Climate and Displacement in U.S. Cities

Strong Prosperous and Resilient Communities Challenge (SPARCC)

June 9, 2020
“...We ignite not in the light, but in lack thereof, For it is in loss that we truly learn to love. In this chaos, we will discover clarity. In suffering, we must find solidarity...”
Climate and Displacement Research

- Framing (SPARCC)
- What have we learned? (Literature Review - Urban Displacement Project)
- What people are doing (Practitioner Survey - EcoAdapt)
- How to do it (Addressing climate & displacement in Atlanta - Partnership for Southern Equity)
- Questions and Discussion (All)
Key Takeaways

- Climate change, displacement, and inequity are connected to people.
- There is an opportunity for mutual understanding and support from leaders across sectors.
- People, community ownership, resilient affordable housing are all integral to environment and development policy.
Investment without Displacement
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Climate Change & Displacement Survey

- **Identify strategies** that may reduce the impacts of climate change and displacement pressures
- **Assess needs** of practitioners seeking to address the challenges of climate change (e.g., better awareness/education, financing, other tools)
- **Document** examples from across the United States
• Affordable healthy housing
• Healthy food options
• Transportation choices
• Public health
• Social networks
**FACTORS THAT AFFECT DISPLACEMENT**

- **INCOME STRATIFICATION & COST OF LIVING**
- **DISINVESTMENT OF NEIGHBORHOODS AND COMMUNITIES**
- **RISING PROPERTY VALUES & ACCESS TO CRITICAL SERVICES**
- **EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES & ACCESS TO LIVING WAGE PAYING JOBS**
- **POLLUTION & PUBLIC HEALTH**
- **STORMS, FLOODS, DROUGHT, WILDFIRE, SEA LEVEL RISE, EXTREME HEAT**

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**Climate change...**

One of several factors affecting displacement

Inequitable distribution of impacts across communities

- Health & safety
- Food and water contamination
- Food security
- Disruption or damage to critical services
- Stress on livelihoods (e.g., fishing and farming communities)
- Cultural and spiritual disruption
What’s in the survey?

Demographics
- Organization/agency type
- Sector (e.g., housing, utilities, etc.)
- Position type
- Geography
- Community size

- Level of concern about climate change
- Level of concern about key community issues (e.g., housing, cost of living, etc.)

Displacement and Other Pressures

- What types of strategies should be considered to support anti-displacement efforts in a changing climate?
- What anti-displacement activities may help increase community resilience?
- What anti-displacement activities may be vulnerable to climate change?
- What information and resources are used to make decisions and what is needed to better make climate-informed decisions?
- Are there specific examples of other climate-informed anti-displacement initiatives?
Have you ever considered the effects of climate change in your anti-displacement efforts?

64% Yes
36% No
Barriers

- Limited time: 36% (Not engaged) - 29% (Engaged)
- Lack of funding: 55% (Not engaged) - 39% (Engaged)
- Insufficient staff resources/capacity: 54% (Not engaged) - 47% (Engaged)
- Lack of leadership: 38% (Not engaged) - 22% (Engaged)
- Current, more pressing issues: 53% (Not engaged) - 35% (Engaged)
- No legal mandate: 38% (Not engaged) - 20% (Engaged)
- Lack of stakeholder demand: 35% (Not engaged) - 24% (Engaged)
- Lack of specific climate information/data for my area: 14% (Not engaged) - 10% (Engaged)
- Opposition from stakeholder groups: 28% (Not engaged) - 6% (Engaged)
- Uncertainty about what will happen: 23% (Not engaged) - 10% (Engaged)
- Unclear about which options are available: 27% (Not engaged) - 22% (Engaged)
- Lack of access to information and data: 23% (Not engaged) - 24% (Engaged)
- Lack of technical expertise or assistance: 31% (Not engaged) - 26% (Engaged)
Activities that may increase individual and/or community vulnerability...

Baseline problems/community stabilization

Keeping frontline communities in place next to polluting industries - impacts to air quality as days get hotter only make it worse for low-income communities. If we are not addressing land-use issues and low-income housing in close proximity to polluting sources we’re only digging our communities graves faster.

“Persons who live in poverty or in areas of high minority concentrations may be the victims of extreme weather events followed by community reconstruction activities that effectively force out the original poor, minority populations due to the high costs of rent and living.”

