



## *Learning Series - From Silos to Synergy: Community-Centered Solutions for Green Gentrification and Displacement*



URBAN WATERS  
LEARNING NETWORK



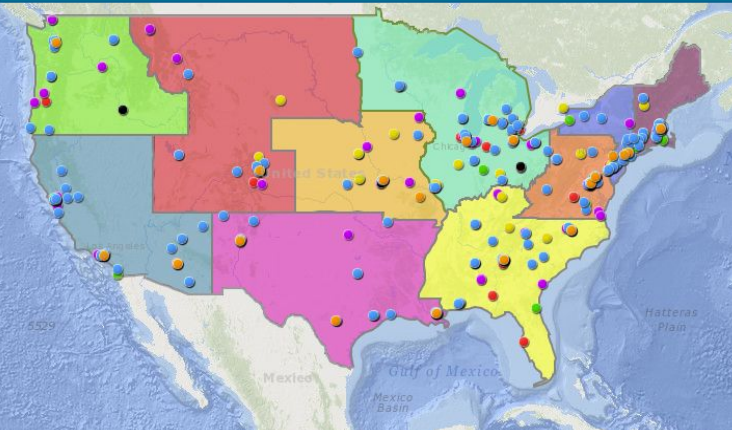
# Welcome!

- This webinar is being **recorded** and will be sent out after the call.
- **Introduce yourself** in the chat - name, org., where you're calling from.
- Please keep yourself on **mute** to reduce background noise and feel free to use the chat for any questions or comments.
- We'll be monitoring the **chat** to capture questions. We will follow up directly with a Q&A session after presentations.

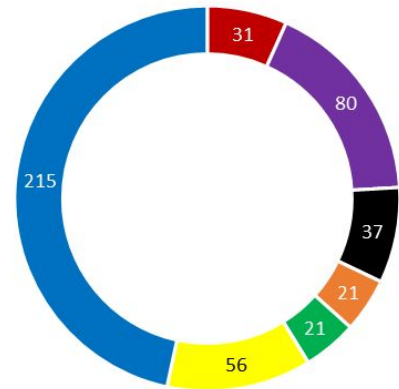




# Urban Waters Learning Network (UWLN)



*We are a peer-to-peer network of people and organizations working to conserve, restore and revitalize America's urban waterways, supporting our members' work through tools, training, mentoring and financial assistance.*



- Businesses
- City-County-State-Tribal
- Federal Agencies
- Urban Waters Federal Partnerships
- Groundwork Trusts
- Learning Institutions
- Nonprofits-Collaboratives



# LEARNING SERIES – FROM SILOS TO SYNERGY

## LEARNING SERIES – FROM SILOS TO SYNERGY: INTEGRATING LAND AND WATER PROGRAMS FOR HOLISTIC ENVIRONMENTAL ACTION

Land, air, and water systems are deeply interconnected – and our approach to healing past harms and creating a more just future needs to be as well.

**Silos to Synergy series**, is designed to help land and water equity practitioners think beyond traditional program silos





# TODAY'S PRESENTERS



**RENEE MAZUREK**  
Resilient Communities Manager  
River Network



**GRACE FULLMER**  
Corporate Engagement Manager  
River Network



**ARIF ULLAH**  
Executive Director  
South Bronx Unite



# Community-Centered Solutions for Advancing Equitable Development and Anti-Displacement



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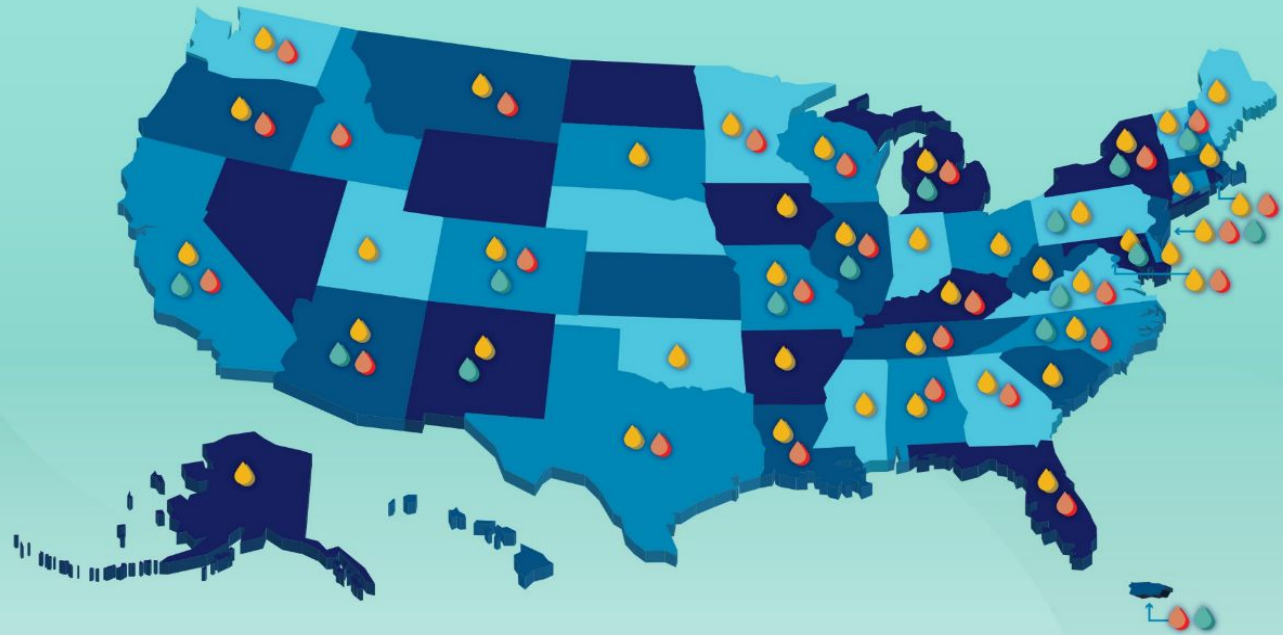




