

# **Uprooted:** Residential Displacement in Austin's Gentrifying Neighborhoods and What Can Be Done About It

Presentation to the Austin City Council  
September 18<sup>th</sup>, 2018

[sites.utexas.edu/gentrificationproject/](http://sites.utexas.edu/gentrificationproject/)

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## **Scope of Study:**

August 17, 2017 council resolution: "[A] study of gentrification, displacement and mapping of vulnerable neighborhoods" and "a foundation for policy decisions..."

- Identify neighborhoods and groups of residents most vulnerable to displacement as housing costs rise
- Identify strategies and policies for preventing their displacement
- Provide framework for selecting particular anti-displacement policies

## Part 1: Gentrification

- Higher-income residents move into a neighborhood with historically low property values and many vulnerable residents
- Housing costs rise
- Vulnerable residents displaced
- Cultural character of neighborhood transformed



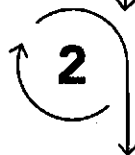
## Part 2: Identifying and Mapping Gentrifying Neighborhoods in Austin

### **Snapshot: 3-Part Gentrification Analysis**



#### **Vulnerability**

What percent of the population in a neighborhood is vulnerable to displacement?



#### **Demographic Change**

What levels of demographic changes, if any, have been occurring in the neighborhood?



#### **Housing Market Change**

How much housing market appreciation, if any, has taken place in the neighborhood?

## Who is most vulnerable to displacement?



Communities  
of Color



People 25 and  
older without a  
Bachelor's Degree



Renters



People making at or  
below 80% Median  
Family Income



Households  
with children  
in poverty

Sources: Gentrification and Displacement Study: implementing an equitable inclusive development strategy in the context of gentrification (Lisa Bates), American Community Survey, 2016, US Decennial Census 2000

## Of 200 Austin neighborhoods . . .

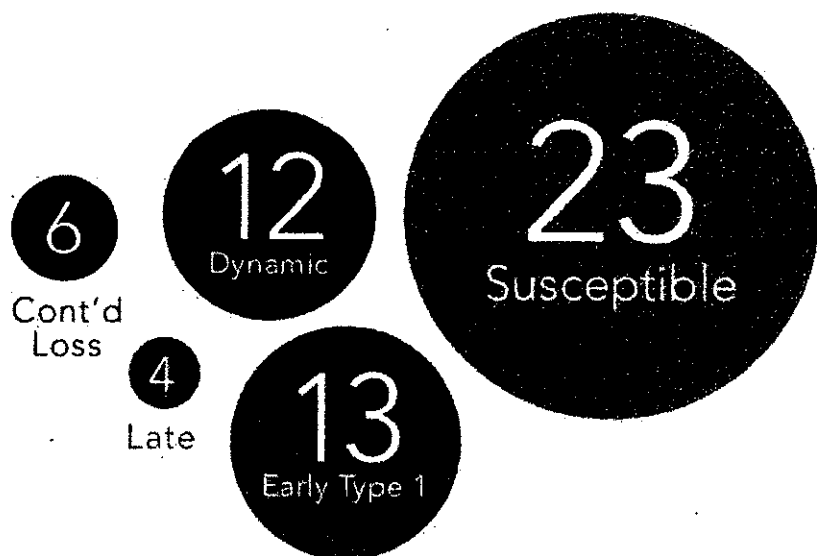
**Susceptible** Near high value/  
high appreciation areas. Not yet  
experiencing demographic change.

**Early Type 1**  
Experiencing appreciation, still  
with low/moderate home values.

**Dynamic**  
Exhibit demographic change  
indicative of gentrification.

**Late**  
Newly high value areas,  
still with vulnerable populations

**Continued Loss**  
High value areas that have experienced  
demographic change



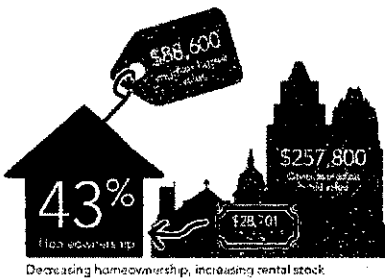
Interactive maps available at:  
[sites.utexas.edu/gentrificationproject/](http://sites.utexas.edu/gentrificationproject/)

# MONTOPOLIS NEIGHBORHOOD

a gentrification drilldown

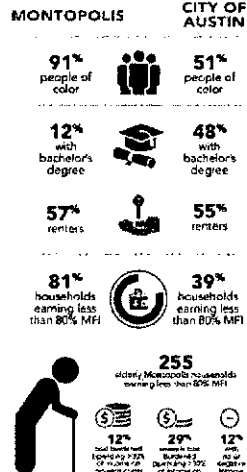
Geography  
Early Type 1

A vulnerable community with homeownership in decline:



