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FAIR HOUSING TASK FORCE MEETING MINUTES

Tuesday, December 8, 2020

1. A meeting of the Fair Housing Task Force was held virtually on Microsoft Teams +1 915-213-4096 United States, El Paso (Toll) Conference ID: 229 926 201# and was called to order at 6:01 p.m. by Chair, Kimberly Cook-McDaniel.

Regular Board Member	Present	Absent	Excused	Not Excused
Mauricio Felix		X		✓
Jonathan Macias	X			
Miguel Hernandez	X			
Rosa I. Estrada		X		✓
Kimberly Cook-McDaniel	X			
Bill Schlesinger	X			
Marcella Carrillo	X			
Andy Farias	X			
Alternate Board Member				
Christine Gallegos		X		✓
Marc A. Salazar		X		✓
Robert Fernandez		X		
Luis Yañez		X		✓

City staff present: Mark Weber; Nickole Rodriguez; Sandra Pellegrini; Sarah Ortiz; Nicholas Muñiz; Clarissa Cervantes

Public present: List of attendees available upon request.



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2. Discussion and Action on the Request to Excuse Absent Members

Absent Members: Mauricio Felix and Rosa I. Estrada

Members with prior notification: n/a

Motion by Bill Schlesinger to move item to the end of the meeting and seconded by Jonathan Macias.

Ayes: Miguel Hernandez, Kimberly Cook-McDaniel, Marcella Carrillo and Andy Farias

Objection: None.

3. Approval of Minutes from October 13, 2020 Meeting

Motion by Bill Schlesinger and seconded by Miguel Hernandez to approve minutes.

Ayes: Jonathan Macias, Kimberly Cook-McDaniel, Marcella Carrillo and Andy Farias

Objection: None.

4. Review of Current Fair Housing Ordinance as it pertains to LGBTQ Protections

Screen shared— City of El Paso: Fair Housing Ordinance

Analysis of Impediments

The recently completed Analysis of Impediments (AI) to Fair Housing Choice identified a lack of protections from discriminatory housing practices for LGBTQ individuals.

The Action Plan within the AI calls for the creation of a cross functional team to look into establishing a Housing Equity Ordinance OR amending the existing Fair Housing Ordinance to include those protections.

Fair Housing Ordinance

The existing Fair Housing Ordinance is the local law for protecting residents from discriminatory housing practices.



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Amending the Fair Housing Ordinance is the most logical and expedient way to include legal protections for LGBTQ individuals.

17.20.040 – Unlawful Discriminatory Housing Practices

Establishes that it is unlawful to discriminate in housing practices based on an individuals ***race, color, sex, religion, national origin, handicap or familial status.***

Suggested amended language:

Race, color, sex, ***sexual orientation, gender identity***, religion, national origin, ***disability***, or familial status.

Questions/Comments:

Miguel Hernandez— If presented to Legal and they approve, when would it be presented to City Council?

RE: Mark Weber— Possibly as early as the January 5th or 19th agenda—take as an introduction. An ordinance requires an introduction and then coming back to Council, or two later for final approval.

Jonathan Macias— In favor of moving expeditiously to present for consideration on January 5th. This has already been presented for Attorney input at the City?

RE: Mark Weber— Correct. Guidance was to redline it anywhere this needs to be done and send to review/approve.

5. Presentation on Rental Assistance—CARES & Evictions by Jacob Meils, County Lead Research Analyst

*Screen shared— *El Paso County: Brief Statistics on Evictions Filed through JP Courts* *



