



# Energy Efficiency, Land Use, and Equity

Joanna Gubman | 2022 ACEEE Summer Study

Executive Director, Urban Environmentalists  
Environmental Director, YIMBY Action



# Who We Are



- Nearly 5,000 activists working to integrate land use policy with environmental policy
- Vision: transform cities and towns into more sustainable, human-centered, and just communities through land use policy reform



## Who We Are



**YIMBY  
ACTION**

- A network of activists fighting for more inclusive, diverse & abundant housing options
- Vision: an integrated society where everyone has access to a safe, affordable home near jobs, services, and opportunity.



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# Who I am



Joanna Gubman (she/her)  
Environmental Director, YIMBY Action  
Executive Director, Urban Environmentalists

- Past: Commissioner's Advisor & Administrative Law Judge at the California PUC; EE non-resource program implementer at Navigant (now Guidehouse); energy & transportation researcher in Germany
- Live in San Francisco
- Jewish, in a biracial family
- Love bicycling... and turtles!



# Agenda

- I. A brief history of land use injustice in the US
- II. How do sprawl, disinvestment, and exclusion relate to EE?
- III. How can we do better?
- IV. Q&A

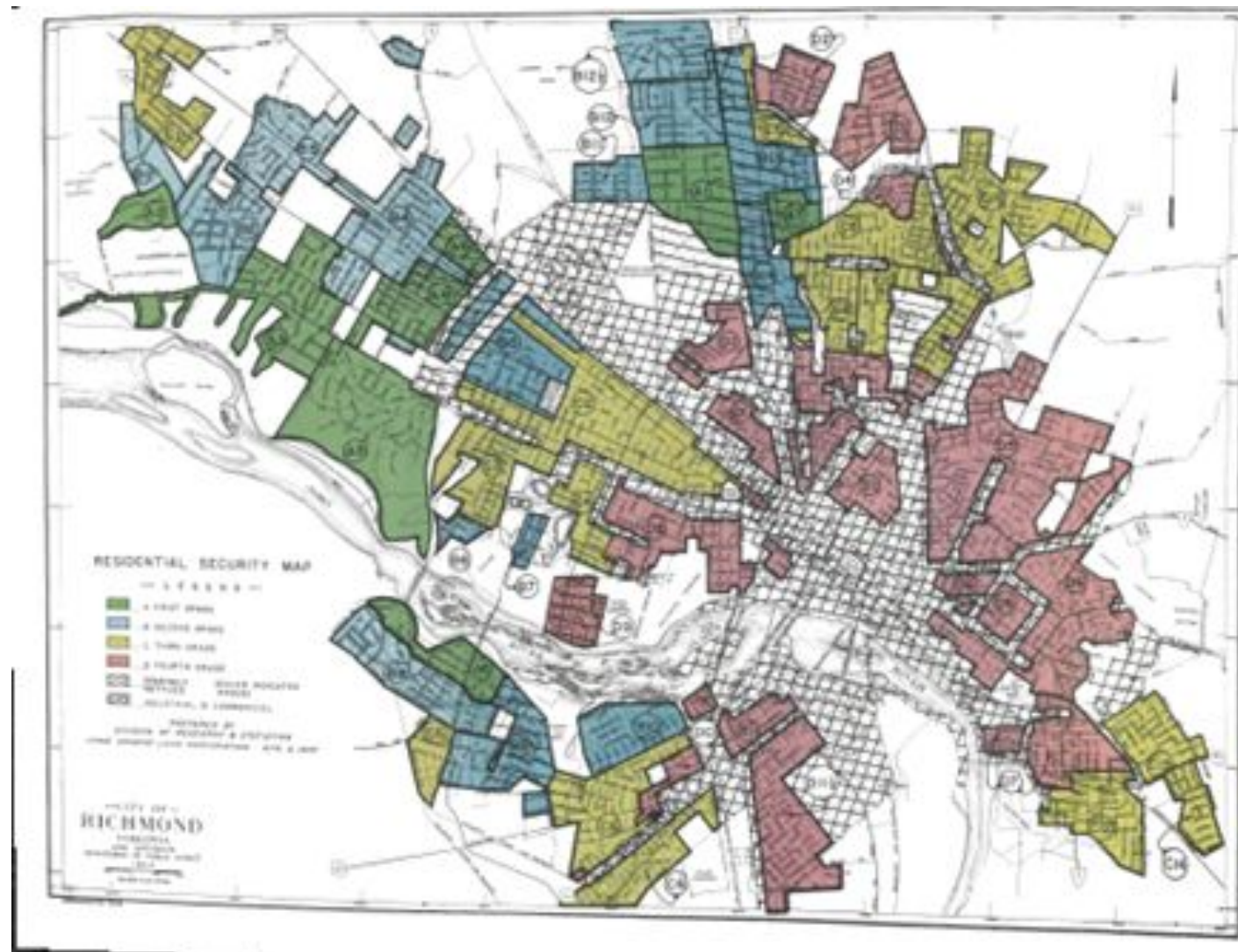
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# Land Use Injustice in the US

