

# Understanding Gentrification and Displacement

## The Path to Equitable Development

**Urban Waters Learning Network**

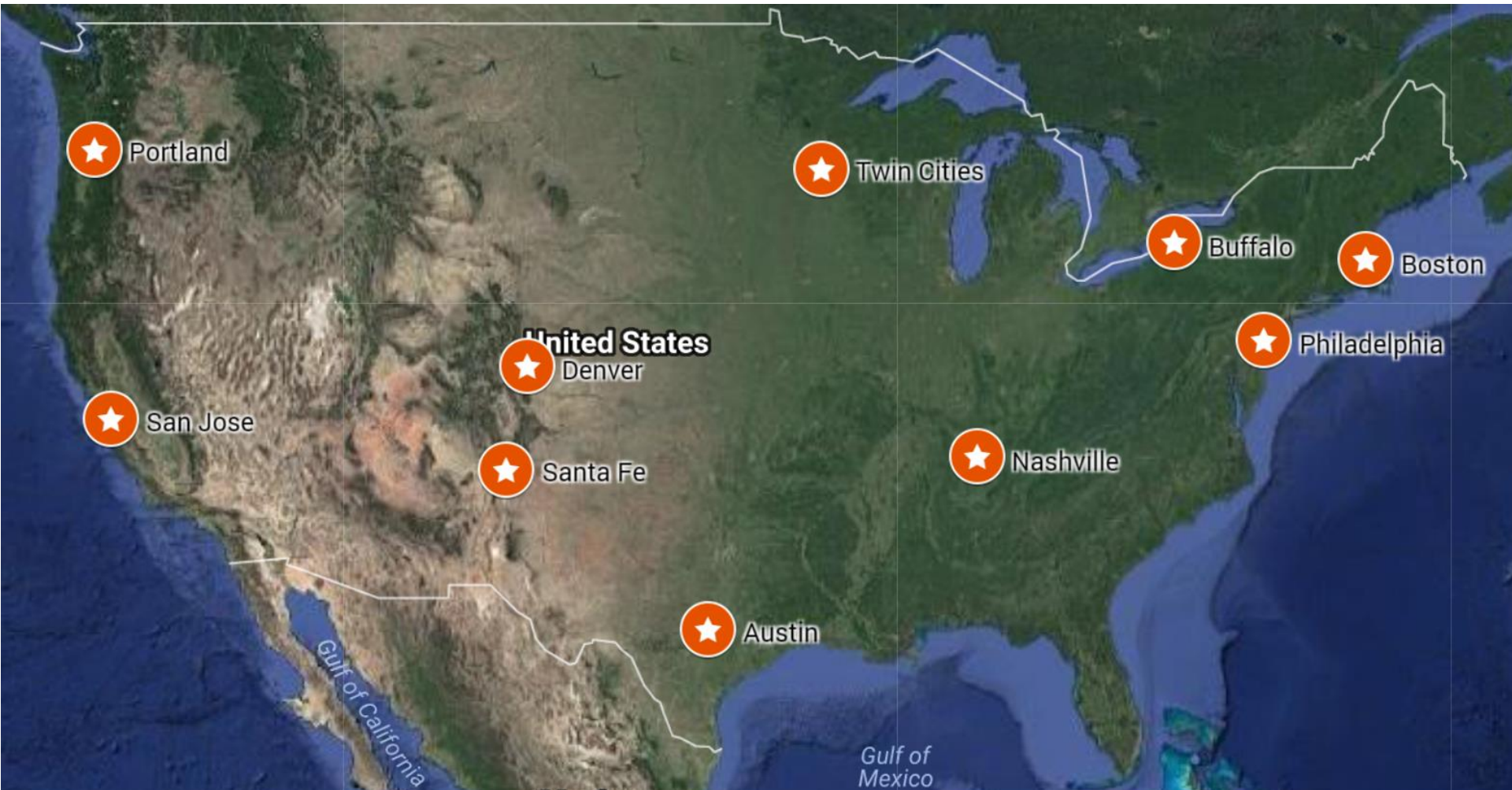
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# All-In Cities Anti-Displacement Policy Network



# Displacement v. Gentrification

“Displacement is about power. Power over the market, over policy, over the meaning of place. Displacement is the erasure of cultural meaning.”

