Housing Equity

Data Explorations and Insights
For Paterson, NJ and Syracuse, NY

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How can data help transform Paterson, NJ into a thriving, liveable city?

Challenge: What is limiting business growth downtown?

Open Questions:

What is the trend in opening/closures of businesses?

Are existing businesses faring well?

Do residents feel that the City is safe and liveable?

How are city processes functioning to help or hinder growth?

What data might help answer these questions?

Dataset name	Description	Metrics
Vacant-Foreclosed-Abandoned Properties	List of vacant, abandoned and foreclosed properties	Property type (vacant/foreclosed/abandoned), address, violation date (2014 to 2020)
QoL_calls	Summary of Quality of Life calls received by Public Safety for each month of 2020.	Call type (barking animal, blocked driveway, noise complaint, etc), number of calls, month.
Annual report Board of Adjustments	List of residential and commercial units that come up in front of Paterson Board of Approvals	Date of the meeting (2017-2019), applicant name, address, phone number, block number, lot number, number of units, commercial type
Incidents Non-Fatal shootings	List of non-fatal shootings during 2020	Date, address, hour
911 Calls for Service	911 log of calls	Date, call hour, call type, status, closed date, last activity date, outcome, latitude, longitude, zip code, address.

What is the trend in opening/closures of businesses?

Relevant Data:

Annual Report for the Board of Adjustments

Vacant-Foreclosed-Abandoned Properties

Open Questions:

- Which locations are worth focusing on immediately?
- Which locations might serve as either positive or negative controls for what is/isn't working?

Are city processes functioning to help growth?

Relevant Data:

Annual Report for the Board of Adjustments

Open Questions:

- Are applications being processed in a timely manner?
- Are there trends in the type of application that are or are not being processed?
- Are there trends in application processing for certain size residential properties or certain types of commercial applications?

Do residents feel that the City is safe and liveable?

Relevant Data:

QoL Calls

911 Calls for Service

Incidents of Non-fatal shootings

Open Questions:

- Where there are high concentrations of activity?
- are QoL reports called in by certain demographics more often than others?

Are existing businesses faring well?

Relevant Data:

Might need to collect new data!

Open Questions:

- What, exactly, does it mean to fare well?

What new data might we collect?

- **Demographics**

    - Is it the case that certain demographics are applying for permits more/less often?
    - Is it the case that permits are being granted more/less often to certain groups?

- **Clarity on goals / Open Questions**

    - What, exactly, do we mean by "revitalize"?
    - Who, specifically, do we want to bring downtown?
    - What metrics will we be using to assess success?
    - What types of businesses do they want to attract?
    - Who are, historically, the primary patrons of these businesses?
    - Do the incomes of individuals who live near the revitalization align with the cost of goods sold by the businesses they want to attract?

What new data might we collect?

- **Clarity on goals / Open Questions, cont.**

  - Which cities embody success as they define it? Who do they look up to? What worked for them? What didn't work for them?
  - In what ways are they similar or dissimilar and what obvious pitfalls can be avoided by looking across multiple cities that have done this work?
  - Are there obvious solutions that don't require extensive data modeling to implement?
  - What are examples of both short-term and long-term projects that have seen success? Or failure?
  - Are there projects that consistently "seem" like they work—or are attractive to the media or trends—but don't actually move the needle on any important metrics?
  - Where did other cities get their investments? What type of developers or investors might be more or less-likely to align with their long-term values?
  - If success is met, what happens next? How do you continue to support the businesses/residents you brought in?