Limitations in resources, including access to services and opportunities

“Limited resources (and concentrated wealth where resources are abundant) are the biggest challenge because a lot of improvements cost significant dollars in addition to industry shifts. Anything that has to do with investment is the most vulnerable to climate change because it comes with so much baggage and politics that are difficult to deal with in a timely manner.”

“Food availability programs are vulnerable to rising food costs as climate change impacts production of food, driving up costs.”

Maladaptive practices that exacerbate vulnerability

“Insurance policies that allow rebuilding in impacted areas or that allow rebuilding without taking climate issues into consideration leads to erosion of capital for re-occurring issues.”

“Trying to help people remain in a neighborhood that is prone to flooding or other hazards is probably the most vulnerable activity. At some point, the costs of remaining may become untenable.”

“There may be some complex interplays between climate mitigation and climate adaptation. For example, relying on AC units to reduce public health impacts of extreme heat and helping elders stay in their homes will also increase the emissions for long term climate impacts.”
Anti-displacement activities that may help to increase resilience...

**Infrastructure and Development**

Integrate climate change into design and retrofitting
Incorporate climate change and equity into community land-use planning

- Build in areas less vulnerable to climate change
- Create mixed housing developments
- Promote community land ownership
- Co-locate affordable housing with green space

**Policy**

Increase cross-sectoral planning and implementation
Increase flexibility in land-use planning and policies to accommodate relocation
Promote tenant and housing stability
Incentivize climate-informed development

- Created “resilience quotient”
- Encourages development in low-risk areas
- Established “coastal resilience overlay”
Transportation and Access to Services

Improve and maintain access to services during extreme events
Incentivize public transit use
Climate-proof facilities
Expand access to local food sources in food-insecure neighborhoods

Capacity Building

Public education and engagement
Workforce investment
Technical and financial assistance

Be a Buddy!

When it’s hot, make sure neighbors and family are in an air-conditioned place.
“We are very mindful of the potential for climate refugees from other areas moving to our reservation due to displacement in other regions of the country... If people start to move to our reservation as a means of escaping less habitable locations, what does that mean for our culture, political interactions, enforcing our laws, and managing wildlife?”

“The issue will be where to move [displaced individuals], how to make people whole financially, and especially how to provide for renters and lower income and elderly homeowners.”

“Given the magnitude of climate change, displacement is unavoidable and all activities should work to mitigate negative effects and increase co-benefits.”

“There is an important issue of where citizens will relocate. Will that impact lower income neighborhoods? And where will rental housing be constructed to house displaced renters and low-income elderly?”

Major Themes

1. Temporary vs. permanent displacement within and outside place of residence

2. Displacement out of and into areas and carrying capacity of these areas

3. Opportunities for direct and indirect action using expressed barriers

• Products pointing out the connections between climate change and displacement and options to address both
• Direct funding and recommendations for funding opportunities
• Technical expertise and assistance
• Peer-to-peer learning networks

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Products

• Synthesis report
  • Climate Change and Displacement in U.S. Communities

• Case studies:
  • Los Angeles: Enterprise Community Partners
  • San Francisco Bay: Bay Area Regional Health Inequities Initiative
  • California: The Greelining Institute
  • Atlanta: Partnership for Southern Equity
  • Atlanta: Southface Institute

• Climate Change and Our Community activity and coloring book

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Climate Change and Displacement in the U.S.

SPARCC Webinar – June 9, 2020

Prepared by: Nicholas Depsky, Shazia Manji, Renee Roy Elias
UC Berkeley - Urban Displacement Project (UDP)
In collaboration with EcoAdapt as part of the SPARCC Initiative
Presentation Outline

1. Research findings
2. Climate-related displacement examples
3. Research and policy implications
Literature Review Scope

Geography | United States with some international context

Time Frame | 1970 onwards, most literature from last 20 years

Literature Sources | Academic (primary), Grey & Media (Secondary)