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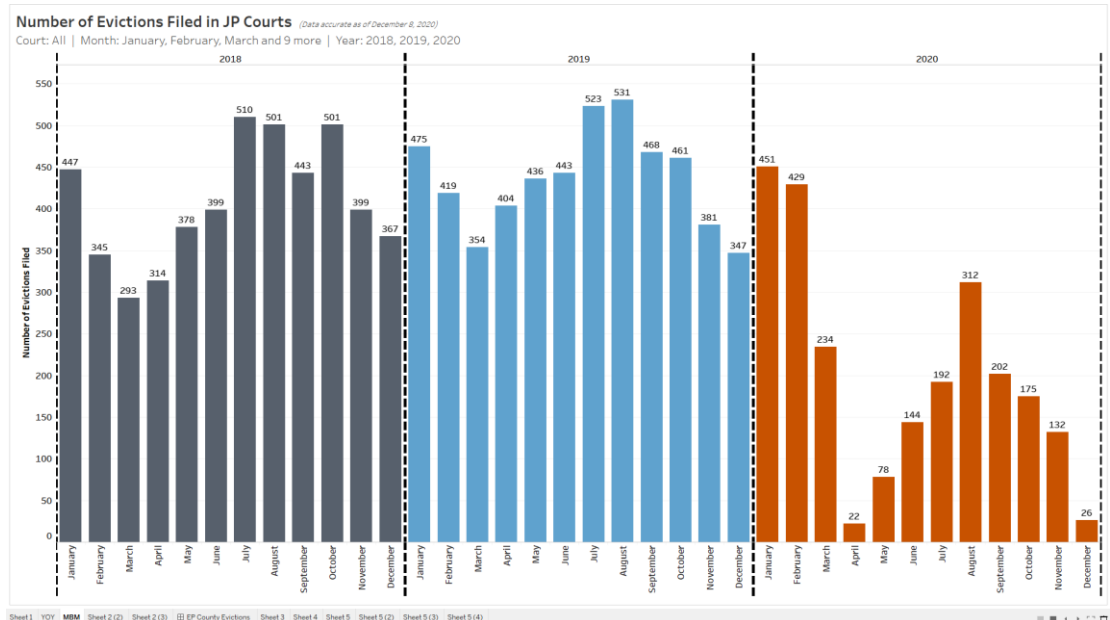
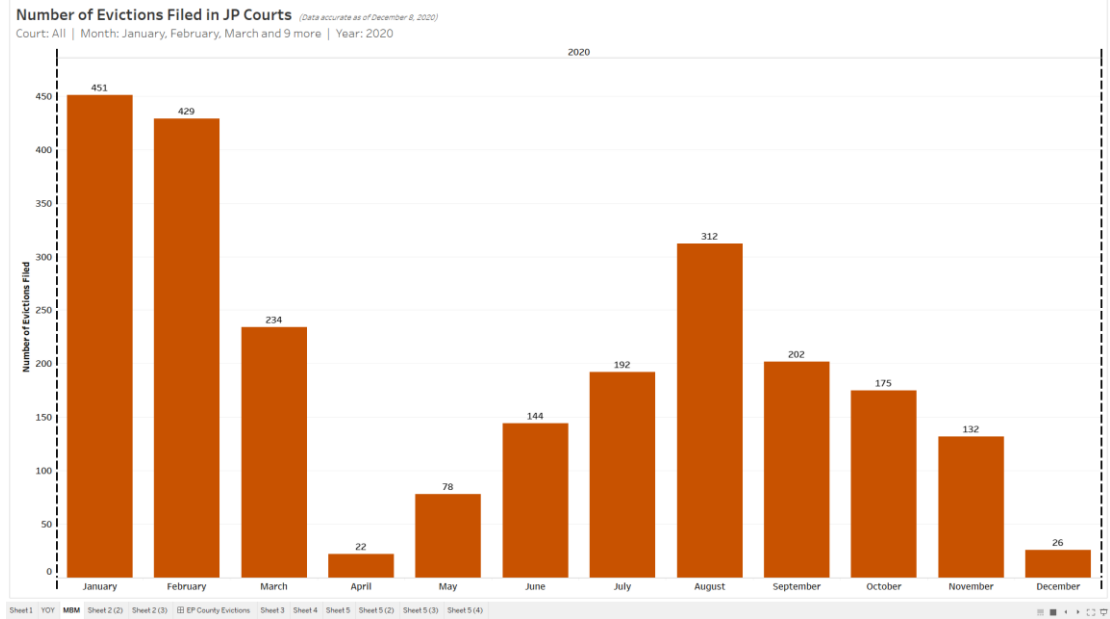