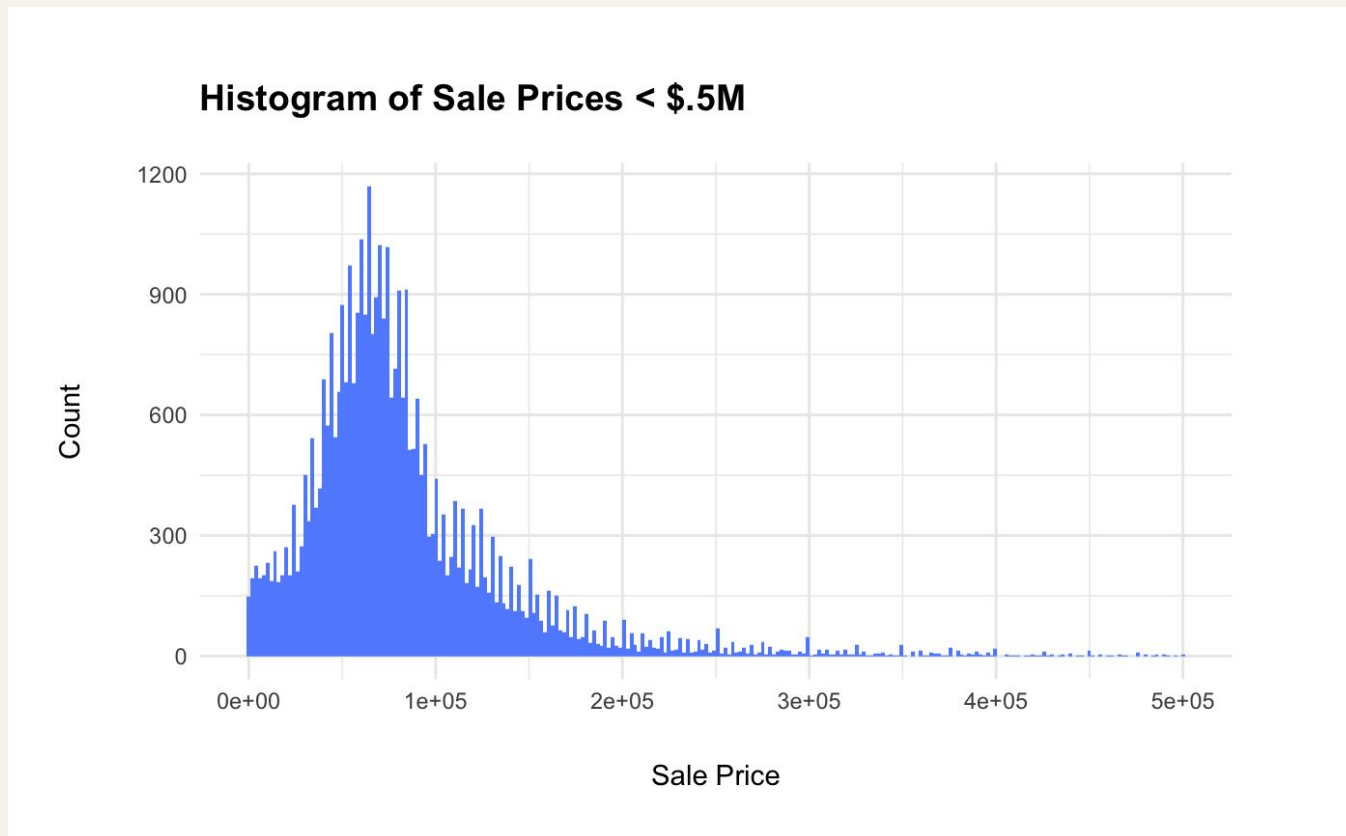# Questions?

Data Explorations and Insights from Syracuse

Question: Are housing prices fairly assessed?

Conclusion: Expensive homes tend to be assessed below market prices

Open Questions:

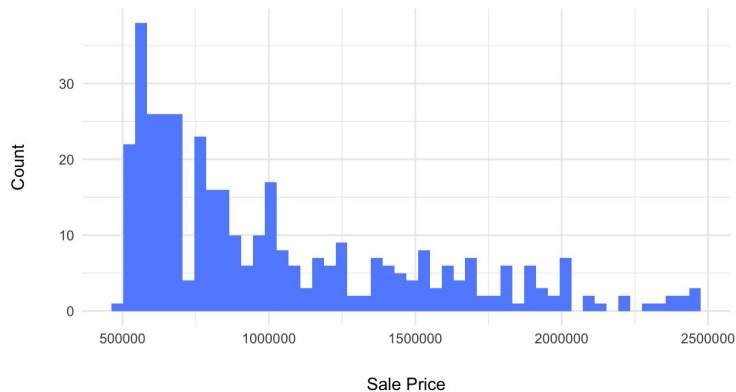- How did we reach that conclusion?
- What might we do to encourage equitable assessment?
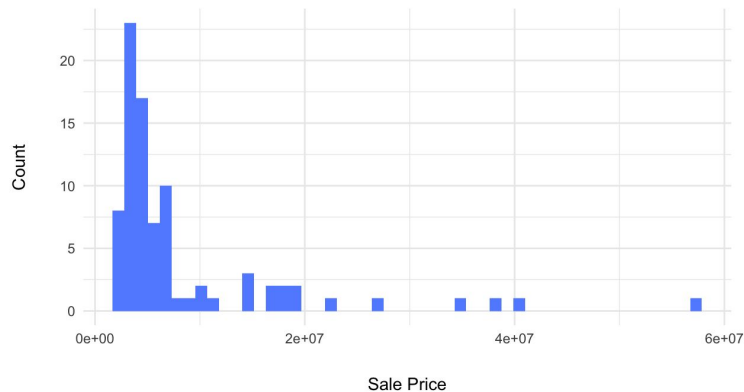
What does it cost to buy a home in Syracuse?

