

# Green Gentrification

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## What is Green Gentrification?

The benefits of habitat restoration extend beyond the ecological: habitat restoration projects also support economic and social benefits that can contribute to community revitalization. However, a potential unintended adverse impact of habitat restoration—especially in underserved communities—is green gentrification.

**Gentrification** describes the process by which long-term residents in under-resourced neighborhoods are displaced by an influx of more affluent residents. **Green gentrification**, then, is when wealthier residents are attracted by planned or recent improvements to greenspace, environmental quality, or climate resilience, especially where the improvements are linked to increased property values, property taxes, and housing costs.

The long-term impact of green gentrification is **displacement** of residents from their neighborhoods, which can contribute to generations of detachment and poverty.

**Displacement** has been linked to:

- Worsening inequities in health, wealth, quality of life, and access to green spaces;
- Lower sense of community and belonging; and
- Disconnection from resources, family, and community networks.

## Preventing Green Gentrification

In our habitat restoration work, NOAA supports [meaningful community engagement](#) to help prevent the adverse impacts of green gentrification and to ensure project benefits flow back to community members equitably. We support holistic planning and capacity building to ensure community members are not displaced due to the impacts of our funded projects.

We encourage applicants to evaluate the potential of green gentrification for their projects and to work with local authorities to incorporate preventative measures into project planning. Examples of preventative measures include: inclusionary zoning policy, protecting existing affordable rental units, acquiring sites for affordable housing, working with or developing a community land trust, and community engagement and education on affordable housing. Additional examples of preventative measures can be found in Table 1 of the Serrano et al. 2022 article linked below.

## Additional Resources

The resources below include more information on preventative measures as well background information on the implications of green gentrification.

- [Great Parks Should not Uproot Communities – Green Gentrification Risk Factors and Anti-Displacement Options](#) – Rigolon (2024) - Report
- [Can Cities Go Green Without Driving Gentrification?](#) – NPR (2023) - 1A Podcast

- [\*\*\*Equitable Development for Urban Waters: Understanding Gentrification and Preventing Displacement\*\*\*](#) – Urban Waters Learning Network (2022) - Story map
- [\*\*\*Improvement, not displacement: A framework for urban green gentrification research and practice\*\*\*](#) – Sax et al. (2022) - Research paper
- [\*\*\*Healthy Community Design, Anti-displacement, and Equity Strategies in the USA: A Scoping Review\*\*\*](#) – Serrano et al. (2022) - Research paper
- [\*\*\*Greening practitioners worry about green gentrification but many don't address it in their work\*\*\*](#) – Nesbitt et al. (2022) – Research Paper
- [\*\*\*Sharing in the Benefits of a Greening City: A Policy Toolkit in Pursuit of Economic, Environmental, and Racial Justice\*\*\*](#) – Klein et al. (2020) - Toolkit
- [\*\*\*Greening without Gentrification: Learning from Parks-Related Anti-Displacement Strategies Nationwide\*\*\*](#) – Rigolon & Christensen (2019) - Policy report and web articles
- [\*\*\*How to Prevent City Climate Action from Becoming "Green Gentrification"\*\*\*](#) – Hart et al. (2019) - Web article