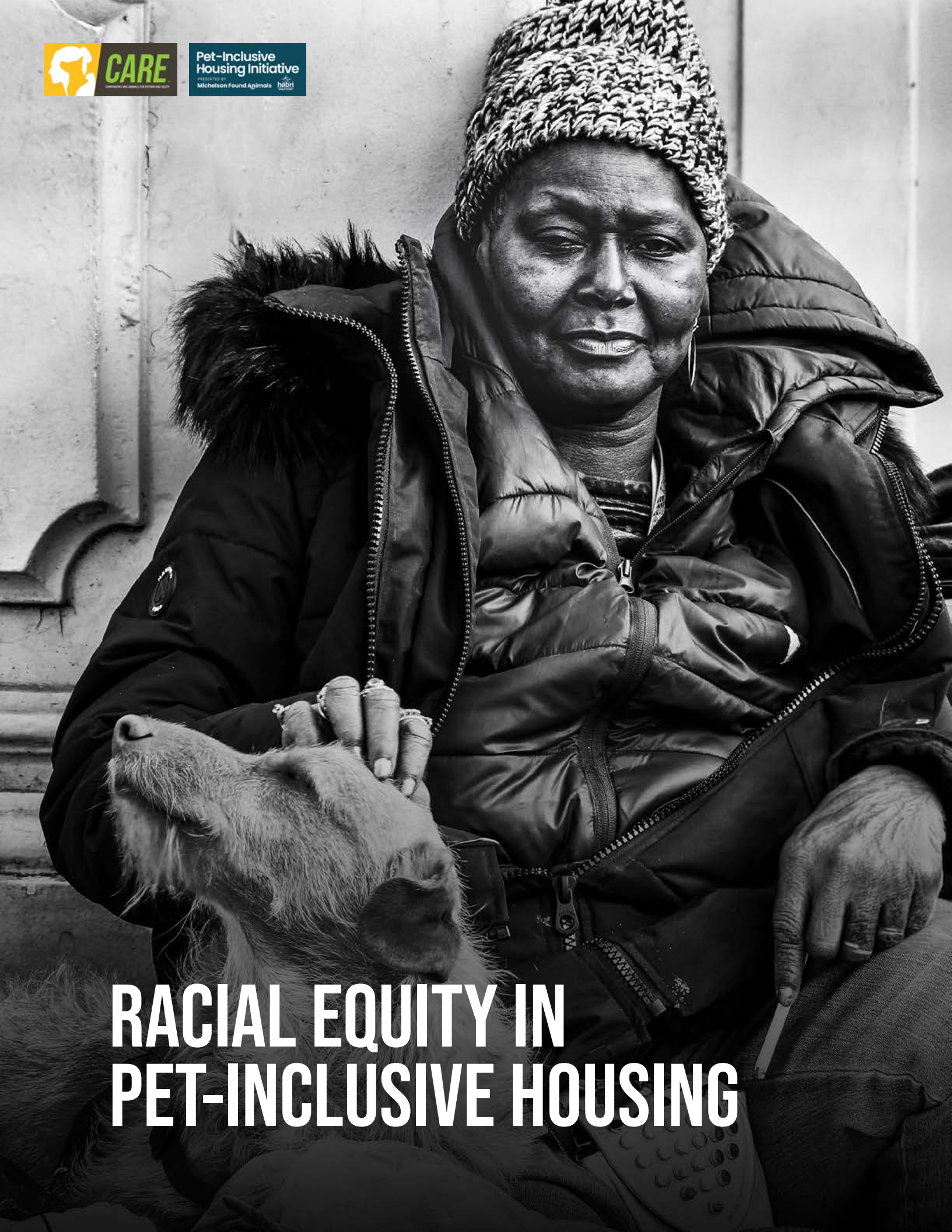




Pet-Inclusive  
Housing Initiative  
PRESENTED BY  
Michelson Found Animals 



# RACIAL EQUITY IN PET-INCLUSIVE HOUSING

# PET INCLUSIVE HOUSING REPORT

MARCH 2, 2026

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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This joint initiative between the Pet-Inclusive Housing Initiative (PIHI) and Companions and Animals for Reform and Equity (CARE) examined how pet-inclusive housing policies are distributed across four major U.S. rental markets: Atlanta, Dallas-Fort Worth, Los Angeles, and Philadelphia.

The goal of the focus groups was to identify the needs and priorities related to housing for Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) pet owners in four major cities (Atlanta, Philadelphia, Los Angeles, and Dallas) and to identify equitable, accessible, and community-led solutions that improve access to pet inclusive housing for all. The goal of the mapping and statistical analysis was to determine what property- and neighborhood-level factors predict whether a rental property allows pets, and under what conditions (e.g., breed restrictions, weight limits, pet fees). Specifically, the map and regression analysis sought to answer two primary research questions:

- 1. What socioeconomic factors (including neighborhood-level social vulnerability) are associated with properties being more or less pet-inclusive?**
- 2. How do rental costs and pet-related fees vary across markets and levels of socioeconomic vulnerability?**

Through focus groups with renters and a geospatial analysis of more than 27,000 rental properties, the project explored how pet policies intersect with property characteristics, neighborhood vulnerability, and housing affordability. By integrating property-level data with the CDC Social Vulnerability Index (SVI), the study makes visible structural patterns that are often difficult to detect through narrative accounts alone.

In addition to the static map analysis presented here, the project developed an interactive mapping platform designed to support ongoing analysis of pet-inclusive housing patterns across the four study markets.

## KEY FINDINGS INCLUDE:

- **Pet allowance rates vary dramatically by market – from fewer than 20% of properties in Los Angeles to more than 85% in Dallas-Fort Worth.**
- **Larger and professionally managed properties are often more likely to allow pets, though this pattern is not universal.**
- **Pet exclusion frequently aligns geographically with higher socioeconomic vulnerability.**
- **“Pet-friendly” does not necessarily mean “pet-inclusive”; breed restrictions, weight limits, and recurring pet fees remain common even where pets are allowed.**
- **Spatial patterns suggest that pet policies function as structural features of local housing ecosystems, not merely individual landlord decisions.**

Together, these findings highlight opportunities to expand pet-inclusive housing through coordinated provider, policy, and philanthropic strategies.

## BACKGROUND

Housing insecurity in the United States (U.S.) remains a growing public health concern, driven by severe shortages of affordable rental housing. The National Low Income Housing Coalition (NLIHC) estimates that the U.S. has a shortage of 7.1 million rental homes that are affordable and available to renters with extremely low incomes, and just 35 affordable and available rental homes exist for every 100 extremely low-income renter households (NLIHC, 2025). Black, Latino, and American Indian or Alaska Native households are disproportionately impacted by this affordable housing shortage.

Pets in the U.S. are increasingly seen as family and also serve as an important source of emotional support, physical health, safety, and family stability. Yet, a recent national survey by the Pet Inclusive Housing Initiative (PIHI) estimates that although 78.5% of U.S. housing providers consider their properties to be “pet-friendly,” less than 10% allow pets without breed or size restrictions (PIHI,

2025). Common barriers to accessing pet-inclusive housing include restrictive policies, unclear rules, and pet-related fees (PIHI, 2025). These barriers are reinforced as housing provider practices are shaped by competitive rental markets with high demand and limited supply.

The lack of pet-inclusive housing has well-documented outcomes, including prolonged housing insecurity and owner relinquishment of pets to animal shelters (Mascitelli et al., 2024; McCarthy and Simcock, 2025). Further, emotional distress for both people and pets may be intensified when there is a shortage of housing options that allow pets. As such, increasing access to affordable pet-inclusive housing has implications beyond animal shelter overpopulation, including human well-being and public health (Applebaum, et al., 2024).

# FINDINGS

# HOW TO READ THE MAPS

## ACROSS ALL METRO AREAS, RENTAL PROPERTIES ARE DISPLAYED USING A CONSISTENT CLASSIFICATION SYSTEM:

- Green = Pets Allowed
- Orange = Pets Not Allowed
- Blue = Pet Inclusive  
(Pet-Inclusive Score  $\geq 88$ , using a  
scale of 0-100)

The Pet-Inclusive Score reflects a composite measure of pet-related restrictions and fees. Properties scoring 88 or higher meet the study's threshold for "Pet Inclusive," indicating fewer restrictions and lower relative financial burden.

Point size reflects property size (number of units). Larger points represent larger properties.

In maps that include shading, census tracts are colored according to the CDC Social Vulnerability Index (SVI), with darker shades indicating higher socioeconomic vulnerability.

# LOS ANGELES

## FOCUS GROUPS

### 1. BARRIERS TO ACCESSING PET INCLUSIVE HOUSING

The most prevalent barriers to finding and maintaining pet inclusive housing identified in the focus groups were: A lack of pet inclusive housing and pet-inclusive emergency shelters/temporary housing; Affordability specifically regarding high rent costs and pet-related fees and deposits; Breed and size restrictions; Restrictions on the number of pets allowed; Difficulties during the housing search process; Difficulties with interagency coordination; Conflicts with neighbors about pets, and; Challenges regarding approval of emotional support animals (ESAs).

### 2. IMPACTS OF LACK OF ACCESS

Focus group participants shared about the impacts of the lack of access to pet inclusive housing. These included: Stress and anxiety about securing housing; Housing insecurity including the potential of eviction and homelessness; A lack of safety; Noncompliance in order to keep housing, and; Rehoming pets or delaying getting a pet.

### 3. ATTITUDES TOWARDS PET OWNERSHIP

Focus group participants viewed pets as integral family members, as a necessity, and as essential emotional and social support.

### 4. COMMUNITY-SPECIFIC PRIORITIES

Specific to Los Angeles, the focus group participants shared about what they consider to be community-specific priorities. These included: Having quality time with pets; Having choice in housing; Neighborhood and public safety; Community-oriented human and pet support services, and; Pet amenities and pet-inclusive spaces.

### 5. COMMUNITY-LED SOLUTIONS

Los Angeles-based focus group participants also shared about their ideas for community-led solutions. These included: Eliminating, lowering, or offering alternatives to pet rent, fees, and deposits; Landlord and housing provider education to ensure fair housing law information sharing and compliance; Pet inclusive housing policies; Pet amenities; Increased access to legal aid to help pet owners understand tenant rights; Increased access to emotional support animal (ESA) designation; Information sharing and resource lists about pet ownership; Increased access to human and pet support services, and; Community care and mutual aid networks.

### 6. DEFINITIONS

Focus group participants discussed their understanding of the terms pet friendly versus pet inclusive. Participants preferred the 'pet inclusive' term/approach over 'pet friendly', noting that the term 'inclusive' suggests that an environment is created for pets to thrive, rather than the environment simply allowing pets. Participants also suggested alternative terminology such as "pets are welcome".

A more detailed report on the focus groups is available [here](#)

# LOS ANGELES

## THE MAP

### MARKET-WIDE RESTRICTION AND STRONG SPATIAL STRATIFICATION

Los Angeles presents the most restrictive landscape among the four markets studied. Fewer than one in five properties allow pets, and Pet-Inclusive properties (score  $\geq 88$ ) are sparse and geographically dispersed.

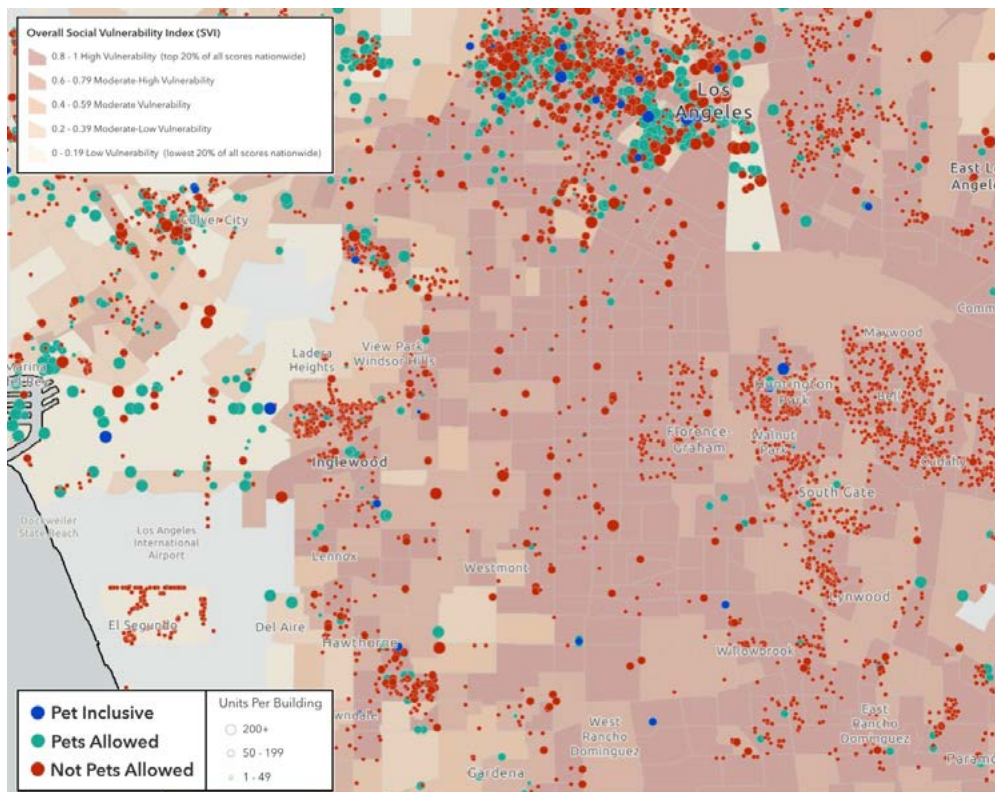
Unlike other markets to be covered later, larger properties in Los Angeles are not consistently more pet-inclusive. Even large-scale developments frequently prohibit pets, suggesting that restrictive norms operate at a market-wide level.

Overlaying pet policy data with SVI reveals the strongest visible alignment between vulnerability and pet exclusion across all markets. As shown

in Figure A, higher-vulnerability census tracts, particularly in South Los Angeles and southeast LA, show dense clustering of non-pet-allowing properties and limited representation of Pet-Inclusive properties. In contrast, lower-vulnerability coastal and westside areas show relatively greater inclusion.

