

# UC Berkeley

## Berkeley Planning Journal

### Title

Inclusionary Housing in International Perspective: Affordable Housing, Social Inclusion, and Land Value Recapture Edited by Nico Calavita and Alan Mallach

### Permalink

<https://escholarship.org/uc/item/05b1z7z1>

### Journal

Berkeley Planning Journal, 24(1)

### Author

Wegmann, Jake

### Publication Date

2011

### DOI

10.5070/BP324111873

### Copyright Information

Copyright 2011 by the author(s). All rights reserved unless otherwise indicated. Contact the author(s) for any necessary permissions. Learn more at <https://escholarship.org/terms>

Peer reviewed

**BOOK REVIEW****Inclusionary Housing in International Perspective: Affordable Housing, Social Inclusion, and Land Value Recapture****Edited by Nico Calavita and Alan Mallach  
Cambridge, Mass: Lincoln Institute of Land Policy, 2010**

Reviewed by Jake Wegman

Affordable housing often, these days, appears to occupy a low rank on the planning agenda. Emergent issues such as climate change and the obesity crisis, along with the various solutions that planning proposes for them, seem to take up much of the available planning communication bandwidth. Indeed, with a widespread foreclosure crisis in the United States and drastically depressed housing prices in much of the world, many have come to see housing affordability as a less urgent concern than it once was. But Nico Calavita and Alan Mallach, editors of *Inclusionary Housing in International Perspective: Affordable Housing, Social Inclusion, and Land Value Recapture*, shine a spotlight on a quiet revolution that has sought to integrate affordable housing provision directly into the planning system. Although inclusionary housing arose four decades ago in a few high-cost pockets of the United States—principally in California, Massachusetts, New Jersey, and Maryland—the practice has, as Calavita and Mallach show, spread worldwide since then.

International comparisons in planning are difficult and labor-intensive, and perhaps especially so in housing, which is deeply intertwined with a nation's political context, finance system, and even culturally specific conceptions of the good life. Calavita and Mallach are exceptionally well-positioned to take on this demanding task. Both have spent their careers studying inclusionary housing policies in the United States and Europe. One or both of them is the lead author on nine of the ten chapters in this book, which contains individual case studies examining inclusionary housing in the United States, Canada, Ireland, France, Spain, and Italy, with a survey chapter examining various nations in Latin America, Europe, Africa, Australia, and Asia. (The tenth chapter focuses on England.) Because of their expertise, and the expertise of contributors from the various nations discussed in the book, *Inclusionary Housing* is able to combine a wide geographic scope with a consistency of voice and editorial coherence that is unusual in an edited volume.

While Calavita and Mallach take pains to disclaim any notions that inclusionary housing is a panacea for the affordability crises that beset nations throughout the OECD and beyond, their book paints a picture of a policy innovation that, in its various place-specific guises, has made considerable progress. Unlike the model of public housing provision that prevailed in much of the world after World War II, inclusionary housing has the potential to ameliorate rather than exacerbate social exclusion. It does this by adding affordable housing to the list of infrastructure items needed in order for market-driven development to “pay its own way.” The authors argue that this practice is most effective when it is linked to land value increases created by governmental action, such as upzonings.

At the same time, *Inclusionary Housing* is true to the spirit of its publisher, the Cambridge, Massachusetts-based Lincoln Institute of Land Policy, which explicitly sees itself as carrying on the legacy of the 19<sup>th</sup> century municipal tax and land policy reformer Henry George. By insisting on taking a hard look at urban land economics, a technical but all-important topic that is too often neglected in planning, Calavita and Mallach are able to temper their assessment of inclusionary housing with a clear-eyed evaluation of its potential in the real world. For this reason, *Inclusionary Housing* is sure to stand as a landmark reference in housing policy for years to come.