

Women and the Gendered Inequalities

| by Antonia Castañeda



of the Mayor's Task Force on Preserving Dynamic and Diverse Neighborhoods

I represent the Westside Preservation Alliance, an organization concerned with preserving the history, culture, and architecture of working class communities in San Antonio, especially in the Westside, where people, their homes and other structures are especially vulnerable; all too often targeted for demolition. These communities are especially vulnerable to displacement and disappearance, one of the many consequences of gentrification.

Thank you everyone for being here; civic engagement and expression of concern to our public officials in a very public

with children in San Antonio, both homeowners and renters, are spending more than 30% of their income on housing. Together, they total 54% of married couples with kids; 68% of single fathers, and a massive 98% of single mothers. I repeat, 98% of single mothers in San Antonio pay over 30% of their income on housing.

As we might expect, Income is another pivotal building block for women's financial security. And in the San Antonio Metro area, a major "wage gap" of \$7,364 per year exists between

security, including education, child care, and insurance.

The point here is that the Mayor's Task Force on Preserving Dynamic and Diverse Neighborhoods in San Antonio, the city that the PEW Research Center identified as the most economically segregated City in the United States, failed to address housing issues among the sector of our population who are the most housing burdened, and thus the most vulnerable among our city's residents—low income, single mothers—who live in the most vulnerable of our inner city neighborhoods.² Certainly Mission Trails Mobile Home Park, in which the City Council members' vote on rezoning, displaced and discarded over three hundred long-time residents, amply bears out this truth. The majority of the residents of Mission Trails were women, and over one hundred and fifty were children. The children of Mission Trails, and the children of single mothers throughout the city, are our future, Mayor Taylor. We can best secure their future, and the future of San Antonio, by understanding and addressing their housing needs; and by ensuring that working class families, and most especially working class women, and particularly single women with children are able to remain in their homes and in their neighborhood. The report, which does not mention the gendered inequalities rampant in all aspects of life in our city, beginning with the housing burden that single women with children in San Antonio live, needs to be specifically, clearly, fully addressed in the Report of the Task Force on Preserving Dynamic and Diverse Neighborhoods, and the proposed Commission on Housing further charged with conceptualizing and developing equitable solutions to the gendered inequalities pertaining to housing that were patently, painfully evident in travesty that is the manner in which the city dealt with the Mission Trails residents by rezoning their homes out from under them. ❖

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way continues to be a critically important venue for holding publicly elected officials accountable to their constituency. These are the actions of which Democracy is made! We hold Mayor Taylor accountable for the refusal to tackle the issue of gentrification as part of the Task Force on Preserving Dynamic and Diverse Neighborhoods, for essentially subverting the intent and process of the Task Force, and for the lack of deeper analysis and wider context of the current Report.

With respect to deeper analysis, I want to focus on gender, specifically on women, and the reality of women and housing in the San Antonio, which the Task Force did not address. Here I draw upon the document entitled "Economic Issues for Women in Texas: San Antonio Metro Area" that the Texas Women's Foundation and the Center for Public Policy Priorities prepared and presented at Café College in the fall of 2014.¹ This Report identifies housing as a primary building block for women's financial security, and calls it the ANCHOR. Accordingly, the majority of all families

full time working men and women. That is, women earn 82 cents for every dollar a man earns. The wage gap is reflected in the same sectors, where women earn almost a thousand dollars less than men! Jobs more common for women tend to pay less than jobs more common for men. Not surprisingly, single mothers in San Antonio area are much more likely to live in poverty: Of two parent households, 10% live in Poverty; of single father households, 21% live in poverty; and of single mother households, 40% live in poverty. Child care costs are 23% of a single mothers' income. Time constraints today do not permit us to address other pivotal issues pertaining to financial



Women in the S.A. metro area earn \$7,364 less than men a year.

*Illustration from Economic Issues for Women In TX Report.