Los Angeles reflects both broad market-level restriction and concentrated geographic inequity. Pet exclusion in this region is not randomly distributed; it aligns spatially with socioeconomic vulnerability at scale.

**FIGURE A.**  
**PET POLICY DISTRIBUTION AND SOCIAL VULNERABILITY, LOS ANGELES**



Rental properties in Los Angeles County classified by pet policy (Pets Allowed, Not Allowed, Pet Inclusive  $\geq 88$ ) overlaid with CDC Social Vulnerability Index by census tract. Larger points represent larger properties.

# PHILADELPHIA

## FOCUS GROUPS

### 1. ATTITUDES TOWARDS PET OWNERSHIP

Focus group participants viewed pets as integral family members, a financial commitment, a source of safety and security, and a personal choice.

### 2. BARRIERS TO FINDING AND MAINTAINING PET-INCLUSIVE HOUSING

The most prevalent barriers to finding and maintaining pet-inclusive housing identified in the focus groups were: A lack of pet friendly housing particularly in affordable and desirable neighborhoods; restrictions based on the breed and size of the pet; restrictions on the number of pets allowed; affordability specifically due to high pet rent costs and additional pet-related fees and deposits; lack of regulations regarding pet fees; difficulties with emotional support animals; and a general lack of awareness of organizations that provide pet support or housing support services.

### 3. IMPACTS OF LACK OF ACCESS TO PET-INCLUSIVE HOUSING

Focus group participants shared about the impacts of a lack of pet-inclusive housing. These included: lack of housing choice; noncompliance with pet restrictions in housing; family separation and rehoming pets; and limited options for pet-sitting.

### 4. COMMUNITY-SPECIFIC PRIORITIES

The focus group participants shared their views on community-specific priorities for Philadelphia. These included: housing choice that is affordable, in a desirable location, safe, and in close proximity to quality schools, retail stores, parks, and green spaces; finding housing that allows pet owners to keep their pet(s); and information-sharing about tenants' rights and legal aid resources for navigating interactions with housing providers.

### 5. COMMUNITY-LED SOLUTIONS

The Philadelphia pet owners also shared their ideas for community-led solutions. These included: improve housing provider communication and transparency regarding the specific pet policies and pet-related fees; eliminate breed and weight restrictions; eliminate, decrease, or offer alternatives to pet rent, pet fees, and deposits; improve housing provider communication and transparency regarding what the pet-related fees, rent, or deposits are used for; encourage use of renters insurance coverage for any pet damages and waive pet deposits; offer pet amenities such as community bulletin boards with available resources, on-site pet service like grooming or daycare, on-site pet wash stations and laundry facilities, and outdoor spaces for pets to socialize and exercise; increase access to legal guidance and tenants rights information; increase access to housing support services and pet support services; preference for utilizing community care and mutual aid sources of support over institutional sources of support; and utilizing self-advocacy strategies to navigate housing provider barriers or resistance to pets.

### 6. DEFINITIONS

Focus group participants discussed their understanding of the terms “pet-friendly” versus “pet-inclusive.” There was no consensus on a preferred term, with several participants viewing the terms as interchangeable, one participant speaking to a potential negative connotation with “inclusive”, and one participant highlighting that any differences in the terms would more likely apply in “more upscale apartments.” Some participants preferred “pets welcome” over “pet-friendly.”

A more detailed report on the focus groups is available [here](#).

# PHILADELPHIA

## THE MAP

### MIXED INCLUSION WITH MODERATE SPATIAL INEQUITY

Philadelphia presents a mixed pet policy landscape. Approximately 40% of properties allow pets – higher than Los Angeles but lower than Atlanta and Dallas.

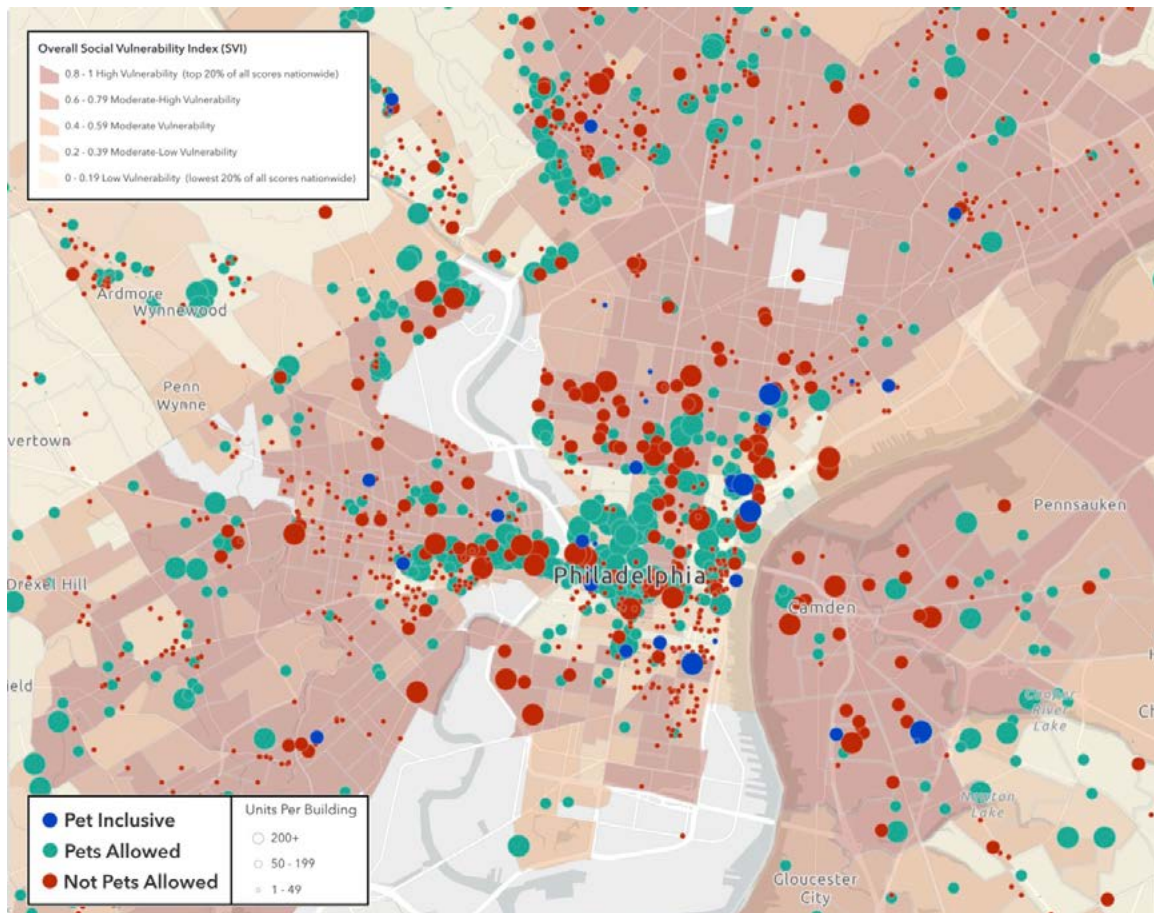
Larger, professionally managed properties are more likely to allow pets and achieve higher Pet-Inclusive scores, though the relationship between scale and inclusion is less pronounced than in Atlanta or Dallas.

When overlaid with SVI, as shown in Figure B, non-pet-allowing properties appear more frequently

in higher-vulnerability areas of North and West Philadelphia. However, pet-allowing properties remain interspersed across vulnerability tiers, indicating a mixed but uneven spatial distribution of inclusion.

Philadelphia occupies a middle position: inclusion exists, but distribution is uneven and patterned along socioeconomic lines.

**FIGURE B.**  
**PET POLICY DISTRIBUTION AND SOCIAL VULNERABILITY, PHILADELPHIA**



Rental properties in Philadelphia classified by pet policy (Pets Allowed, Not Allowed, Pet Inclusive  $\geq 88$ ) overlaid with CDC Social Vulnerability Index (SVI) by census tract. Larger points represent larger properties.

# ATLANTA

## FOCUS GROUPS

### 1. ATTITUDES TOWARDS PET OWNERSHIP

Focus group participants viewed pets as family members, sources of emotional support, companions, and motivation to get through difficulties.

### 2. BARRIERS TO FINDING AND MAINTAINING PET-INCLUSIVE HOUSING

The most prevalent barriers to finding and maintaining pet-inclusive housing identified in the focus groups were: a lack of pet-friendly housing; the overall cost of living in the city, including the costs of pet-friendly housing and challenges with finding affordable pet care; restrictive pet policies, including limited on the number of pets and breed/size restrictions; and a lack of transparency around pet policies.

### 3. IMPACTS OF LACK OF ACCESS

Focus group participants shared about the impacts of a lack of pet-inclusive housing. These included: threats of eviction, hiding pets and noncompliance, family separation and rehoming, and incidents of judgment and racial bias.

### 4. COMMUNITY-SPECIFIC PRIORITIES

The focus group participants shared their views on community-specific priorities for Atlanta. These included: safety; proximity to resources such as green spaces, schools, pet stores, and veterinary care; affordability; and a pet-inclusive community.

### 5. COMMUNITY-LED SOLUTIONS

The Atlanta pet owners also shared their ideas for community-led solutions. These included: increase communication and transparency regarding pet policies; remove breed and size restrictions; reduce or eliminate pet rent, fees, and deposits; offer pet amenities both within individual units and in community spaces; increase access to human and pet support services like pet behavior and enrichment, spay/neuter, and information sharing; and utilize community care and mutual aid sources of support.

### 6. DEFINITIONS

Focus group participants discussed their understanding of the terms pet-friendly versus pet-inclusive. Participants preferred pet-inclusive over pet-friendly. They also suggested using language that evokes the feeling of “freedom for pets.”

A more detailed report on the focus groups is available [here](#).

# ATLANTA

## THE MAP

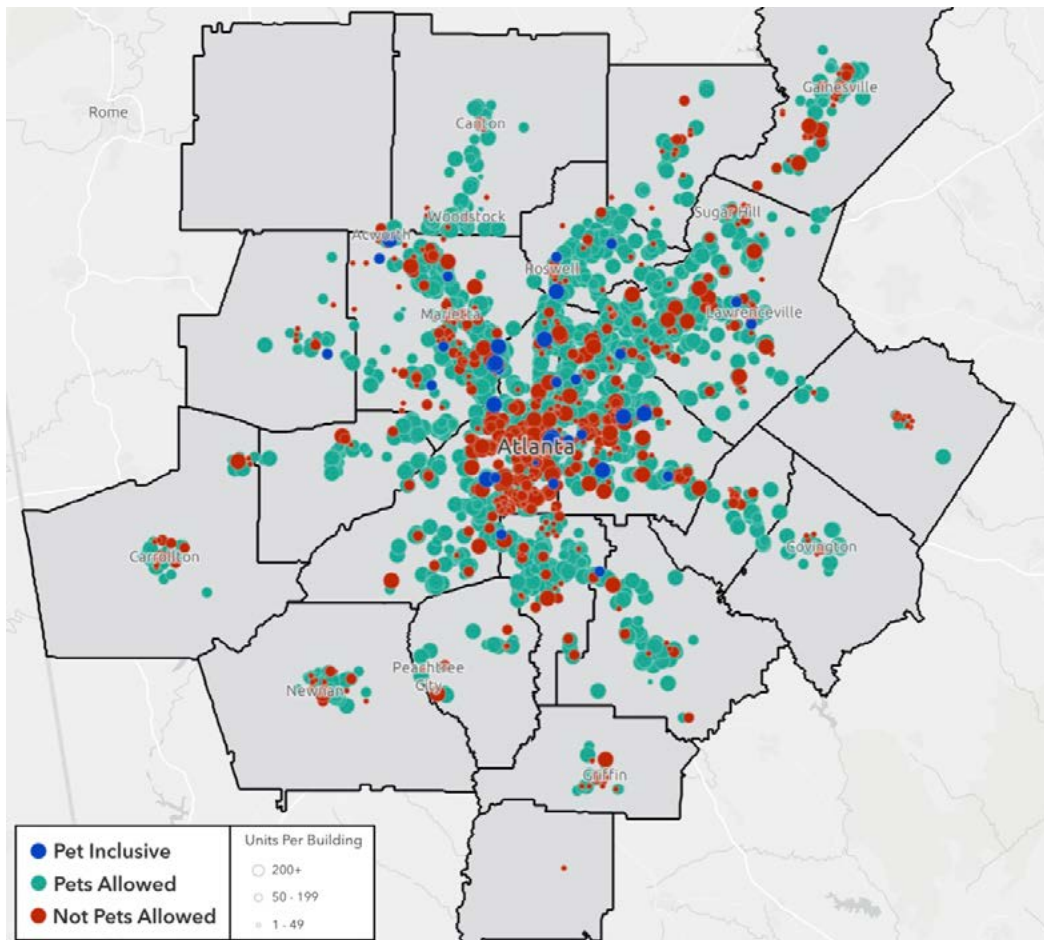
### HIGH ALLOWANCE, UNEVEN INCLUSION

Atlanta demonstrates relatively high rates of pet allowance, with approximately three-quarters of rental properties allowing pets. At a surface level, this positions Atlanta as a comparatively pet-friendly market.

However, spatial analysis reveals important nuance. Figure C illustrates a visible relationship

between property scale and pet inclusion in Atlanta. Larger properties are disproportionately represented among Pets Allowed and Pet Inclusive classifications, while smaller properties more frequently prohibit pets. This pattern suggests that institutional capacity, including standardized policies and risk management infrastructure, may facilitate more inclusive pet practices.