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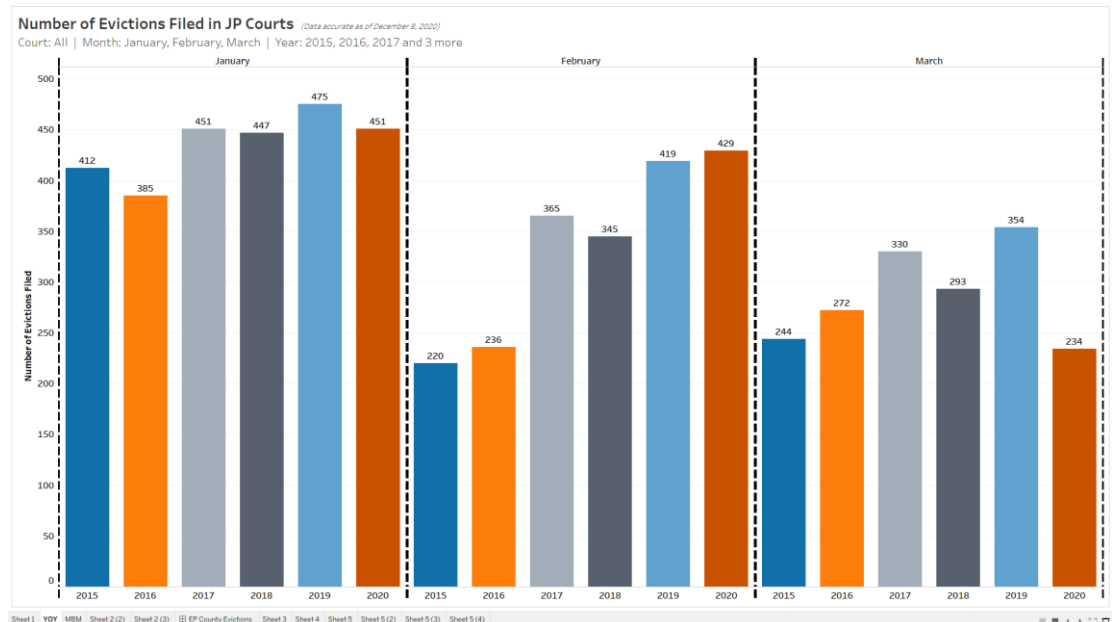
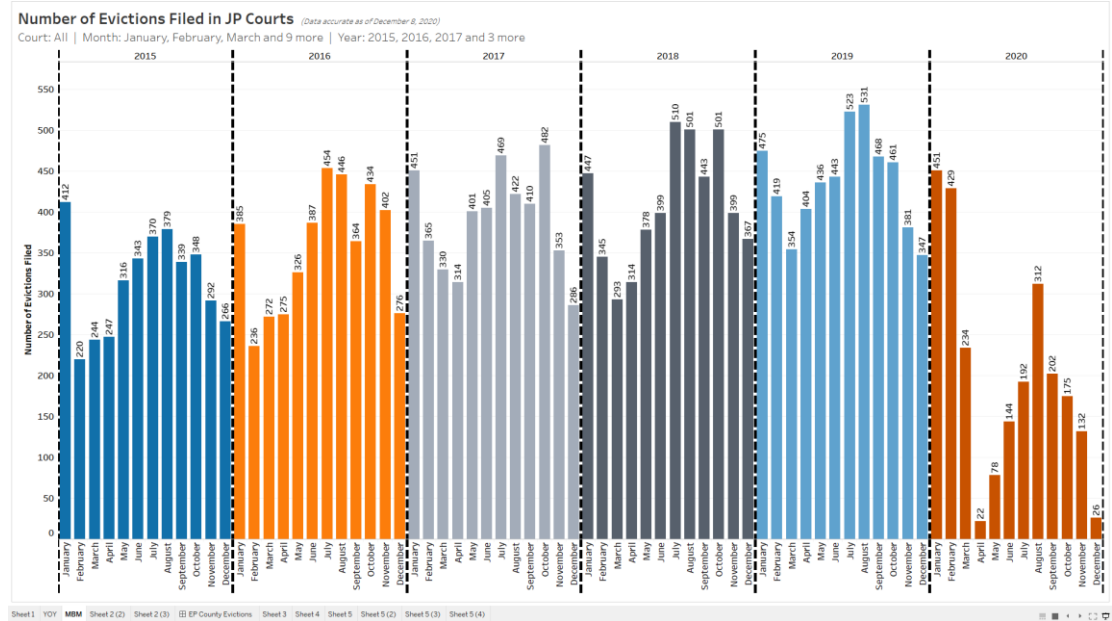