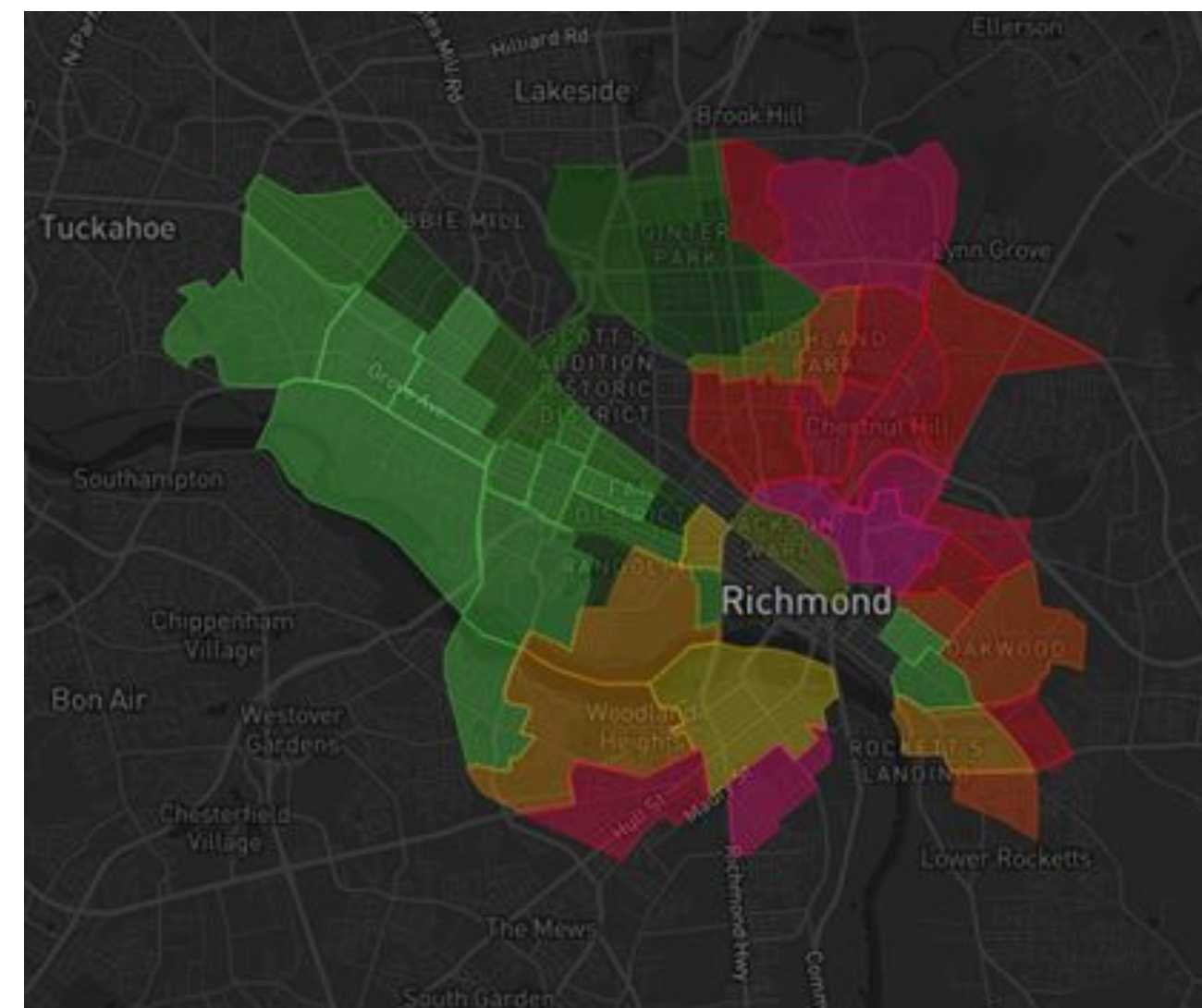


# Redlining: impacts persist

Redlining in Richmond, Virginia

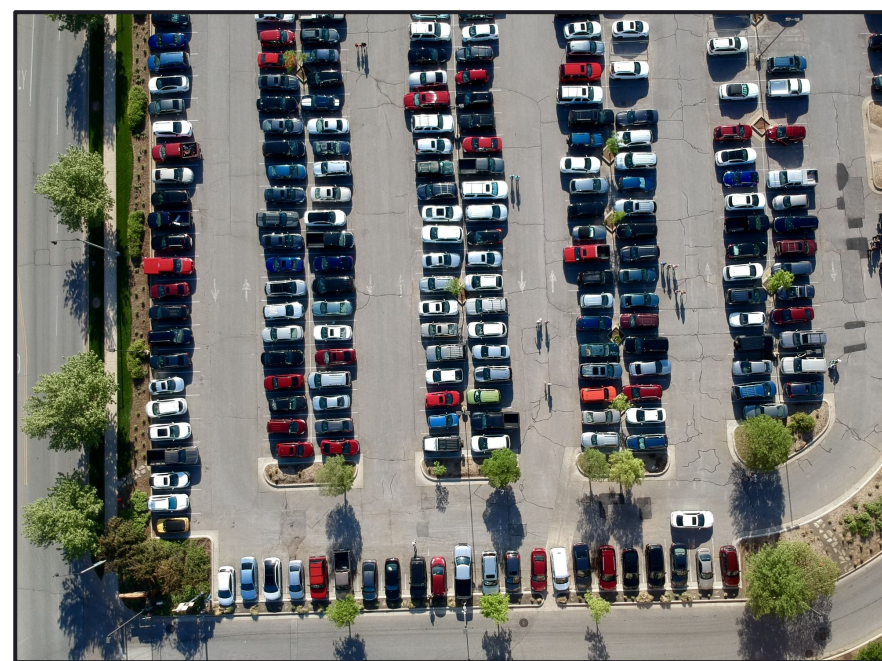


Today's Social Vulnerability Index





# White supremacy: it's not just redlining



- Racial restrictive covenants
- Single-detached homes
- Segregated public & private housing developments
- Urban Renewal
- Car-centric design
- Opposition to infill housing in wealthy neighborhoods