**FIGURE C.**  
**PROPERTY SIZE AND PET POLICY CLASSIFICATION, ATLANTA**



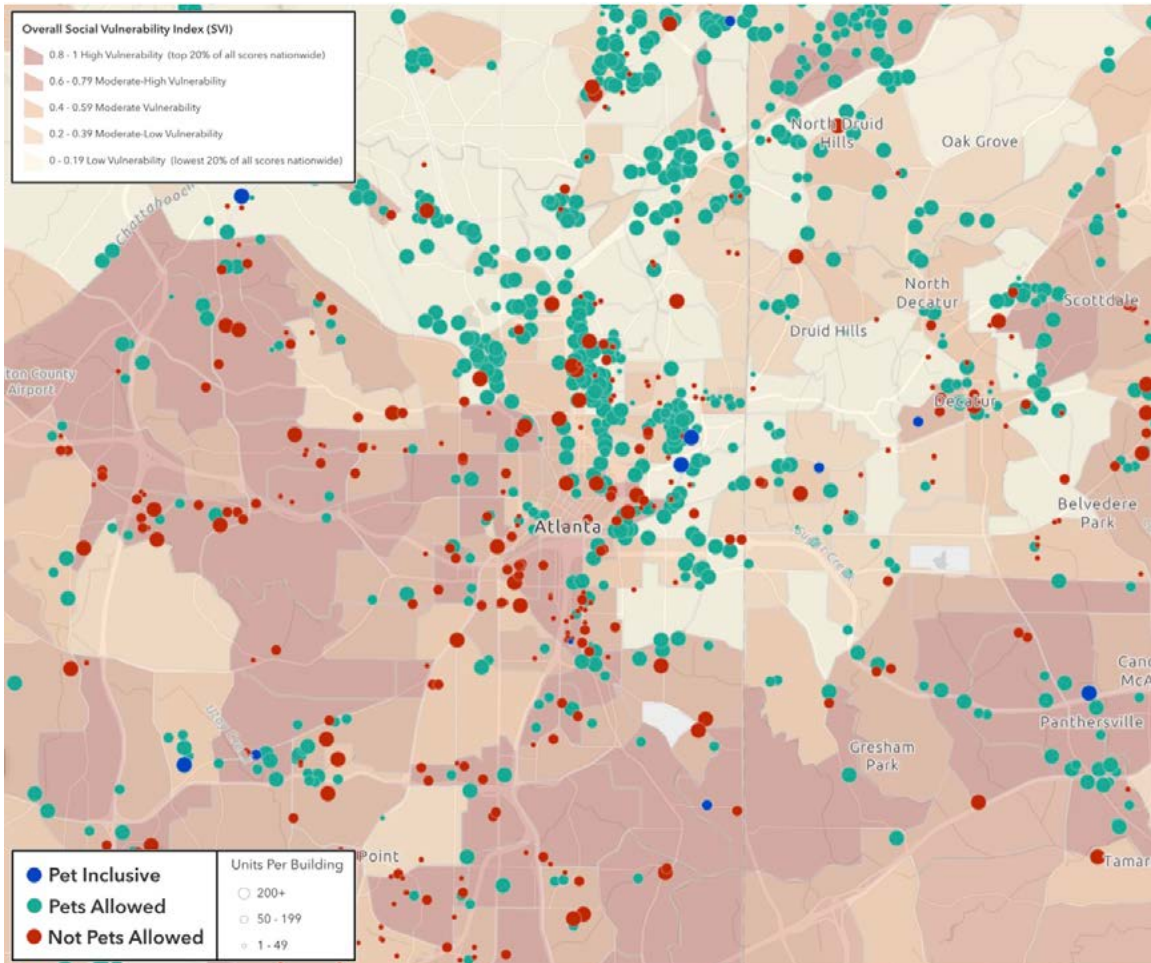
Rental properties in Atlanta displayed by pet policy category, with point size reflecting property size (number of units). Colors indicate Pets Allowed, Pets Not Allowed, and Pet Inclusive (score  $\geq 88$ ).

Yet when pet policy data are overlaid with the Social Vulnerability Index, as shown in Figure D, higher-vulnerability census tracts, particularly in south and southwest Atlanta, exhibit higher concentrations of properties that prohibit pets and fewer that meet the Pet-Inclusive standard. While pets are widely

allowed across the metro area, meaningful inclusion is less evenly distributed.

Atlanta, therefore, represents a market where pet allowance is common, but spatial equity remains incomplete.

**FIGURE D. PET POLICY DISTRIBUTION AND SOCIAL VULNERABILITY, ATLANTA**



Rental properties in Atlanta classified by pet policy (Pets Allowed, Not Allowed, Pet Inclusive  $\geq 88$ ) overlaid with CDC Social Vulnerability Index (SVI) by census tract. Larger points represent larger properties.

# DALLAS

## FOCUS GROUPS

### 1. ATTITUDES TOWARDS PET OWNERSHIP

Focus group participants viewed pets as family members, sources of emotional support, and a financial responsibility. They believed that income shouldn't determine whether a person can have a pet.

### 2. BARRIERS TO FINDING AND MAINTAINING PET-INCLUSIVE HOUSING

The most prevalent barriers to finding and maintaining pet-inclusive housing identified in the focus groups were: affordability; restrictive pet policies including restrictions based on breed, weight, and number of pets, pet vaccination, spay/neuter, and licensing requirements; challenges with obtaining accommodations for emotional support animals; and lack of access to housing and pet support services.

### 3. IMPACTS OF LACK OF ACCESS

Focus group participants shared about the impacts of a lack of access to pet-inclusive housing. These included: negative health impacts, prolonged housing insecurity and homelessness, and pet rehoming or separation.

### 4. COMMUNITY-SPECIFIC PRIORITIES

The focus group participants shared about what they consider when seeking housing in Dallas. These included: location and proximity to resources; pet-inclusive housing options; pet-friendly amenities; and safety.

### 5. COMMUNITY-LED SOLUTIONS

The Dallas pet owners also shared their ideas for community-led solutions. These solutions included: practicing self-advocacy; seeking emotional support animal accommodations; eliminating or reducing pet rent, fees, and deposits; increasing pet policy transparency from housing providers; housing providers should evaluate each pet as an individual; implementing health and safety requirements for pets in housing, such as vaccination or spay/neuter requirements; providing pet behavior and enrichment guidelines to enhance community safety and pet well-being; ensuring all tenants have appropriate cleaning and sanitation supplies for their pets; providing pet amenities like pet waste disposal stations, indoor and outdoor play areas, and pet boarding and daycare; providing alternatives to rehoming a pet by increasing access to pet support services; and utilizing friends, family, and neighbors as sources of community care and mutual aid.

### 6. DEFINITIONS

Focus group participants discussed their understanding of the terms pet-friendly versus pet-inclusive. Participants generally understood the terms to differ slightly: pet-friendly meant pets were allowed with some restrictions, whereas pet-inclusive meant all pets were allowed and the property offered pet-specific amenities.

A more detailed report on the focus groups is available [here](#).

# DALLAS

## THE MAP

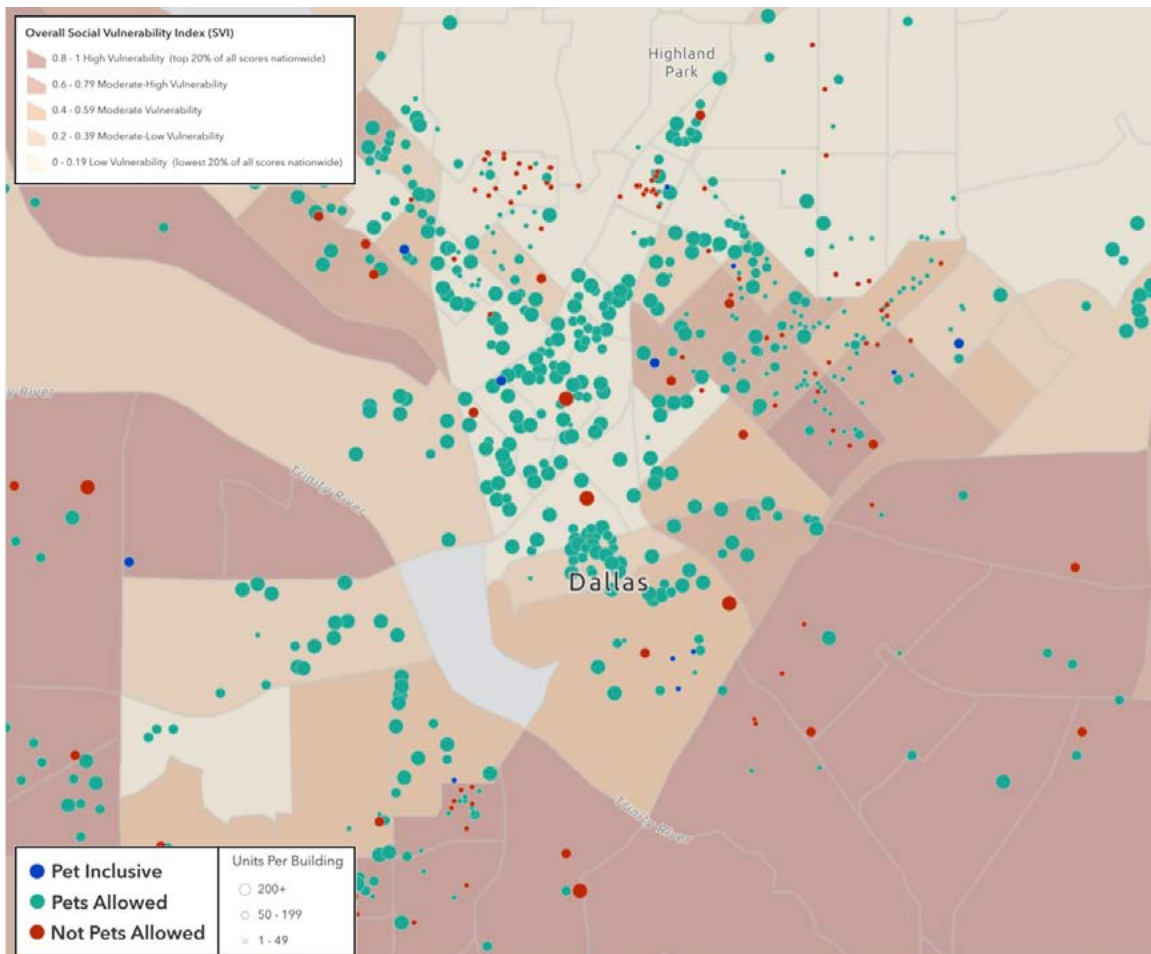
### NORMALIZED PET INCLUSION ACROSS GEOGRAPHY

Dallas-Fort Worth stands out as the strongest market for pet inclusion among the four regions studied. More than 85% of rental properties allow pets, and Pet-Inclusive properties (score  $\geq 88$ ) are broadly distributed.

As shown in Figure E, pet-allowing properties are broadly distributed across both lower- and

higher-vulnerability census tracts in the Dallas-Fort Worth region. Non-pet-allowing properties appear dispersed rather than spatially clustered, suggesting a weaker geographic alignment between socioeconomic vulnerability and pet exclusion compared to other markets studied.

**FIGURE E.**  
**PET POLICY DISTRIBUTION AND SOCIAL VULNERABILITY, DALLAS-FORT WORTH**

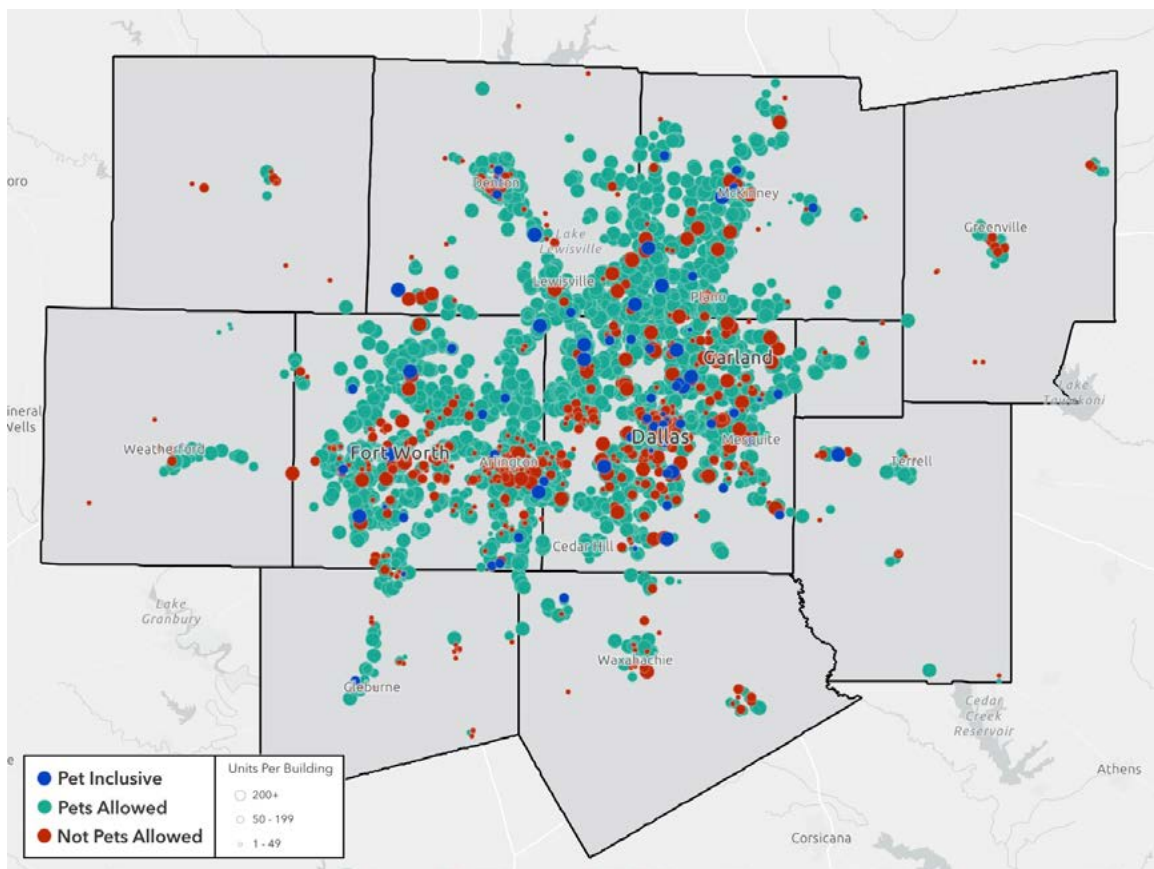


Rental properties in Dallas-Fort Worth classified by pet policy (Pets Allowed, Not Allowed, Pet Inclusive  $\geq 88$ ) overlaid with CDC Social Vulnerability Index (SVI) by census tract. Larger points represent larger properties.