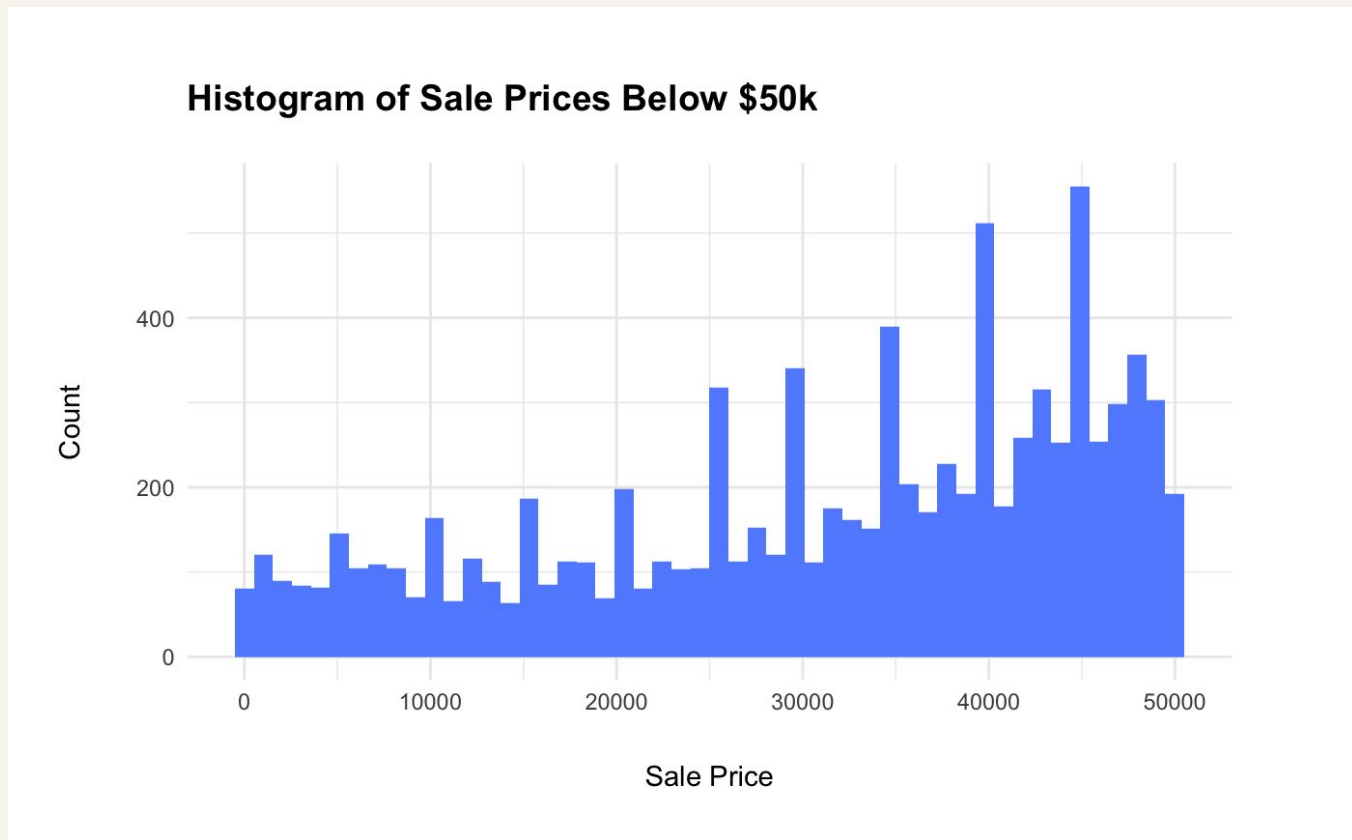**Histogram of Sale Prices < $.5M**

What does it cost to buy a home in Syracuse?

