

## **Variables Affecting Neighborhood's Socioeconomic Status: A Case Study of the San Francisco Bay Area**

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### **Abstract**

The main purpose of this research is to examine the factors that determine the socioeconomic status of residential neighborhoods. Analyzing the 1970, 1980, and 1990 census data, this study found that among the Bay Area's five counties--Alameda, Contra Costa, Marin, San Francisco, and San Mateo--a neighborhood's socioeconomic status was affected primarily by its growth, accessibility, site and persistence. In general, each of these variables had a positive impact on the neighborhood's socioeconomic status. However, the impact of accessibility--as measured by the availability of Bay Area Rapid Transit (BART) service--on a neighborhood's socioeconomic status was not always significant when holding other variables constant. While those census tracts with BART lines going through them saw little or no improvement in their socioeconomic status, those areas surrounded by BART stations and those counties having BART lines passing through them did experience a noticeable rise in socioeconomic status when other variables were controlled. It should be pointed out, however, that the actual impact of BART was not fully evident in the census data until 1990, since the BART system did not begin operating until 1974-1976.