When overlaid with SVI, pet allowance remains common even in higher-vulnerability tracts. Pet-Inclusive properties appear across multiple vulnerability tiers, suggesting a weaker spatial coupling between vulnerability and pet exclusion than observed elsewhere.” While breed and weight restrictions remain prevalent, Figure F demonstrates that pet allowance in Dallas-Fort Worth is not

confined to small-scale properties or niche submarkets. Larger developments are frequently classified as Pets Allowed or Pet Inclusive, indicating that high rates of inclusion are compatible with large-scale rental operations. Unlike more restrictive markets, inclusion in Dallas appears embedded within prevailing housing norms.

## FIGURE F. PROPERTY SIZE AND PET POLICY CLASSIFICATION, DALLAS-FORT WORTH



Caption: Rental properties in Dallas-Fort Worth displayed by pet policy category, with point size reflecting property size (number of units). Colors indicate Pets Allowed, Pets Not Allowed, and Pet Inclusive (score  $\geq 88$ ).

# COMPARISONS OF SPATIAL PATTERNS ACROSS MARKETS

While each metropolitan region demonstrates distinct characteristics, clear cross-market patterns emerge.

Dallas-Fort Worth exhibits the broadest normalization of pet allowance across geography and neighborhood vulnerability levels. Atlanta demonstrates high overall allowance but reveals pockets of exclusion concentrated in higher-vulnerability tracts. Philadelphia presents a mixed landscape with moderate spatial inequity. Los Angeles shows both the lowest allowance rates and the strongest geographic alignment between pet exclusion and socioeconomic vulnerability.

These contrasts suggest that pet policies are shaped not only by property characteristics, but also by market-level norms and local housing ecosystems. In some markets, institutional capacity appears to facilitate inclusion. In others, restrictive practices persist even among large-scale developments.

Taken together, the findings indicate that pet-inclusive housing is not solely a matter of individual landlord discretion, but a structural feature of regional housing systems — one that varies in degree and equity across markets.

# **POLICY AND PRACTICE IMPLICATIONS**

This multi-market analysis demonstrates that pet-inclusive housing is shaped by market norms, institutional capacity, and neighborhood-level socioeconomic dynamics. Across all four markets, pet-inclusive housing is patterned — by property scale, market norms, and neighborhood vulnerability. Addressing these patterns requires systems-level approaches that recognize pet policies as part of the broader housing equity landscape. Expanding access requires coordinated, systems-level strategies with engagement from tenants, housing providers, policymakers, and philanthropy.

While the spatial and quantitative analysis highlights structural patterns in pet-inclusive housing, the qualitative findings illuminate how those patterns are experienced by renters in practice. Mapping findings inform where barriers concentrate, while the qualitative findings inform how they're experienced and what solutions feel legitimate.

Together, these perspectives suggest that expanding pet-inclusive housing requires both shifts in market norms and targeted policy clarifications that strengthen stability and reduce inequitable burdens.

The recommendations are intended to support cross-sector dialogue among tenants, housing providers, policymakers, philanthropy and other community stakeholders — and to complement ongoing efforts to expand pet-inclusive housing through systems-level reform.

## FOR TENANTS

The solutions identified by tenants in the focus groups emphasize the importance of self-advocacy and mutual aid strategies when navigating the housing search process with pets.

### TENANTS CAN:

- Practice self-advocacy and negotiate directly with housing providers; know your rights as a tenant and advocate for inclusive pet policies and reasonable pet-related deposits, rent, and fees.
- Request that all pet-related policy and fee details are documented in writing.
- Utilize legal aid and other support services (e.g, case managers, housing navigators, animal shelters) when navigating barriers to finding or keeping housing with pets.
- Seek temporary boarding or foster care programs or utilize friends or family members as a source of temporary housing, as needed.

## FOR HOUSING PROVIDERS

The data show that high rates of pet allowance are operationally viable at scale. In markets such as Dallas-Fort Worth, pet inclusion is broadly normalized across property types and neighborhood conditions. In other markets, larger and professionally managed properties are more likely to allow pets, suggesting that institutional capacity supports inclusion.

### HOUSING PROVIDERS CAN:

- Reevaluate blanket breed and weight restrictions that may not reflect documented risk.
- Assess whether pet fee structures align with actual cost exposure.
- Leverage pet-inclusive policies as a tenant retention and market differentiation strategy.
- Expand inclusion in submarkets where pet “deserts” create unmet demand.

Where inclusive norms are established, spatial inequities appear less pronounced. Provider-led shifts in standard practice can influence broader market behavior.

## FOR POLICYMAKERS

Pet exclusion frequently concentrates in higher-vulnerability neighborhoods. When restrictive policies align geographically with socioeconomic stress, they may compound barriers to housing stability.

### **POLICYMAKERS CAN:**

- Examine the impact of breed- and weight-based restrictions.
- Evaluate whether pet-related fees impose disproportionate burdens.
- Consider incentives that encourage pet-inclusive development.
- Integrate pet policy considerations into broader housing stability strategies.

Market variation indicates that restrictive norms are not inevitable; policy frameworks and standards can shape inclusion over time.

## FOR PHILANTHROPY

The findings highlight opportunities for catalytic investment.

- Continue supporting data transparency and mapping that make structural inequities measurable.
- Invest in model policies, provider education, and risk mitigation tools that reduce perceived barriers.
- Foster cross-sector collaboration between housing and animal welfare stakeholders.

Markets such as Dallas-Fort Worth demonstrate that inclusive systems are possible. Strategic investment can help accelerate similar shifts in markets where exclusion remains concentrated.

# STAKEHOLDERS

We have generated a list of potential or ongoing stakeholders for policy-related actions to advance pet-inclusive housing in the four cities.

## LOS ANGELES

There has been considerable legislative advocacy relating to pets and housing at both the state and local level in California and Los Angeles, and a wide variety of stakeholders prominent at the national, state, and local levels have been involved in these efforts.

This issue has broad support from other types of animal welfare organizations, including municipal governments, large corporations such as Mars and Rover, animal shelters, nonprofits and unions representing tenants, and veterinary associations. And there has been no shortage of California citizens who have been willing to make their voices heard in committee hearings.

- Heart LA
- American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (ASPCA)
- Michelson Found Animals Pet Inclusive Housing Initiative
- Best Friends Animal Society
- Humane World for Animals (fka The Humane Society of the United States)
- California Animal Welfare Association
- Housing California
- Social Compassion in Legislation
- betterTogether Forever
- Los Angeles Tenants Union
- Animal Legal Defense Fund

Efforts in support of pet-inclusive policies have often been met with opposition from housing associations and individual landlords. Opponents of pet-friendly housing policies commonly argue that pets carry a risk of causing property damage, that insurers may refuse to cover damage stemming from certain breeds, sizes, or weights of dogs, and that pets can pose safety risk to other people living in a development. Associations representing housing providers in different parts of California have appeared at committee hearings to oppose legislation. These organizations include:

- Apartment Association of Greater Los Angeles
- Apartment Association of Orange County
- California Rental Housing Association
- Santa Barbara Rental Property Association
- Southern California Rental Housing Association
- Southern California Association of Non-Profit Housing

## PHILADELPHIA

Neither the state of Pennsylvania nor the city of Philadelphia have been involved in serious legislative efforts to protect pets in housing. Whereas numerous other cities and states have at least proposed legislation with the intent to keep more tenants together with their pets, it seems that no such legislation has reached the legislative committees in Philadelphia or Pennsylvania.

However, we have listed below a number of stakeholders that have been engaged in pet-inclusive legislative efforts in recent years across the country, and we have also listed below a number

of active animal welfare organizations active in Philadelphia that it could be helpful to reach out to.

- **Best Friends Animal Society**
- **American Kennel Club**
- **Humane World for Animals (The Humane Society of The United States)**
- **Animal Legal Defense Fund**
- **American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals**
- **Philadelphia Animal Welfare Society (PAWS)**
- **ACCT Philly**
- **Animal Coalition of Delaware County**
- **Morris Animal Refuge**
- **Pennsylvania Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals**

## ATLANTA

Neither the state of Georgia nor the city of Atlanta have been involved in serious legislative efforts to protect pets in housing. However, we have listed below a number of stakeholders that have been engaged in pet-inclusive legislative efforts in recent years across the country, and we have also listed below a number of active animal welfare organizations active in Atlanta that it could be helpful to reach out to.

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- **Animal Legal Defense Fund**
- **American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals**
- **Atlanta Humane Society**
- **Lifeline Animal Project**

- **PAWS Atlanta**
- **Atlanta Animal Rescue Friends**
- **Angels Among Us Pet Rescue**
- **Georgia Animal Rights and Protection**

## DALLAS

Most legislative efforts to increase access to pet-inclusive housing in Dallas-Fort Worth have been at the state level due to robust preemption by the state government in landlord-tenant law in Texas. In legislative committees, pet-inclusive housing legislation has been largely unsuccessful, but has garnered support from Texas cities, national, state, and local animal welfare organizations, and Texas citizens coming from a diverse set of backgrounds. Below is a list of organizations to reach out to for those who want to make housing more accessible for pet owners.

- **Best Friends Animal Society**
- **American Kennel Club**
- **Texas Housers**
- **Texas Pets Alive!**
- **The Humane Society of The United States**
- **Texas Community Association Advocates**

Legislation that proposed to include more pets in housing has been met with some opposition. The most common opponents were associations of housing providers, local Public Housing Authorities, and individual citizens. Typically, landlords will appear at committee hearings to oppose bills that they see as unfavorable for them. Opponents of pet-inclusive policy often state that pets pose risks to property and other tenants. Below is a list of organizations and Public Housing Authorities that have opposed pet-inclusive legislation:

- **TX NAHRO**
- **Housing Authority of the city of Austin**
- **Texas Apartment Association**

# CALL TO ACTION

## PET OWNERS AND RENTERS

- Know your rights as a renter/tenant
- Emotional support animals and reasonable accommodation process under Fair Housing Act
- Address common topics for conflict with landlords (pet damages, emergency contact, proof of vaccinations, leash policies)
- Address common topics for conflict with neighbors (barking, keep pets on leash)
- Meet with local officials
- Letters to the editor
- Resource list of legal aid and tenants rights organizations
- Resource list of pet support providers, including pet deposit and housing assistance or temporary housing providers for pets

## POLICYMAKERS

- Address affordable housing shortages
- Reduce relinquishment and clear the animal shelters/reduce animal shelter euthanasia by increasing pet inclusive housing
- Partner with tenants rights organizations
- Place-based strategies
- Eliminate or reduce pet related deposits, rent, or fees
- Eliminate breed and weight restrictions
- Align restrictions on number of pets with local ordinances
- Support services for unhoused people with pets

# APPENDIX A: RESEARCH METHODS

# THE MAP

The mapping and statistical analysis component was led by the Veterinary Care Accessibility Project (VCAP) in collaboration with the Pet-Inclusive Housing Initiative (PIHI). Additional analysis and mapping was carried out by Michelle Hansen.

The dataset included 27,284 rental properties sourced from Smart Apartment Data (February 2025 snapshot) across four predefined markets: Atlanta, Dallas-Fort Worth, Los Angeles, and Philadelphia

## **EACH PROPERTY RECORD INCLUDED:**

- **Pet allowance status**
- **Breed restrictions**
- **Weight limits**
- **Pet rent and deposits**
- **Building size, age, and management structure**

Properties were geocoded and joined to census tract-level Social Vulnerability Index (SVI) data from the CDC. Logistic regression models were used to examine predictors of pet allowance and other pet-restrictive policies.

A “Pet Fee Burden” metric was developed to quantify the financial impact of pet-related costs relative to average rent, allowing for comparison across markets and vulnerability levels

## **THE RESULTING INTERACTIVE MAP ENABLES VISUALIZATION OF:**

- **Pet-inclusive housing “deserts”**
- **Clustering of restrictive policies**
- **Relationships between pet policies and neighborhood vulnerability**
- **Cross-market comparisons**

The map is intended as both an analytical and advocacy tool, translating complex statistical findings into accessible visual insights for researchers and policymakers,

# FOCUS GROUPS

The focus groups were conducted in 2025 using a community-based participatory research (CBPR) approach. The study was a collaborative effort by Companions and Animals for Reform and Equity (CARE) and the Housing Equity and Advocacy Resource Team (HEART).

- Research questions co-created with research partner, HEART
- Virtual focus groups were conducted with 31 participants in January 2025 through November 2025
- \$50 electronic gift card incentive for each participant
- Zoom transcripts were manually verified and de-identified
- Transcripts were coded inductively using a rapid qualitative analysis approach

## FOCUS GROUP PARTICIPANT DEMOGRAPHICS

A total of 31 BIPOC pet owners across the four focus cities, Los Angeles (n = 10), Philadelphia (n = 8), Atlanta (n = 7), and Dallas (n = 6), participated in the focus groups. The demographic characteristics of the focus group participants are presented in Table 1.

**TABLE 1.**  
**DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS OF FOCUS GROUP PARTICIPANTS (N = 31)**

<b>CHARACTERISTICS</b>	<b>N (%)</b>
<b>GENDER</b>	
WOMAN	25 (80.6)
MAN	3 (9.7)
DID NOT RESPOND	3 (9.7)
<b>RACE/ETHNICITY *</b>	
BLACK	21 (67.7)
SOUTH AMERICAN/CENTRAL AMERICAN/MEXICAN	6 (19.4)
EAST ASIAN	2 (6.5)
MULTIRACIAL	2 (6.5)
<b>AGE</b>	
18-24	3 (9.7)
25-34	11 (35.5)
35-44	10 (32.3)
55-64	4 (12.9)
DID NOT RESPOND	3 (9.7)
<b>PET OWNERSHIP *</b>	
DOGS	25 (80.6)
CATS	15 (48.4)
OTHER PETS (INCLUDED FISH AND TURTLES)	1 (3.2)
NO PETS	1 (3.2)

<b>EDUCATION LEVEL</b>	
<b>SOME HIGH SCHOOL</b>	<b>1 (3.2)</b>
<b>HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMA</b>	<b>10 (32.3)</b>
<b>SOME COLLEGE/CURRENTLY ENROLLED</b>	<b>4 (12.9)</b>
<b>ASSOCIATE DEGREE</b>	<b>5 (16.1)</b>
<b>BACHELOR DEGREE</b>	<b>5 (16.1)</b>
<b>MASTERS OR OTHER GRADUATE DEGREE</b>	<b>2 (6.4)</b>
<b>PROFESSIONAL DEGREE</b>	<b>1 (3.2)</b>
<b>DID NOT RESPOND</b>	<b>3 (9.7)</b>
<b>HOUSING STATUS *</b>	
<b>RENTER IN UNIT THAT ALLOWS PETS</b>	<b>15 (45.5)</b>
<b>LIVING WITH FAMILY/FRIENDS</b>	<b>7 (21.2)</b>
<b>RENTER IN UNIT THAT DOES NOT ALLOW PETS</b>	<b>6 (18.2)</b>
<b>EMERGENCY OR TEMPORARY HOUSING</b>	<b>4 (12.1)</b>

\*Participants could select more than one response; the percentage may exceed 100.

