

ANTI-DISPLACEMENT POLICY IN TRANSPORTATION  
PLANNING:  
A PLAN ANALYSIS

by

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Cities in the United States have an extensive history of displacement of marginalized communities, specifically during the 1950s and 60s. This displacement was primarily caused by federally funded urban renewal programs, meant to improve aging infrastructure and build an entirely new transportation system to meet the demands of the growing automobile industry. The interstate freeway system was the primary result of these programs, but not without a cost, as marginalized communities were primarily the ones displaced. This thesis explores how transportation planners today consider this history of displacement from transportation investments, through the inclusion of anti-displacement policy in their published planning documents. This study made use of a typology rating system and qualitative analysis to perform an overall plan analysis of 10 U.S. cities. Each of these cities was chosen based on their bicycle infrastructure. The plan analysis found an overall poor inclusion of anti-displacement policy and/or language in the cities' transportation and comprehensive plans. These findings indicate the necessity for greater inclusion of this policy in city planning documents to recognize displacement history more effectively and prevent future displacement as a result of transportation investments.

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## **Introduction**

In 1956, the Federal Aid Highway Act was enacted into law under President Dwight D. Eisenhower. This law became the major funding source for the construction of the interstate freeways system that allows motorists to travel from state to state today. The term urban renewal often refers to this period of freeway construction during the 1950s and 60s when the federal and local city governments invested in redesigning city centers and urban neighborhoods. Urban renewal programs, in the United States, are often seen as a time of successful infrastructure implementation and city redesign, and yet often overlooked as the racist and destructive force that they were in reality. Planners and historians began studying the effects of urban renewal in the 1970s as the after-effects of the construction of the interstate freeway system became clear (Zuk et al., 2018). Scholars found that the major effects of these programs were that neighborhoods of color were being displaced, as families' homes were forcibly bought out by the government under the rights of eminent domain, and the land was cleared to make room for freeways and other large developments (Avila & Rose, 2009; Connerly, 2002; Karas, 2015)

Due to this historical atrocity, planners and scholars have continued to study the relationship between public investments and gentrification or displacement. As the public sector invests in urban areas through new infrastructure, transportation systems or housing developments, the government is at risk of creating instances of gentrification or displacement (Zuk et al., 2018, 31). Whether public investments definitively cause gentrification or displacement remains unclear in scholarship, however, more recent studies have shown that these unintended consequences are

possible. Bates (2019) in explaining how Portland's city planners are dealing with community backlash from fear of displacement, explained that:

Planners working on neighborhood development today face intense distrust and anger about past and current practices that spur gentrification (23). (Bates, 2019)

This mistrust is a reality for many U.S. cities as many residents feel anxious over residential displacement as they have experienced neighborhood change in the past (Zuk et al., 2018, 31). However, it is important to note that these two terms are very different in their meaning. Gentrification is often defined as the overall neighborhood change, often as a result of an influx of wealthier residents or new housing developments bringing high-income people to a neighborhood. Conversely, displacement refers to the specific movement of households out of a neighborhood, often due to reasons that are beyond their control, such as rising rents or property taxes, or eminent domain (Zuk et al., 2018). Gentrification has the potential to cause the displacement of households, and displacement of long term residents is often a result of gentrification (Flanagan et al., 2016). It is important to note that displacement can happen completely separately from gentrification, however the two terms are often used to describe similar events or processes.

Displacement and gentrification are often terms associated with housing, not transportation. How do we define displacement in the context of transportation and land use? Zuk et al. (2018) provide one definition of *residential displacement* as:

[Occurring] when any household is forced to move from its residence by conditions which affect the dwelling or immediate surroundings, and which:



- 1) are beyond the household's reasonable ability to control or prevent;
- 2) occur despite the household's having met all previously imposed conditions of occupancy; and
- 3) make continued occupancy by that household impossible, hazardous or unaffordable. (Zuk et al., 2018)

To summarize, this definition claims that displacement refers to when people either have no choice but to move from their dwellings because of rising costs of living so they move somewhere more affordable, or people are forced to leave due to an outside entity, such as their landlord or the government (i.e., eminent domain). It is also important to consider various definitions of gentrification and displacement in relation to transportation. Cohen & Pettit (2019) defines *displacement* as:

Forced or involuntary household movement from place of residence. Usually expanded beyond formal forced moves such as evictions to include unaffordable rents or poor living conditions (6).  
(Cohen & Pettit, 2019)

I would argue that the causes of displacement go beyond what this definition presents, however in terms of the household movement, it is accurate. Other definitions of displacement include similar language or reasoning, however, the voluntary versus involuntary part is not clear in the literature. There are also cases to consider when people voluntarily leave their neighborhood and a household with a similar income cannot move in due to rising costs after the other household has left. Rent controls from leases often do not apply once a tenant has moved and the landlord then has free rein to increase the rent. Brown (2016) defines *gentrification* in the context of transportation, as:

A process of neighborhood change that results in economic and demographic transitions in transit-oriented neighborhoods (2).