# Meet River Network

River Network Grows and strengthens a transformational national network of water, justice, and river advocates.

*We envision a powerful and inclusive movement that ensures abundant clean water for all people and nature to thrive.*



## **WE CONNECT**

Our work brings together the nationwide network of water advocates, leaders, and protectors, to share solutions, advance equity, and build trust.

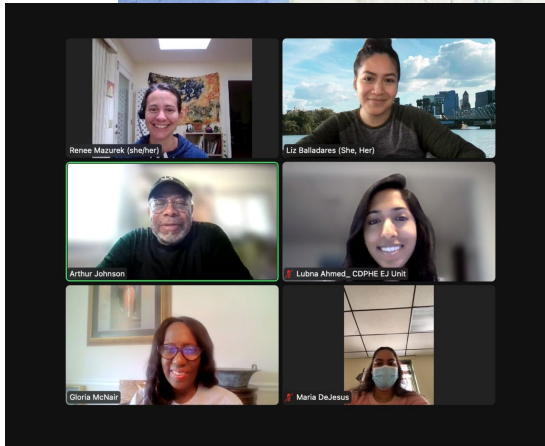
## **WE STRENGTHEN**

Groups and individuals across the network impress us daily with their power and passion. We are honored to strengthen their work through financial support, skill development, and community events that bring a future of clean water for all closer each day.

## **WE TRANSFORM**

We transform the scope and scale of the network through comprehensive, fresh solutions that drive organizational change, relationship change, data transformation, and policy translation, for a holistic movement that goes above and beyond just water.

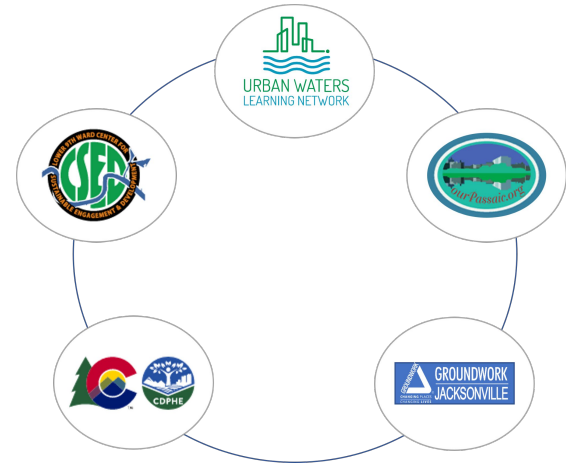
# UWLN Collaborative





# Equitable Development Work

- Urban Waters Learning Network resources and Mobilize group
- UWLN Equitable Development and Anti-Displacement Collaborative
- Development of Toolkit (Published in Sept 2024) - River Network partnered with NPS Rivers, Trails, and Conservation Assistance + Advisory Group
- Peer Calls
- Webinars and training



# Definitions - A Review





# Definitions- Displacement

**Displacement:** Happens when residents are pushed out of their neighborhoods due to various direct and indirect drivers.

## 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

# Definitions- Gentrification

**Gentrification:** “The process of neighborhood change that occurs as places of lower real estate value are transformed into places of higher real estate value.” - *US EPA Office of Environmental Justice*

**Green gentrification:** Investments in parks, green infrastructure and other types of environmental restoration can add to displacement pressures.

**“Withintrification”:** Coined by Pastor John Wallace, “withintrification” is a term that describes when residents within a community are leading neighborhood revitalization alongside efforts to remain in place.