# APPENDIX B:

## ADDITIONAL MAPS

This appendix includes the complete set of static spatial maps and representative views from the interactive mapping platform developed for this study.

For each market, four views are provided:

### **1. INTERACTIVE PLATFORM VIEW (REPRESENTATIVE SCREENSHOT)**

A static capture of the web-based mapping application, demonstrating the interactive layers and filtering functionality available to users.

### **2. ALL VIEW**

Displays all rental properties classified by pet policy, with point size representing property size (number of units).

### **3. ZOOM GREY VIEW**

A zoomed-out metropolitan view emphasizing clustering of pet policy classifications without socioeconomic overlay.

### **4. ZOOM SVI VIEW**

A zoomed-out view overlaying pet policy classifications with census tract-level Social Vulnerability Index (SVI) data.

The static maps support standardized comparison across markets, while the platform view illustrates the broader analytical tool developed through this project.

Methodological Note on Map Construction and Platform Development: The spatial analysis in this study integrates property-level rental data with neighborhood-level vulnerability metrics to examine geographic patterns of pet-inclusive housing.

## **DATA SOURCES**

Rental Property Data: Smart Apartment Data (February 2025 snapshot), including 27,284 geocoded properties.

Neighborhood Vulnerability Data: CDC Social Vulnerability Index (SVI), linked at the census tract level.

## **PROPERTY CLASSIFICATION**

Each property was categorized into one of three tiers:

- **Pets Not Allowed**
- **Pets Allowed**
- **Pet Inclusive (Score  $\geq 88$ )**

The Pet-Inclusive Score is a composite metric derived from breed restrictions, weight limits, pet rent, and deposit structures. A threshold of 88 was used to identify properties with fewer restrictions and lower relative financial burden.

## **STATIC MAPS VS. INTERACTIVE PLATFORM**

Two complementary mapping approaches were developed:

### **STATIC MAPS**

Standardized visualizations used for structured comparison across markets. These maps apply consistent scale, symbology, and classification thresholds to ensure comparability.

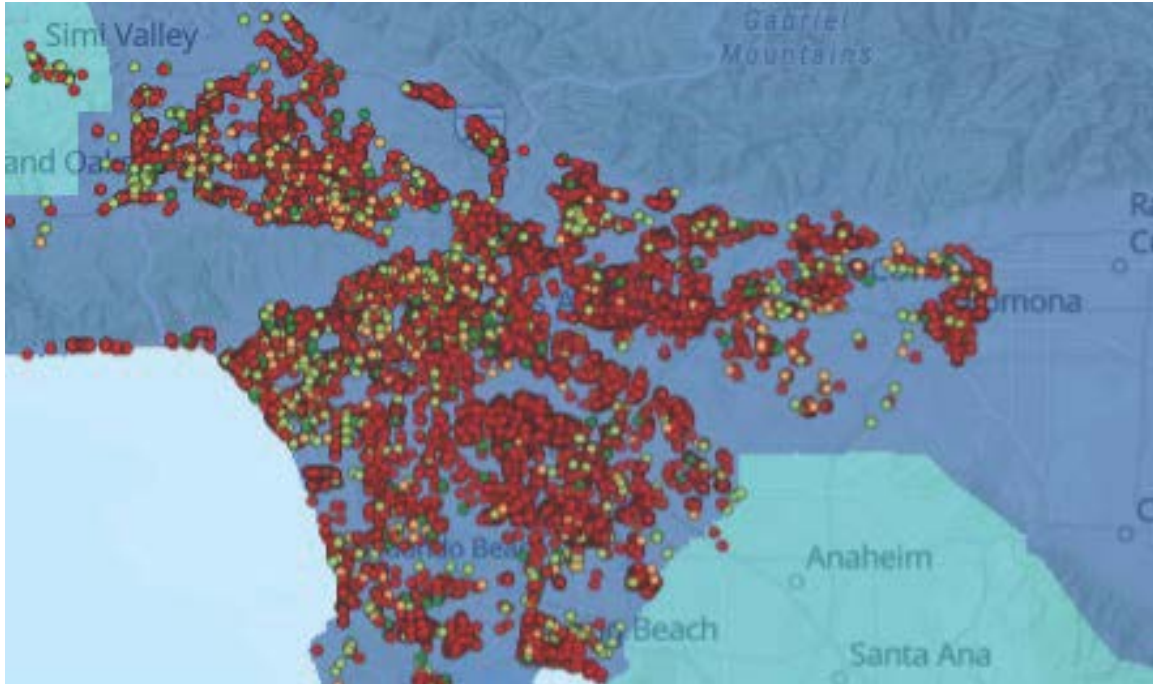
### **INTERACTIVE MAPPING PLATFORM**

A web-based tool that allows users to toggle layers, explore specific neighborhoods, filter by property characteristics, and examine underlying data attributes. The representative screenshots included in this appendix demonstrate the platform's functionality.

While the main body of this report relies on static maps for controlled analytical interpretation, the interactive platform provides an adaptable tool for continued research, stakeholder engagement, and policy discussion.

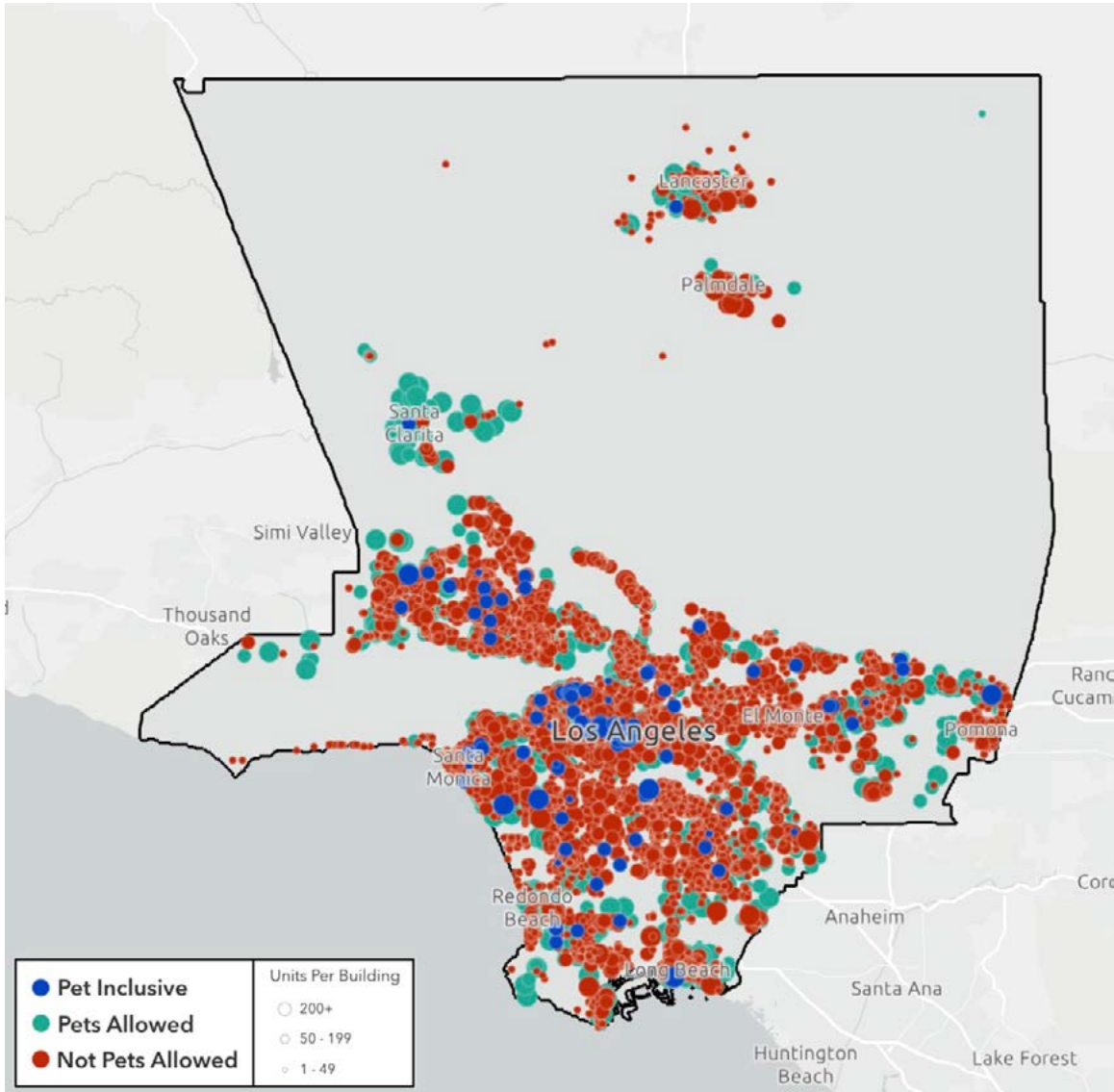
# APPENDIX B1. LOS ANGELES

**FIGURE B1.**  
**INTERACTIVE MAPPING PLATFORM (REPRESENTATIVE VIEW), LOS ANGELES**



Static capture of Los Angeles County using the interactive mapping tool developed for this project.

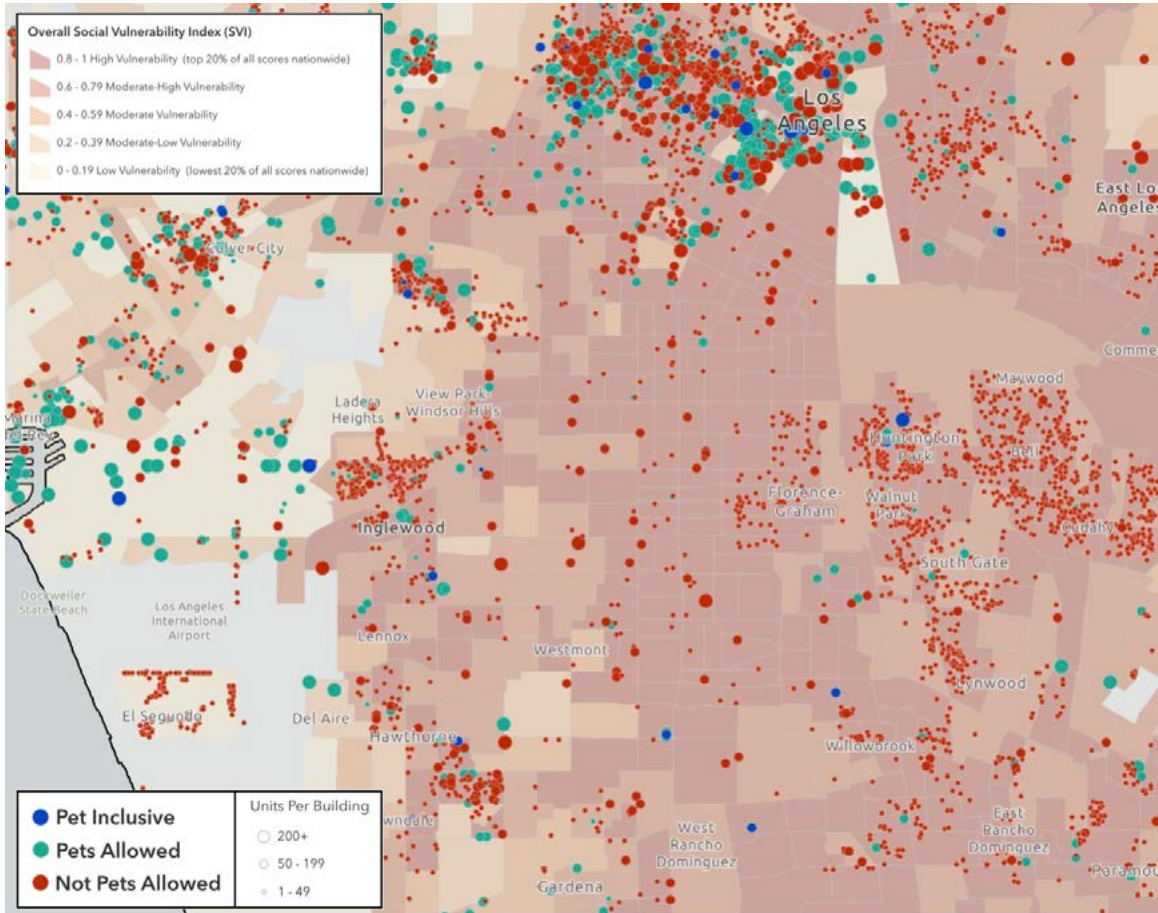
**FIGURE B2.**  
**PROPERTY SIZE AND PET POLICY CLASSIFICATION (ALL VIEW), LOS ANGELES**



Rental properties in Los Angeles County displayed by pet policy category. Point size reflects property size.