(Brown, 2016)

Compared to the residential displacement definition from Zuk et al. (2018) this gentrification definition focuses on the aspect of neighborhood change. The Brown (2016) study looks at how neighborhoods transition or change due to the presence or introduction of transit-oriented development. It is important to recognize the differences between the two terms, but also understand how they are very interconnected when it comes to issues of housing and transportation. Taking these definitions into consideration and my review of the literature, for the purposes of this research, this thesis defines *displacement* as:

The movement of households as they are forced to leave due to financial burdens (i.e., rising cost of living, rent, neighborhood changes) OR an outside entity (i.e., the government).

The concern today, by scholars, planners and concerned community members, is that new transportation investments will have similar displacing effects to those experienced during the urban renewal period. The populations that are most at risk for these impacts are low-income communities and majority communities of color. Marginalized communities are often the most overlooked populations in city planning, despite equity becoming a higher priority in the public sector in recent years. The question that remains is whether city transportation planners are considering the potential displacing effects of transportation investments in their published plans. Transportation planners today are increasingly focused on implementing infrastructure that supports sustainable forms of transportation, such as biking, walking, and even transit. Bike infrastructure, in

particular, has become more popular in city planning, as planners are investing in public health and modes of transport that reward less vehicle usage. As cities are on track to redesign their urban areas to cater more towards other forms of transportation, the question is whether they are considering any unintended consequences of these land use changes.

The purpose of this thesis is to see whether city transportation planners today are integrating policies to combat displacement into their transportation plans. Through a plan analysis of 10 highly ranked bicycle-friendly cities, I will examine anti-displacement policy and language in recently published city transportation and comprehensive plans. The significance of reviewing each city's comprehensive plans, in addition to their transportation plans, is that if anti-displacement policy is lacking in the transportation plans, it is important to see if the other major city planning document accounts for this information. Displacement is a topic that all city planners should be aware of as we know that displacement negatively affects communities, specifically marginalized communities, see for example: Bates (2016), Chapple & Zuk (2016), Flanagan et al. (2016), and Padeiro et al. (2018). The relationship between transportation and displacement is a continuing point of research for scholars; therefore, I will investigate whether transportation planners today, in bicycle-friendly cities, are considering the potential impacts of their proposed public investments by including anti-displacement policy in their published plans.

## **Literature Review**

### **History of Displacement in Planning**

The United States has an extensive history of displacement. Specifically in transportation planning, prolonged and large-scale displacement occurred during the implementation of the nation's interstate highway system. The history of urban renewal in the U.S. and federal policy resulted in the poverty and racial segregation that followed urban renewal programs. In 1956, President Eisenhower, Congress, and the truck operators of America decided on the Federal Highway Aid Act to fund the construction of the Interstate Highway system (Avila & Rose, 2009). The passage of this federal act caused severe displacement to many Black and Brown communities across the nation. As the federal government slowly began implementing the freeway system, neighborhoods were bulldozed, displacing communities to make room for highway infrastructure (King, 2021). These neighborhoods were often, whether purposeful or not, communities of color (King, 2021). Additionally, the disproportionate impact that the Interstate Highway system had on low-income and minority communities (Karas, 2015). Furthermore, Karas (2015) argues that the federal interstate initiative was a civil rights violation as so many people of color (POC) communities were demolished and people were displaced, that evidence is pointing to it being purposeful.

Peterson and Doerr (2022) discuss the legacy of racism in transportation and housing projects, specifically how "blighted" areas were demolished to make space for new highway infrastructure. The term blighted, in this context, refers to urban areas that were decaying and in need of infrastructure improvements. These neighborhoods were

often disinvested by the government, yet, the government used terms such as “blighted” as an excuse for urban renewal projects, claiming that these areas were not safe and needed reconstruction (Peterson & Doerr, 2022, 71). This racist process allowed cities to buy private property using eminent domain, for cheap, for the purpose of “renewal,” resulting in the eviction or displacement of POC residents (Peterson & Doerr, 2022, 72).

