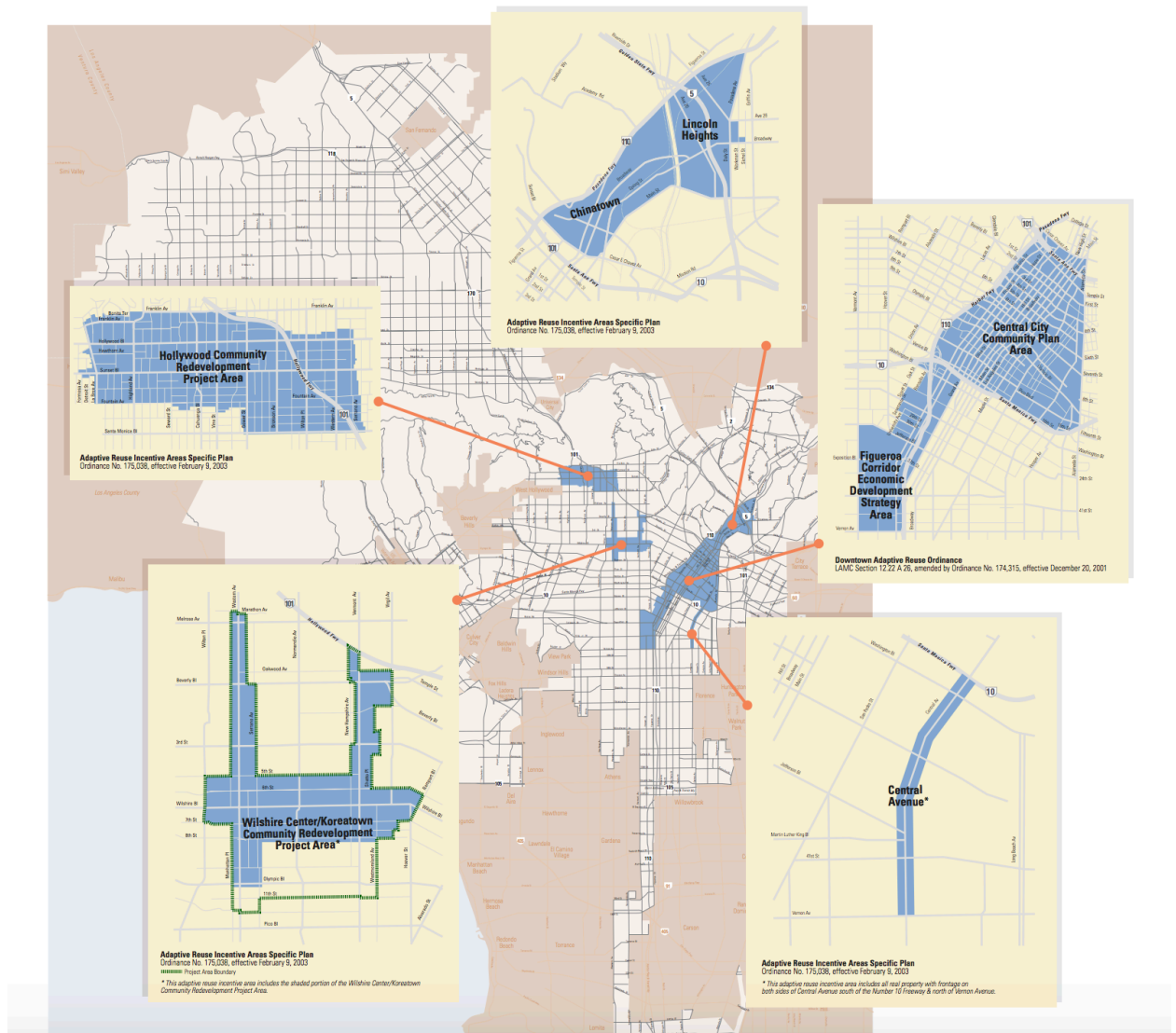


Figure 1: “Adaptive Reuse Ordinance.” *Adaptive Reuse Ordinance boundaries* |Source: Office of Historic Resources, City of Los Angeles, source: preservation.lacity.org/incentives/adaptive-reuse-ordinance.

With major changes occurring and being encouraged in all of these communities the effects that the new developments have had on people living in and around downtown Los Angeles should not be ignored. Downtown presents the best-case study being the original site of the ordinance and where the majority of adaptive reuse transformations have occurred in Los Angeles to date. The ordinance has been in effect for 20 years and has shaped a great deal of developments, the changes that have occurred as a result of these developments are worthy of

being studied, which is why the goal of this paper is to evaluate the Adaptive Reuse Ordinance's facilitation of building uses in Downtown Los Angeles and quantify the housing prices of residential units in downtown as compared to pre-1999.

Background

California currently has nearly 40 million residents, the state's population nearly tripled in the last half of the 20th century, and its growth rate has been substantially higher than any other state in the United States ("California's Population", 2017). California's population is more urbanized than that of the US in general, this large urban population requires adequate and evolving urban planning to fit its large demands ("ECampus Rural Health: Stanford Medicine.", n.d.). Sufficient planning would have to account for the state's constant growth and changing demographics. During the second half of the 20th century, planning in California has shifted in regard to how planners consider this rapid growth. Historically, planning has revolved around the development of raw land. The consumption of underdeveloped land was focused on outward expansion from cities. Beginning after World War II, during this economic boost, the suburban population in North America rapidly expanded. Suburban living became the ideal that many aimed to achieve. Suburban expansion lasted for decades in California leading to an abundance of first-generation housing tracts outside of Los Angeles and around the state (Fulton & Shigley, 1991). However, more recently, starting around the 1990s, California has seen a metropolitan shift from its historically suburban growth.

The shift from suburban planning is a result of many factors, mainly the inevitability of land sparsity and a new consciousness of sustainability. Other factors such as the redistribution

of population growth have encouraged in this transformation. There has been a reversing of the suburban movement and a return to central cities. The great recession in 2007 further encouraged this trend as the recession lessened the demand for single family homes. The newly created suburban neighborhoods, created when suburban expansion was still occurring, were left vacant and neglected. Once suburban neighborhoods became ghost towns, killing any development in the surrounding areas as well. The recession gave further recognition into what is economically sustainable in terms of development, and suburbs far from cities and jobs were not cutting it.

There is limited room to build within cities, in order to maximize potential and promote sustainable practices, new development techniques have come to the forefront of urban growth. New Urbanism arose to offer alternatives to the typical sprawling, low-density patterns of post-WWII development (“What is New Urbanism?”, n.d.). This form of planning emphasizes compact development compared to conventional suburban growth. This growth looks towards the recycling of urban neighborhoods. As the demand for more central living increases, places to live closer to employment, the alteration and renewal of urban cities has blossomed. This trend has affected Los Angeles' many urban neighborhoods. Adaptive reuse has seen an increase in use as an urbanistic tactic to fit the demand that the changing population demographics has had on cities.

Estimates suggest 90 percent of new development to come will likely be focused on adaptive reuse of existing buildings (Saurabh et al., 2018). Adaptive reuse is a variety of repairing or altering existing buildings to serve contemporary uses, while preserving features from the past. Tearing down and building up new buildings in the traditional cycle is not a sustainable practice. Adaptive reuse promotes the usage of materials to their full lifespans,

wasting less new resources and limiting material waste (“Adaptive Reuse: How Can We Make Old Buildings More Sustainable?”, 2018). Maintaining and reusing buildings can be cost effective as well, saving more in construction costs than replacing buildings with new structures. Architecturally, re-using existing buildings can also create exciting spaces leading to more creative designs (Orbasli, 2009). Adaptive reuse has been promoted as having economic, environmental and social benefits, all reasons why the use of this practice has increased dramatically in the last decade.

City officials in Los Angeles have facilitated public efforts to revitalize downtown since 1949, an estimate suggests the Community Reinvestment Act (CRA), spent over \$2.5 billion dollars on downtown redevelopment between 1950 and 1995 (Gordon and Richardson, 1998). Much of this money went into revitalizing the Bunker Hill district. The city redevelopment agency took over this area through eminent domain in 1949. The efforts to revitalize the area displaced approximately 10,000 residents (Manville, Shoup, 2010), replacing old residences with middle class housing and renovated office spaces. These office spaces attracted firms from downtown’s Historic Core neighborhood. Filling the new buildings left many commercial spaces vacant in the historic core of the city (Manville, Shoup, 2010). These vacancies helped spur the adaptive reuse ordinance and its focus on abandoned spaces.

The City of Los Angeles has encouraged the use of adaptive reuse through the Adaptive Reuse Ordinance. The ARO was designed as an attempt to revitalize downtown Los Angeles by “facilitating the conversion of older, economically distressed, or historically significant buildings to apartments, live/work units or visitor-serving facilities” (Adaptive Reuse Ordinance, 2001). The ordinance incentivizes adaptive reuse by providing an expedited approval process which

excludes older and historic buildings from the same zoning and code requirements that apply to new construction within the boundaries of the ordinance. In 2003 the ordinance was expanded and adopted into five other Los Angeles neighborhoods through the Adaptive Reuse Incentive Areas Specific Plan, Figure 1.

The specific plan for the second ordinance that includes Chinatown, Lincoln Heights, and Central Avenue south of Freeway Number 10 and north of Vernon Avenue; the Hollywood Community Redevelopment Project Area; and certain portions of the Wilshire Center/Koreatown Community Redevelopment Project Area is largely the same as the original but with a few differences. One being that this ordinance includes a provision which limits eligible residential buildings to ones that have been completely and continuously vacant since March 1, 2002. The ordinance includes maps with boundary lines around the areas in which the ordinance is in effect and the incentives apply.

The City of Los Angeles Adaptive Reuse Program Handbook highlights that the ordinance: revitalizes neighborhoods, preserves historic architecture, encourages community development, stimulates economic investment, and facilitate mixed-use (City of Los Angeles Adaptive Reuse Program Handbook, 2006). The incentives used to accomplish these objectives specifically expedite the approval process by relaxing parking, density, and other typical zoning requirements and providing flexibility in the fire and life safety approval and permitting process. To get approved for these benefits a development is automatically entitled if all of the following are true for the project: rental units, inside a designated incentive area, commercial zoning or R5 zoning (high density residential), or a building constructed before July 1, 1974 (City of Los Angeles Adaptive Reuse Program Handbook, 2006). If all of these are true a permit must be

applied for, but the requirement of a public hearing is waved. Adaptive reuse projects permitted “by-right” do not require environmental clearance and may be issued permits by the Department of Building and Safety. For a site to be eligible a Zoning Administrator must also find that the building is no longer economically viable in its current use or uses.