Image: Sawmill River, Yonkers, Groundwork Hudson Valley

# Definitions- Equitable Development



CreekFest 2019, Groundwork Jacksonville. Photo: Gloria McNair

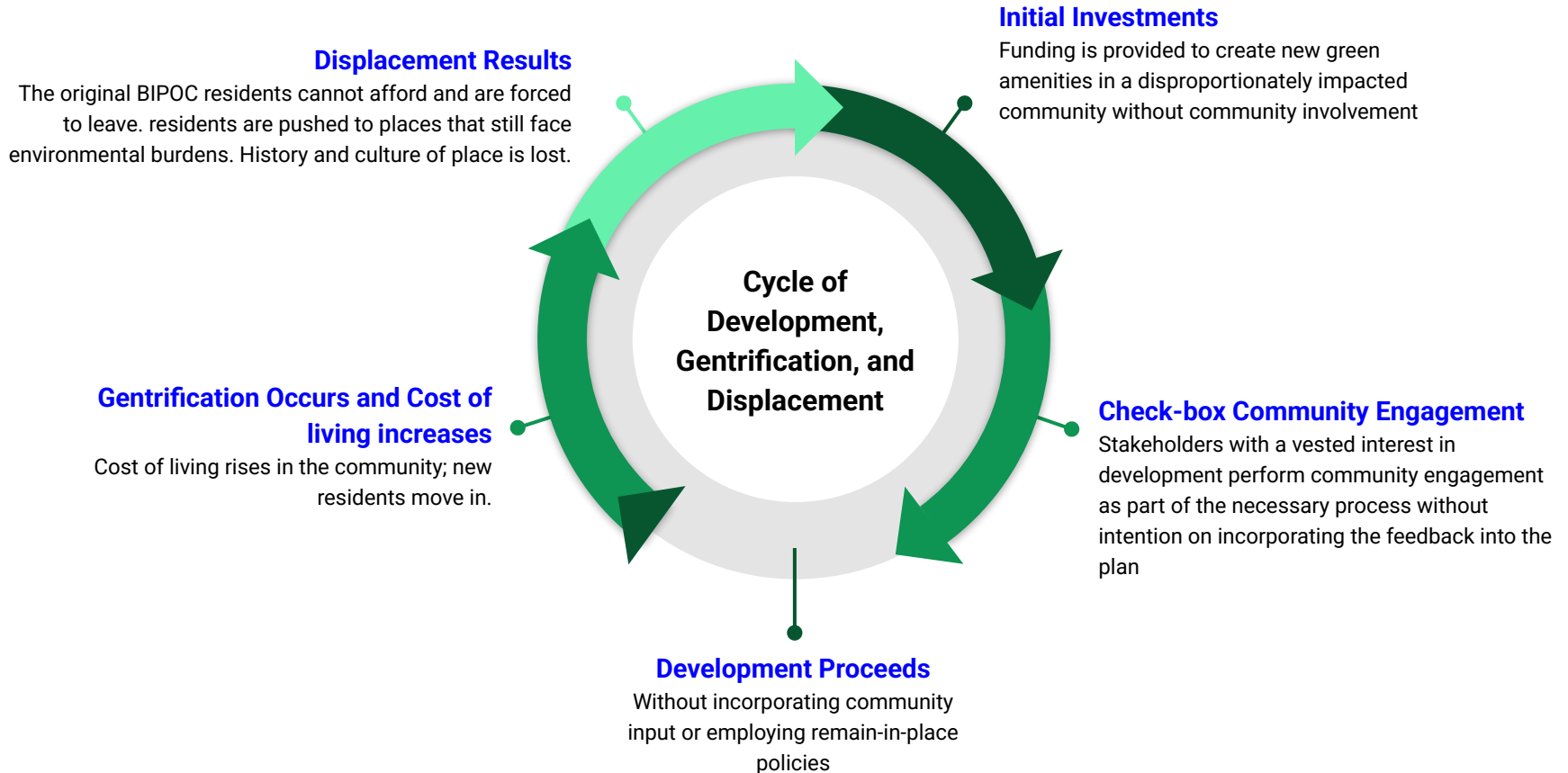
“**Equitable development** is an approach for meeting the needs of underserved communities through policies and programs that reduce disparities while fostering places that are healthy and vibrant.” - *EPA Office of Environmental Justice*.

**We expand this definition to recognize:**

- the cycles of gentrification and displacement that are at play.
- that while restoring rivers, providing access to green spaces, and implementing nature-based solutions will make communities more “healthy and vibrant,” these forms of development can change neighborhood characteristics and displace residents to less-desirable locations that are also impacted by a changing climate.



# Business As Usual



# Business As Usual



**Green:** Business as Usual  
**Purple:** Ways to interrupt the cycle

### Displacement Results

The original BIPOC residents cannot afford and are forced to leave. residents are pushed to places that still face environmental burdens. History and culture of place is lost.

### Equitable Growth Occurs and Displacement Avoided

Guided by and with community members, growth can occur in such a way that residents are able to remain in place and enjoy the new benefits in their neighborhood.

### Gentrification Occurs and Cost of Living Increases

Cost of living rises in the community; new residents move in.

### Forming Deeper Partnerships to Invest in Multiple Benefits

At the same time that development is occurring, deepen ties with community and multi-sector partnerships to invest in multiple benefits like affordable housing and workforce development

### Community-led Vision

Share project idea, and get initial feedback while also incorporating their priorities. Before investments are made, understand community priorities and incorporate them into funding proposals and planning processes

### Initial Investments

Funding is provided to create new green amenities in a disproportionately impacted community without community involvement

### Authentic Community Engagement

Intentionally engage community members using equitable methods. Start developing relationships with other sectors that can support community priorities.

### Check-box Community Engagement

Stakeholders with a vested interest in development perform community engagement as part of the necessary process without intention on incorporating the feedback into the plan

### Incorporate Community Priorities into Development Planning

Take community input into account as a baseline for this work and develop planning processes with those multiple benefits in mind

### Development Proceeds

Without incorporating community input or employing remain-in-place policies

**Cycle of  
Development,  
Gentrification, and  
Displacement +  
Ways to Interrupt  
the Cycle**



# The Toolkit: Overview

- Historical Background and Context
- Strategies for Addressing Risks
  - Looking Inward
  - Looking Outward
- Tying it all together



# Context and History

## HISTORICAL TIMELINE

It's important to understand the history of racist policies and practices, like redlining and urban renewal, to understand today's displacement risks as well as how the environmental justice movement is working to reduce these risks.