Themes of Focus

- Inequities in social vulnerability to climate risks
- Direct displacement due to climate
- Indirect displacement due to rising costs/neighborhood changes (from climate or M/A strategies)
- Disparities in ability to return to community/recover post-shocks
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Displacement Pressures</th>
<th>Climate Shocks &amp; Stressors</th>
<th>Adaptation &amp; Mitigation</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Neighborhood Change</td>
<td>Sea Level Rise</td>
<td>EE &amp; Renewables</td>
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<td>Housing Affordability</td>
<td>Nuisance Flooding</td>
<td>Green Building Cert.</td>
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<td>Housing Price</td>
<td>Hurricanes</td>
<td>Parks, Gardens, Greening</td>
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<td>Housing Mobility</td>
<td>Storms</td>
<td>Urban Growth Controls &amp; Infill Development</td>
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<td>Property Values</td>
<td>Extreme Weather</td>
<td>Brownfield Development</td>
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<td>Property Appreciation</td>
<td>Floods</td>
<td>Bike &amp; Ped Infrastructure</td>
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<td>Utility &amp; Insurance Costs</td>
<td>Extreme Heat</td>
<td>Transit-Oriented Development</td>
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<td>Evictions</td>
<td>Wildfires</td>
<td>Bus &amp; Rail Transit</td>
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<td>Displacement</td>
<td>Landslides</td>
<td>EV Charging</td>
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<td>Right to Return</td>
<td>Climate Disasters</td>
<td>Infrastructure</td>
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<td>Relocation</td>
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<td>Gentrification</td>
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Key Takeaway: Inequities in Vulnerability

Low-income and communities of color experience greater exposure and sensitivity to climate hazards and related economic stressors

- Proximity to hazards (e.g. floodplains)
- Substandard housing
- Insurance rate increases
- Drought and agricultural worker impacts
- Access to and costs of cooling
Key Takeaway: Inequities in Recovery

Low-income and communities of color face greater challenges in re-housing and financial recovery post-disaster

- Recovery programs designed to restore wealth
- Housing stock shortages and rent hikes
- Redevelopment and neighborhood change
- POC less likely to be able to return
Key Takeaway: Unintended Consequences
Climate resilience efforts and anti-displacement strategies can exacerbate displacement pressures for vulnerable communities

- Evidence is mixed, context-dependent
- Parks, TOD, EE & higher property values
- Affordable housing in floodplains
- Coordinated resilience & anti-displacement efforts
Miami and Sea Level Rise

- Miami is highly vulnerable to SLR, nuisance flooding, storm surge (Miami Beach @ ~4ft).
- Higher elevation neighborhoods (e.g. Little Haiti, Liberty City) home to communities of color due to redlining, coastal exclusion.
- Neighborhoods now appreciating in property value at 2x the city-average due to relative flood safety (indirect SLR displacement).
- City response includes “climate gentrification/displacement” study, affordable housing bonds, inclusionary zoning.
Hurricane Harvey

- Low-income & non-white residents most impacted, partly due to discriminatory housing policies, poor flood protection
- Harvey flooded or damaged 25% of public and LIHTC housing developments
- Renters: Limited affordable housing pre-storm, increased demand post-storm
- Owners: Mortgage loan delinquency rates, foreclosures
Implications for Research & Policy

→ Redesign of government recovery
→ Equitable investment in mitigation
→ Climate-informed housing policy
→ Community-driven processes
→ Just transition, vocational training programs
→ More intentional monitoring and evaluation
Policy Spotlights

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| 01 | Community Land Trusts | • Help residents return, rebuild  
|    |   | • Ex. Caño Martín Peña in Puerto Rico |
| 02 | Disaster Pre-Planning (ie, Houston’s Rapido model) | • Temporary-to-permanent housing  
|    |   | • Proactive planning and funding |
| 03 | Robust post-disaster renter protections | • Moratoria on foreclosures, insurance cancellations; rent increase caps |
Our Mission

The Partnership for Southern Equity (PSE) advances policies and institutional actions that promote \textit{racial equity and shared prosperity} for all in the growth of metropolitan Atlanta and the American South.

- Just Energy
- Just Growth
- Just Opportunity
- Just Health

ORGANIZING, LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT, COALITION BUILDING, RESEARCH & REPORTING, AUTHENTIC ENGAGEMENT
Atlanta Context

• Climate change and displacement is a prominent conversation in Atlanta
• The impacts we see are more infrastructure-based
PSE: Theory of Change Approach

Our community organization work is driven by the belief that:

1. Residents directly impacted by inequitable policies must be positioned to lead decision-making at the **beginning, middle and end of a process**.