The Adaptive Reuse Ordinance has been attributed in large to the revitalization of Downtown Los Angeles, facilitating the transformation of vacant buildings to popular live/workspaces and much more. The revitalization of downtown has resulted in its emergence as a trendy neighborhood where people want to live. The allure of this revitalized downtown attracts wealthier buyers, who for the most part, can afford to live anywhere. As downtown repopulates and the buying rates get expensive the neighborhoods next to downtown experience the same revitalizing effect, due to their proximity to the newly ideal location. This shift in growth becomes more complicated, in Los Angeles specifically, due to limited housing supply. Not all areas of and around downtown were vacant before revitalization. There are many factors that separate cities by class and affect where parts of the population can live. In general, when suburban life became popular and people moved to the suburbs others stayed or moved to inner cities because it was affordable, as well as a myriad of other factors including de facto or de jure segregation, restrictive covenants, inability to secure a mortgage, exclusionary zoning, lack of multifamily housing, and more. The switch back to urban living often results in residents who have lived in their homes for years getting pushed out to make way for the new wave of people who want to live in and around revitalized neighborhoods. They are able to do so by buying their way in, ultimately pricing out the previous residents. Capitalism determines who gets to live where. This process has coined the name gentrification. A 1978 U.S. Housing and Urban

Development working paper describes gentrification as “the process by which a neighborhood occupied by lower-income households undergoes revitalization or reinvestment through the arrival of upper-income households” (Toplansky, Lopez del rio, Murphy, 2018). Gentrification has arisen as a major problem facing Los Angeles neighborhoods.

Growth of downtown areas and the decline of middle-class neighborhoods is a result of gentrification. Los Angeles has seen a great deal of Urban revitalization induced displacement over the last decade. According to UCLA researchers the number of gentrified neighborhoods (census tracts) increased by 16% percent between 1990 and 2015 in Los Angeles County (“Urban Displacement Southern California Map”, n.d.). The neighborhoods of Boyle Heights, Eastside, and Downtown Los Angeles including the Arts District as well as Little Tokyo, Koreatown, and Chinatown are highlighted for having experienced the effects of first wave gentrification. Many other neighborhoods in Los Angeles are also experiencing gentrification. Los Angeles Daily News states in an article titled, Gentrification is failing in Los Angeles, that it “suffers the highest levels of crowding, the greatest levels of poverty, the least affordable housing, the lowest homeownership rates and the second-largest concentration of homeless in the nation” (Kotkin & Toplansky, 2019). When addressing new developments and revitalization it is integral to keep in mind gentrification.

Another point of concern regarding Los Angeles’ Adaptive Reuse Ordinance is that Skid Row, an approximately 50 square block area that historically has been an epicenter for homelessness in Los Angeles, is located in the Downtown adaptive reuse incentive area. Skid Row has experienced changes due to downtown revitalization, one being the shrinking of its

boundaries. There is little study on the connection of adaptive reuse to negative impacts on Skid Row but the timing of the two events could be seen as congruent with one another.

The city first enforced the boundaries of Skid Row in 1972 through a policy of containment, the space totaled about 330 acres, Figure 2. In 2006 as a result of the settlement in *Jones v City of Los Angeles* court case, which ruled that LAPD was no longer able to arrest people for sleeping on the street when no shelter beds were available, Skid Row's boundaries were reconfirmed, but this time as 255 acres ("FindLaw's United States Ninth Circuit Case and Opinions.", n.d.). This reduction left out the area now known as Gallery Row. In an article titled "Skid Row vs. Gallery Row: How cultural revitalization is changing downtown L.A." author Stan Paul discusses the disparities between the two neighborhoods as of 2016. Paul identifies Gallery Row as "a gentrifying neighborhood in downtown Los Angeles with many new art galleries, trendy bars and restaurants" (Stan, 2016). While in contrast, Skid Row is a "downtrodden area of dilapidated streets, buildings and cluttered sidewalks that support a temporary "city" inhabited by thousands of homeless people" (Stan, 2016). The Downtown Los Angeles 2040 plan proposes to rezone industrial property into market-rate housing in parts of Skid Row, making the new boundaries significantly smaller, only 71.5 acres of the original 330 (Holland, 2018). The increase of development in Downtown and the redrawing of Skid Rows boundaries have occurred hand in hand.

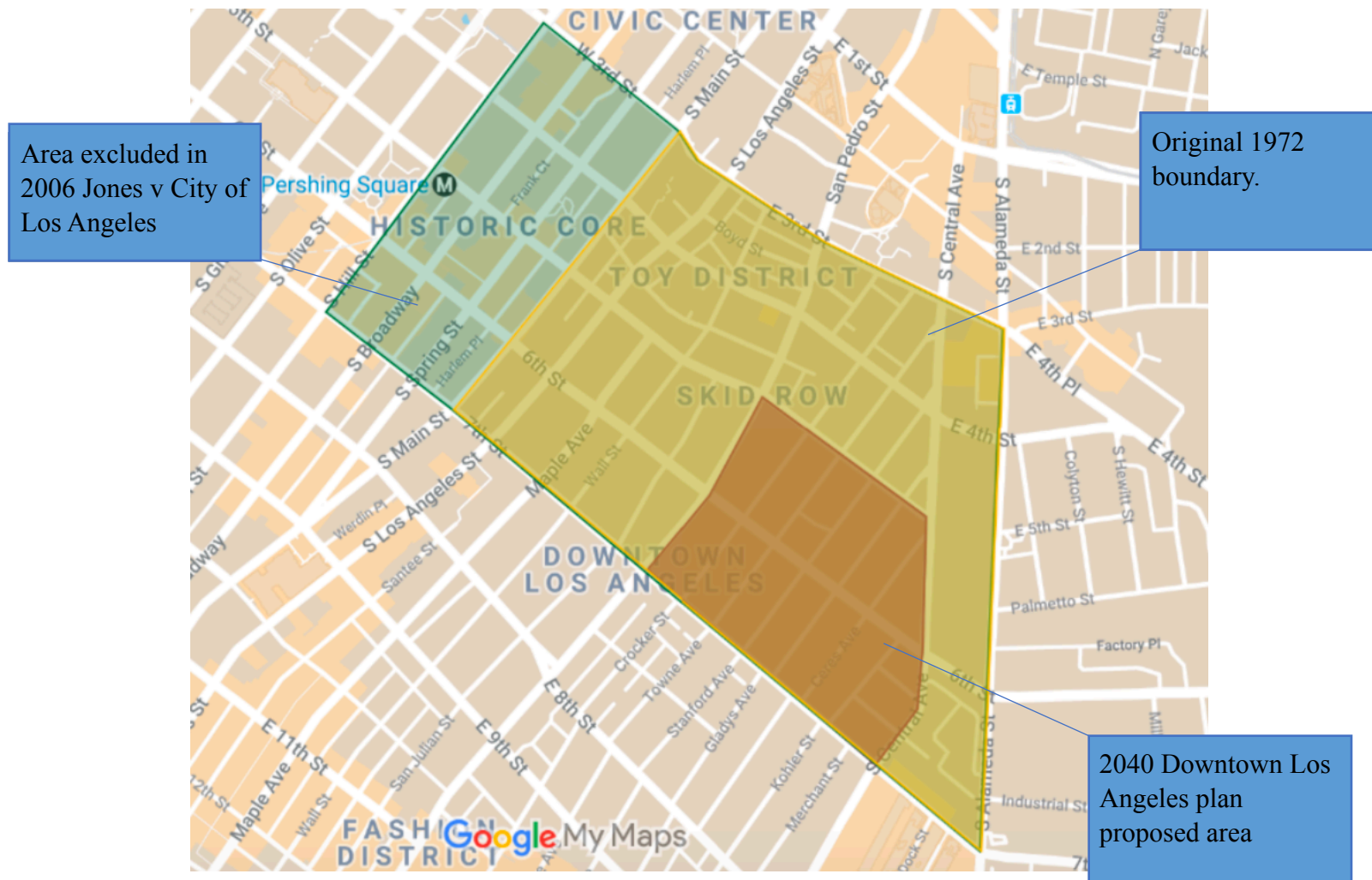


Figure 2: Skid Row boundaries over time, 1972-2040. *Source: POLS/UEP 265 group project for LACAN*

The disparities between Skid Row and Gallery Row, the area that was cut out of Skid Row in 2006, is shocking. A recent study done by UCLA researchers that analyzes the effects of city revitalization on the two areas identifies the stark differences in environments, just as Stan points out in his article. Lead author of the study Brady Collins and UCLA Luskin urban planning professor Anastasia Loukaitou-Sideris touch on the fact that the purpose of city revitalization strategies is to attract young urban professionals as well as business growth and investment (Brady & Loukaitou-Sideris, 2016). This process spurs gentrification, which their

research points to as a culprit in creating the disproportionate wealth gap between the two neighborhoods (Stan, 2016).

Literature Review

This literature review will discuss adaptive reuse and its use as a sustainable building practice. Specifically, looking at literature that addresses the terminology and theories behind adaptive reuse in order to completely define the term and identify its emergence as a practice. Another important theme that will be addressed is gentrification. Defining what gentrification means in this project and discussing Los Angeles specific gentrification. Literature surrounding the Adaptive Reuse Ordinance and Los Angeles adaptive reuse projects are put in discussion with one another to identify how different scholars view the ordinance and its impacts.

The Emergence of Adaptive Reuse

Adaptive Reuse is a fairly new term in development although related techniques have been employed since the 19th century. A vocabulary around this term is still debated and overlaps with other topics such as “rehabilitation”, “conversion”, and “retrofitting” as well as other words commonly used in development (Plevoets, Van Cleempoel, 2013). The main purpose of adaptive reuse, as it will be referred to in this paper, is to redevelop older, dilapidated or abandoned, structures into buildings that will be used for purposes other than those originally intended (Young, 2009, p.1). Not only is there discussion around the vocabulary of adaptive reuse but there is a theoretical debate around its emergence and employment as well.