Furthermore, Anthony & Rodriguez (2021) explain the history of the racism and redlining policies that impacted low-income and minority communities during the freeway implementation in the 1960s (Anthony & Rodriguez, 2021). The authors highlight the POC communities in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, where over twenty one thousand homes were lost to the construction of the city freeway system between 1960 and 1971 (Anthony & Rodriguez, 2021). The source also highlights how during the 1960s the city built over 41,000 new housing units, arguing that this action would make up for the displaced neighborhoods; however, many of the displaced residents were not able to afford these new housing units (Anthony & Rodriguez, 2021). Specific city examples like Milwaukee in the 1960s show how the impacts of the freeway system had on entire communities.

Another example of the interstate highway system displacing neighborhoods was in Birmingham, Alabama. Connerly (2002) explains that the interstate system was used to bisect the city’s Black neighborhoods, as the freeways were built either right along the neighborhoods or directly through them. As a result of this infrastructure, these neighborhoods experienced significant population losses, displacing many Black families and forcing them to find new homes (Connerly, 2002). The urban renewal

projects in Birmingham are another example of how transportation planning in the past displaced minority communities.

Ward (2022) explores the generations of urban renewal in Atlanta, GA, breaking up the events into four major periods, referring to the period of 1946-1950 as “The Downtown Connector,” signifying the period when the interstate freeway system in Atlanta, I-75 and I-85, was implemented. The article explains that originally there was land near downtown Atlanta proposed for public housing units to house the displaced, majority Black community, after the construction of the interstate (Ward, 2022). However, white city elites who wanted that land for a downtown business district ensured the relocation of Black residents to the west side of town, further isolating them from downtown and segregating them from the white suburbs of Atlanta (Ward, 2022). Additionally, Ward notes that almost 7,000 Black residents were evicted from their homes and displaced, under eminent domain, to make room for freeway construction (Ward, 2022). This period accounted for a significant amount of displacement as a result of the interstate system, a federally funded transportation investment.

### **Transportation, Displacement & Gentrification**

Sandoval (2021) explains how transportation projects have the potential to create instances of gentrification, and yet he investigated specific Latino communities that were able to transform these transit investments into community-driven projects and derive community benefits from. Additionally, Sandoval (2021) addresses the inequitable distribution of transportation projects, particularly how neighborhoods of color are often disproportionately left out of these opportunities in American cities. Sandoval explains how:

Transportation projects have the risk of perpetuating a historical linkage to the inequitable history of large-scale transportation planning projects that displaced communities of color throughout the 1950/60s (Sandoval, 2021).

The journal highlights how POC communities in the 1950s and 60s were impacted by transportation developments and illustrates how communities of color are impacted by transportation projects today (Sandoval, 2021). Similarly, Zuk et al. (2018) discusses the relationship between displacement, gentrification and transportation investments. In the article, the authors use a definition of displacement from a 1978 report on urban displacement sponsored by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (Zuk et al., 2018). Additionally, this journal highlights the relationship between a specific type of transportation investment and displacement: publicly funded rail transit (Zuk et al., 2018). Brown (2016) explores a decade long study conducted on the relationship between Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) in Los Angeles, California, neighborhood changes, and subsequent displacement. The study looked at how the Orange line, a bus rapid transit line in LA, impacted the neighborhoods within half-a-mile radius of the line (Brown, 2016). The overall findings were that transportation investments such as rail and BRT have the potential to change neighborhoods and policymakers need to implement affordable housing efforts to protect residents from displacement (Brown, 2016). However, there are limitations to this study was that Brown (2016) couldn't necessarily see if the individuals living in said neighborhoods changed, she was only able to observe the change in overall neighborhood characteristics. Therefore, it's important to note that these changes could reflect the influx of new homeowners/renters or the same ones that are simply getting wealthier. It's also important to consider that the results from Brown (2016) related to

gentrification have spanned modes, not just in rail, but there is also little to no evidence of gentrification found in some investments. So there isn't enough definitive evidence to suggest that transportation investments cause gentrification, the research is still ongoing, yet there is evidence to suggest it is possible.