2. Creating engagement opportunities is critical in shaping how the residents’ public policies and practices will be influenced by the **wisdom provided by leaders of impacted populations**.

3. Due to vigorous engagement, new leaders, civic infrastructure and policy innovations can be realized that support better outcomes.
Issue Area Circles: Some of our Shared Values

Just Growth Circle

Anticipate & Protect Against Displacement - Partner with others to manage the impacts of increased surrounding property values on vulnerable neighbors.

Heal Environmental Injustice - Prioritize investment in communities that have felt the cost and burden of poor infrastructure in the past.

Just Energy Circle

Community partnerships are vital for the equitable progression towards self-sufficient people and neighborhoods.

Equity is the principal growth model for the American South.
Circle Model: Building Capacity for Equitable Action during Moments of Opportunity

Equity, health, carbon footprint, resilience level

New infrastructure development

Retiring old infrastructure

The city at any moment in time

Moments of Opportunity
decisions about design, location, funding, hiring of projects (fleeting, require collaboration to influence, unpredictable)

Just Growth & Just Energy Circles
Pre-building capacity: engaging, educating, organizing, acting
# Water Equity Task Force

## Focus Areas

### Shared Equitable Water Decision-Making
- History of mistrust and one-way communications
- Disproportionate impact of issues (flooding, infrastructure failures)

**Priority Actions**
1. Host community charrettes and expand stormwater roadshows
2. Support the expansion of the Atlanta Watershed Learning Network

### Workforce Development
- High unemployment
- Wave of retirements

**Priority Actions**
1. Develop a hyper-local Workforce Benefits RFP as part of an Environmental Impact Bond (EIB) Pilot
2. Develop a strategy to find alternative workforce development funding streams

### Climate Resilience
- Inadequate Public Infrastructure
- Education and Awareness
- Land Use Patterns
- Electrical Grids
- Housing Stock and Maintenance Issues

**Priority Actions**
- Stormwater Utility
- Post Development
- Stormwater Ordinance Overlay Districts
- Improving rating in FEMA Community Rating System

Use findings from the

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**FOCUS AREAS** | **CHALLENGES** | **PRIORITY ACTIONS**
--- | --- | ---
Shared Equitable Water Decision-Making | - History of mistrust and one-way communications  
- Disproportionate impact of issues (flooding, infrastructure failures) | 1. Host community charrettes and expand stormwater roadshows  
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Workforce Development | - High unemployment  
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Climate Resilience | - Inadequate Public Infrastructure  
- Education and Awareness  
- Land Use Patterns  
- Electrical Grids  
- Housing Stock and Maintenance Issues | - Stormwater Utility  
- Post Development  
- Stormwater Ordinance Overlay Districts  
- Improving rating in FEMA Community Rating System

Use findings from the
Collaborative Capacity-Building

Resident Leaders for Equity, TransFormation Academy, and Just Energy Academy
Equitable Development Implementation Tool

**Step One: Commitment**

Assemble your project team and stakeholders for a conversation about these four values. Are they important to you? Are there any that you have questions about or aren’t sure you subscribe to? How have you already been incorporating them?

Using EDIT will require spending extra time working with data, modifying some
Equitable Development Implementation Tool

Step Two: Assembling Background Understanding

Next you will need to gather some understanding of the make-up, history, and prior planning and design work undertaken in the community. This section of the tool will help you pull that information together.
Equitable Development Implementation Tool

Step Three: Using EDIT Throughout the Project Duration

– Respecting Communities –
Putting respect for communities into action takes many forms; EDIT focuses on four of them. Review these questions around any major decision-making.

- Review Before Decision-Making
- Review Before Each Meeting
- Review Quarterly
- Review After Each Meeting
- Strategy for Community Benefits
- Strategy for Affordable Housing
Municipal Policy & Planning Development:
City of East Point, GA
Questions and Discussion
“Break the narrative that displacement and gentrification of urban centers is a sad but necessary part of making our cities more compact and climate ready...”
Thank you!

- www.sparcchub.org/
- www.urbandisplacement.org/
- www.cakex.org/
- https://psequity.org/