Histogram of Sale Prices between $0.5M and $2.5M
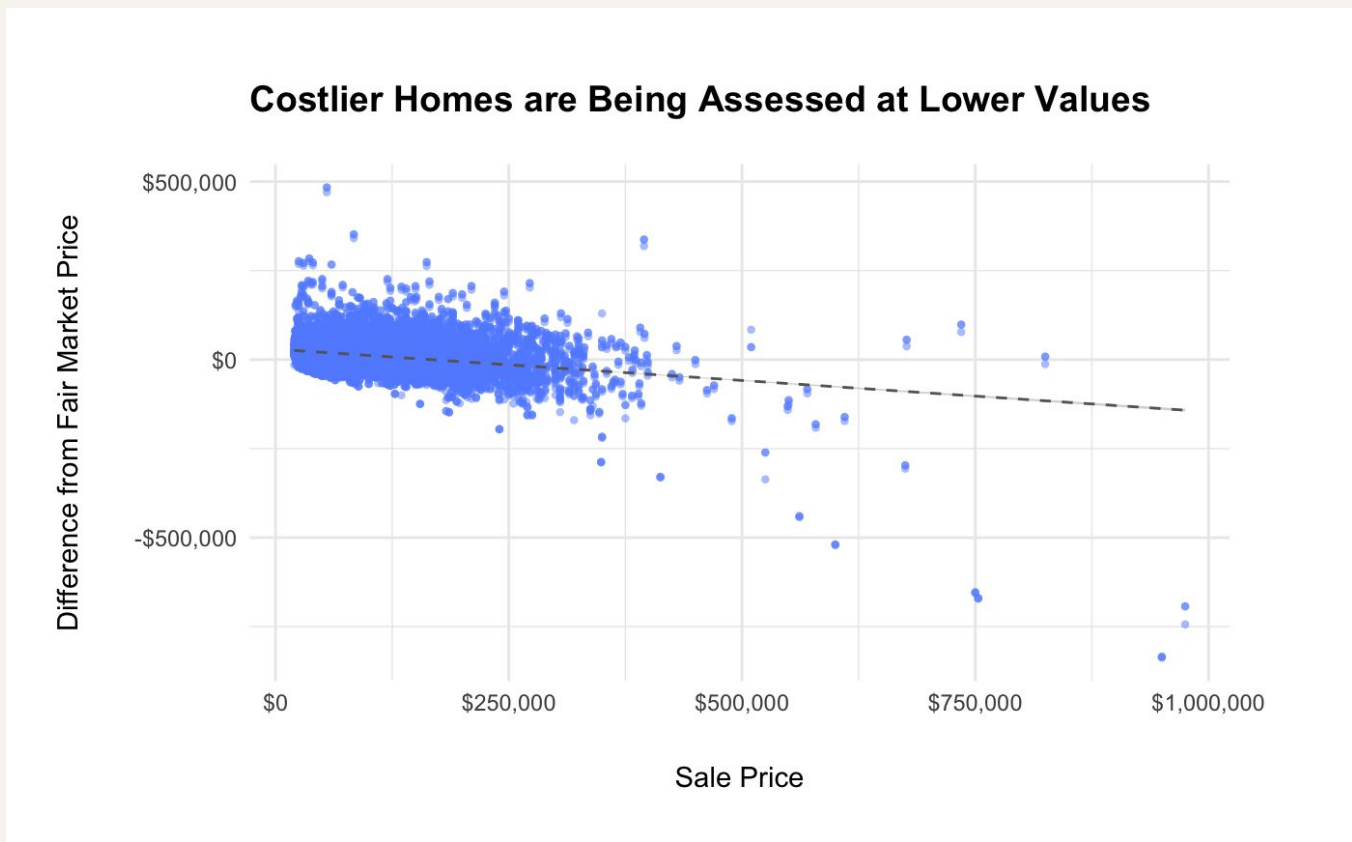