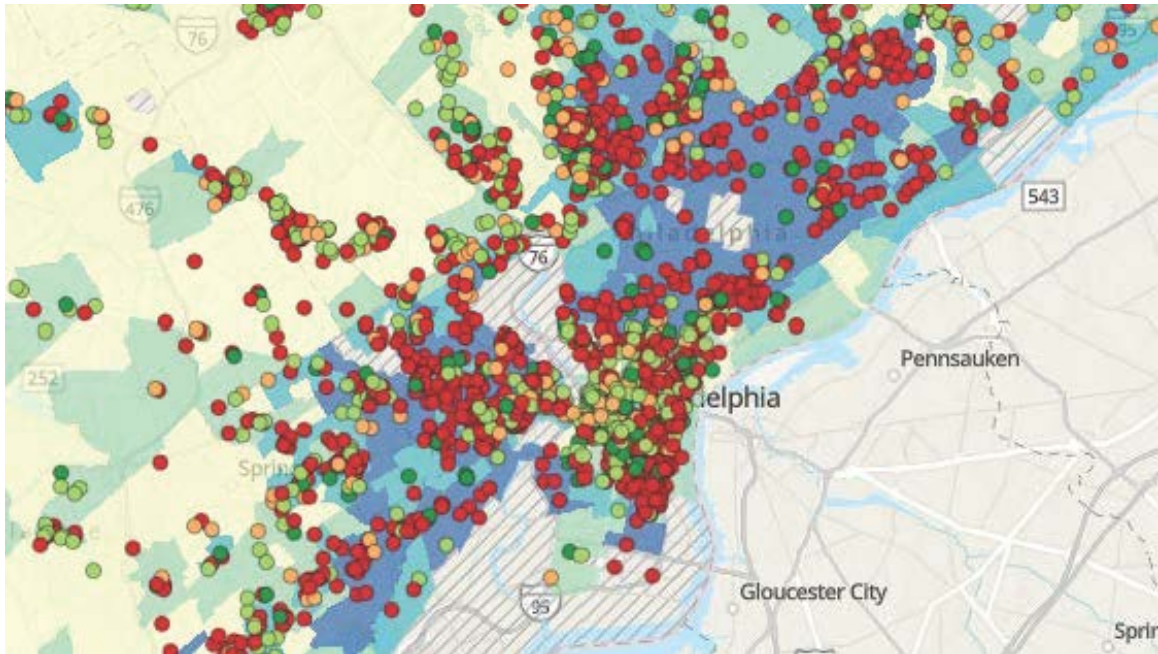
**FIGURE B4.**  
**PET POLICY AND SOCIAL VULNERABILITY (ZOOM SVI VIEW), LOS ANGELES**



Rental properties in Los Angeles County displayed by pet policy category. Point size reflects property size. Tract shading indicates SVI.

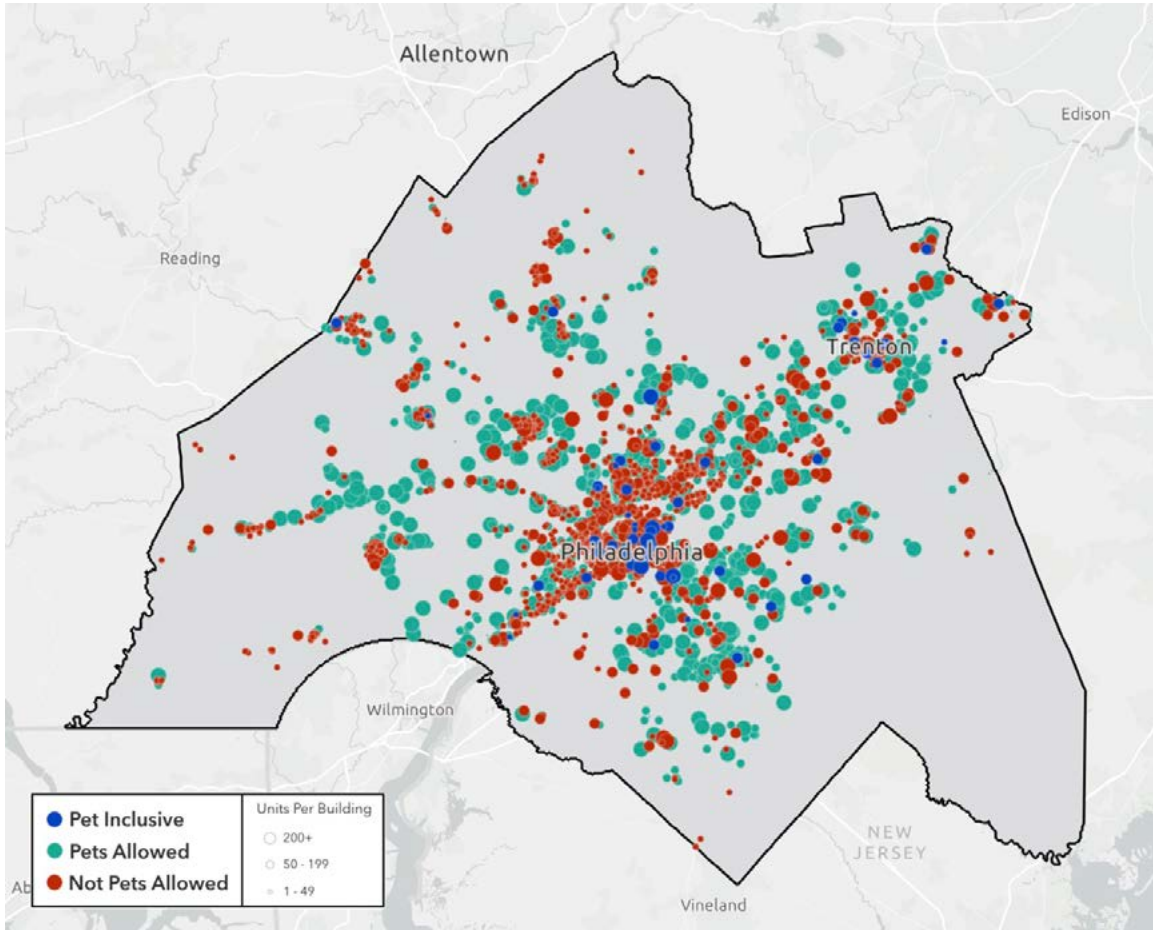
# APPENDIX B2. PHILADELPHIA

**FIGURE B5.**  
**INTERACTIVE MAPPING PLATFORM (REPRESENTATIVE VIEW), PHILADELPHIA**



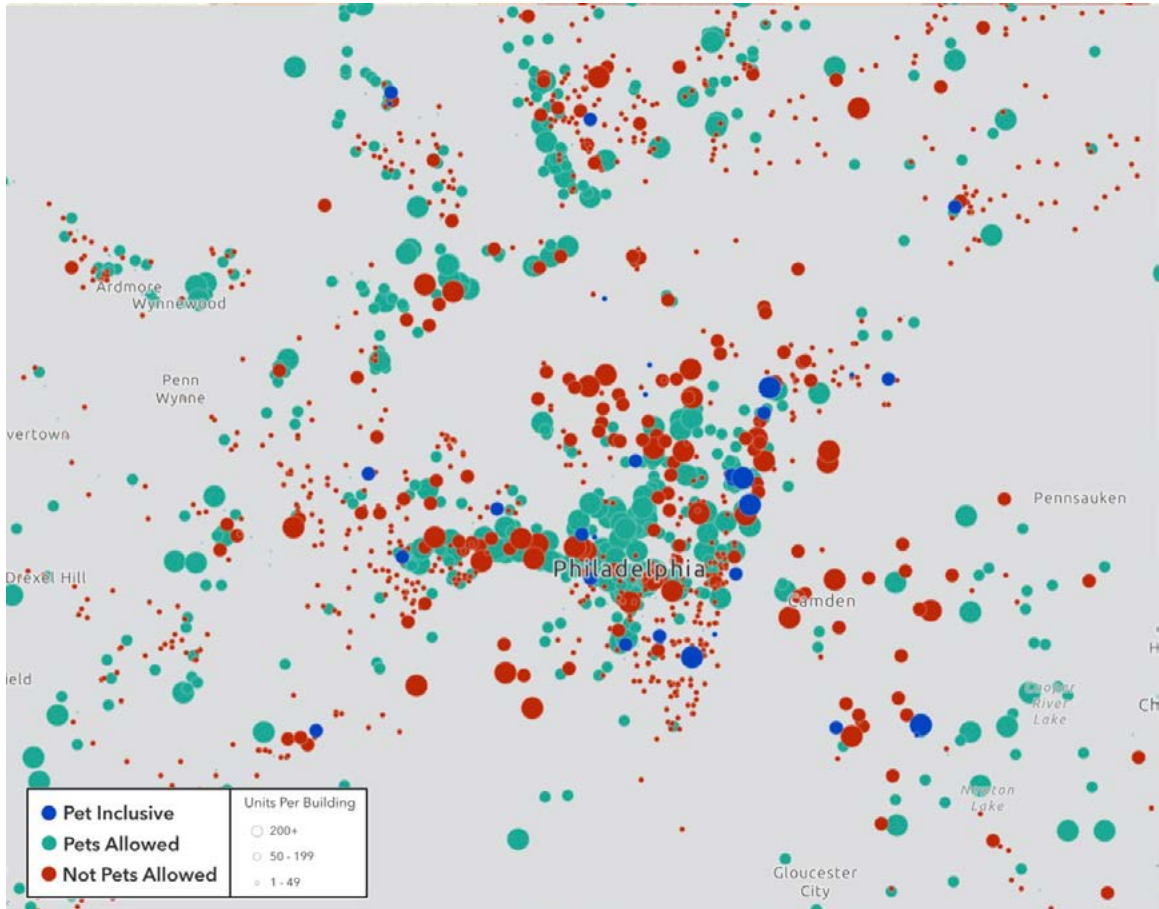
Static capture of Philadelphia using the interactive mapping tool developed for this project.

**FIGURE B6.**  
**PROPERTY SIZE AND PET POLICY CLASSIFICATION (ALL VIEW), PHILADELPHIA**



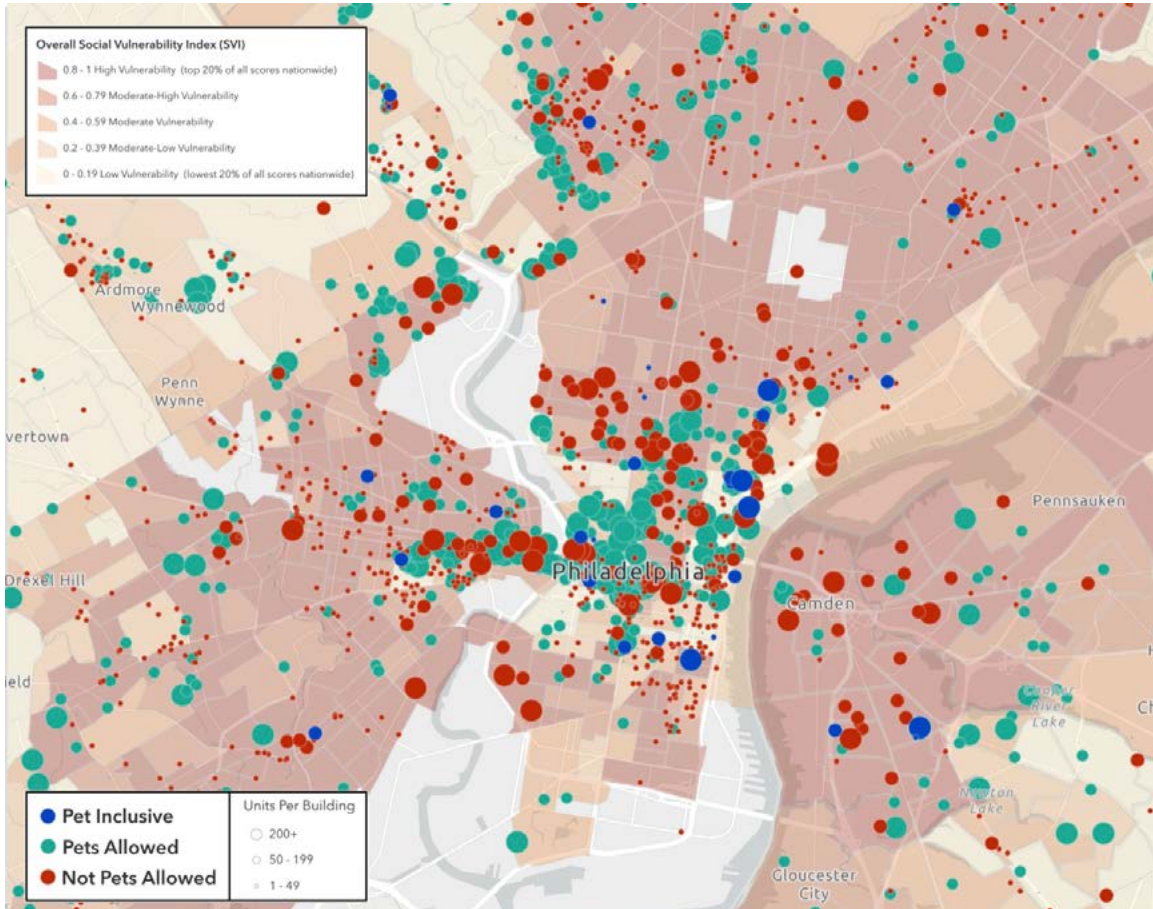
Rental properties in Philadelphia displayed by pet policy category. Point size reflects property size.

**FIGURE B7.**  
**METROPOLITAN DISTRIBUTION OF PET POLICY (ZOOM GREY VIEW), PHILADELPHIA**



Rental properties in Philadelphia displayed by pet policy category. Point size reflects property size.