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**How do Sprawl, Disinvestment,  
and Exclusion Relate to EE?**





# What's wrong with these land uses?

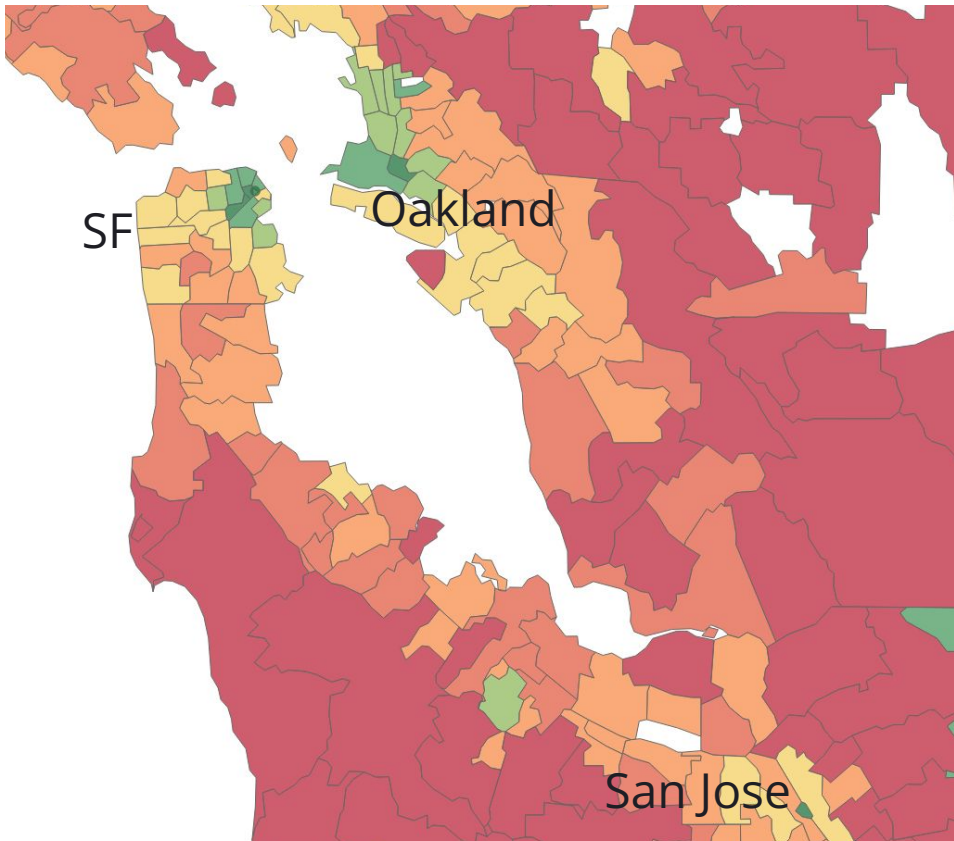
Consider Land Use Equity, Energy, and Climate Risk