Histogram of Sale Prices above $2.5M
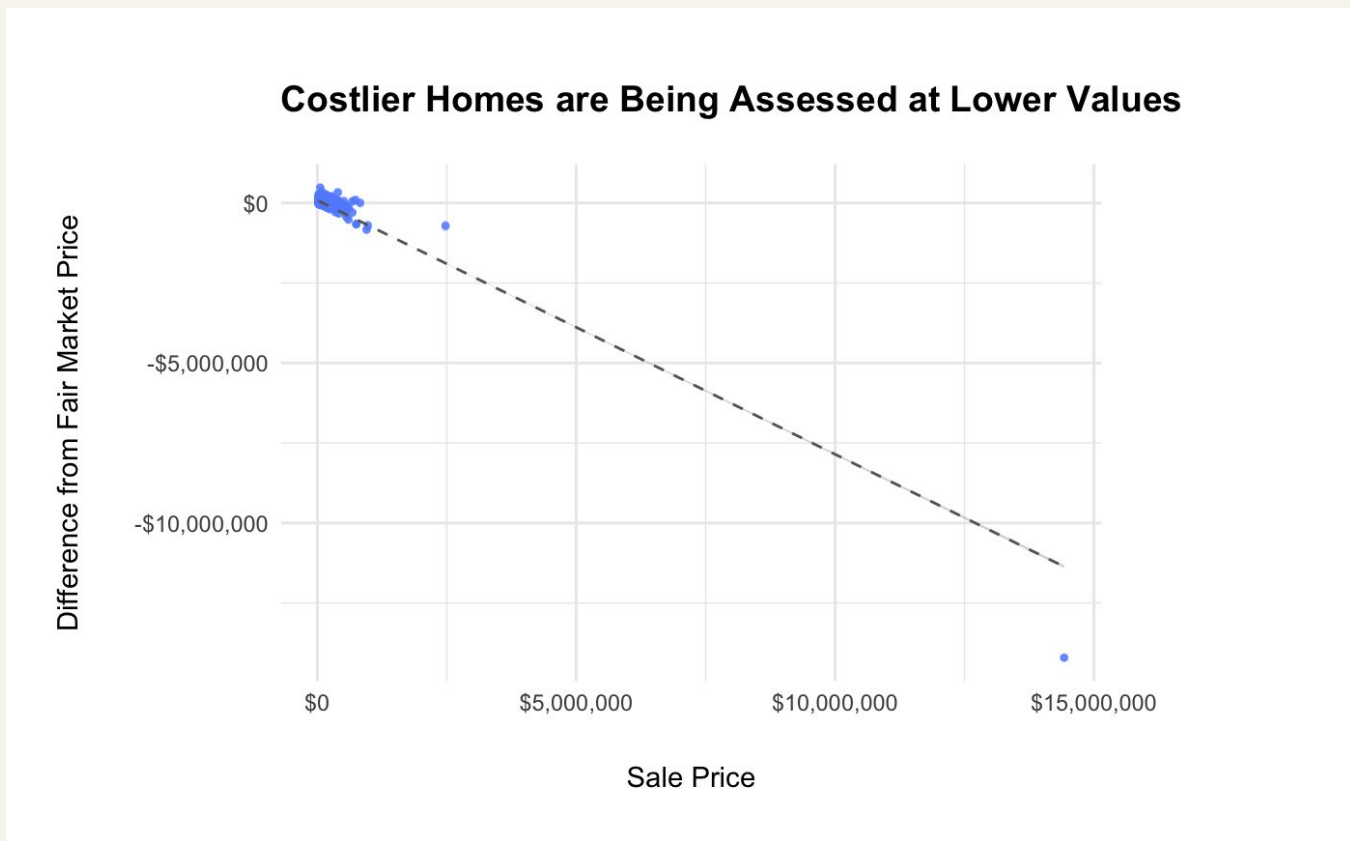
How do we filter suspicious sale prices?

Histogram of Sale Prices Below $50k

How do we filter suspicious sale prices?

Expensive Homes Tend to Be Assessed at Lower Prices

Costlier Homes are Being Assessed at Lower Values

Expensive Homes Tend to Be Assessed at Lower Prices

Costlier Homes are Being Assessed at Lower Values

What might we do to encourage equity in assessments?

Questions?