Bie Plevoet and Koenraad Van Cleempoel discuss restoration theory tied to adaptive reuse in their paper “Adaptive Reuse as an Emerging Discipline: An Historical Survey”. Plevoet and Cleempoel address four approaches that lay out the framework of adaptive reuse:

typological, technical, programmatic, and strategic. The typological approach is formulated based on Sherban Cantacuzino's works, his first influential book being, "New Uses for Old Buildings" written in 1975. This book names eleven types of spaces in which to formulate new functions via adaptive reuse techniques. His second book in 1989 focuses on six typologies based on preferred building types for revitalization, "...public buildings, private buildings, commercial buildings, industrial buildings, ecclesiastical buildings and rural buildings" (Plevoets and Van Cleempoel, 2013). This categorical typology based on building function, has been used by other researchers to organize their studies. The technical approach is less theoretical, its focus is on how buildings can adapt to best fit their new function. This typology addresses the improvements necessary in terms of technical changes such as, fire resistance, thermal performance, and decay. The third typology, programmatic, begins with selecting a purpose or function for a space then adapting the building to accommodate the selected use. The focus of this typology is less on the physical structure but the social value. Lastly, the strategic approach applies a different way to think about the remodeling of a building. One in which form is not the focus but "... the 'meaning' of the past and the way the architect or designer deals with it..." is key to development (Plevoets, Van Cleempoel, 2013). The preservation of historical elements is integral in strategic typology. These typologies are employed by developers when choosing to redevelop spaces.

Adaptive Reuse in Los Angeles

There has been some research conducted on Los Angeles specific adaptive reuse. Los Angeles is highlighted in adaptive reuse discussions due to the implementation of the Adaptive Reuse Ordinance in 1999. The ordinance expands to other selected neighborhoods as mentioned

before but the majority of completed developments, ones in which the impacts can be studied, are located downtown. The ordinance, as of 2010, is responsible for over 6,700 units of housing in downtown (Manville and Shoup, 2010). Adaptive reuse development also attracts other ground up development to the areas in which it is employed. Downtown Los Angeles, since 1999, has become significantly more attractive for investment. Due to these combined effects, of adaptive reuse projects and ground up development, “The ARO is therefore responsible for more housing construction in 10 years than all private and public sector development of the previous thirty years combined” (Manville and Shoup, 2010). This mass development has completely altered the downtown environment. Different authors debate the effectiveness of the ordinance and the impact of the new units and multi-use spaces developed because of it.

Peter. A. Bullen and Peter E.D. Love in “Residential Regeneration and Adaptive Reuse: Learning from the Experience of Los Angeles” hold L.A. up as an exemplar for adaptive reuses’ ability to regenerate a disinvested area. Adaptive reuse is primarily addressed, in this paper, as a strategy to repopulate urban districts and attract investment. Bullen and Love believe that Los Angeles has, “continued to champion” adaptive reuse since the implementation of the ordinance (Bullen & Love, 2009). One of the standards used to determine the effectiveness of the Adaptive Reuse Ordinance is the sale prices of units and the assessed value of downtown as a whole. In 2000, the average sale price for one-bedroom condominiums was \$270/sq.ft. which by 2009 had risen to \$415/sq.ft.. The assessed value for Downtown Central property rose from \$4.2 billion in 1997 to \$6.05 billion in 2004 (Bullen & Love, 2009). Since 2004 there have been further significant changes, but with little to research to report. When looking at economic growth there is no doubt that there has been an increase in value to downtown properties in correlation with

the new developments that occurred after the enactment of the Adaptive Reuse Ordinance. In general, the statistics show a great deal of economic growth in downtown as well as an increase in sheer number of units.

Los Angeles Adaptive Reuse Concerns

The economic benefits are not the only aspect of adaptive reuse to study, Mathew A. Young in “Adapting to Adaptive Reuse: Comments and Concerns About the Impacts of a Growing Phenomenon” primarily focuses on the social aspects of adaptive reuse in his research. Bullen and Love analyze the social benefits of the ordinance further in their paper as well. These authors address some of the same issues that have presented themselves in the effects of adaptive reuse. Even as Bullen and Love praise Los Angeles’ employment of adaptive reuse they do note that affordable housing represents only 16% of the total units produced (Bullen & Love, 2009). Young talks more in depth about the negative impacts the ordinance has on low income families in downtown, other than just the lack of new affordable housing.

Bullen and Love as well as Young both address a need for incentives for affordable housing in their papers, recognizing that this is an area that the ordinance is lacking. Bullen and Love in their conclusion reiterate that there are social equity issues that go along with the Downtown progress but, “Generally, the objectives of reusing old buildings appear to coincide with many of the desired outcomes of sustainability” (Bullen & Love, 2009). Young has a more critical view on these disparities and addresses a larger scope of problems presented by adaptive reuse policy in L.A.

Young, in his paper, has a section that addresses issues he finds with the system in place to incentivize adaptive reuse developers to build affordable housing, titled, “The Inadequacies of

Existing Affordable Housing Incentives and Relocation Assistance Programs”. This critique was used for minor consultation purposes by drafters of a new ordinance, effective in 2008. The new ordinance, the Los Angeles Residential Hotel Unit Conversion and Demolition Ordinance requires “building owners to either replace each converted residential hotel unit with a comparable unit somewhere within a two-mile radius of the converted unit or pay the City an impact fee” (Young, 2009). A residential hotel is categorized as, “a building with six or more guestrooms, intended or designed to be used, or which are used, rented and is occupied as a primary place of residence” (HCIDLA, 2019). Most apartment buildings would be categorized as residential hotels within this definition. This is an improvement from previous requirements and shows the city recognizes the impact such development has on low income individuals. The demolition of affordable housing still causes displacement of many low-income individuals, even if a fee is paid to the city, however. This is not the only critique Young has on the revitalization of Downtown via adaptive reuse.

Smart growth is a concept often identified with adaptive reuse, it is the creation of a denser city using mixed use housing to locate workers’ residences closer to jobs and transit corridors (Young, 2009). Adaptive reuse projects often create mixed use spaces. Young discusses how this term is used to hide the negative effects developments have on existing neighborhoods. Smart growth, Young believes, is connected with gentrification, stating that smart growth projects “behave like a wolf in sheep's clothing” (Young, 2009). Using smart growth as a cover, developers have been able to perpetuate the sprawl of new development with little regard for potentially harmful effects. The city is likely to approve of and encourage development if it is under the umbrella of smart growth.

The new shops and restaurants in adaptive reuse spaces allow for more spending which translates to a neighborhood's prosperity and growth. Many smart growth projects in Los Angeles are, "exempt from site plan review to the extent that adaptive reuse techniques are implemented in the final scheme" (Young, 2009). Young finds that the term adaptive reuse is used similarly, the term now acts as a cover for the gentrification of the neighborhoods it exists in. Toplansky, Lopez del rio, and Murphy also connect adaptive reuse to gentrification in their paper about Los Angeles specific gentrification. They point to the beginning of gentrification in Downtown Los Angeles to the Adaptive Reuse Ordinance, "Spurred by the city's 1999 Adaptive Reuse Ordinance, massive investment accelerated in the long-neglected core [i.e. Downtown Los Angeles]" (Toplansky, Lopez del rio, Murphy, 2018). These authors attribute gentrification to city policies, such as the Adaptive Reuse Ordinance, and to private investors who see revitalized neighborhoods as financial opportunities.

Gentrification in Los Angeles

The return of affluent individuals to the urban center of Los Angeles, in the past decade, has sparked urban renewal and city revitalization in Downtown Los Angeles. Similar effects are occurring to many neighborhoods throughout Los Angeles as wealthy buyers continue to be drawn to more central neighborhoods. Significant development has occurred in the city center to accommodate and encourage this shift. There are repercussions to shifts in habitation along these lines, gentrification is often the result of such movement. Gentrification is a highly debated topic and has varying definitions, for the purpose of this study gentrification is referring to the influx of affluent or middle-class individuals into an area which in turn results in the displacement of

the often poorer preexisting residents. *Governing Magazine* identifies gentrification as individuals from the 40th percentile of income, or below, moving out of their neighborhoods while individuals in the 60th percentile or above move in (Maciag, 2015). This scale is useful in putting gentrification into perspective. There is residential competition for space in Los Angeles and a severe shortage of affordable units, this coupled with the resettlement of affluent individuals, results in gentrification. It is occurring throughout Los Angeles, in certain areas more than others.

Toplansky, Lopez del rio, and Murphy highlight Little Tokyo, Koreatown, and Chinatown as neighborhoods impacted by gentrification in their study done for the Center for Opportunity Urbanism about Los Angeles gentrification. These are not the only neighborhoods to have shown signs of gentrification, however, it is widespread throughout Los Angeles. In 2016, the UCLA Luskin School of Public Affairs conducted a study on gentrifying neighborhoods and mapped the results. They found that parts of Mid-City and Echo Park as well as Angelino Heights and the Arts District are threatened. Most of downtown is shown as being gentrified in the last decade as well. The UCLA researchers found that neighborhoods that have experienced the most gentrification tend to be near downtown.

Methods:

Due to the complexities of the policy and limited prior research I will collect mixed data, both qualitative and quantitative, to analyze the effects of adaptive reuse in Los Angeles. This strategy will best capture how the ordinance is impacting downtown Los Angeles. Because adaptive reuse has only spiked in implementation in the last two decades, research on its effects

is still scarce. In order to capture all aspects of what is happening to downtown Los Angeles I will catalog the completed adaptive reuse projects and conduct interviews with city officials and developers.

Cataloging the current projects will involve mapping the locations of these buildings. I will catalog their current ownership and the developers used or being used to develop the buildings. As well as look to find the building's current and past uses and the prices of apartment and loft spaces created through renovations. The locations of the projects will help inform where the policy is being enacted most. I am interested in the ownership of these properties to find out if there are repeat owners buying buildings in the same area or buying adaptive reuse projects throughout Los Angeles. Looking into the developers who completed adaptive reuse projects will answer a similar question, are there developers who specialize in adaptive reuse? Are the same companies revitalizing downtown and other parts of Los Angeles or are there many actors in this process? Figuring out the new uses of these spaces will give insight into what is being added to the neighborhoods. The prices of the newly developed units, as well as their uses, will point to who the spaces are built for or who developers are trying to attract, based on who can afford them. I am interested to find if the prices are dramatically different from other housing in the same neighborhoods. Together these elements will give a greater understanding of how the program is working, who it is working for and where it is being used.