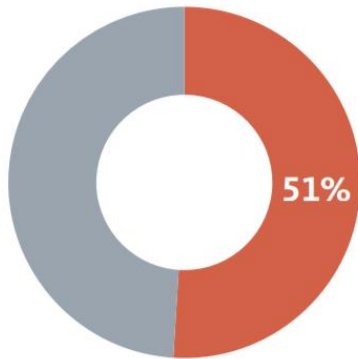
-- Manuel Pastor, University of Southern California

# When Renters Rise, Cities Thrive

The United States is increasingly a renter nation, especially since the foreclosure crisis. Today, 107 million people live in renter households, and renters are contributing ever more to the economic, social, and cultural vitality of neighborhoods and cities. They could be contributing even more if it were not for skyrocketing rents and stagnant wages. When the rent is too high, little is left over for basics like food, transportation, health care, and education. Millions of families are increasingly at risk of eviction and homelessness.

Renters are the majority in the largest 100 cities...

■ Renter  
■ Owner



Nationally, they are 35% of the population, an **increase of 27% since 2000**.

...but renters nationwide are burdened by rising rents and low wages.

**51%**  
pay too much for housing\*

- Renters already contribute about **\$1.5 trillion** each year to the national economy.\*\*
- If rents were more affordable, renters and the nation would be much better off.

# When Renters Rise, Cities Thrive

As incomes drop, cost burdens rise. Since 2000, renters have seen:

11%

decline in median income\*\*\*\*

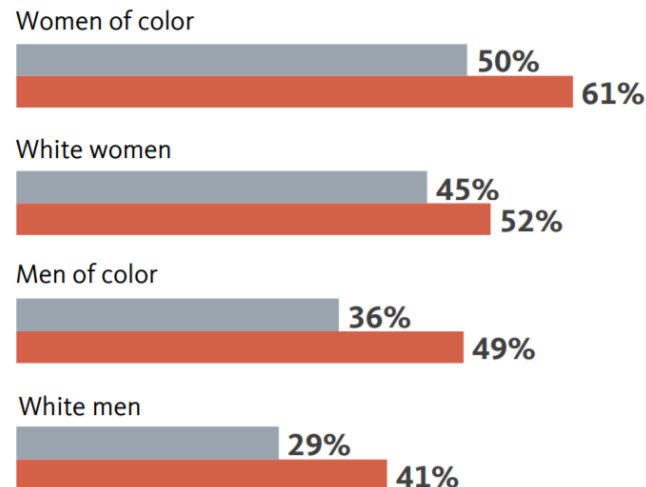
57%

increase in cost-burdened households

Women of color continue to face the steepest burdens.

Share of renters paying more than 30% of income on housing by race and gender

■ 2000  
■ 2015



**Notes:** Data analysis from the National Equity Atlas, a partnership between PolicyLink and the USC Program for Environmental and Regional Equity (PERE). **Sources:** 2015 5-Year American Community Survey and 2000 Decennial Census microdata from the Integrated Public Use Microdata Series (IPUMS), USDA, Care.Com, BLS, and the College Board.

# Drivers of displacement

## Direct

*Who has been forced to leave?*

- Eminent domain
- Eviction, foreclosure, habitability
- Incarceration

## Economic

*Who can afford to live here?*

- Rent gaps/rising land values
- Outside investments
- Speculation

## Cultural

*Who belongs?*

- Cultural and religious events, institutions
- Local businesses, goods, services
- Policing and gentrification

## Climate

*Who is at risk from climate events?*

- Green infrastructure investments
- Extreme events readiness and response
- Resilience and recovery



## Polling question

Which drivers of displacement are impacting your communities? (select all that apply)

- A. Direct
- B. Economic
- C. Cultural
- D. Climate
- E. Other (please tell us what!)
- F. I don't know/am not sure

# Strategies to address displacement

1. Center those most impacted
2. Acknowledge and amend past wrongs (reparations)
3. Advance housing as a human right
4. Build community wealth and ownership