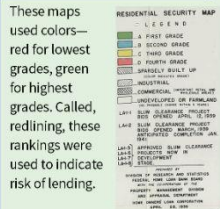
### 1930s–1940s REDLINING

In 1933, President Franklin Delano Roosevelt signed into law the Home Owners' Loan Act.

The Home Owners' Loan Corporation (HOLC) was formed to carry out the provisions of the law.

Between 1935–1940, HOLC created Residential Security Maps that ranked neighborhoods based on quality of housing as well as race, ethnicity, and class.

Red communities were cut off from the capital needed to improve their living situations, resulting in decades of racist housing policies and discriminatory loan practices, the impacts of which still exist today.



**RELATED RESOURCE:** [The National Community Reinvestment Coalition research study of 115 cities finds that 74% of the areas classified as red \(or lowest grade\) are low-to-moderate income today, and 64% are racially diverse neighborhoods.](#)

### 1950s–1960s: URBAN RENEWAL

The Federal Housing Acts of 1949 and 1954, activated federal funds to invest in affordable housing and the redevelopment of blighted cities. This became known as Urban Renewal.

Between 1955 and 1966, more than 300,000 people were displaced by urban renewal.

**RELATED RESOURCE:** [A map created by the Digital Scholarship Lab Renewing Inequality Project shows the number of families that cities reported as displaced between 1955 and 1966.](#)

### 1960s–1970s: URBAN-CENTERED ENVIRONMENTAL MOVEMENT

Early environmental movements focused on conservation and preservation of “wild” areas, the 1960s and 1970s saw a movement toward urban-centered environmentalism.



The Cuyahoga River in Cleveland, OH caught fire at least a dozen times during the 1960s, driving concerned citizens and organizations to act for a cleaner environment.

### 1960s–1970s: CONTINUED

The first Earth Day was held on April 22, 1970 as an effort to raise awareness of environmental degradation. In the years following, the United States saw the development of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), the Clean Air Act, and the Clean Water Act.

The early days of the urban environmental movement mostly excluded people of color and low-income residents who were the ones most exposed to high levels of pollution.

### 1980s to Present: ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE MOVEMENT

In 1987, the United Church of Christ Commission on Racial Justice's landmark paper—[Toxic Wastes and Race in the United States](#)—finally unequivocally identified race as the most significant indicator for the location of hazardous waste facilities.

In 1992, the EPA created the Office of Environmental Equity which became the Office of Environmental Justice in 1994 and the Office of Environmental Justice and External Civil Rights in 2022.

In 2021, the federal government established the [Justice 40 Initiative](#) that directs 40% of federal investments to disproportionately impacted communities followed by the [Bipartisan Infrastructure Law in 2021](#) and the [Inflation Reduction Act in 2022](#).

Today, the office “provides resources and technical assistance on civil rights and environmental justice, engages with communities with environmental justice concerns, and provides support for community-led action.”

**RELATED RESOURCES:** [EJ Screen](#), [EPA IRA map](#), [CEJST](#), and [Environmental Justice Timeline](#).

# Strategies: Internal Work

- Organizational Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Trainings and Practices
- Setting Your Intention
- Addressing Barriers