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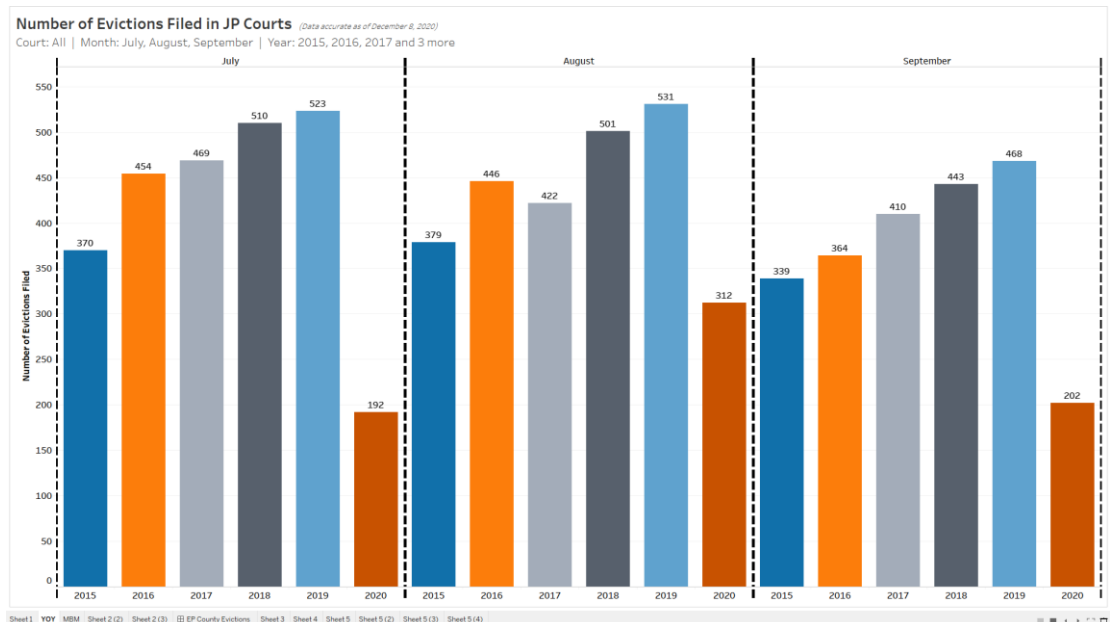
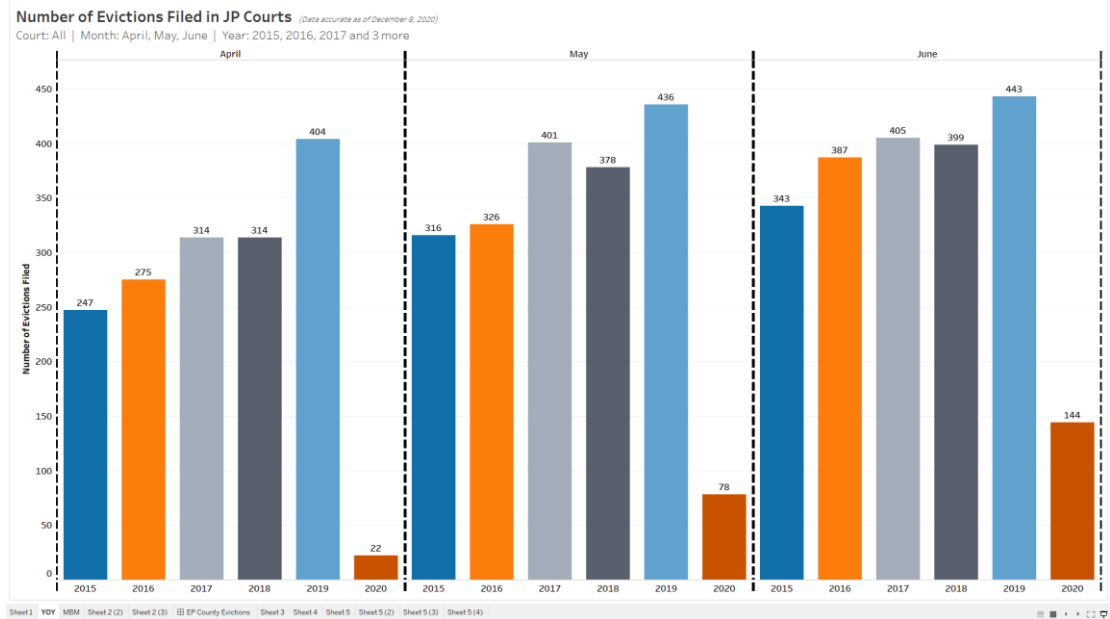
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