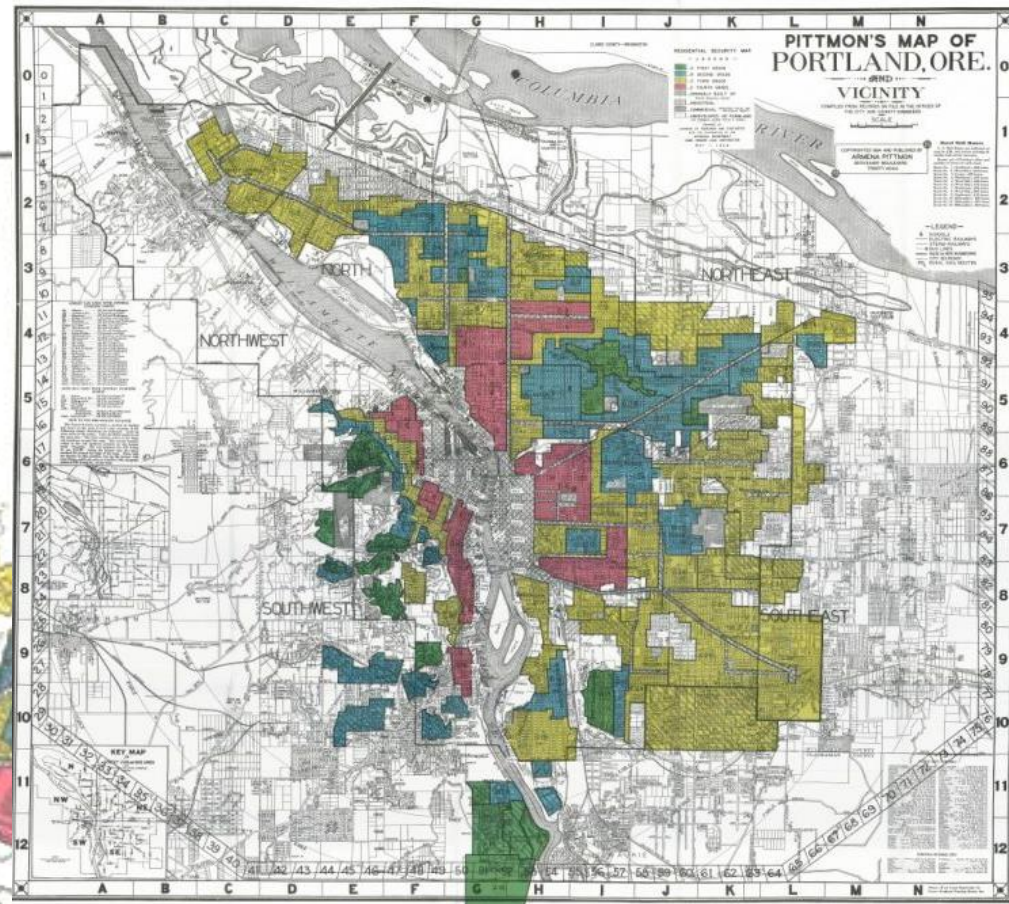
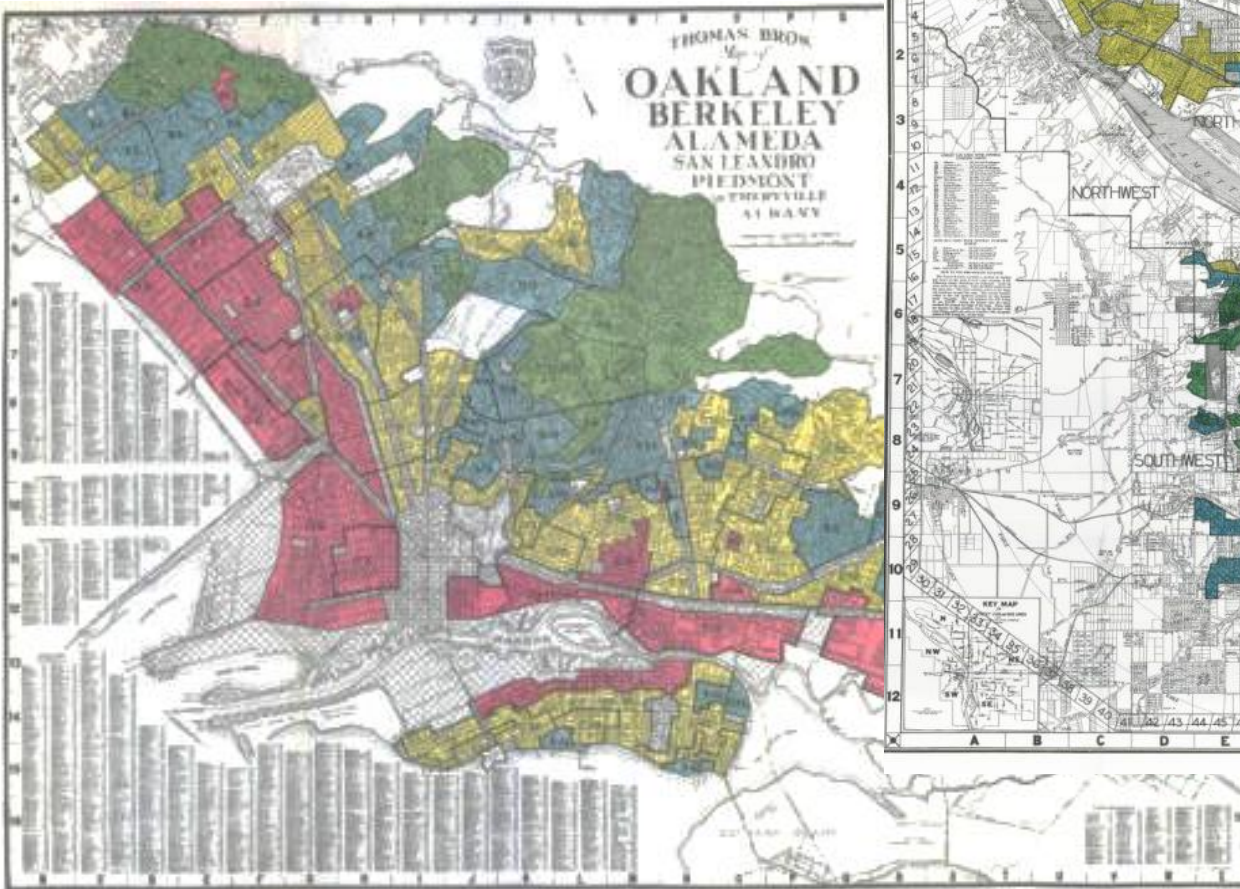