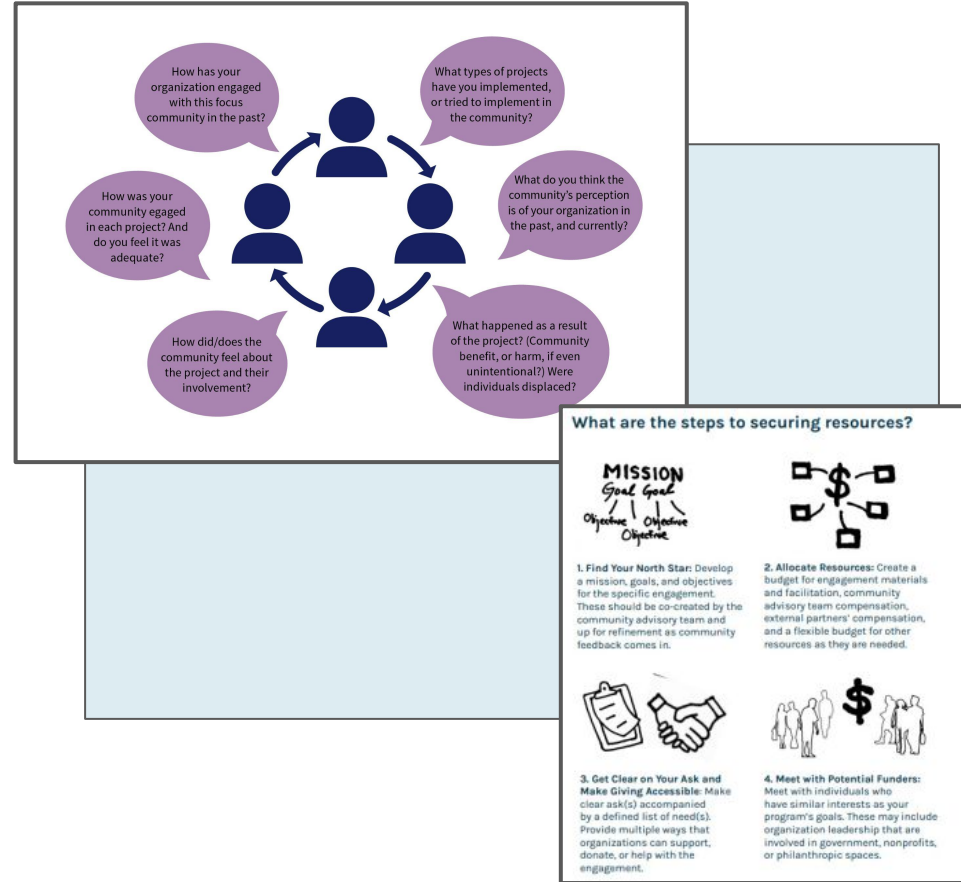


BARRIER	TACTIC	RESOURCES NEEDED
Lack of Trust	See <a href="#">Fostering Community Trust</a>	
Leadership does not support the work	See <a href="#">Fostering Leadership Commitment</a>	
The work is not funded	See <a href="#">Funding and Budgeting to do the work</a>	
Add your own here...	See <a href="#">Appendix A</a> for a blank rubric	



# Strategies: Internal Work

- Fostering Community Trust
- Fostering Leadership Commitment
- Funding and Budgeting to do the work



# Strategies: External Work

- Understanding and Engaging Communities
- Building the Team
- Creating the Toolbox and a Plan
- Long-Term: Continued Engagement

## COMMUNITY-CENTERED SOLUTIONS FOR GREEN GENTRIFICATION AND DISPLACEMENT

To think about how you can use these different tools, use the example framework below to build out your toolbox. For a blank rubric, see [Appendix A](#). For a more comprehensive list of toolkits, strategies, equitable development plans and other resources refer to [Appendix B](#).

Identified Community Priority (be very specific)	Example Policies or Tools that would address it	Who can you partner with to accomplish this goal? Who is the team lead?
<b>Housing</b> <i>(Stabilizing housing costs, paying for housing repairs, helping with heirs property taxes, education for first time homeowners, building a community land trust)</i>	Examples from the City of Newark: <a href="#">rent control</a> , <a href="#">inclusionary zoning</a> , and <a href="#">right to counsel</a> and the North Riverside CDC and Groundwork Jacksonville Home Repair Program	
<b>Workforce Development</b> <i>(how can you tie the development work to job opportunities for the community? What kinds of trainings can you provide? And are there placements available after the training?)</i>	Examples of workforce development programs: <a href="#">Green City Force</a> and Groundwork New Orleans <a href="#">Ground Crew</a>	
<b>Community Preservation</b> <i>(Is it a specific location or gathering place to preserve? Can art and/or storytelling contribute to the work)</i>	Find examples from the National Endowment for the Arts Guide: <a href="#">How to Do Creative Placemaking</a>	
<b>Economic Development</b> <i>(what small businesses would benefit from being a part of the development? What already exist that can be preserved?)</i>	Find examples in the National Center for Smart Growth Research and Education at the University of Maryland <a href="#">Small Business Anti-Displacement Toolkit</a>	
<b>More Community Priorities Here... Find a blank rubric in <a href="#">Appendix A</a>.</b>	Refer to <a href="#">Appendix B</a> for more tools.	

# Understanding and Engaging Communities

- Pre-community Engagement ([resource](#))
- Community Engagement Resources

COMMUNITY-CENTERED SOLUTIONS FOR GREEN GENTRIFICATION AND DISPLACEMENT

**OTHER USEFUL RESOURCES:**

There are many tools to begin to engage community members in authentic ways. Other River Network resources include [Tools for Equitable Climate Resilience](#).

The [Community-Led Research](#) toolkit provides step-by-step guidance and lessons learned on how to effectively engage with community members to understand climate impacts and to develop more equitable climate resilience strategies.



The [Fostering Community Leadership](#) toolkit aims to build the capacity of organizations to serve as catalysts in supporting members of their communities stepping into leadership roles, engaging them meaningfully in defining the scope of local climate change risks and impacts, and formulating and implementing equitable solutions.



River Network's [Building Blocks of Trust](#) report also provides strategies for building trusting relationships. While this is focused on community relationships with water utilities, the trust-building practices are widely applicable to understanding different roles and finding commonalities in goals.



## CASE STUDY HIGHLIGHT: MESA, AZ

All of the steps in the Pre-Community Engagement methodology are important: (1) Seek to Understand the Layers within a Community, (2) Understand a Range of Community Member Perspectives, and (3) Identify Engagement Strategies that Support Community Preferences. It doesn't have to be as deep or detailed as in the Mesa analysis; however it is important to:

- Understand the context and history of place as well the place as it is right now
- Make connections with folks living in the place and conduct at least 10 interviews with a variety of people.
- Provide community members with information about how you will use it as well as the outcomes of the conversations you're having with them.
- Act on the issues that are important to them, even small-scale issues that affect their daily lives. This sets up a solutions-oriented mindset to tackle larger scale issues.
- Invest in the process (it's more important than a large report as an outcome).