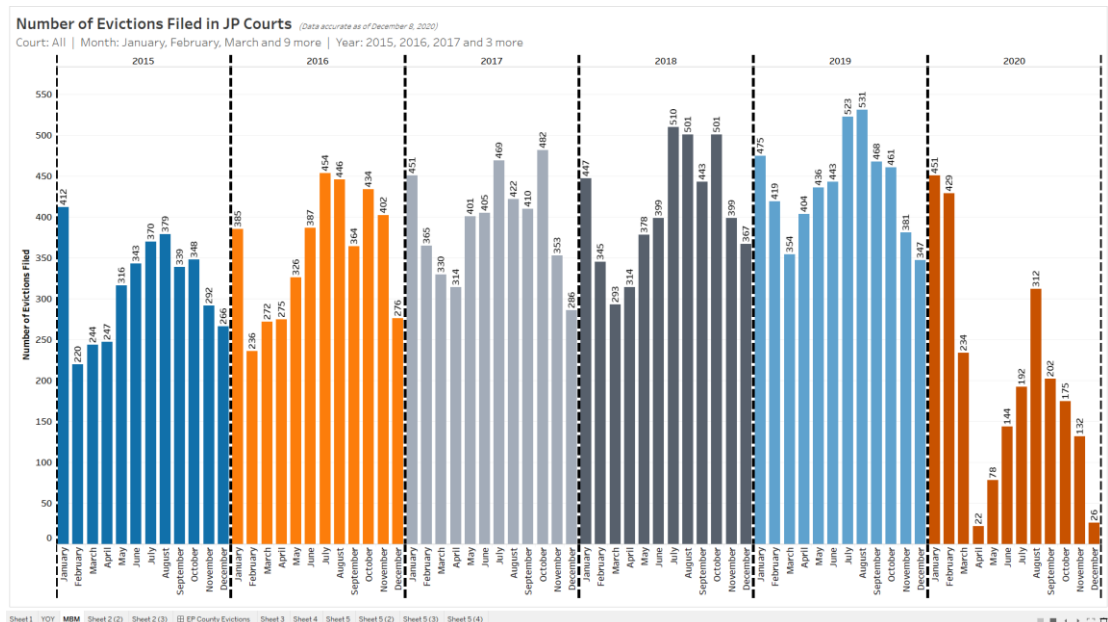
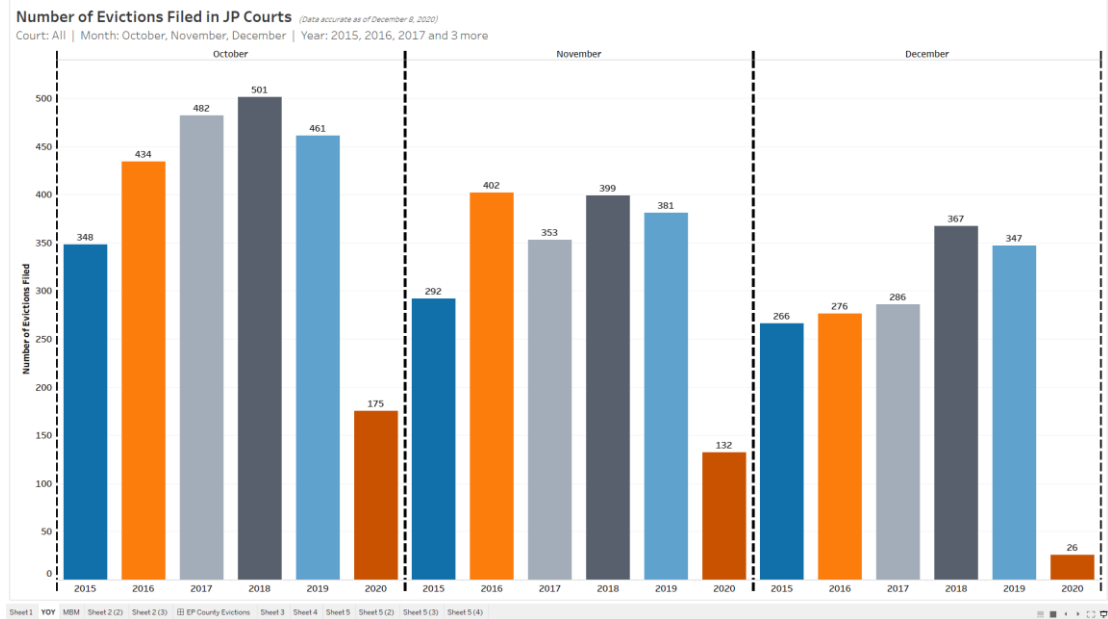
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