The interviews will specify answers to some of the questions posed above, shedding light on the details of how adaptive reuse is being used in Los Angeles. I want to interview city officials to see what kind of thinking went into the crafting of this policy. What are the goals behind it and how did they decide the neighborhoods involved, including the boundary lines of

these areas? Understanding the policy objectives more clearly will allow for a greater comprehension of the program's purpose. Interviewing developers will help grasp their interest of the selected areas, why do they see these as being successful opportunities and what kind of benefits do they predict?

Interview questions:

Developers:

How long have you been working as a developer in Los Angeles?

What work have you done or are you working on?

How many adaptive reuse developments have you completed? And where?

What drew you to adaptive reuse?

What benefits do you see in this kind of development?

How many developments have you completed using adaptive reuse?

How important was the Adaptive Reuse Ordinance in motivating this development?

What was the draw to the area you developed in?

What was the draw for utilizing the Adaptive Reuse Ordinance?

City Officials:

What was your role in enacting the Adaptive Reuse Ordinance?

What societal benefits did/do you predict from the ordinance?

What economic benefits did/do you predict?

Do you think the ordinance is working well? / Doing what it was set out to do?

What are the challenges you have come across since enacting the ordinance?

What is the future of the ARO policy? Have most available sites in greater Downtown LA already been adaptively reused or is there much more to go?

How does the ARO policy contend with the immense need for affordable housing?

Findings:

This research is primarily based off of a database containing a list of all Adaptive Reuse Ordinance permit applications from 2000-2020, provided to me by the Los Angeles Building and Safety Department (LADBS). The Los Angeles Building and Safety Department has issued 188 permits under the Adaptive Reuse Ordinance in Los Angeles as of January 2020, 20 years after

the ordinance's enactment in 1999. Using the LADBS online permit lookup I was able to look at each individual permit and collect information from these permits to use in quantitative research (Appendix A). In the complete dataset there were, however, some building addresses that had multiple permits. These additional permits were issued for a number of reasons, like supplemental work being added to existing ARO buildings after the building had been transformed or structural changes prior to Adaptive Reuse development. In these cases, other permits were issued for the construction of the actual building for Adaptive Reuse purposes. The permits issued with the above purposes made no changes to the buildings use. For the purpose of this study it was important that each building only be represented once, and that each permit translated to a singular building built with adaptive reuse. Due to these reasons the permits issued that did not transform the uses of the buildings and permits issued for multiple addresses at the same site were removed, leaving 124 permits in the data set corresponding to 124 different adaptive reuse buildings.

How the ARO Facilitated the Change of Building Uses in Downtown

In order to receive a building permit, developers are required to list the prior use or uses of the building they intend to develop as well as the proposed use or uses of the building after development. I reviewed the 124 building permits and catalogued the past and proposed uses to show how ARO has facilitated the change of building uses in Downtown. In order to condense the data, due to some uses being more specific than others, both current and past uses have been categorized into more general categories (Appendix B). The utility category is a combination of manufacturing spaces and warehouses. The business category is any business that is not an office

or retail, this includes mostly restaurants and theaters. With this kind of condensing the past uses are now broken into 16 different categories and the current into 21 categories. Current uses were harder to generalize due to the multiple combinations of uses in a single building. As seen in Figure 3 and 4.

Two past uses stand out amongst the rest, these are office and retail and office alone. 43 of the 124 buildings were home to the combined use of office and retail space. Offices were in 34 of the buildings prior to Adaptive Reuse. Combined these two uses account for 62.1% of all Adaptive Reuse building's past uses. The utility category is a combination of two uses, warehouses and manufacturing facilities, which were in 9 of the buildings before adaptation. Business is another generalized category for any use specifically listed and not under the retail category, this includes theaters and restaurants. Many of the categories are some combination of these main uses. 11 of the 16 categories include multi-use buildings, accounting for 73 of the buildings. Other single use categories include two hotels and one hospital.

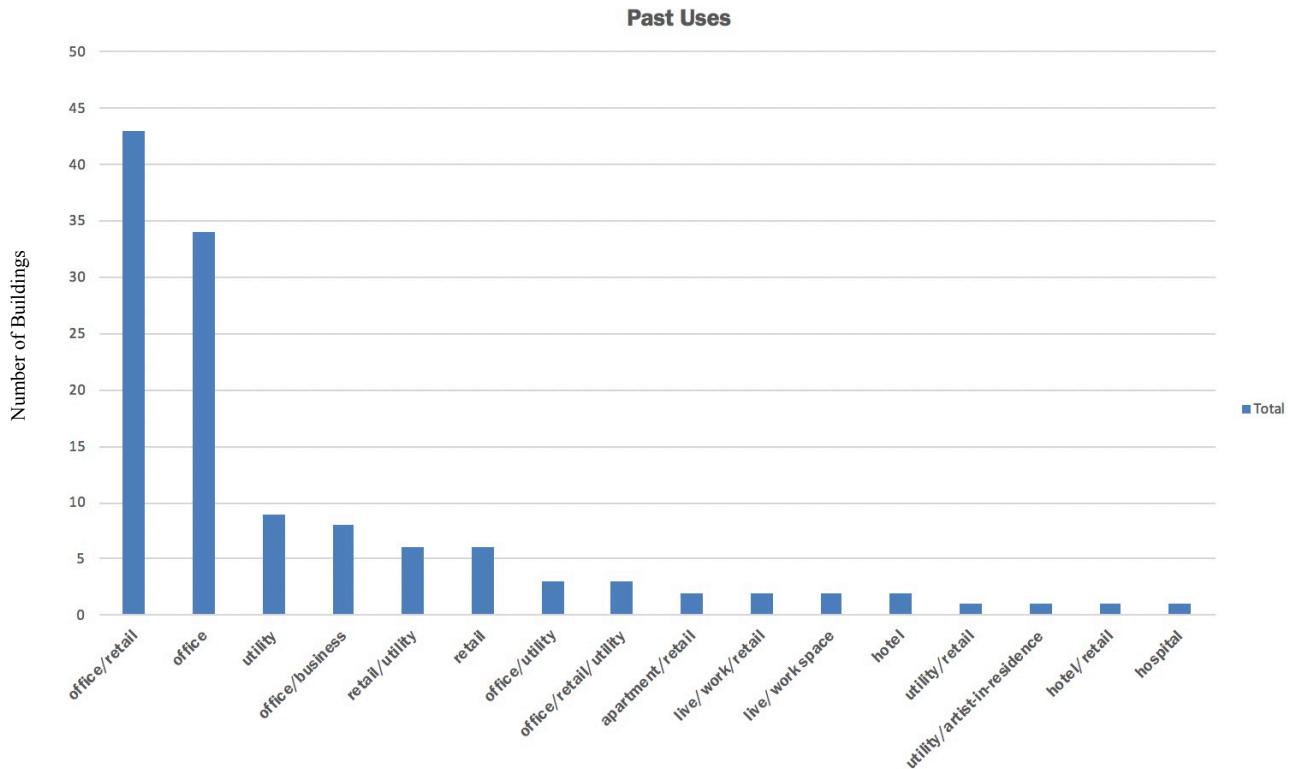


Figure 3: Past Uses of Adaptively Reused Buildings

The past uses of the adaptive reuse buildings, shown in Figure 3, shows the variety in the types of buildings that existed in downtown prior to adaptive reuse. It was said by multiple interviewees such as Carol Shatz, who founded the Downtown Central Business Improvement District (DCBID) and was president of the Central City Association of Los Angeles (CCA) and Ken Bernstein, Director of the Los Angeles Conservancy, that Downtown was nearly desolate prior to adaptive reuse. This data however provides that businesses did in fact exist downtown before the ARO. Of the 16 past use categories 12 included uses having to do with retail or other businesses, which encompasses 83 of the 124 buildings, 66.9% of the past uses. 11 of the use categories contain more than a single use, which accounts for over half of the buildings. Only one category contains three or more uses.

It is clear from the data that there was a stark lack of living quarters in Downtown before any development, in regard to adaptively reused buildings. As many interviewees stated, that Downtown was purely for business not for residents. Ken Bernstein, who also advocated for the policies enactment during the policies start explained that the policy, “created a residential base to downtown that wasn’t there before”, which correlates with the data presented here.

Although the buildings in the past were often joint use spaces, the current uses of the buildings vary much more and are significantly different types of uses from the past uses. The varied combinations of uses in different buildings explains why there are 12 use categories that contain only one building in each category, which can be seen in Figure 4. The majority of building’s current uses were labeled as joint living and working quarters, 35 of the buildings are now joint living and working spaces. The second leading use is joint living and working quarters combined with retail space which can be seen in 23 of the buildings. Following that is apartments joint with retail spaces in 21 of the buildings. The fourth most popular use is just apartments in 12 of the buildings. 107 buildings have more than one use, only three of the 20 categories below are single uses. 11 of the 20 uses are a combination of three or more uses in a single building, 47 of the buildings.