*This has become a practice anytime that we're going into a new place...The whole idea is that all of the assets in a community already exist. All of the leadership in a community already exists... Diving deeper to really identify the more granular pieces takes a lot more work, and if we do that on the front end, it then makes the result for everything else that much easier, more authentic, and better informed by community." —Augie Gastelum, Patchwork Community Inclusion, Community & Economic Development Consultant*



## CASE STUDY HIGHLIGHT: JACKSONVILLE, FL

Through experiences gained while developing the Emerald Trail in Jacksonville, Florida, Gloria McNair—from Groundwork Jacksonville—shares the following best practices for community engagement:

- 1 Engage community early and often
- 2 Apply an equity lens
- 3 Build trust
- 4 Be transparent
- 5 Value residents as subject matter experts
- 6 Find and share available resources
- 7 Look at the big picture



# Building The Team

- Stakeholder Analysis
- Models for multi-sector work
  - Collective Impact - Backbone Organizations

“

*I think the methodology of before the project begins, putting together a team who's going to think about this is...really important and a very smart strategy.... I get this question all the time, "What can you do?" The truth is that it's never one thing, and it's never the same. Having an understanding of the entire toolbox and knowing how to use the different tools that you have at your disposal, either through your city, through your county, through legal representation, through educating and supporting the residents themselves, knowing when to kind of pull which lever, and having a group of people that are all working together, who have some knowledge of these various levers and deploying that strategically, is what will work, is what has worked." - Candice Dickens-Russell, Executive Director of Friends of the LA River and 2023 Listening Session Participant*



## Backbone Starter Guide

A Summary of Major Resources about the Backbone from FSG and the Collective Impact Forum

IN COLLABORATION WITH



Related Resource for funding collaborative work: Collectively Owned Strategies:

[https://ssir.org/articles/entry/collectively-owned-strategies?utm\\_source=Enews&utm\\_medium=Email&utm\\_campaign=SSIR\\_Now#](https://ssir.org/articles/entry/collectively-owned-strategies?utm_source=Enews&utm_medium=Email&utm_campaign=SSIR_Now#)

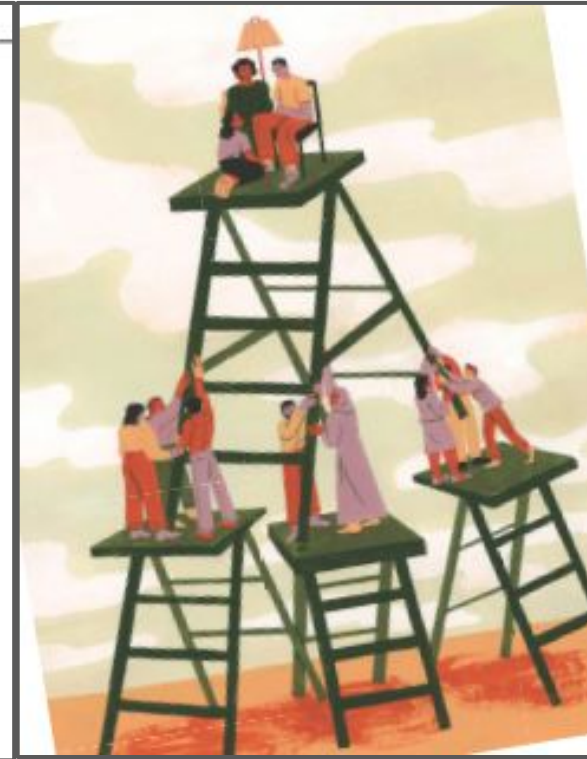
# Creating the Toolbox and a Plan

- Strategies depend on communities but may include
  - Affordable Housing
  - Workforce development
  - Public Policies
  - Cultural Preservation
- Equitable development planning



# Long Term: Continued Engagement

- Sustained engagement
- Looking for new opportunities
- Continue to invest / build capacity
- Tips for Avoiding Engagement Fatigue