# 1. Center those most impacted



Photo credit: Community Alliance of Tenants

## 2. Acknowledge and amend past wrongs (reparations)





### 3. Advance housing as a human right

# OUR HOMES, OUR FUTURE

HOW RENT CONTROL CAN BUILD  
STABLE, HEALTHY COMMUNITIES



**PolicyLink**



## 4. Build community wealth and ownership



Buffalo Green  
Development Zone

Buffalo Fruit Belt  
Community Land Trust

Photo credits: PUSH Buffalo and Open Buffalo



# Where to start

1. **Timing is everything!** Put protections in place before projects start.
2. Partner with housing/tenant organizations active in your community.
3. Be explicit about racial equity – Who benefits? Who pays? Who decides?



# Thank you

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**Verde serves communities by building environmental wealth through Social Enterprise, Outreach & Advocacy.**





# Verde Landscape

- Workforce training program
- 15 years in operation
- Currently \$1.3 million in revenues
- Wages, training, full benefits for trainees
- Scopes: stormwater facility installation and maintenance, tree planting, habitat restoration



# Verde Builds

- Increasing minority- and woman-owned business and social enterprise contracting in green infrastructure sector.
- Completed projects: 78 kwh solar installation, 25 acre park
- Pipeline: 300 kwh solar installation, EV charging stations,



# The Cully Neighborhood



VERDE



- 5.5 acres of land purchased, 240 affordable homes in production
- 2 mobile home parks protected from eviction
- City's first mobile home park zoning designation to protect additional parks





# Cully Park

- 76% - Minority- owned contractors
- 2,356 – Total Shrubs planted
- 255 – total trees planted
- 25 – acres of brownfields restored
- 400 – households with new access to a park within ¼ mile of their house