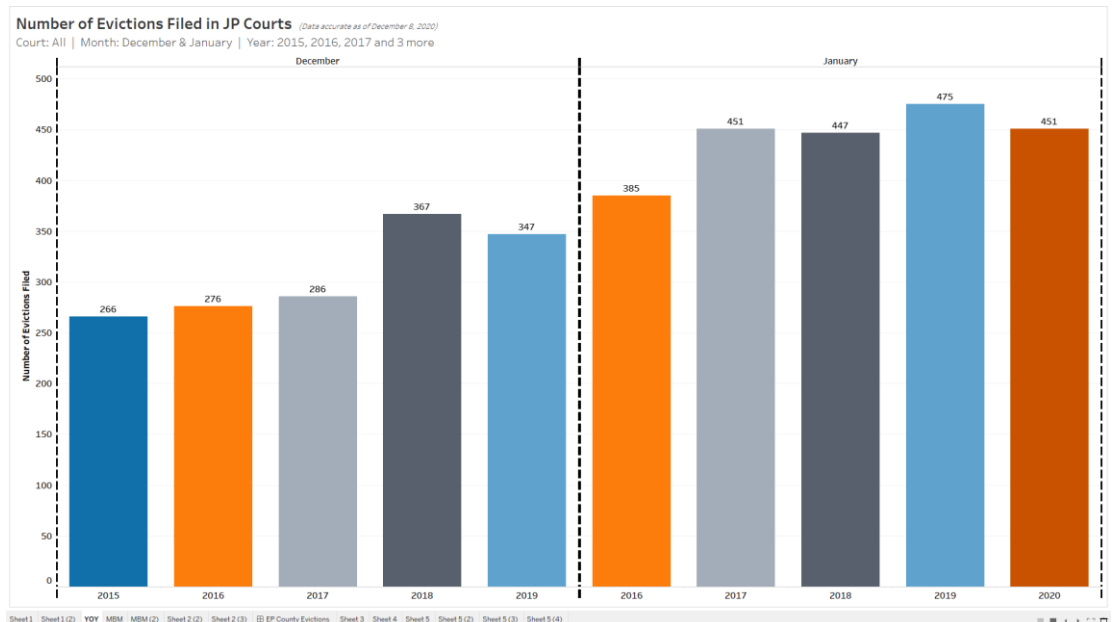
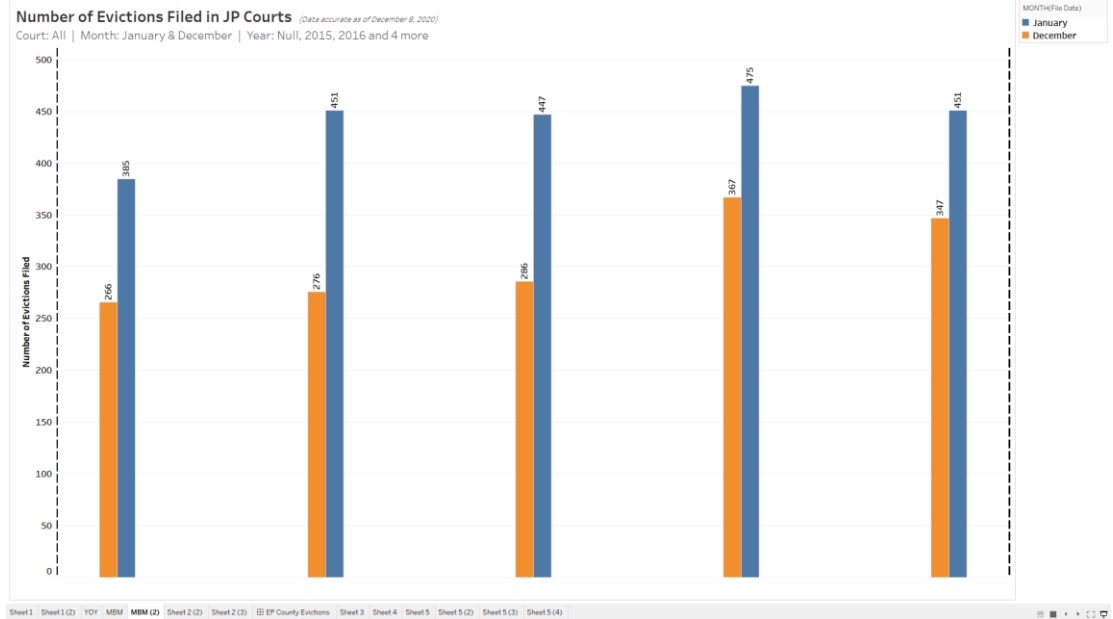
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