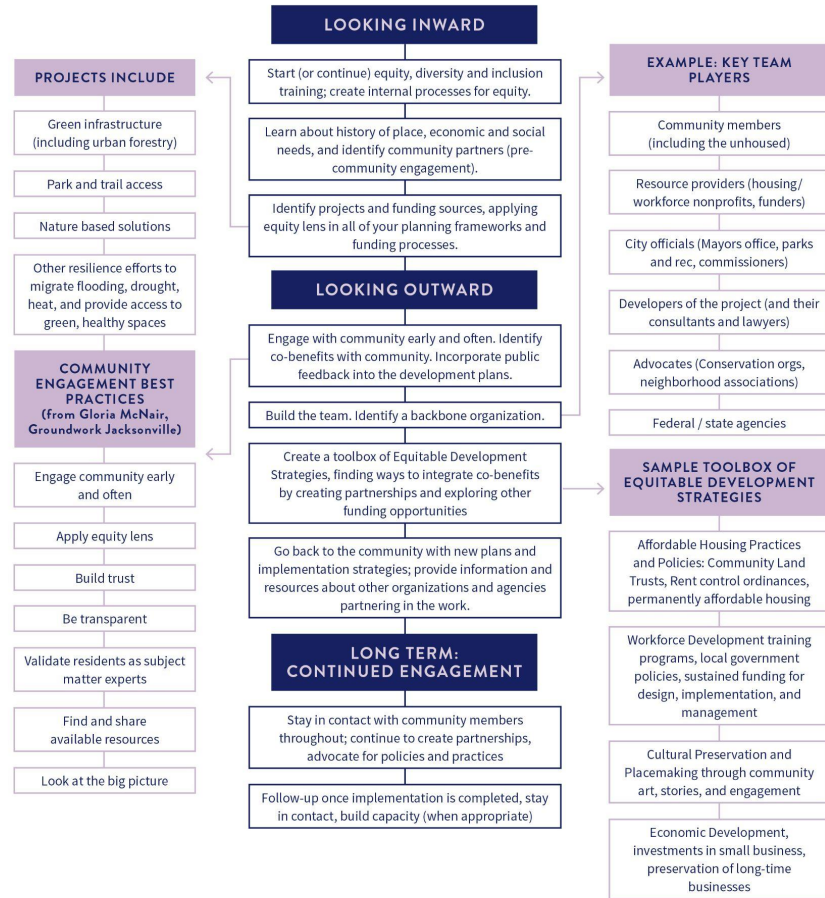


Article from the Stanford Social Innovation Review:

[https://ssir.org/articles/entry/transformational\\_capacity\\_building#](https://ssir.org/articles/entry/transformational_capacity_building#)



# Tying it all Together



# Case Study Examples

COMMUNITY-CENTERED SOLUTIONS FOR GREEN GENTRIFICATION AND DISPLACEMENT

## CASE STUDY INTRODUCTIONS

There are some great examples of organizations and partnerships that are implementing equitable development strategies. We highlight three case study examples in this toolkit. Find here an introduction to each of the locations and projects, and throughout the toolkit we include insights and recommendations from the case study contacts.



JACKSONVILLE, FLORIDA: GROUNDWORK JACKSONVILLE AND THE EMERALD TRAIL

Groundwork Jacksonville is a nonprofit organization in Jacksonville, FL that was formed in 2014 in collaboration with the City to oversee the development of the Emerald Trail and the restoration of creeks along the greenway—McCoy's and Hogans Creeks. The Emerald Trail will be 30 miles of greenway through 14 historic neighborhoods in Jacksonville, promoting economic development and connecting the urban core around their waters.

Using community-led research, Groundwork Jacksonville set out to improve their community engagement and equitable development efforts. Through community engagement, Groundwork was able to identify community preferences and priorities. While flooding was originally the main concern of McCoy's Creek, the community members saw the revitalization of their neighborhood through Emerald Trail as a more pressing issue due to possible displacement from the restoration. With their input from the beginning, the community was able to implement their wants to bring fishing back to their neighborhoods and it is now a "crucial aspect" of the McCoy's Creek restoration project.

COMMUNITY-CENTERED SOLUTIONS FOR GREEN GENTRIFICATION AND DISPLACEMENT



SOUTH BRONX, NEW YORK: SOUTH BRONX UNITE COMMUNITY WATERFRONT PLANNING

South Bronx Unite (SBU) is a nonprofit organization working to bring together residents, community organizations, and other partners to restore and protect the social, environmental, and economic future of Mott Haven and Port Morris. Though rich in culture and ingenuity, the South Bronx is a low-income, primarily Black, Brown, and immigrant community that is disproportionately impacted by environmental injustice, a legacy of redlining, urban renewal, and disinvestment.

The waterfront there is dotted with heavy industry and polluting facilities like major expressways, waste transfer stations, peak power plants, last-mile warehouses, and thousands of daily diesel truck trips. Today, the South Bronx has some of the worst air pollution levels in the country, with asthma hospitalization rates 21 times higher than any other New York City neighborhood. Asthma is known to limit physical, social, and professional aspects of life; and air pollution causes other health issues, like heart disease and cancer.

Relief from the air that is literally killing residents in the South Bronx could be found along the waterfront, but access is non-existent even though those polluting facilities are on public land. The South Bronx is also at an extreme risk of increased heat and flooding over the next 30 years, both of which have already started.

South Bronx Unite's [Mott Haven-Port Morris Waterfront Plan](#) is their proposal to provide residents with access to a public waterfront while also providing solutions to air pollution and climate change effects. What makes this plan different from other developments is that it is a community-envisioned and [community-managed waterfront](#). Through charrette activities and other forms of engagement, the community put forth the vision to create seven interconnected green spaces on the waterfront. SBU has been working with landscape architects, urban designers, engineers, students, elected representatives, and city and state agencies to bring this vision to life with green infrastructure and nature-based solutions that provide benefits for mental and physical health while decreasing flooding and heat risks.