Padeiro et al. (2019) reviewed thirty-five quantitative research-based studies, from 2000 to 2018, that explored the potential connection between transit-oriented development (TOD) and gentrification. The journal discusses how TOD can increase land values, thus leading to the possibility that low-income neighborhoods may have their access to housing eliminated or have difficulty maintaining their current housing (Padeiro et al., 2019). The article cites researchers that have concerns over the unintended social costs, equity, and fairness of TOD (Padeiro et al., 2019). The study concluded that more research is necessary to definitively claim that TOD causes gentrification or displacement, however, some of the studies they analyzed did support the hypothesis (Padeiro et al., 2019). Flanagan et al. (2016) explore the privilege surrounding cycling infrastructure, with Portland and Chicago and the case studies. This study used census tracts to look for signs of gentrification, and to explore the distribution of cycling investments in each city (Flanagan et al., 2016). The study's findings suggest that marginalized communities do not receive as much cycling infrastructure investments without the presence of a privileged group, despite there being motivators for city cycling within these communities. (Flanagan et al., 2016). The findings of this study are unique, yet intriguing as they look at the relationship between gentrification, privilege, and cycling infrastructure.



## **Equity & Anti-Displacement Policy**

Bates (2019) discusses Portland's city planning efforts to implement equity and anti-displacement policies. Bates focuses on how Portland's equity planning deals with issues of displacement and gentrification, examining whether it is successful or not, as Portland has a track record for gentrifying primarily POC neighborhoods (Bates, 2019). This review of Portland's attempts at anti-displacement policy in transportation planning is a quality insight into how anti-displacement policy can or is being implemented into planning. According to Chapple & Zuk (2016), researchers have discovered early warning signs for neighborhood displacement that can be used to describe neighborhood change and potentially predict future change. The journal article explains how these warning signs are being developed into toolkits that have the potential to transform displacement policies to protect neighborhoods (Chapple & Zuk, 2016). Planners could use these warning signs in future anti-displacement policy.

Chapple et al. (2017) report their research on creating a methodology for analyzing potential displacement. The report looks at the relationship between rail, TOD neighborhoods, and displacement in Los Angeles and San Francisco (Chapple et al., 2017). The study found that the proximity to transit significantly affected the stability of neighborhoods, resulting in increasing in housing costs and the loss of low-income households (Chapple et al., 2017). Furthermore, the study used and developed a tool that may be able to help planners identify risk of displacement (Chapple et al., 2017). Other anti-displacement strategies found were from Serrano et al. (2023). This journal discussed how some recent studies have suggested that the increase in public investments to help foster sustainable communities may increase property values,

therefore potentially leading to a greater risk of displacement for low-income and POC populations (Serrano et al., 2023). This 2023 study reviewed literature on this topic to create a compilation of potential strategies to combat this risk of displacement. Some of these strategies included preserving existing affordable housing, include a share of new housing stock is affordable, increase financial resources to build further affordable housing units, and create policies that provide financial incentives for developers to build affordable housing developments (Serrano et al., 2023). These strategies are important to keep in mind when searching for anti-displacement policy in plans, as it may appear in multiple forms.

In reviewing how transportation plans and other city published plans are implementing anti-displacement policies, equity was a common theme mentioned in planning documents. Loh & Kim (2021) describe how city planners are acknowledging equity in their projects and subsequent planning documents. In the journal article, scholars describe equity in planning as “concerned with access to resources and opportunities for those who are disadvantaged...[and] seeks to expand choices and increase agency” (Loh & Kim, 2021). This article examines how comprehensive plans today include sections on equity, including goals and recommendations, and analyzing whether these are effective (Loh & Kim, 2021). This is significant because implementing equity and similar language in planning documents may be the appropriate crossover to anti-displacement policy in planning.

### **Plan Analysis**

In searching for methods on how to conduct my plan analysis, I found a few scholarly journals to discover how researchers analyze plans and other city planning

documents. Pierce et al. (2020) examined and analyzed urban biodiversity plans from 39 cities. The study used the Singapore Index (SI) as the analytical framework, a widely accepted method used as a biodiversity indicator system (Pierce et al., 2020). The SI uses 23 indicators on various biodiversity-related topics and then categorizes them into three key elements (Pierce et al., 2020). The researchers used a simplified version of the SI as a framework for categorization, specifically to understand how the plans stated and measured their own goals (Pierce et al., 2020). They used this framework to discover and analyze indicators in the plans. This categorization framework influenced my methods in terms of deciding on how to categorize and rate each plan I reviewed.