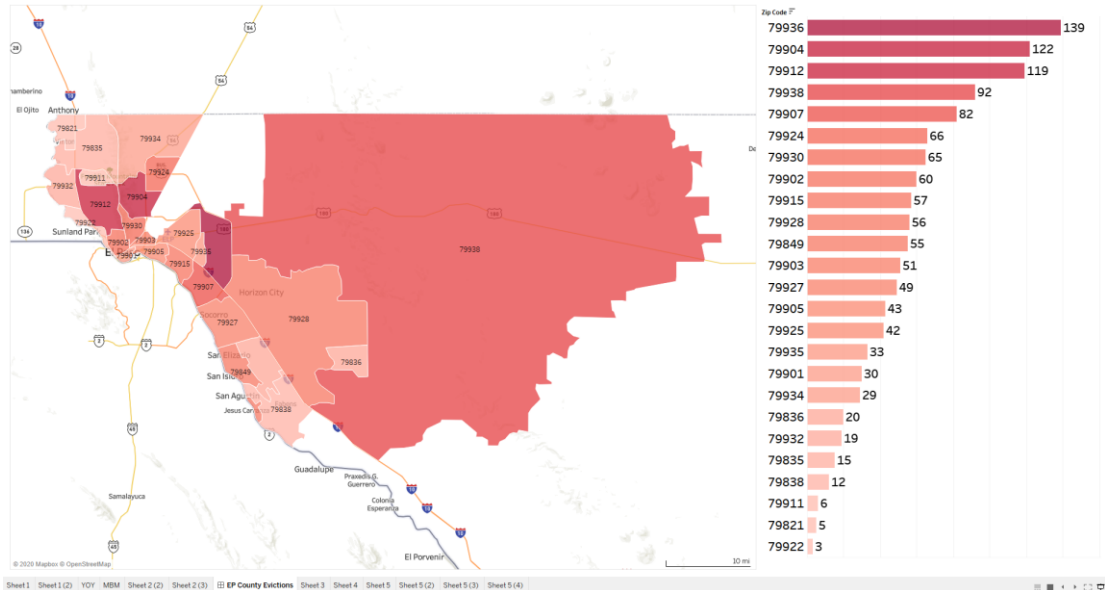
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Evictions in El Paso County JP Courts since April 1, 2020