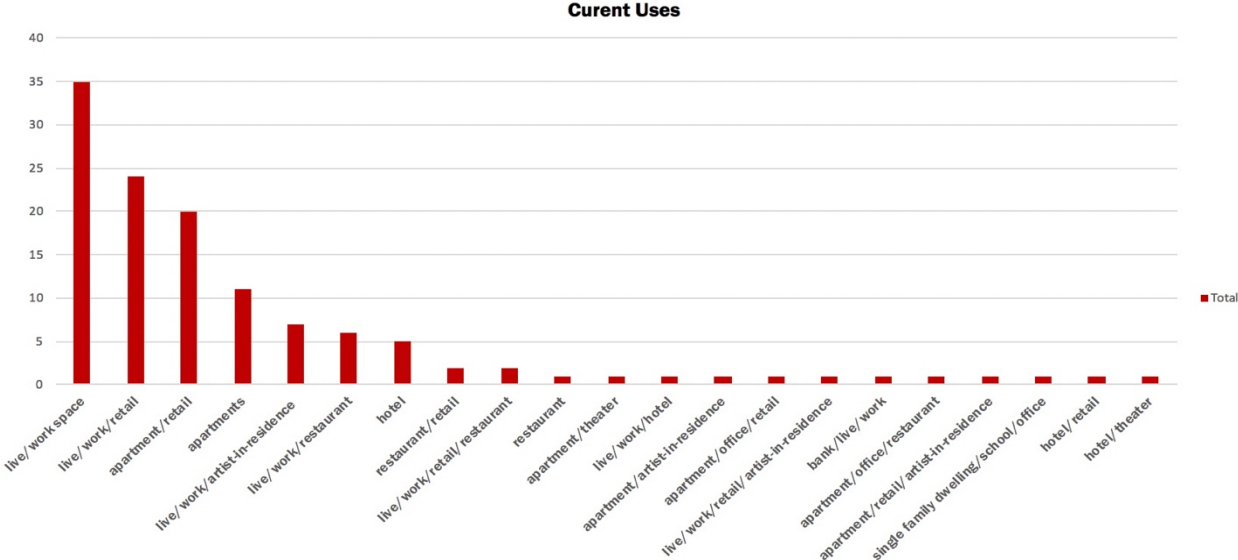
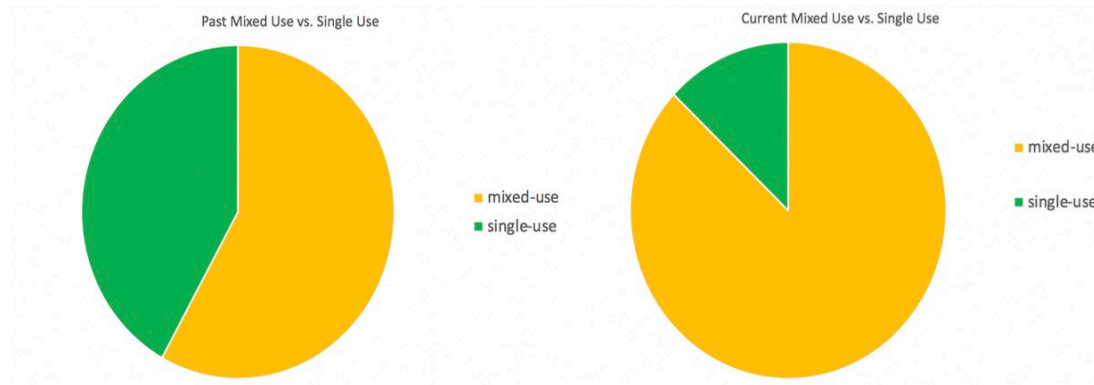


Figure 4: Current Uses of Adaptively Reused Buildings

Number of Buildings

The transformation of building uses represents the shift Downtown has gone through in regard to atmosphere. The current uses of the buildings are almost entirely mixed use. All but 6 buildings have two or more uses, meaning 108 buildings have multiple uses while 72 buildings previously, before adaptation, contained two or more uses. This can be seen proportionally in Figure 5. There are also more buildings currently with three or more uses than there were in the past. Figure 4 shows the vast combinations of uses that the adaptive reuse buildings now host. There is a trend of buildings transforming into more mixed-use spaces by number of buildings containing mixed uses as well as in the number of uses in each building. A goal of Downtown revitalization was for Downtown to go from a 9-5 workplace into a 24-hour city and mixed-use spaces are a way to encourage this. With living, working, retail and other businesses residing close together creates a more livable environment, encouraging residency (Ewing, 1997).

Figure 5: Past and current mixed use vs. single use proportions



Living spaces are common amongst almost all of the adaptively reused buildings current uses. Building uses primarily moving from office, retail, and utility spaces to joint living and working quarters, retail, and apartments suggests that adaptive reuse promotes the facilitation of living spaces. As well as points to the fact that adaptive reuse is responsible for a large portion of the unit increases in downtown over the last two decades.

Residential Inequality

New housing units developed with adaptive reuse permits resulted in a greater number of market rate housing in Downtown between 1999 and 2020. The Downtown Los Angeles' 2019 residential inventory update from the Downtown Central Business Improvement District, shows that the number of market rate units in Downtown has largely expanded since the beginning of the Adaptive Reuse Ordinance. The DCBID data begins pre-1999, pre-1999 also means pre-Adaptive Reuse Ordinance, although the totals seen above are general for all downtown development not only adaptive reuse development. The total number of units in downtown as of the end of 2019 is 48,677, up 36,051 units from pre-1999 when the total was 11,626 units.

Market-rate apartments went from 2,426 to 29,627, resulting in a 272% increase of market rate units in the 20 years the ordinance has been enacted. Market-rate condos have also increased in presence rising by 5,931 units, a 59.3% increase. The number of affordable apartments and condos has also gone up after the implementation of the Adaptive Reuse Ordinance by 3,919 units, from 8,371 units to 12,290, 39.2% increase. The units listed as affordable fall under this category if all units are either fully or partially subsidized or if the units are reserved for those who meet specific income criteria (Affordable Housing Incentive Guidelines, n.d.). Market-rate is identified as anything that does not meet the affordable criteria.

Residential Inventory of Units and Population Estimate in Downtown Los Angeles 1999-2019

	Pre-1999	Units Created After 1999	As of Jan. 2019	Percent change 2000-2019
Market-Rate Apartments	2,426	27,201	29,627	272%
Market-Rate Condos	829	5,931	6,760	59.3%
Affordable Condos & Apartments	8,371	3,919	12,290	39.2%
Total	11,626	37,051	48,677	

Figure 6: Residential Inventory of Units in Downtown Los Angeles 1999-2019. *Source:* Downtown Central Business Improvement District

There has been a disproportional increase of unit types, market-rate versus affordable, in downtown since 1999. The unit increases are separated by market-rate apartments, market-rate condos, and affordable apartments and condos. In order to better represent market-rate versus affordable units overall both market-rate condos and market-rate apartments will be combined into one market-rate category, containing 36,387 units as of January 2019. This combination

category changes the percent increase of all market rate units, condos and apartments, to a 331.3% increase from pre-1999 to January 2019, compared to the 39.2% increase seen in affordable condos and apartments.

Proportionally the kind of units that existed in downtown pre-1999 compared to 2019 has shifted a great deal, this can be seen in Figure 7. Market-rate and affordable housing have almost nearly flipped over the last 20 years. The red portion, representing affordable units, in the pre-1999 chart appears almost as large as the blue portion, representing market-rate units, as of January 2019. There was not a decrease in affordable units but a much more rapid increase in market-rate units.

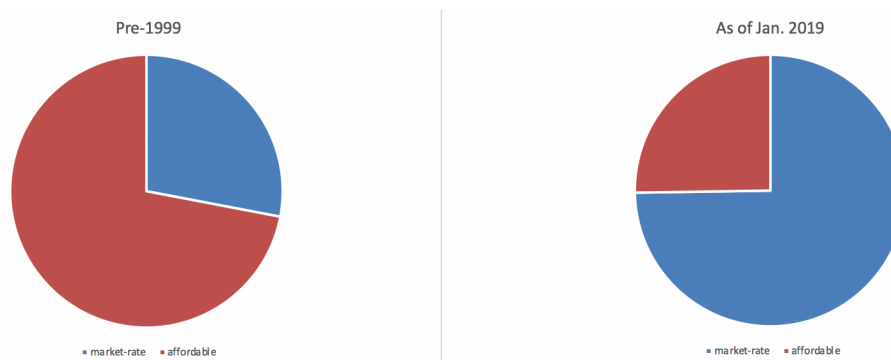


Figure 7: Proportional Comparison of Types of Units in Downtown Los Angeles Pre-1999 to Jan. 2019.

Not only are there more market-rate units in Downtown but adaptively reused units have a higher median cost than the rest of Los Angeles as a whole. 112 of the buildings that received ARO permits contain residential units. Of the 112 buildings that contain residential units 79 of these building's average rent could be deduced from information online or from the building manager. 33 of the building's rents could not be found due to many factors, such as the buildings

solely having condos, the buildings not being complete yet, or simply that there was no pricing information available online or over the phone. The rents were found by looking on the building's websites, looking at current and recent past listings online at topcondos.com, realator.com, and apartments.com as well as Zillow estimates in some cases. Only prices of single bedrooms or studio apartments are accounted for in this data in order to keep the data more consistent. When multiple prices could be found online for studios and one-bedroom apartments in the same building the average of the high and low were taken. The median of the 79 found adaptive reuse building's rents is \$2,325 per month. *Curbed Los Angeles* reported, in January 2019, that by their analysis for the entire city of Los Angeles, the median rent price for a one-bedroom apartment was \$1,360 (Chiland, 2019). This puts adaptive reuse building's median rent above the median rent for the entire city. The number of buildings within certain ranges of rent can be seen in figure 8. Rents range from \$605.00 to \$5,405 for studios and one bedroom.