Reckien et al (2018) wrote about a plan analysis they conducted on 885 city climate change plans. The authors describe how they ranked, rated and grouped each city's climate change plan based on various categories and how they developed a typology to categorize and differentiate the wide variety of climate change plans (Reckien et al., 2018). The authors ranked and subsequently categorized each Local Climate Plans (LCPs) based on their ability to integrate with or be placed within the existing local policy documents (Reckien et al., 2018). Each LCP was given a specific rating for its integration/placement (A-F) and then an additional rating for the type of plan (1-3) to create a letter and number combo rating to categorize each plan (Reckien et al., 2018). In this journal, the authors only reported the plans that they concluded were categorized as type A1-A3, however their specific methods in how they differentiated and rated each plan is detailed. This method played a significant role in the process of selecting a method for the plan analysis section of my research.

## Methodology

Many transportation planners use “equity planning” to introduce anti-displacement policies or language. In my transportation plan analysis, I wish to test this theory by searching for the extent to which bicycle friendly cities in the U.S. are implementing and considering these policies in their plans.

I first chose which cities to include in a transportation plan analysis. I am interested in cycling infrastructure and its effects on urban design, as well as gentrification and displacement, as it frequently arises in current events. Therefore, I chose to explore how the top cycling cities in the United States are dealing with, or rather not dealing with, issues of displacement that may result from transportation investments, including those that are bicycle-related. The term “cycling cities” or “bicycling cities” refers to cities that have invested in user-friendly infrastructure, bike safety strategies, and bike resources such as shops and educational networks. I chose to review transportation—and eventually comprehensive—plans for cities that had quality or improved bicycle infrastructure.

To begin my search, I found online sources that listed ratings of the top bicycle friendly cities in the United States. I compiled multiple sources that included ranked lists of the top bike-friendly cities in the nation. These sources used various metrics, such as bike lanes per square mile, federal data on bike safety and funding, and access to bike resources (i.e., bike shops, bike share programs). These sources included a 2021 New York Times article, which compiled and reviewed data based on various bicycling categories completed by Lawnstarter (*2022’s Best Biking Cities in the U.S.*, 2022). The NYT article took those data and rankings to create a list of the top 200 bicycling cities

in the United States (Kolomatsky, 2021). Another source I used to choose which cities to review was the League of American Bicyclists, “2022 Bicycle Friendly State Report cards” (Murphy, 2022). The third and final source I used in my choice process was the People for Bikes, “2022 City Ratings” (PeopleForBikes 2022 City Ratings, 2022). I chose ten cities, based on these sources and their rankings, of varying population size, bicycle infrastructure and friendliness to review.

Next, I compiled this list of cities and reviewed their available and published transportation planning documents. Figure 1 highlights the cover pages of some of the transportation plans I reviewed. Upon my research, I discovered there were some cities that would not be workable for my transportation plan analysis, primarily due to time restraints or lack of extensive information to review. Those cities were Seattle, New York City, and Washington DC. The city of Seattle is in the process of updating and redesigning their transportation plan. According to the Seattle Department of Transportation’s (DOT) website, the redevelopment of the Seattle Transportation Plan is estimated to be completed by the summer of 2023 and the goal is to improve transportation objectives to better serve the public’s transportation needs (*Seattle.Gov*, 2022). Based on the timeline of this thesis, I found that Seattle’s redevelopment of their transportation plan would not be feasible for my research. Another city that I opted not to include in my plan analysis was New York City. Although considered a very bikeable city, NYC, with over 550,000 cycling trips made a day, hasn’t updated their official city transportation plan since 2016 (New York City DOT, 2021). There is a more recent plan for the city of New York, known as the Green Wave plan, however, this report solely focuses on bicycling, therefore, I felt it was not fair to use that plan as

it does not encompass all forms of transportation (New York City DOT, 2019). The cities selected included plans that address bicycling and other modes of transportation.



Figure 1: Cover pages of some of the Transportation plans

Overall, in place of Seattle and NYC, I reviewed transportation plans of lesser populated cities that have published more recent plans and data. I initially intended to include Washington, DC in my final plan analysis as it is considered a fairly bike friendly city. Overall, Washington, DC was ranked highly in the New York Times article, however, it did not make the cutoff for the People for Bikes rankings as they ranked it 162nd overall. In addition, they did not include it in the Bike League ratings, as they did not consider it its own state in their rankings. As a result, I chose to opt out of using Washington, DC as a city for my plan analysis, as it would only have one proper source suggesting it's high ranking and the other would have to be considered void.