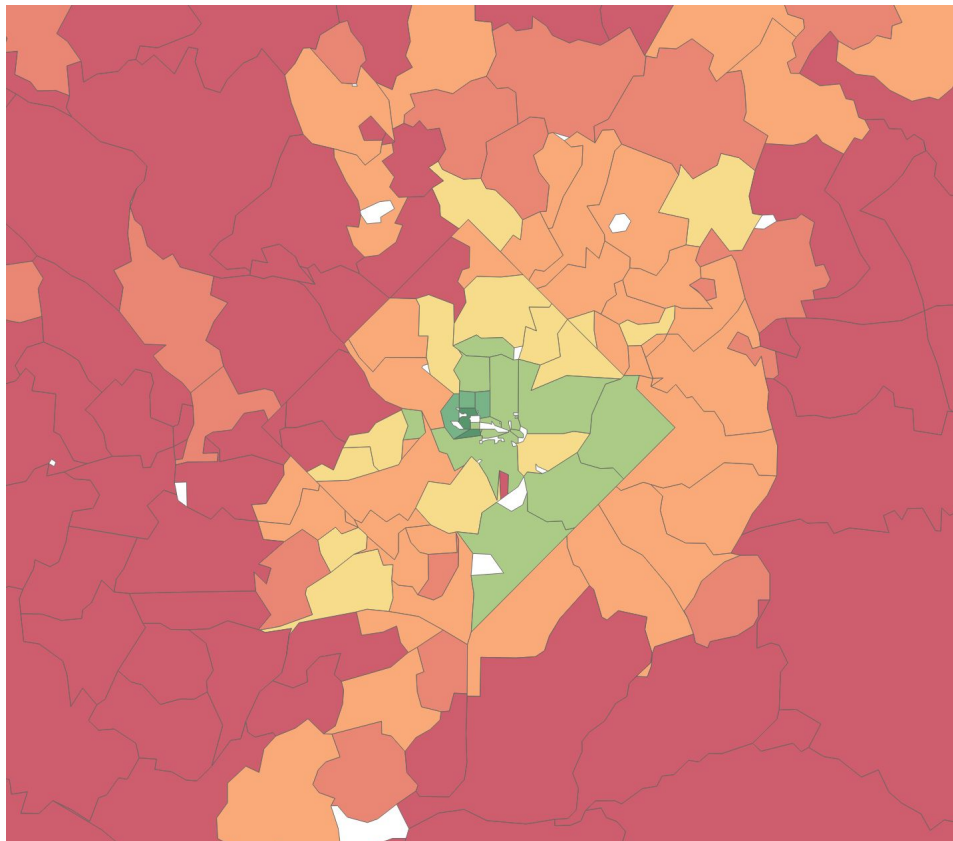




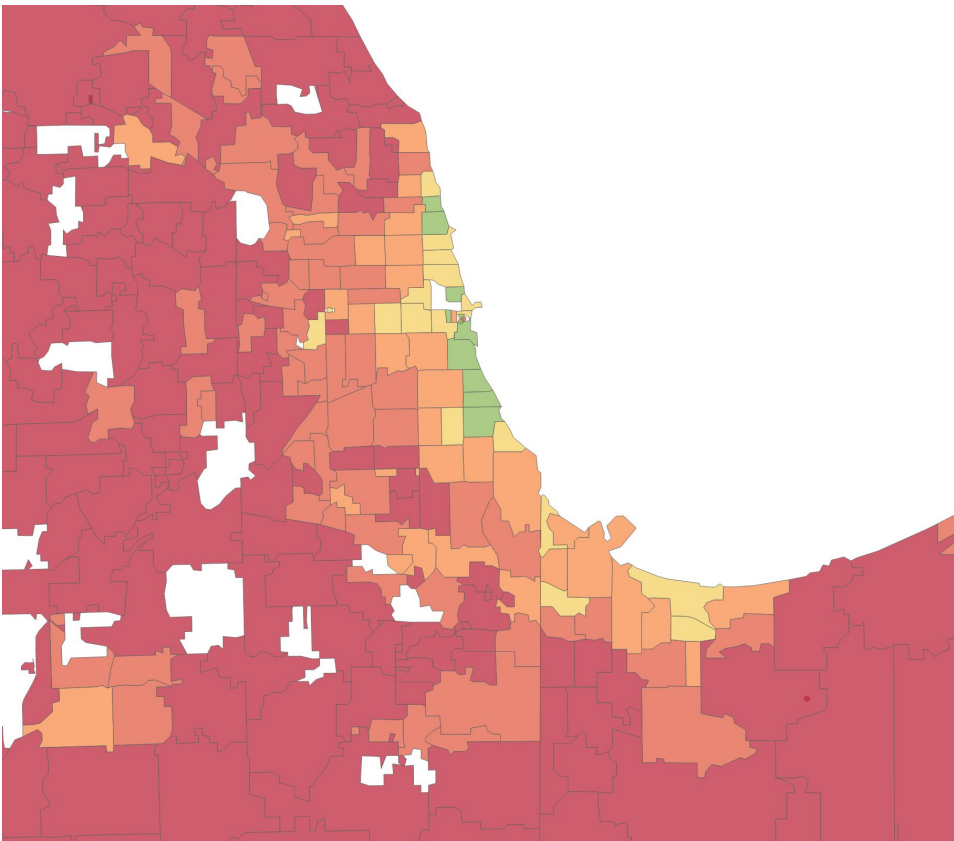
# Outer suburbs: ~1.5x greater emissions/household\*