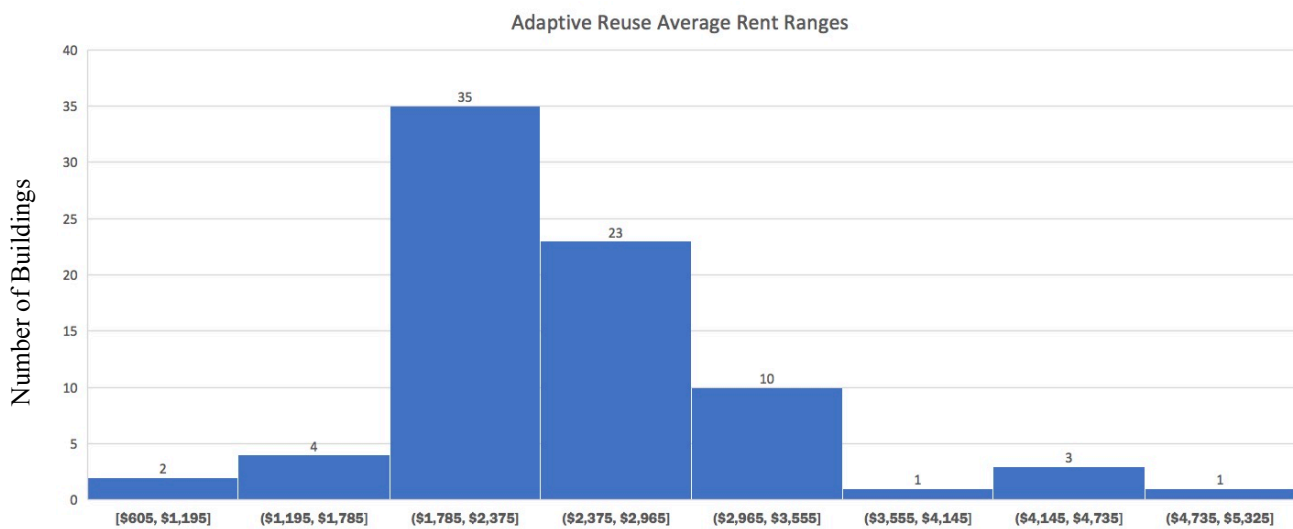


Figure 8: Adaptive Reuse average Rents as of February 2020

Only two buildings were redeveloped as solely affordable housing. The two specifically affordable housing buildings are the two buildings in the lowest category of average rent ranges in Figure 8. These findings correspond with the data reported in figure 6 as well. The kinds of units built with adaptive reuse, and the average rent of living units within these buildings answers the key question of who adaptive reuse is for, this data suggests that adaptive reuse is for people who can afford market-rate units, above the median asking price, in Los Angeles.

Waves of Adaptive Reuse

Each permit has an issue date that lists when the permit was granted. Looking at the 124 permits in the data set organized by issue year it becomes clear that adaptive reuse has occurred in waves. The largest number of permits were issued between 2002 and 2007, after 2007 there is a large decrease. 2008 saw less than half the number of permits issued than the year prior in 2007. In 2008, the Los Angeles Residential Hotel Unit Conversion and Demolition Ordinance was enacted, which requires building's owners to replace converted low income units within a 2-mile radius of the converted unit or pay an impact fee to the city (Young, 2009). This protection of affordable housing, that relates specifically to the demolition and conversion of buildings, may have had an impact on the decline of adaptive reuse permits in 2008 and thereafter. 2004 and 2005 are when the largest spike in issued permits occurred, with 16 permits issued each year. In recent years the total has not come close to the numbers reached in early years such as 2004 but there are still permits being issued. There has been, on average, three permits issued per year since 2008. With the exception of a surge in 2016 when 8 permits were issued, as shown in Figure 9.

I was able to gain insight into the reasons behind these trends through interviewing individuals who were highly involved in the beginning stages of the ARO as well as people who still deal with it today. Interviewing Carol Schatz provided me with background knowledge to help explain these trends, since she and her organizations were highly involved with the formation of the policy. According to Schatz the Adaptive Reuse Permits likely got a slow start due to trepidation around the policy and a lack of faith in Downtown. DCBID was formed with the purpose of bringing Downtown Los Angeles back to a thriving city center and CCA did policy and economic development work to bring Downtown back as well. Carol Schatz led both organizations at the same time due to their similar missions, to revitalize Downtown. She described Downtown Los Angeles as, “on its last legs” prior to Adaptive Reuse development. According to Schatz the state Downtown was in “scared developers off”. The vacancy of the city center did not seem promising for a good return on investment. She noted that downtown in the 1990s was strictly a place of business and it was hard to imagine, or sell an image of, anything different. This is likely why the first spike in issued permits does not occur until 2002, two years after the ordinance’s enactment.

Tarrah Beebe, an architect with Killefer Flammang Architects (KFA) a firm familiar with adaptive reuse, noted similar trends. KFA lists on their website that they, “helped to spark the resurgence of the historic core in downtown Los Angeles” by completing “the first three buildings under LA’s Adaptive Reuse Ordinance in the Old Bank District (“About KFA”, n.d.). KFA has since rehabilitated over 40 historic buildings throughout the City. When speaking about trends in adaptive reuse, Beebe stated that, “All buildings that were easy to develop were developed in the first wave”. Easy to develop meaning the more obviously transformable

buildings, that would present less challenges and were in good locations. After these locations were taken it became less obvious what other projects could take place using the ARO, causing a slowdown in permit applications. According to Beebe, the decrease in permits in 2008 was due to the recession that began in 2007. After the recession Beebe explained that there have been more permits issued for buildings in the hospitality sector than apartments like in the first wave.

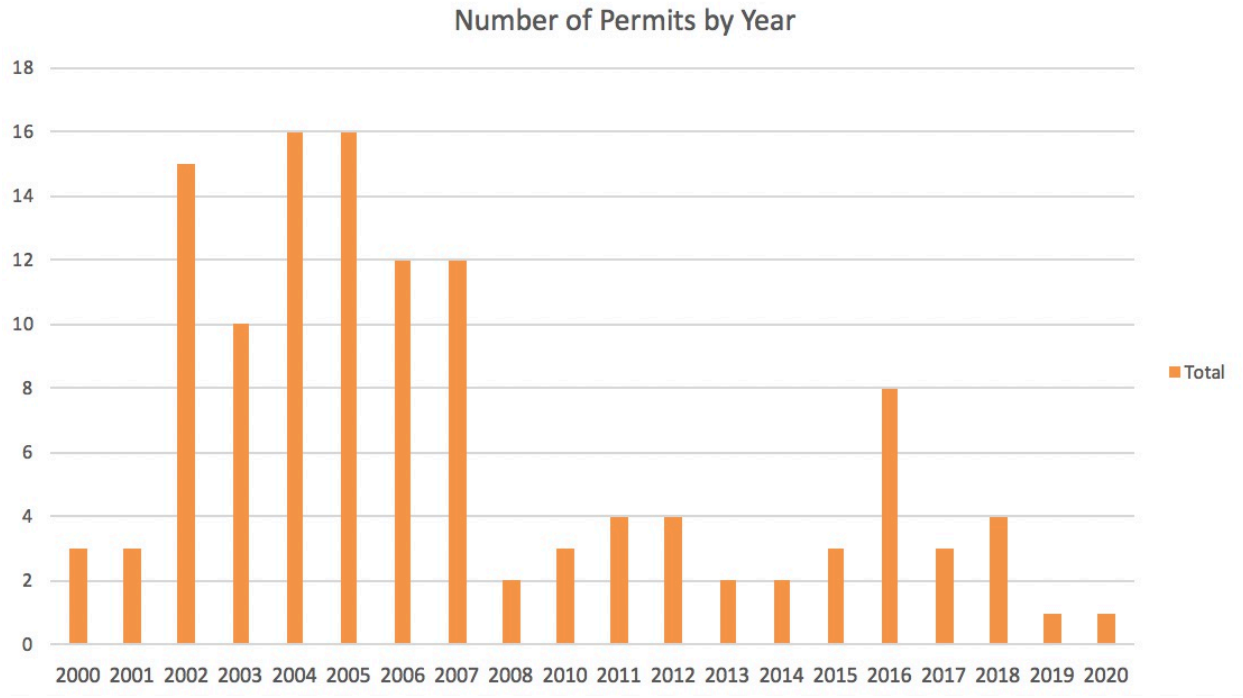


Figure 9: Number of Permits by Year

Higher concentration of ARO Buildings in Downtown Los Angeles

The majority of the adaptive reuse permits are issued for downtown Los Angeles, meaning that the highest number of adaptive reuse buildings now exist in downtown. After mapping the buildings locations, it is clear to see the concentration of buildings in downtown compared to other areas, Figure 10. 84 of the 124 permits issued have zip codes that correlate

with downtown Los Angeles, 67.7% of all permits. There have been eight permits issued in Koreatown, which is the second leading area by number of permits. Hollywood has seven permits bearing its zip code. It is clear still, however, that downtown has the most permits per area under the ordinance. Downtown was the first area to have adaptive reuse, 3 years prior to the addition of the other areas, but the number of permits far exceeds Koreatown and Hollywood, even exceeding all of the other areas combined.

Downtown Los Angeles was the original focus of adaptive reuse which could account for why there are substantially more adaptive reuse buildings in downtown than any other incentive area, but there could be other factors contributing to this disparity. One being that there may be less viable historic buildings in the additional neighborhoods compared to downtown. Another likely factor in the slower pace of development in the additional incentive areas is the additional provision added to the 2003 ordinance. The additional provision limits eligible residential buildings to ones that have been completely and continuously vacant since March 1, 2002 (City of Los Angeles Adaptive Reuse Program Handbook, 2006).

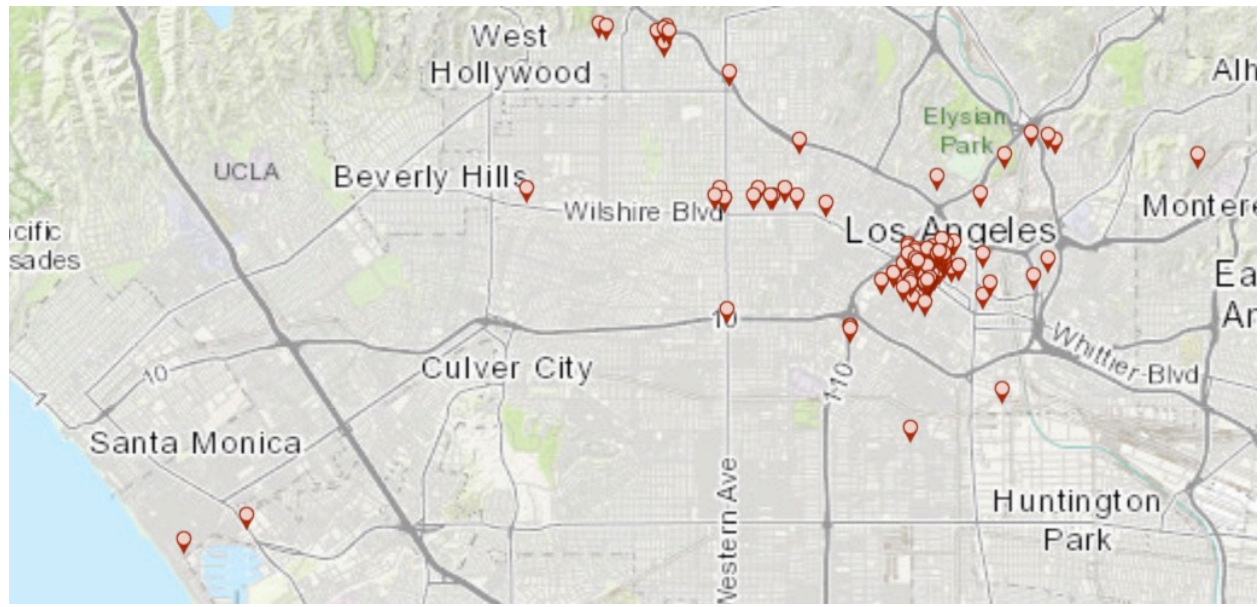


Figure 10: Adaptive Reuse Building Locations

The number of permits in downtown compared to other areas showcases just how much more the ordinance has been utilized in downtown comparatively to the other areas where the adaptive reuse policy also exists. It is known that downtown Los Angeles has gone through a revitalization since the late 90's but the abundance of adaptive reuse permits in the area point to just how much the Adaptive Reuse Ordinance contributed to the revitalization. The Adaptive Reuse Policy is often credited with transforming Downtown, and with 84 issued permits in the area, translating to 84 different building transformations, the atmosphere of Downtown has to have shifted in some way or another as a result of these transformations, regardless of other factors.