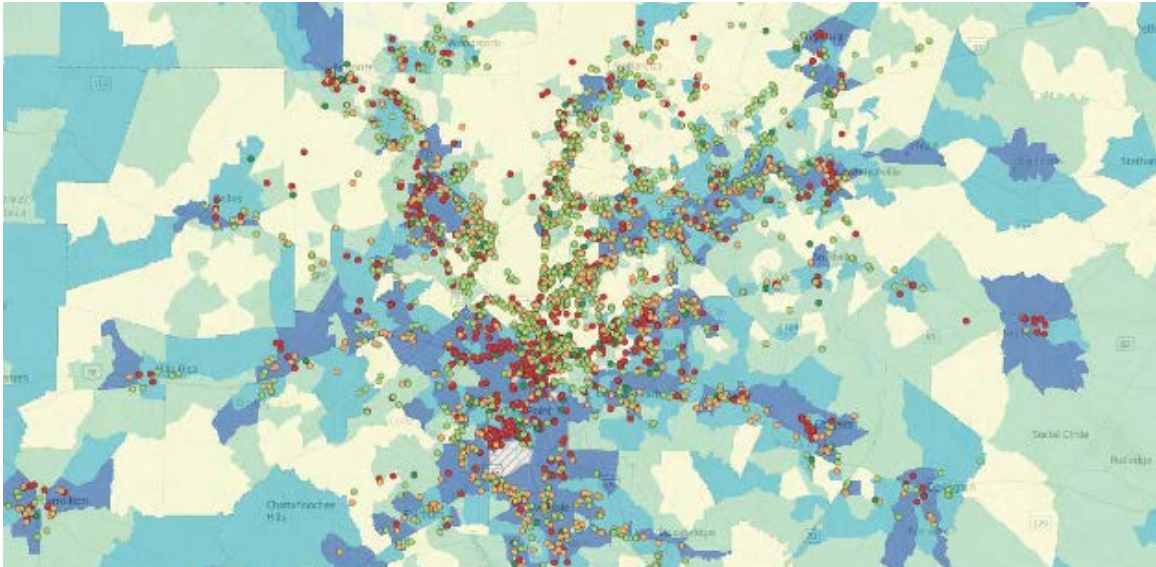
**FIGURE B8.**  
**PET POLICY AND SOCIAL VULNERABILITY (ZOOM SVI VIEW), PHILADELPHIA**



Rental properties in Philadelphia displayed by pet policy category. Point size reflects property size.  
 Tract shading indicates SVI.

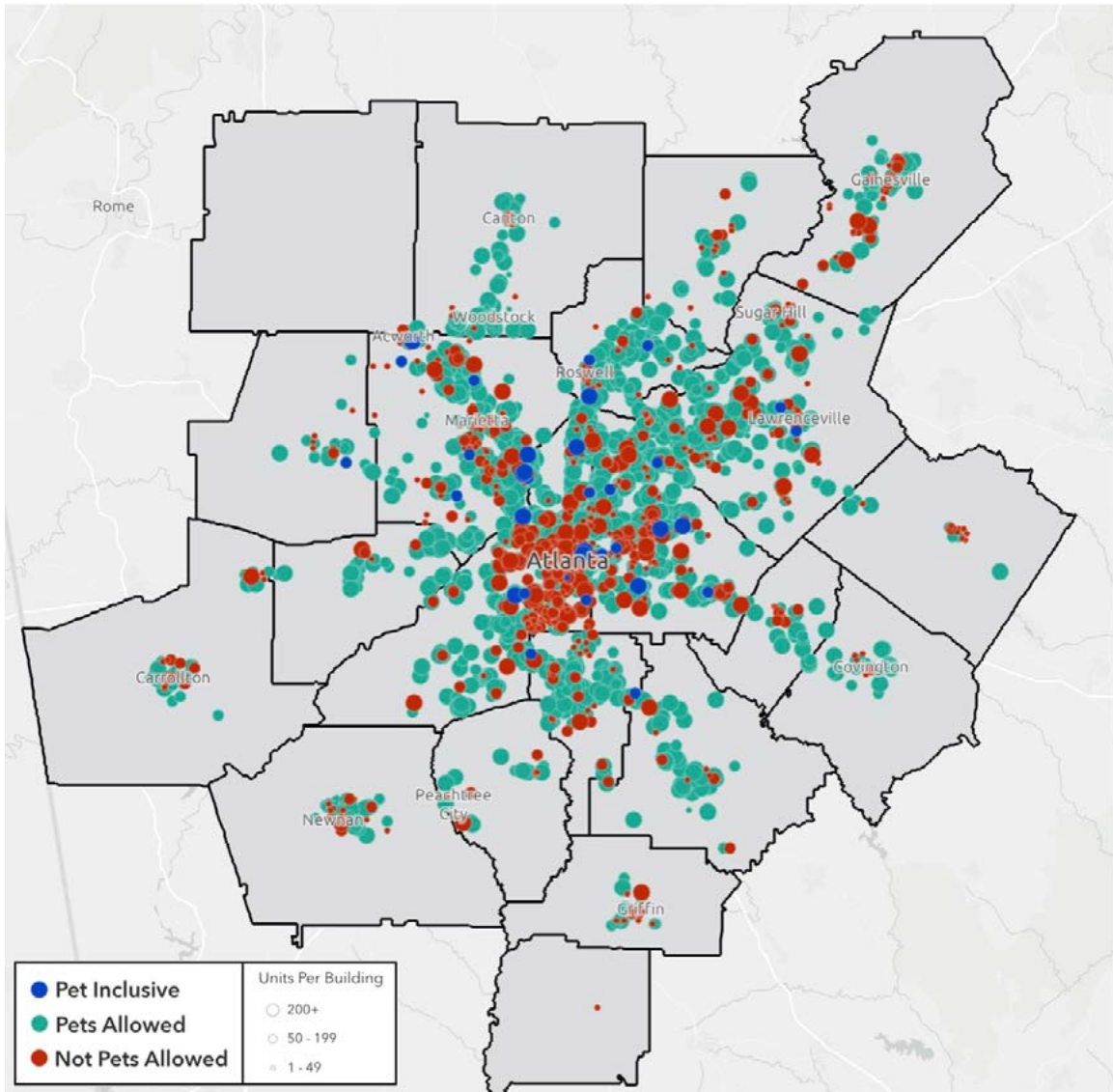
# APPENDIX B3. ATLANTA

**FIGURE B9.  
INTERACTIVE MAPPING PLATFORM (REPRESENTATIVE VIEW), ATLANTA**



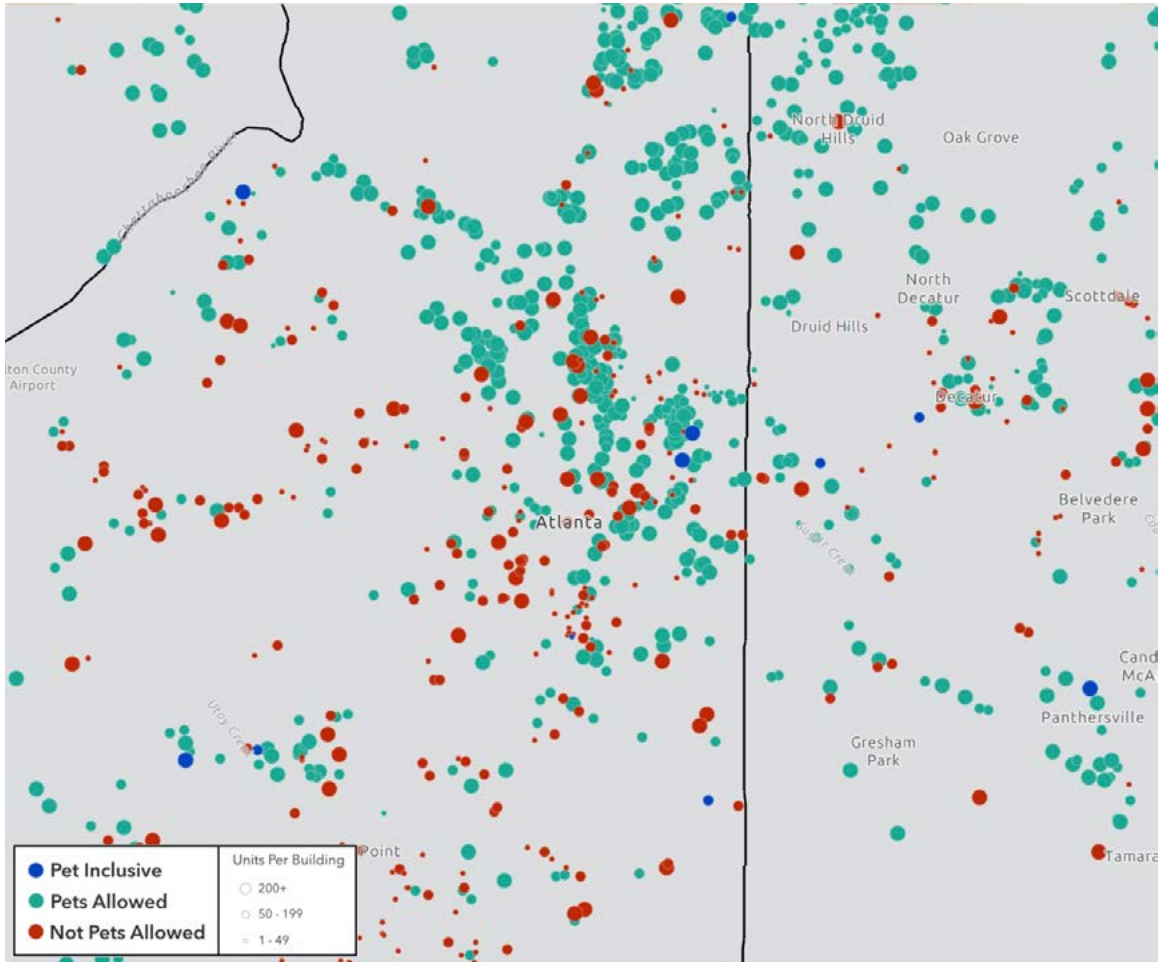
Static capture of Atlanta using the interactive mapping tool developed for this project.

**FIGURE B10.**  
**PROPERTY SIZE AND PET POLICY CLASSIFICATION (ALL VIEW), ATLANTA**



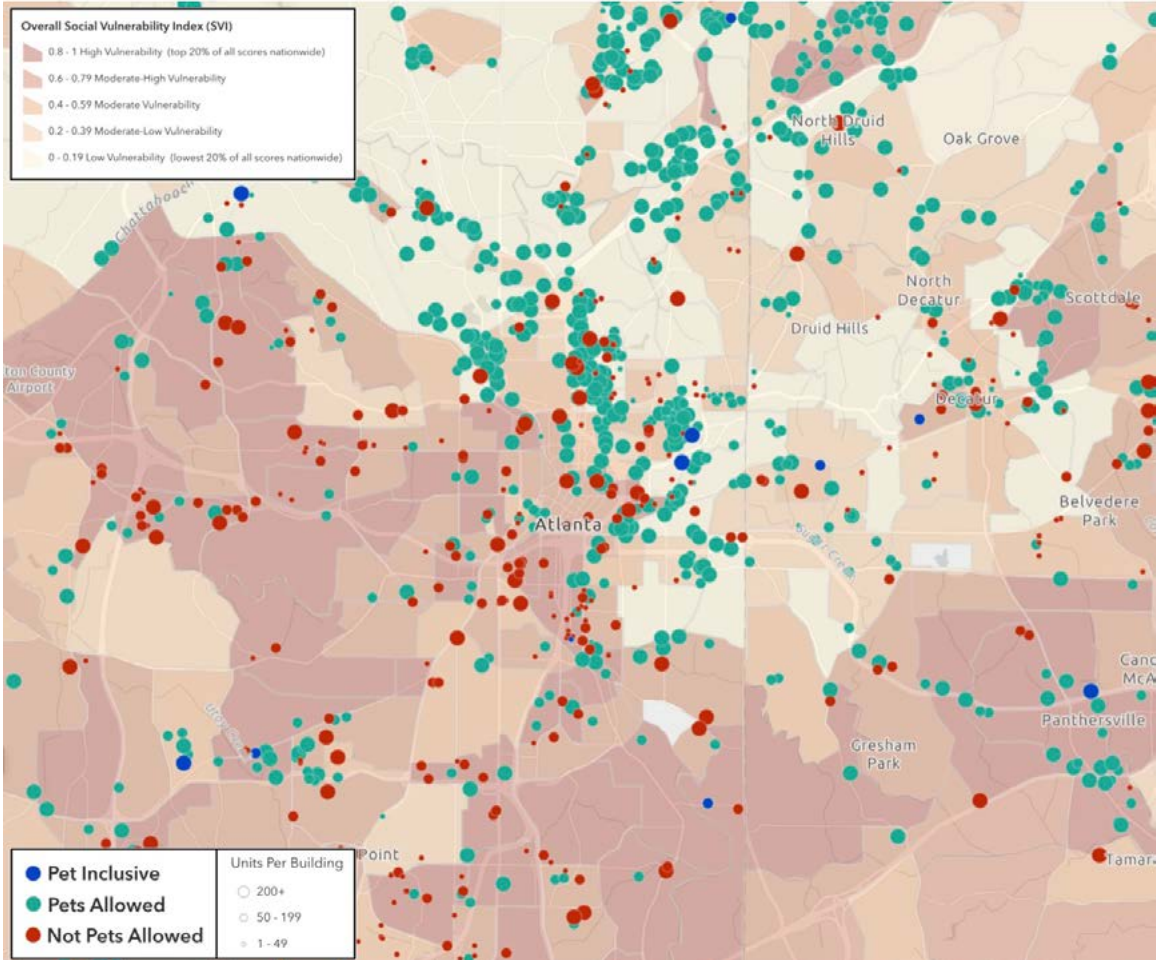
Rental properties in Atlanta displayed by pet policy category. Point size reflects property size.

**FIGURE B11.**  
**METROPOLITAN DISTRIBUTION OF PET POLICY (ZOOM GREY VIEW), ATLANTA**



Rental properties in Atlanta displayed by pet policy category. Point size reflects property size.