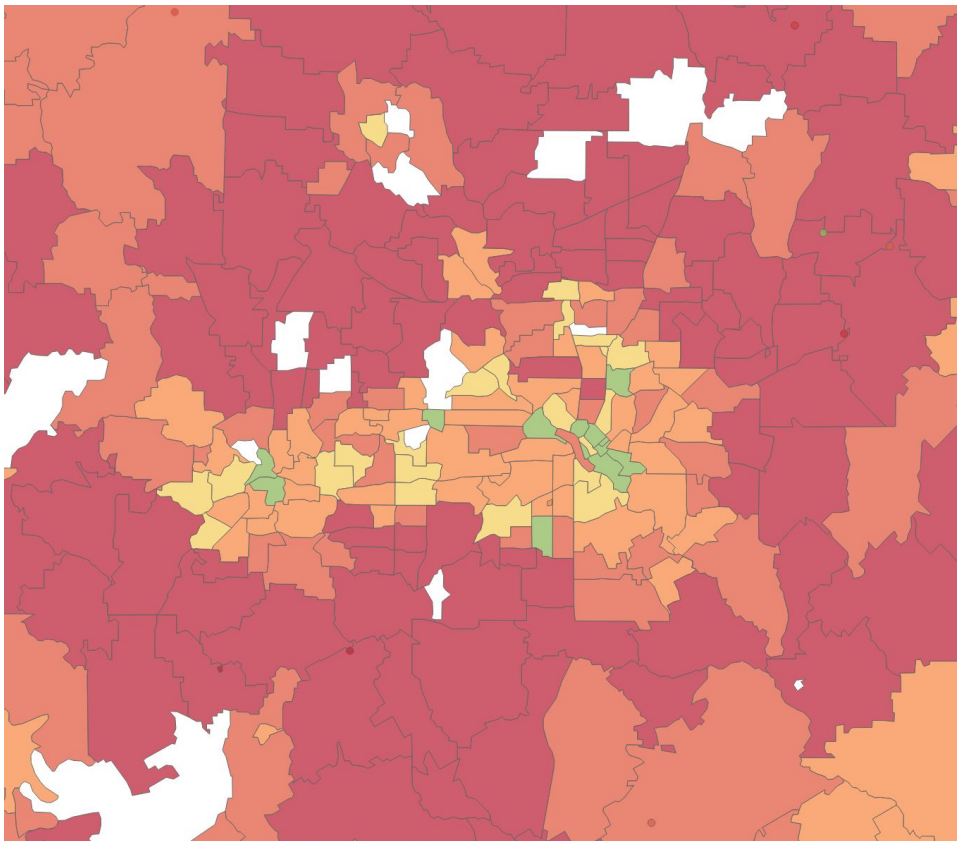
**San Francisco Bay Area**



**Washington, D.C.**



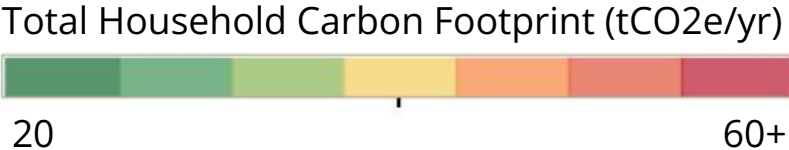
**Chicago**



**Dallas**

\*After controlling for income, assuming same generation mix. Before controlling for income it is ~3-4x. Calculated on a consumption basis.

Sources: [CoolClimate Maps](#), UC Berkeley Cool Climate Network, 2013. [Zack Subin](#), RMI, 2021.