Adaptive Reuse has Occurred in and Around Skid Row

Adaptive Reuse Development has occurred within Skid Row's original 1972-2006 boundary as well as within the boundary lines in place today. Looking closer at the adaptive

reuse building locations makes it easier to see how the ARO developments correlate with Skid Row's different boundary lines, Figure 11. There are 15 adaptively reused buildings in the 105 acres of Gallery Row that was once a part of Skid Row, this is the teal area in Figure 11.

Gallery Row has gone through a transformation within the last decade, resulting in a now high-end neighborhood. A lot of this change may have been sparked by developments in the area. Some of which were developments encouraged by the Adaptive Reuse Ordinance. Seven of the permits for the buildings in this section of the map were issued prior to 2006, before the boundary of Skid Row was officially redrawn and eight were issued afterwards. Developments occurring before the redrawing of skid row's boundaries goes to show that the official boundaries may not have been as important as the waterfall effect of development in the greater downtown area.

The transformation of neighborhoods seemingly occurs quickly, downtown could not attract investors 20 years ago but now has a higher average rent than the rest of Los Angeles. After the Adaptive Reuse Ordinance caught wind in 2002 there was a large upsurge of developments thereafter until the recession, Figure 9. Nothing attracts investment like developments themselves. Figure 11 shows that there has also been investment in the green section of the map which represent the current Skid Row boundaries. 12 buildings so far have been adaptively reused in Skid Row. The boundaries of Skid Row are once again at risk of shrinking, the 2040 Los Angeles Plan has proposed that Skid Row's official boundaries be reduced to the 71.5 acres represented by the brown portion of the map in Figure 11. This much smaller portion has so far been untouched by development. The redrawing of boundaries in 2005 occurred after initial development and did not slow further development. Whether the boundary

redrawing was encouragement, or the existence of prior developments was enough alone, development has not stopped after 2005. If the same is true for the current situation further development may be likely to occur in skid row, encouraging the proposed reduction of the boundaries. Some may see the reduction of the boundaries of Skid Row as a positive step towards the redevelopment of downtown, but the people who live in Skid Row are not going to be living in the market-rate housing that will be zoned in this area if the reduction occurs. The number of residents of Skid Row will not diminish with the boundaries but instead have to be condensed into a much smaller area.

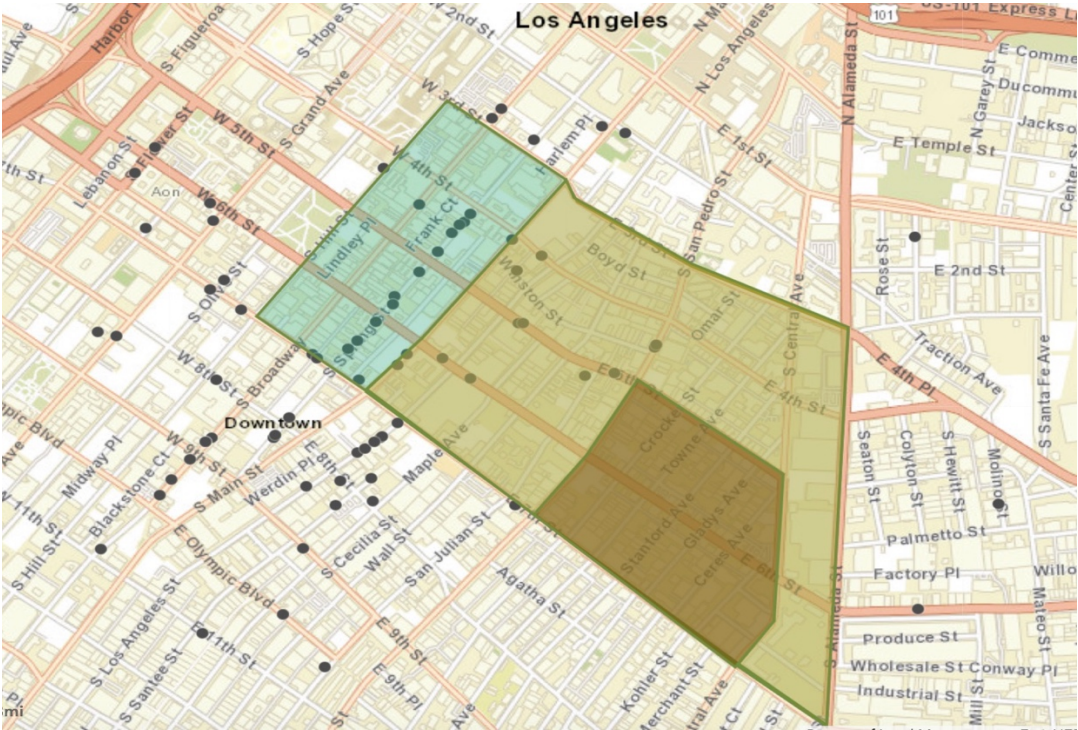


Figure 11: Adaptive Reuse Building Locations and Skid Row’s past, current, and proposed boundaries.

Those Responsible for the Adaptively Reused Buildings

Understanding the ownership of the buildings built using the ARO is important to promote transparency in planning, and important to this research to find out if there is repeat in ownership among projects. Looking at the building permits it appears that, for the most part, the owners vary from building to building. The majority of the building permits featured limited liability companies (LLCs) under the ownership category. Most LLCs either are named the address of the building or something having to do with the street name etc.. 72 buildings are owned by separate LLCs. Another common theme is Limited Partnerships (LPs), 17 buildings are owned by LPs. There are limited repeat owners throughout the buildings, four companies own two buildings each of the 124 buildings. These companies are LADT LLC, Albion Pacific Property Resources LLC, 2222 South Figueroa LLC, and Eastern Columbia Associates LLC. Another company involved with two separate buildings but under two different LP's is CIM, a nationwide community-focused real estate and infrastructure owner, operator, lender and developer, CIM has a part in CIM 8th and Grand LP and CIM 7046 Hollywood LP.

The majority of adaptive reuse buildings having different LLC owners has three foreseen benefits for these owners. First, it stops the public from accessing ownership details, in order to find out the person or partners in each company one would need to track down this information with the Secretary of State, LLC's allow for more privacy in this way. One person or the same partners could own multiple LLC's under different names, but without taking more extensive measures I am unable to identify if this is the case or not. LLC's also have beneficial liability purposes; they provide liability protection for their members and managers (Mushell, n.d.). Funders are protected from the risk of losing more than their investment amount, enabling them

to keep their other assets if something were to go wrong. There are also tax advantages associated with LLCs, an LLC is not taxed as an entity, instead the company is taxed at the member level as income, once the income that is generated moves to its members. Due to these benefits it becomes clearer why separate LLCs have been created for most of the adaptive reuse buildings. If there were to be multiple buildings owned by one LLC, the risks associated with the investors is higher.

LP's are a business partnership owned by two or more individuals, one a general partner who oversee the business running's and other limited partners who do not partake in the managing of the business. The general partner therefore has unlimited liability for the business while limited partners have limited liability up to their investment amount. In this set up again the identities of the partners and number of partners is unavailable on the building permit or general internet. Due to this, for both the LLC's and LPs, it is difficult to know if people within the separate companies do in fact overlap between different LLCs or LPs. With this effect I am unable to identify if there are repeat owners buying buildings in the same area or buying adaptive reuse projects throughout Los Angeles, besides the few LLC's that own as many as two buildings.

Barry Shy, the only individual to come up on multiple building permits as an owner and at least two other projects as a developer has garnered a reputation based on his investments and projects in Downtown Los Angeles. *Los Angeles Downtown News* published an article in May of 2009 titled "Barry Shy Just Keeps Building: Controversial Developer Is Speeding Ahead, With Three Downtown Projects Opening This Year". This article claims Barry Shy as, "one of Downtown's most controversial developers (Scott, 2009). This reputation may come from the

fact that he has been involved in more than 170 civil cases. These charges are from local real estate agents, brokers and residents who have accused Shy of “everything from overcharging for parking to shoddy construction work”, which do not make up for the best reputation (Mushell, n.d.). Shy is still building new projects in Downtown and people are buying despite the complaints against him.

Over 50%, 61.7%, of the developments designed through the Adaptive Reuse Ordinance have repeat architects, architecture firms, developers, or engineers. Meaning single people or firms who have worked on multiple projects, their names repeat in the data. The building permits have a section for contractor, architect, and engineer’s names to be listed, often only one or two names were listed in this section, with no identification of what the person or company’s role was. Four permits did not list any contractor, architect, or engineer in this section but of the 120 that were listed 74 were repeats, names or companies that are listed more than once. The count of 74 comes from any repeat mention, meaning that every mention of the same architect is counted separately not a count of individuals that were repeated. Two structural engineers were named the most of all listed names, one being listed 10 times and the other 11. Eight people were listed at least three times, including repeats of up to 5 to 6 times.