To achieve the goals of the plan, partnerships are of the utmost importance. SBU partners with many different entities in the community. They host walking tours several times a year for elected representatives, government officials, school groups, and other stakeholders to see the polluted

# Next Steps and Poll

- In development:
  - Online Resources
  - New training materials and opportunities
  - Spanish translation
- We also want to hear from you - Poll

**December Urban Waters Equitable Development Peer Group Quarterly Call**

**18 Dec**

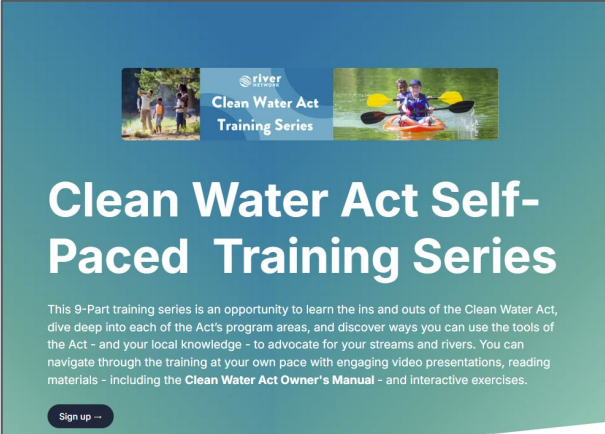
📅 Dec 18th, 1:00 pm - 2:00 pm EST

📍 <https://rivernetwork.org/zoom.us/j/83452579173?pwd=82lQOiCa8zmyVceY0XHkIj7PbXiNA.1&from=addon>

The quarterly calls are informal gatherings for network members to talk about equitable development and anti-displacement strategies, successes, and challenges. This is a space for you to engage with your peers to ask questions, share experiences and resources, and provide insights on other resources that would be helpful for future meetings. Find some of the Urban Waters

[Read More](#)

Quarterly Peer Calls ^^^



**Clean Water Act Self-Paced Training Series**

This 9-Part training series is an opportunity to learn the ins and outs of the Clean Water Act, dive deep into each of the Act's program areas, and discover ways you can use the tools of the Act - and your local knowledge - to advocate for your streams and rivers. You can navigate through the training at your own pace with engaging video presentations, reading materials - including the **Clean Water Act Owner's Manual** - and interactive exercises.

[Sign up --](#)

An Example of online training ^^^

Join our Online Community for opportunities:

<https://community.rivernetwork.org/registrations/groups/42923>



# South Bronx Unite







## WHY THIS PROJECT

**VULNERABLE TO  
HEAT ISLAND &  
FLOODING**

**EXPOSURE TO  
POLLUTING  
FACILITIES &  
TRUCK EXHAUST**

**LACK OF  
WATERFRONT  
ACCESS**





# PORT MORRIS - MOTT HAVEN WATERFRONT PLAN | CATALYST PROJECTS & VISION

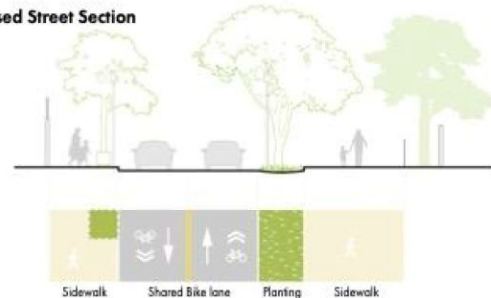
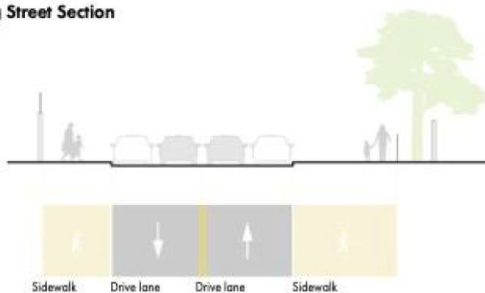


# CONNECTION TO RANDALL'S ISLAND CONNECTOR



Existing Street Section

Proposed Street Section





# 132ND STREET END



Existing Street Section

Proposed Street Section





# **Power-Sharing & Community-Driven Design**



**SOUTH  
BRONX**  
HEALTH MATTERS

PUBLIC LAND  
for  
PUBLIC GOOD

**OUR**  
WATERFRONT MATTERS

WATERFRONT  
ACCESS  
FOR ALL

NUESTRA  
CALIDAD

**SOUTH BRONX**

**UNITE**

[www.SouthBronxUnite.com](http://www.SouthBronxUnite.com)

@SouthBronxUnite




























# BEFORE YOU GO...

**Connect!** Network with others on land and water topics.


**Tell us what you think!** See evaluation survey.

**Join us again!** Register for our upcoming sessions in March & May.



URBAN WATERS  
LEARNING NETWORK

## From Silos to Synergy



**Integrating Land and  
Water Programs for  
Holistic Environmental Action**



A scenic view of a city at sunset. In the foreground, a river flows over a concrete dam, creating a white waterfall. The water is a deep blue. In the middle ground, a large, multi-arched bridge spans the river. The sun is setting behind the bridge, creating a bright orange and yellow glow in the sky. The sky is filled with soft, colorful clouds. In the background, several tall, modern buildings are visible against the sunset sky. On the right side, there are green trees and utility poles with power lines. A small sign is visible on the riverbank near the trees.

***Thank you!***

***Share your feedback via the evaluation link in the chat!***