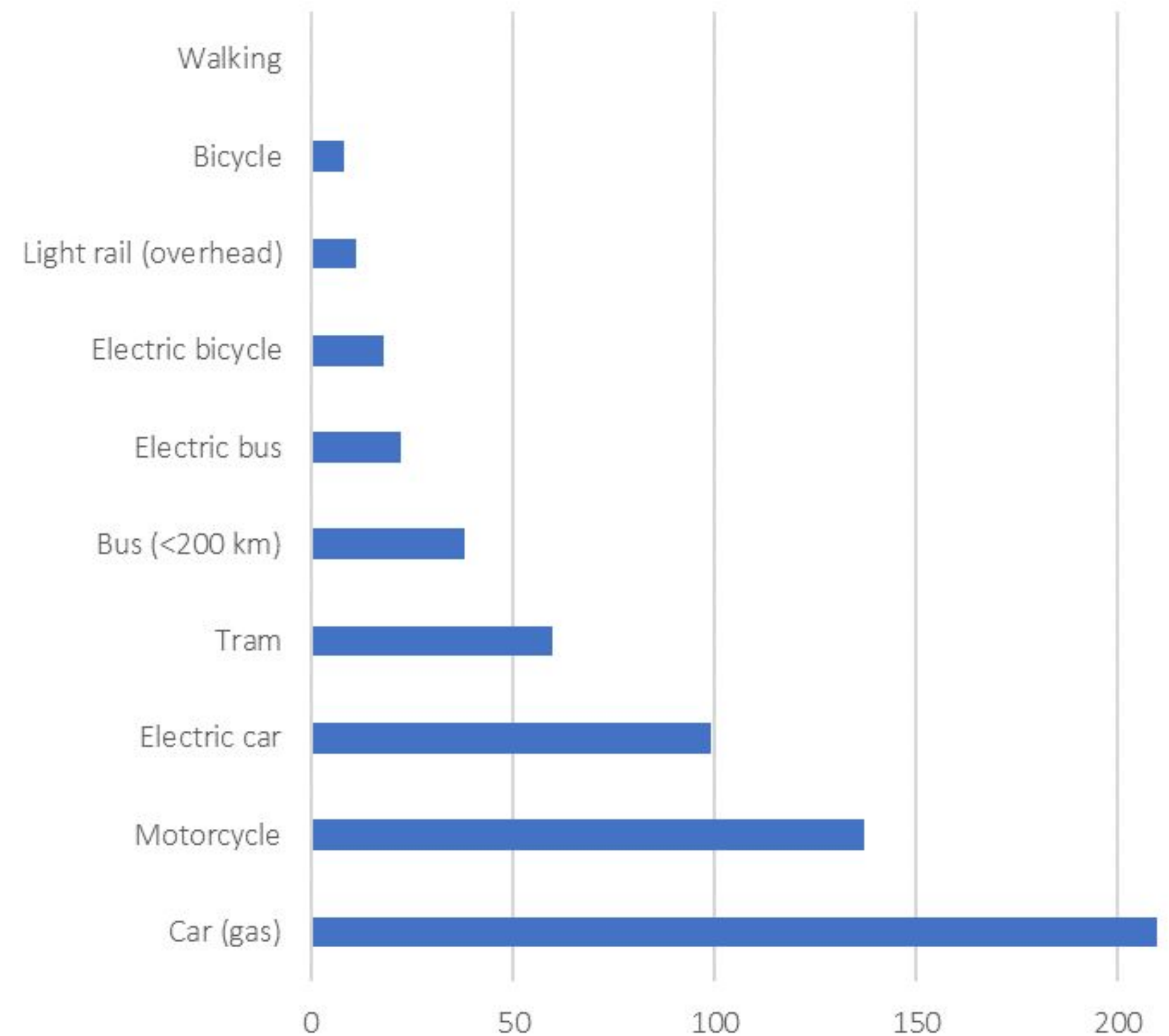




# Car-centric sprawl is not energy efficient

*Electric cars are essential.  
So are heat pumps.*

*And they are not enough.*



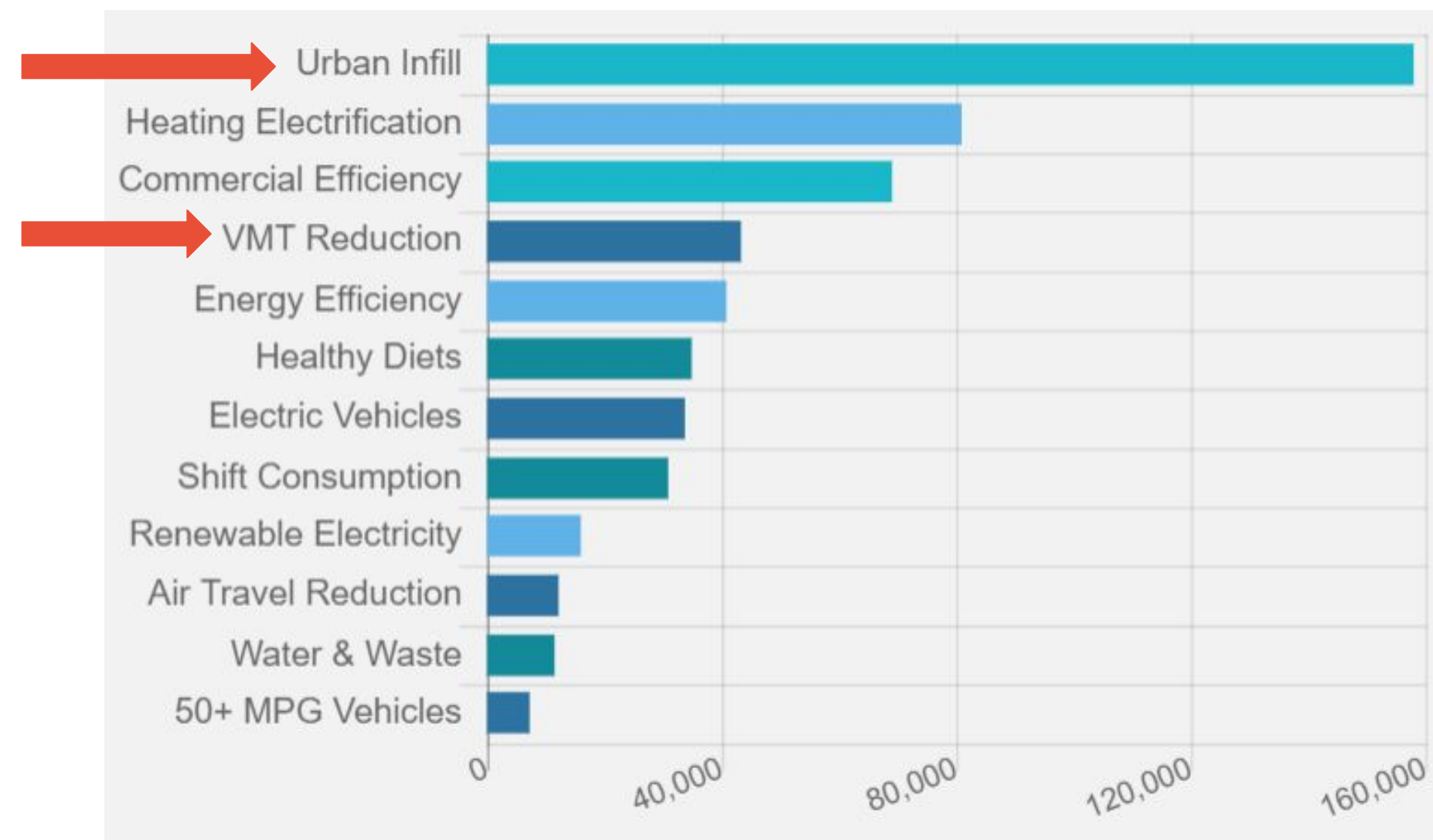
Typical carbon emissions by transport type (g/person-km)