Questions/Comments:

Miguel Hernandez— Is the increase of these claims being filed at the JP Court, would it correlate with the growth of the population since it continues to up?

RE: Jacob Meils—That could definitely be a hypothesis that I would certainly not argue with in terms of general trend overall. The total number of evictions in 2015 is substantially lower than 2019, that is true. Now the increase from December to January, I would not attribute to overall population growth, however more to the changing of calendar year. Generally, two landmark times of when visas begin/end.

Bill Schlesinger— If you were going to overlay the moratorium, where does it hit most? Are we seeing an impact month by month on when the moratorium hit or does it not follow the moratorium at all?

Why if there is a moratorium, do we still see the eviction numbers at all?

RE: Jacob Meils— Yes, I would attribute it that to this latest moratorium on evictions however it also follows the general trend of falling after September as well. This is a federal moratorium. This does not apply to nonfederal housing.

Andy Farias— Curious on the zip code breakdown, saw 79936 had the most evictions to date since the beginning of the new year. Why is it that it is still registered higher than lower income zip codes?



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RE: Jacob Meils— Very good question and could only provide hypothesis. The extent of data used does not go into any of that information/no surveys conducted.

Mark Weber— Question about the Justices of the Peace and the tools at their disposal. If we can bring in local funding for the Texas Eviction Diversion Program, then the Justices of the Peace can refer cases to that program that then allows for eviction perversion in terms of rental assistance.

RE: Jacob Meils— Understanding that Justices have no latitude to suggest that. They can allow that to happen should the parties desire that to be happening and for the most part, the ball is in the court of the landlord.

6. Public Comment

Irma Avila— Doing fair housing promotions through food drive through, enclosed pamphlets and reached out to 25 families in November.

Revisiting Item #2 on agenda: Discussion and Action on the Request to Excuse Absent Members

Absent Members: Mauricio Felix and Rosa I. Estrada

Members with prior notification: n/a

Jonathan Macias moves to have absent members with prior notification marked as excused and those with no prior notification as not excused, seconded by Any Farias.

Ayes: Miguel Hernandez, Kimberly Cook-McDaniel, Bill Schlesinger and Marcella Carrillo

Objection: None.

7. Adjourn

Motion by Bill Schlesinger and seconded by Miguel Hernandez

Meeting was adjourned at 6:46 p.m.

Prepared by: Clarissa Cervantes

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