The same developers, architects, and engineers have worked on multiple projects in adaptive reuse which points to the fact that there are people and firms who specialize, at least to some extent, in adaptive reuse projects. As shown through the data, a lot of the same companies are revitalizing downtown and other parts of Los Angeles due to their specialty in this kind of development. Due to the specific code requirements and particular structural elements to adaptive reuse development it does make sense that engineers and architects with experience in

dealing with old buildings and who are familiar with the adaptive reuse process would be recruited to work on multiple projects.

Conclusion

Downtown Los Angeles gained a significant number of housing incorporated mixed-use buildings after the implementation of the Adaptive Reuse Ordinance in 1999. Furthermore, the housing incorporated in these projects are overwhelmingly market-rate units as compared to pre-Adaptive Reuse Ordinance downtown Los Angeles. Although it is unclear exactly how much the ARO contributed to the conversion of types of units, shown in Figure 7, because the data is not adaptive reuse specific, the prices of the units in the 124 adaptively reused buildings goes to show the ordinance's impact in the transformation of downtown from a said desolate area of the city to an expensive sought-after place to live.

Limitations

As is the case in most research the findings do not come without limitations. When narrowing the data set, to eliminate repeated addresses, there is risk of losing some data, permits that were not supposed to be omitted may have been. This could affect the reliability of the quantitative results. As far as building locations, identifying how many buildings are in each neighborhood by zip code leaves some leeway in whether or not one zip code spans into two neighborhoods. It is also important to note that when researching the affordability of the units the rents listed online may not be completely up to date and in line with current market prices. The listed prices, because of the limited reliability, are only predicted prices. Some of the

affordability data also came from estimates provided by Zillow, which has its limits as well.

Zillow estimates are based on information from sources such as comparable sales and public data which means the estimates are only as accurate as the data behind them. If the number of bedrooms or bathrooms in a home, its square footage, or its lot size are inaccurate on Zillow, the Zestimate will not be accurate.

The wording of the 124 permits in the final data set were often vague, especially when in regard to the past and current uses (Appendix A). The uses being vague allows for some possible inaccuracies, what was listed on the permit and what may actually exist in the buildings could be different. Because the uses were vague determining what category the building use should be placed in was left to my best judgement. Due to this there could have been some misinterpretation in the uses causing for inaccurate categorization. The developers were not always listed on the permits, in four cases there was no listed architect, engineer or developer, which leaves four data points and potential repeat names or companies out of the data set.

Another limitation is in respect to interviews, having only one interview with an architect limits the perspective of those who work on adaptive reuse projects. The same goes for city officials, having only interviewed three people leaves out some potentially useful perspectives. The interviews conducted were with individuals who were highly involved in the ordinance's passing and early years, lacking a current point of view on the ordinance.

Given a time and capacity limit, I was unable to look any further into the LLC's, LP's, and family trusts that own the buildings. Without doing this there is a lack of connection between building owners, when in reality there could be some overlap. Further research could uncover interesting results, using the data provided here.

Recommendations

Currently there is only limited research on the impacts the Adaptive Reuse Ordinance has had on Los Angeles' neighborhoods. I think it is important for the city to keep track of how the ordinance has been transforming downtown in detail. This would include what kind of changes in use and affordability the buildings have gone through after adaptive reuse. Knowing how the affordability of downtown is changing could be a tool in protecting against gentrification.

A big question I am left with after looking at the usage data is, whether or not jobs and economic opportunities for some were lost with the transformation to apartments and mixed-use spaces. There was a great deal of retail spaces in many of the buildings prior to their adaptive reuse transformations, and it is unclear whether or not these businesses were given the opportunity to return to the building after transformation. Which has led to me to be concerned over job loss in the area as well. The utility sector of Downtown diminished during revitalization. Job loss or even relocation can be a detriment to families who worked in these spaces.


Another remaining question is in regard to the displacement of individuals and families who lived in Downtown and can no longer afford to live in the area as a result of gentrification. A useful tool to look into gentrification is the data presented in Figure 6, with the types of units in the area changing, and getting more expensive, the price of living in general also increases. It is possible this change put pressure on individuals who remained in downtown. Another concern is for the neighborhoods directly outside of downtown, gentrification not only effects one area but often spreads to the surrounding areas as people desire to be closer to the city center

(Richardson et al., 2019). Interviewing community members was an original intention of this research but being that the research was conducted in 2020, the in person interviews were cut short. However, interviewing individuals who lived in downtown or who still live in downtown and the areas surrounding downtown would be useful in gaining community perspective on development induced displacement. Are communities aware of the ordinance? Have they observed shifts in their neighborhood both physically and demographically? Are they concerned or happy about the development? The intended interview questions that I had for community members can be found in Appendix C. The question aim to collect important aspects of public opinion about the policy that should not be ignored, the communities perspective should be acknowledged and researched further.

Further research on these remaining questions may find the GIS map created during this project useful. The map has the locations of all adaptive reuse buildings up until January 2020. Upon clicking on a building of interest the information from the building permit, such as owner, architect, and uses will be listed, as well as the predicted rents for single bedroom or studio apartments. My hope is that this map may be used as a tool for further research on adaptive reuse.

Appendix A

Example of an Adaptive Reuse Ordinance Building Permit which was analyzed to extract the address, the past uses, current uses, owners, and developers. Permits were found by searching by document number and selecting the building permit digital image.

550 S Flower St			Permit #: 00016 - 10000 - 15386
		Plan Check #: CC12092	Ref. #:
		Event Code:	
Bldg--Alter/Repair Apartment Back Room Plan Check	City of Los Angeles - Department of Building and Safety APPLICATION FOR BUILDING PERMIT AND CERTIFICATE OF OCCUPANCY	Status: Ready to Issue Status-Date: 12/05/00 Printed on: 12/05/00 14:42:15	
I. TRACT	BLOCK LOT(s)	ARR MAP REF #	PARCEL ID # (PIN) L BOOK/PAGE/PARCEL
BELLEVUE TERRACE T 103	103 12	M R 2-585	130-5A209 186 5151 - 024 - 004
BELLEVUE TERRACE T 103	103 11	M R 2-585	130-5A209 204 5151 - 024 - 004
II. PARCEL INFORMATION			
BAS Branch Office - LA Council District - 9 Community Plan Area - Central City Census Tract - 2077.000		District Map - 130-5A209 Energy Zone - 9 Hillside Grading Area - YES Hillside Ordinance - YES	Earthquake-Induced Liquefaction Area - YES Lot Type - Interior Near Source Zone Distance - 7.3 Parking Dist. - CCPD
ZONE(S): C2-4D/			
III. DOCUMENTS			
ZI - 1441		ZI - ZI 940	CRA - ZI 940 CENTRAL BSN DIST
ZI - 1493		ZA - ENV-2000-3104	AFF - AFF 41635
ZI - ZI 145-0686		ZA - ZA-2000-3103-ZV	AFF - PKG 2702 (A)
IV. CHECKLIST ITEMS			
Std. Work Descr - Interior Non-struct. Remo			
V. PROPERTY OWNER, TENANT, APPLICANT INFORMATION			
Owner(s): Downtown La Standard, Llc		142 Greene St ,3rd Floor	NEW YORK, NY 10012 212-226-5656
Tenant:			
Applicant (Relationship: Agent for Owner) Roderick Villafranca -		(310) 828-6131	
VI. EXISTING USE	PROPOSED USE	VII. DESCRIPTION OF WORK	
	11 Hotel	TI & Change Use from office to (207) Hotel Guestrooms on 3 -12 flrs per Adaptive Reuse A12.21a26. (Lower floors under separate permit). Full compliance w / Div 95 - under 00016-10000-07409. Building is fully sprinklered.	
VIII. Bldg on Site & Use CHANGE OF USE FROM OFFICE TO HOTEL			
IX. APPLICATION PROCESSING INFORMATION		For information and/or inspection requests originating within LA County, Call toll-free (888) LA4BUILD Outside LA County, call (213)-977-6941. (LA4BUILD = 524-2845) For Cashier's Use Only W/O #: 01615386	
BLDG. PC By: Philip Yin		DAS PC By: <i>WJIA</i>	
OK for Cashier: Philip Yin		Coord. OK:	
Signature: <i>Philip Yin</i>		Date: <i>12/05/00</i>	
X. PROJECT VALUATION & FEE INFORMATION Final Fee Period			
Permit Valuation: \$6,000,000		PC Valuation:	
FINAL TOTAL Bldg--Alter/Repair	25,488.70	Permit Issuing Fee	0.00
Permit Fee Subtotal Bldg--Alter/Rep	22,074.50		
Energy Surcharge			
Handicapped Access			
Supp. Plan Check	0.00		
Plan Maintenance	300.00		
Fire Hydrant Refuse-To-Pay			
E.Q. Instrumentation	600.00		
Supp. O.S. Surcharge	459.49		
Supp. Sys. Surcharge	1,378.49		
Planning Surcharge Misc Fee			
Supp. Planning Surcharge	671.24		
Sewer Cap ID:			
XI. ATTACHMENTS			
Plot Plan <i>OC</i>			

Appendix B

This chart shows the use categories of what was condensed based off the past uses listed on the building permits. The left bold categories are the labels that are seen on the graph in Figure 3 and the right are the kinds of uses that were generalized into the categories using the wording that was used on the permits. The current uses are all the same titles that were used on the permits already, so no generalization was used.

Past uses:

office/retail				
office				
utility	warehouse	manufacturing		
office/business	office/restaurant	office/theater	office/bank	office/church
retail/utility	retail/warehouse	retail/manufacturing		
retail				
office/utility	office/warehouse	office/manufacturing		
office/retail/utility	office/retail/warehouse	office/retail/manufacturing		
apartment/retail				
live/work/retail				
live/work space				
hotel				
utility/artist-in-residence	manufacturing/artist-in-residence			
hotel/retail				
hospital				

Appendix C

Intended Interview Questions for Community Members:

Are you aware of the Adaptive Reuse Ordinance?

Have you noticed development occurring in your neighborhood?

How do you feel about the development?

What kind of businesses/ spaces are being built?

Do you feel like these spaces are useful to you?

How are developments impacting your neighborhood?

Do you think gentrification is occurring in your neighborhood?

What kind of demographic shifts have you observed?

Do you see the ordinance having a role in gentrification?

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