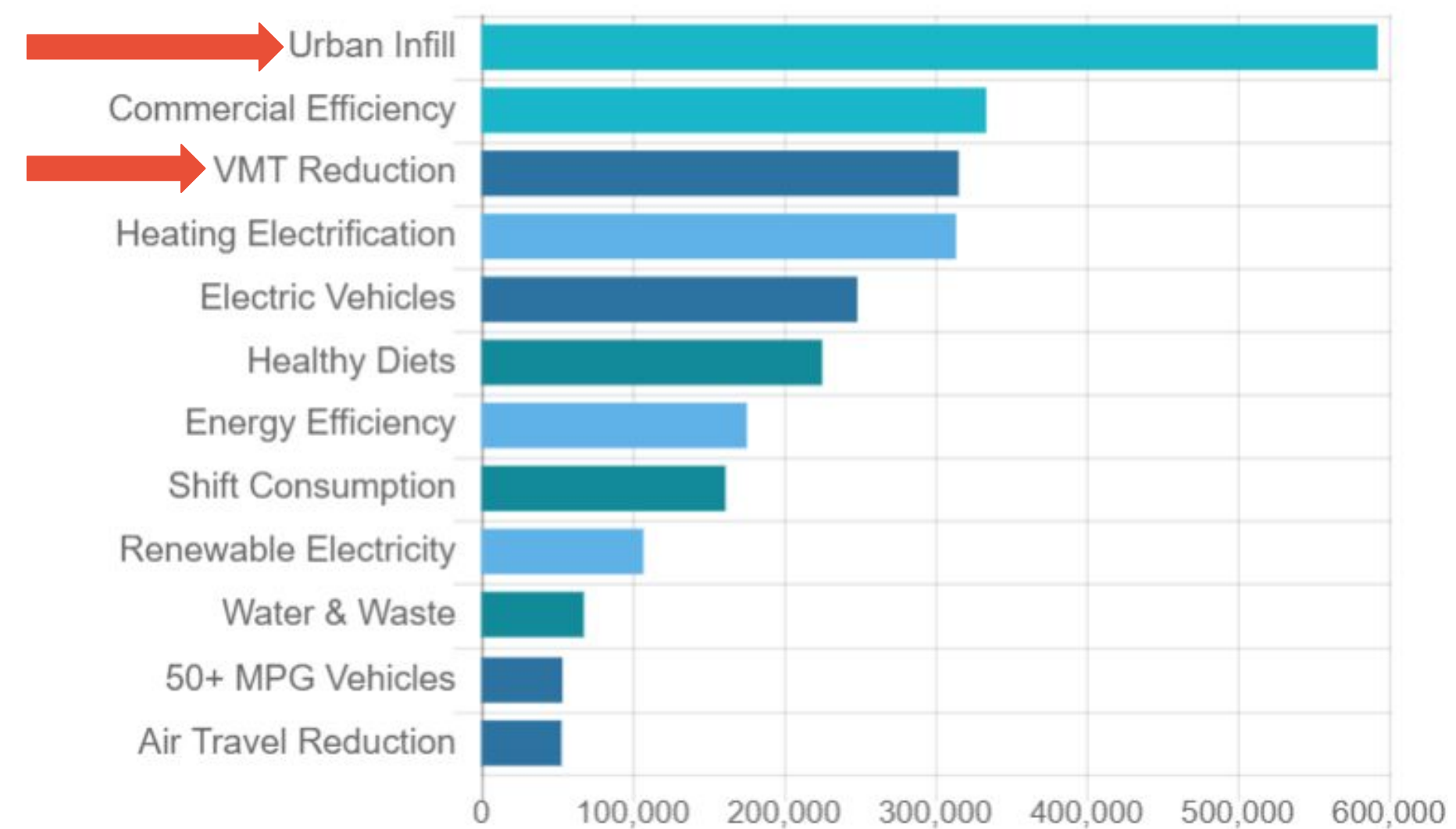
# Walkable, bikeable communities: a key local climate action

2030 savings potential (tons of greenhouse gasses) in...

## Berkeley, CA



## Sacramento, CA





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# What's wrong with these land uses? Do today's EE programs help?

Consider Land Use Equity, Energy, and Climate Risk





**EE is not just about better technology or behavioral choices.**

**It's also about changing what and whom we prioritize in terms of land, funding, and time.**

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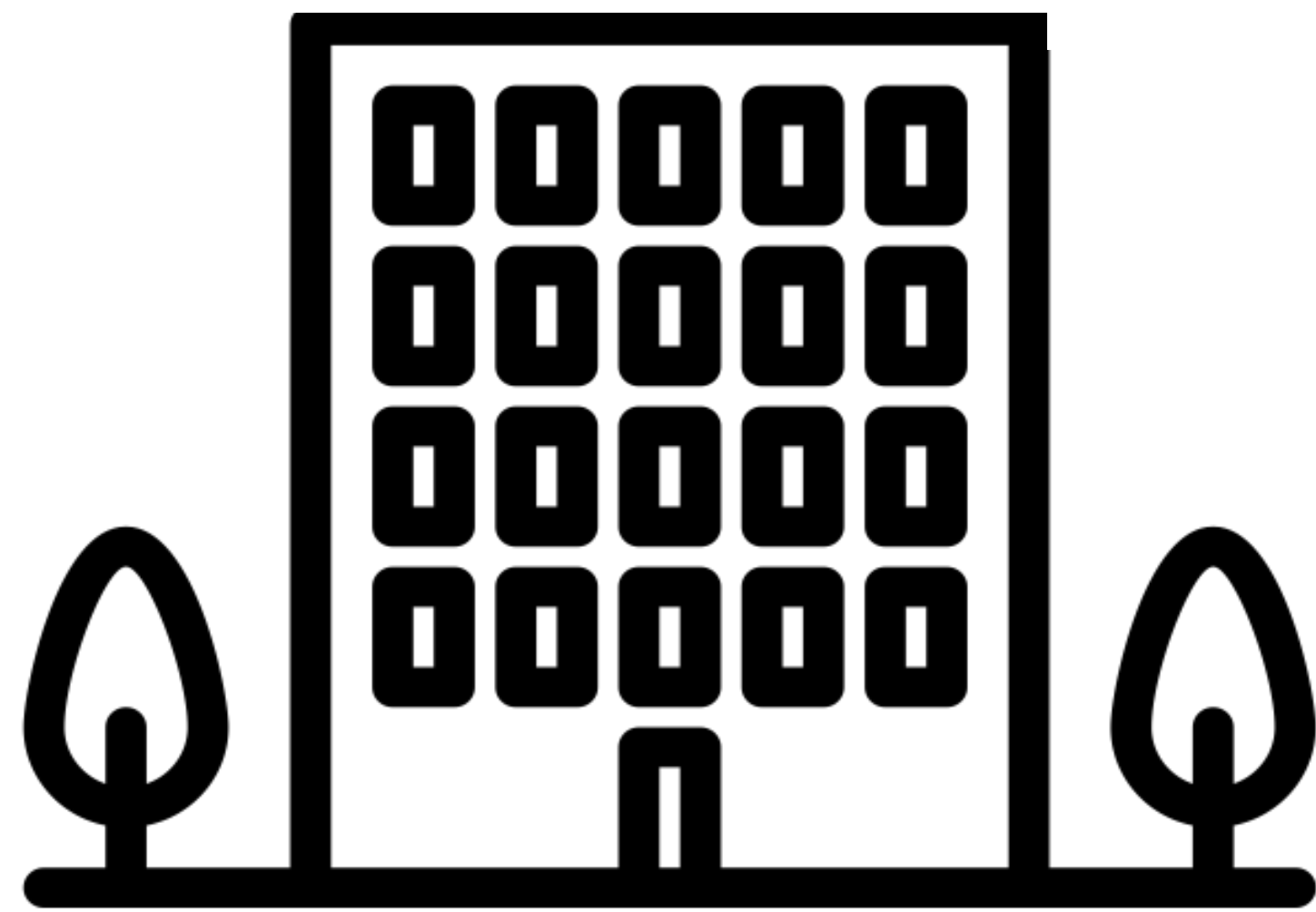