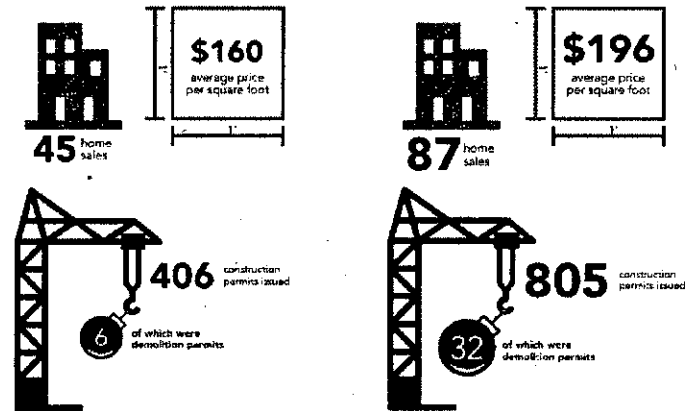
	2000	2012 - 2016
Homeownership	67%	43%
Median Household Income	\$40,768*	\$28,701
Median Home Value	\$75,404	\$88,600
Citywide Median Home Value	\$168,387	\$257,800

\*all values in 2016 dollars (adjusted for inflation)



# Neighborhood Drilldowns

2015 → Increasing home prices, more construction → 2017



Sources: Gentrification and Displacement Study; implementing an equitable inclusive development strategy in the context of gentrification (Lisa Bates), American Community Survey 2016, US Decennial Census 2000

## Part 3: Case Studies of Local Efforts to Mitigate Displacement in Gentrifying Neighborhoods

### Portland, OR

Inner North/Northeast neighborhoods

### Washington, DC

Columbia Heights neighborhood

### Austin

Guadalupe neighborhood



## Themes emerging from case studies

A meaningful role for residents is critical.

It takes a long time.

Act early. Buy land. Build anti-displacement into city plans.

It requires a lot of money.

Match strategies to local conditions.



## Parts 4 and 5: A Framework for Action

- Start with vision and goals from public discussions
- Identify solutions that serve each goal
- Use criteria to evaluate solutions, match to neighborhood conditions



## Vision Statement

Low-income residents and persons of color—and their children—in historically disadvantaged communities have the opportunity to stay and return to their neighborhoods in the face of rising property values and an influx of more affluent residents. Over time, opportunities remain for new low-income residents to live in the community. Residents have a meaningful role in shaping the future of their neighborhood.

## Six Goals — and Choices Between Them

1. Prevent displacement of renters
2. Prevent displacement of homeowners
3. Retain existing affordable housing
4. Plan inclusively to prevent displacement
5. Enable the return of those displaced
6. Create new housing for current and future residents

**Goals, Strategies, and Policies for Addressing the Displacement of  
Vulnerable Residents in Gentrifying Neighborhoods**

Goal #1: Vulnerable renters in gentrifying neighborhoods are not displaced from their current homes and neighborhoods		
Strategy	Tool	In Austin's Strategic Housing Blueprint?
Strategy 1a. Provide direct financial relief to vulnerable renters who are at risk of being displaced from their homes in gentrifying neighborhoods.	Increased local funding for emergency rental assistance	No
	Neighborhood stabilization voucher program	No
Strategy 1b. Increase city legal protections for renters to reduce evictions and other forms of displacement in gentrifying neighborhoods.	Mandatory city tenant protections for all rental properties receiving city support	No
	Expansion of legal and mediation support for tenants facing eviction	No
	Improvements to the City's anti-retaliation ordinance and anti-harassment protections for tenants	No
	Eviction notification ordinance/required notice to city	No

# Funding \$ \$ \$ \$ \$ \$ \$

- General Revenue
- Tax Increment Financing
- General Obligation Bonds
- Density Bonus In-Lieu Fees

## Criteria — Understanding Costs and Tradeoffs

Which group will this help?

What stage of gentrification does this best fit?

Is this a place-based strategy?

Will it serve current or future residents? or both?

How will the voices of vulnerable residents be represented?

What level of funding is required?

Do we have the current capacity to do this?

**Policy Drilldown Table: Analysis of Anti-Displacement Policies for Austin**

Policy	Vulnerable populations targeted	Stage of gentrification targeted	Place-based	Sustainability	Inclusivity	Financial resources required	Capacity required
<b>Local Housing Voucher Programs</b>	Low-income renter households	Middle to late	No	Poor to fair	Poor to fair	Medium to high	Fair
<b>Homestead Preservation Center</b>	Low-income homeowners, including seniors and persons of color	All	Yes	Poor	Good	Medium	Fair
<b>Neighborhood Stabilization Overlays</b>	Current homeowners and renters	Early and mid-stage	Yes	Poor to fair	Fair	Low	Fair
<b>Affordable Housing Preservation Network and Inventory</b>	Current and future low-income renters of apartments	Early and mid-stage	No	Good	Good	Low to medium	Fair
<b>Neighborhood-Jobs Pipeline Program</b>	Working-age low-income residents	Early and mid-stage	Yes	Poor to fair	Good	Medium	Fair



## Policy Highlights

- Homestead Preservation Center
- Preservation network and database
- Affordable housing preservation officer
- Tenant opportunity to purchase program with tenant capacity building
- Early and strategic land banking
- Public-private below market debt fund
- Community-driven, neighborhood-scale displacement mitigation plans

This report provides a framework to:

- Identify neighborhoods and groups of residents most vulnerable to displacement as housing costs rise
- Identify strategies and policies for preventing their displacement
- Provide framework for selecting particular anti-displacement policies