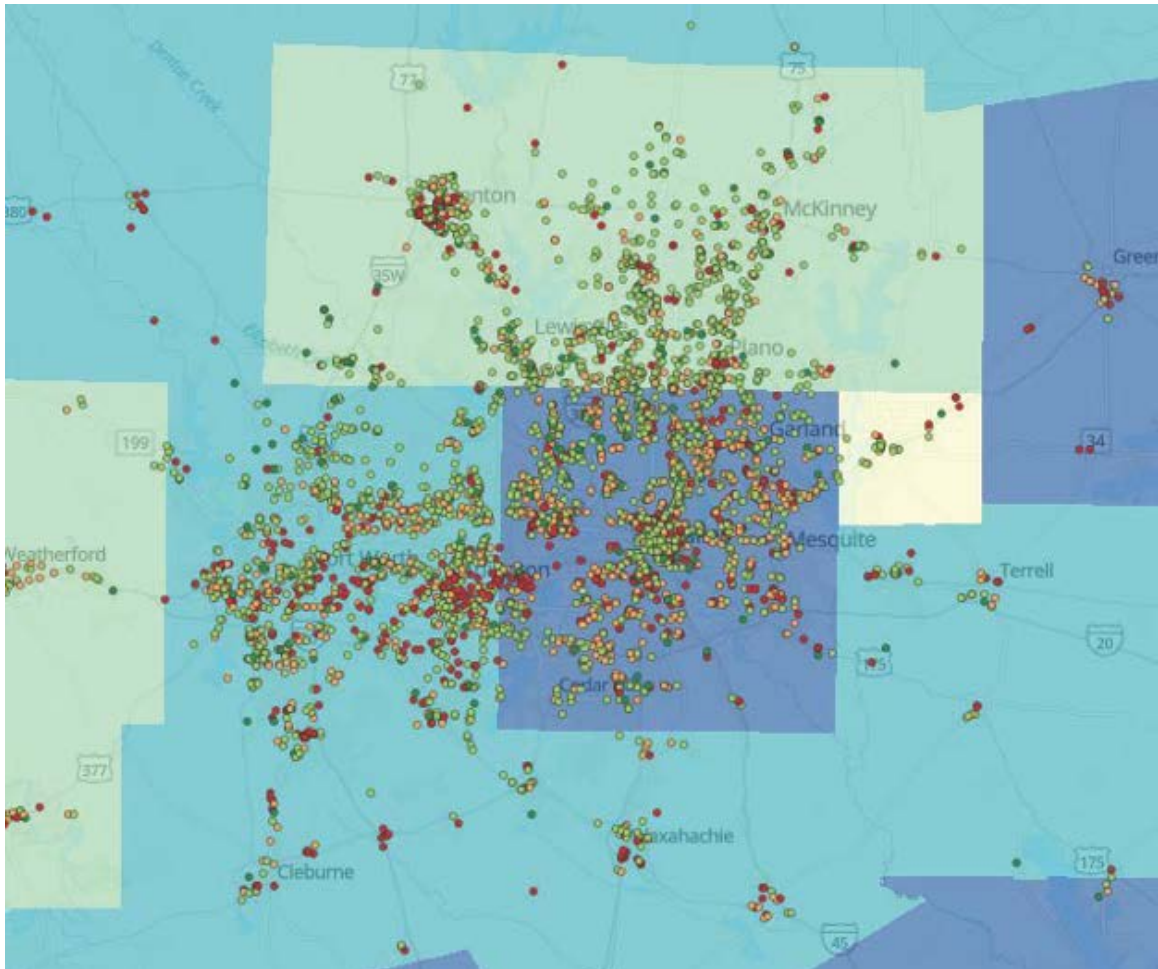
**FIGURE B12.**  
**PET POLICY AND SOCIAL VULNERABILITY (ZOOM SVI VIEW), ATLANTA**



Rental properties in Atlanta displayed by pet policy category. Point size reflects property size. Tract shading indicates SVI.

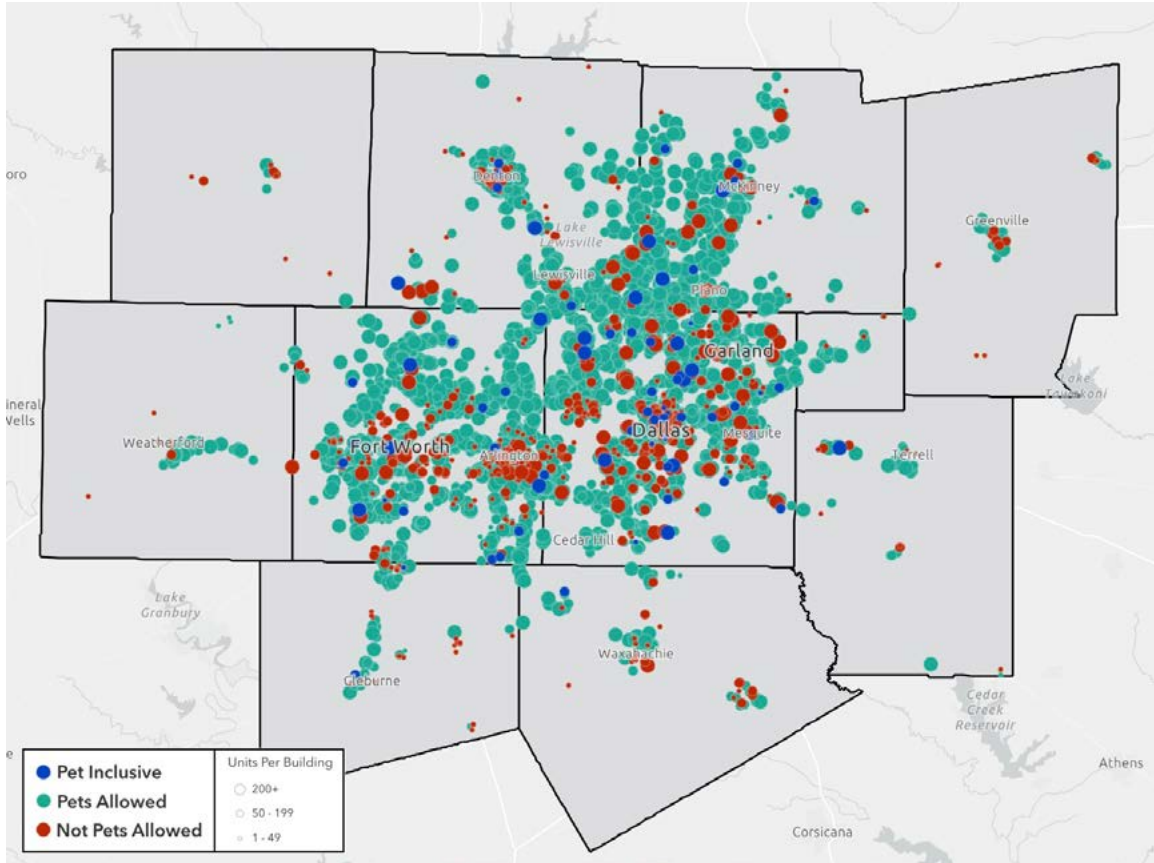
# APPENDIX B4. DALLAS

**FIGURE B13.**  
**INTERACTIVE MAPPING PLATFORM (REPRESENTATIVE VIEW),**  
**DALLAS-FORT WORTH**



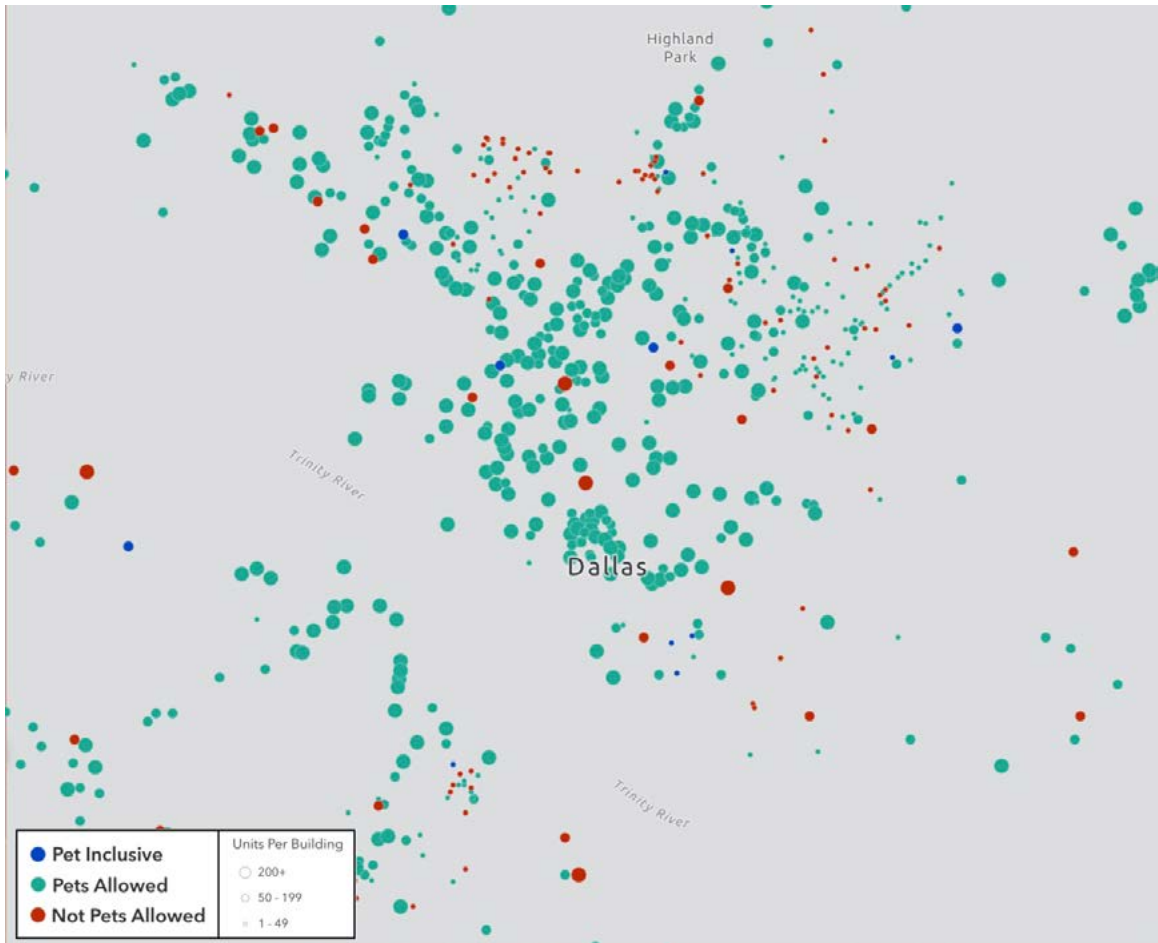
Static capture of Dallas-Fort Worth using the interactive mapping tool developed for this project.

**FIGURE B14.**  
**PROPERTY SIZE AND PET POLICY CLASSIFICATION (ALL VIEW),**  
**DALLAS-FORT WORTH**



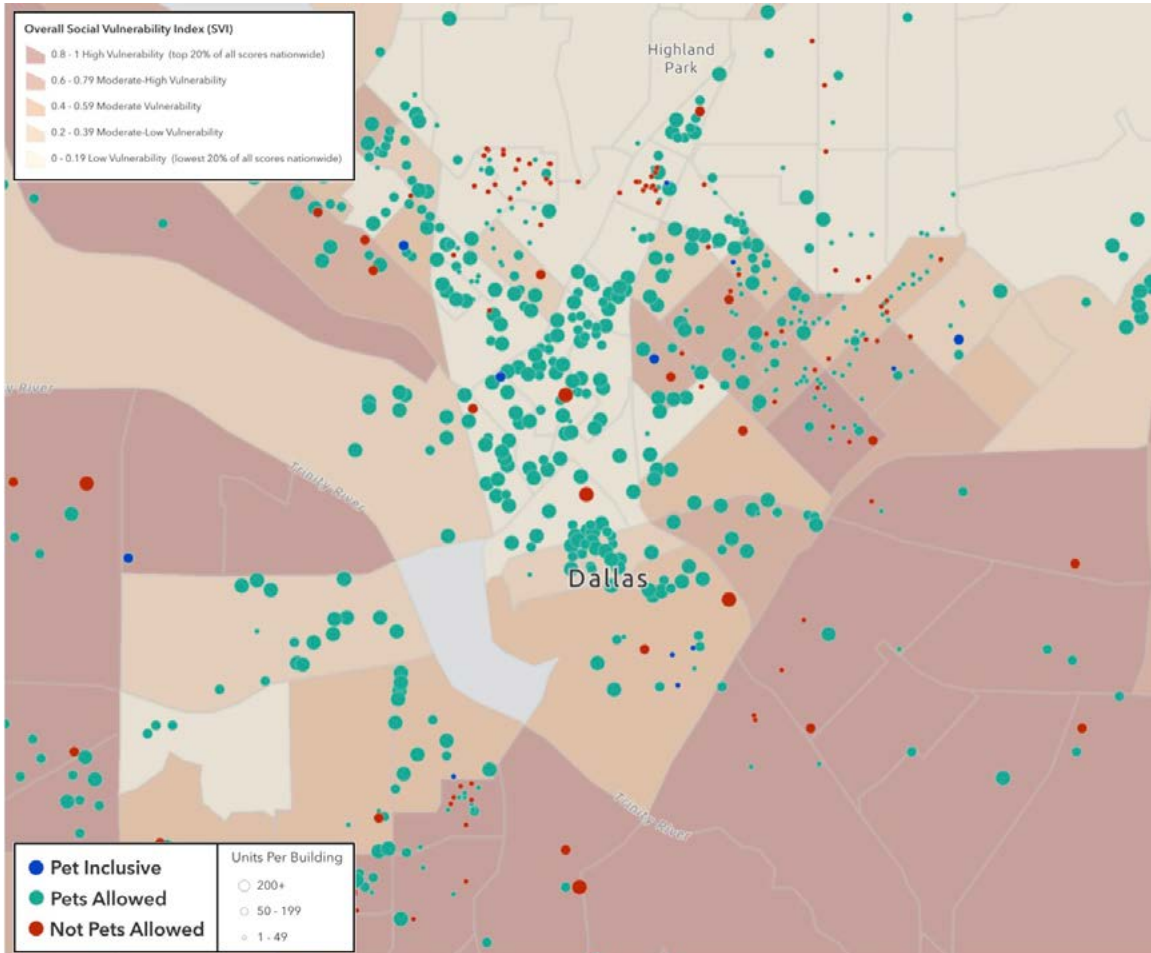
Rental properties in Dallas-Forth Worth displayed by pet policy category. Point size reflects property size.

**FIGURE B15.**  
**METROPOLITAN DISTRIBUTION OF PET POLICY (ZOOM GREY VIEW),**  
**DALLAS-FORT WORTH**



Rental properties in Dallas-Fort Worth displayed by pet policy category. Point size reflects property size.

**FIGURE B16.**  
**PET POLICY AND SOCIAL VULNERABILITY (ZOOM SVI VIEW), DALLAS-FORT WORTH**



Rental properties in Dallas-Forth Worth displayed by pet policy category. Point size reflects property size. Tract shading indicates SVI.