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**Could these be EE programs?  
What's stopping us?**

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# Dense housing: funding & technical assistance



- Rezoning & incentives for dense multifamily, mixed-use development
- Streamlining new housing in exclusionary neighborhoods
- Education and outreach on energy and other benefits





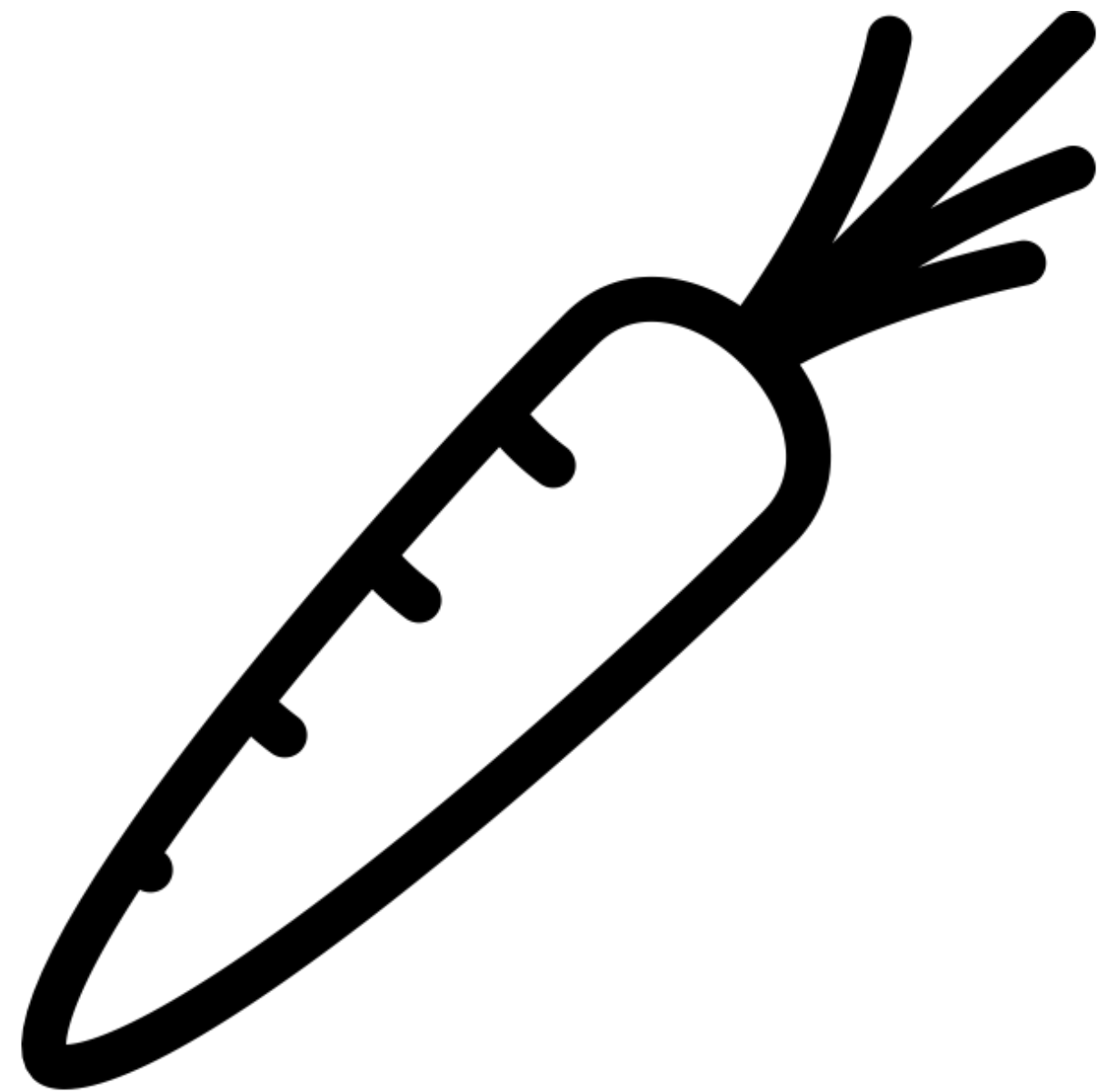
## **Support walking, transit & micromobility (not cars)**



- Transit-only lanes & protected bike lanes
- Secure bicycle parking
- Pedestrian plazas
- Advocacy to reduce parking mandates



# Urban greening



- Community gardens
- Tree planting
- Bioswales
- Public green space



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# Let's support land use justice!

Everyone who wants it should be able to afford to live  
in a safe, comfortable dwelling  
in a climate-resilient location  
with car-free access to jobs, amenities, and green space  
and thus have an inherently lower carbon & environmental footprint.

Energy efficiency programs can and should help.

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# Thank you

**Let's connect:**

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