Table 1 includes the rankings of bicycle friendliness of my chosen cities, based on the sources I reviewed. This table, in addition to the rankings provided by each

source, considers each city's relative population size, how frequently they were mentioned in each source, and a qualitative rating based on the materials reviewed. I provided this qualitative rating with the following metrics: "Great," "Good," and "Ok." If a city was highly ranked in all three sources, I gave it a 3 out of 3 and a subsequent Great rating; if a city was only highly ranked on 2 out of 3 sources, it was provided with a "Good" rating, and finally a city that was only highlighted on 1 out of 3 sources was given an "Ok" rating. The New York Times article ranked the Top 200 U.S. cities on how weather affects residents' ability to bike, as well as the city's bike accessibility, safety, and overall community support for biking; using these categories, I gave each city an overall ranking (Kolomatsky, 2021). All the cities I chose to review were considered in the top 25 overall ranking from this source.

In People for Bikes' 2022 City Ratings report, each city was given an overall ranking out of 1,236 total cities worldwide, as well as a separate ranking based on the relative population size of the city (PeopleForBikes 2022 City Ratings, 2022). Each city chosen was categorized as either a "large city" or "midsize city" by this source. Each city received an additional ranking based on its subsequent size. Large cities were ranked out of 143 total cities worldwide and each midsize city was ranked out of 514 total cities worldwide. People for Bikes also used accessibility as a metric to determine bike friendliness, specifically looking at how accessible various areas or aspects of each city is via bike, such as accessibility to jobs, schools, basic services and recreational opportunities (PeopleForBikes 2022 City Ratings, 2022). the most effort and funding into equitable transportation.

City	Population <sup>1</sup>	New York Times 2021	People for Bikes 2022	Bike League 2022	Number of Sources in which City was Ranked Highly	Rating Based on Sources
San Francisco, CA	815,201	#1 out of 200	50 <sup>th</sup> overall 20 <sup>th</sup> large cities	CA #4	3/3	Great
Portland, OR	641,162	#4 out of 200	95 <sup>th</sup> overall 39 <sup>th</sup> large cities	OR #2	3/3	Great
Salt Lake City, UT	200,478	#23 out of 200	147 <sup>th</sup> overall 52 <sup>nd</sup> midsize cities	UT #10	3/3	Great
Fort Collins, CO	168,538	#12 out of 200	114 <sup>th</sup> overall 41 <sup>st</sup> midsize cities	CO #6	3/3	Great
San Jose, CA	983,489	#15 out of 200	391 <sup>st</sup> overall 91 <sup>st</sup> large cities	CA #4	2/3	Good
Boston, MA	654,776	#6 out of 200	348 <sup>th</sup> overall 81 <sup>st</sup> large cities	MA #1	2/3	Good
Minneapolis, MN	425,336	#2 out of 200	201 overall 62 <sup>nd</sup> large cities	MN #5	2/3	Good
Madison, WI	269,196	#11 out of 200	80 overall 29 <sup>th</sup> midsize cities	WI #29	2/3	Good
Eugene, OR	175,096	#5 out of 200	202 <sup>nd</sup> overall 74 <sup>th</sup> midsize cities	OR #2	2/3	Good



City	Population <sup>1</sup>	New York Times 2021	People for Bikes 2022	Bike League 2022	Number of Sources in which City was Ranked Highly	Rating Based on Sources
Chicago, IL	2,696,555	#10 out of 200	733 <sup>rd</sup> overall 77 <sup>th</sup> large cities	IL #15	1/3	Ok

Table 1: City Rankings for Bicycle Friendliness & Infrastructure

The New York Times cut off was the Top 25/200; The People for Bikes cut off was the Top 150 overall; and finally, the Bike League cut off was that the city had to be within the Top 10/50 states.

In addition, this source compiled data to create a map detailing high and low stress areas for bikers, added with the accessibility ratings, to create an overarching community analysis profile (PeopleForBikes 2022 City Ratings, 2022). It’s important to note that this source ranked cities around the world, hence why the U.S. cities have relatively lower ratings compared to the other sources. These sources allowed me to rate each city’s quality of cycling infrastructure and community, to determine which cities were putting

The next step of methods included reviewing and analyzing the transportation plans of the chosen cities, looking for anti-displacement language, as well as inclusion or acknowledgement of anti-displacement policy. To do this, I downloaded the documents for each city’s transportation plans and reviewed them, looking for specific language relating to or specifically on anti-displacement policy. This language included specific terms like “equity,” “displacement,” “urban renewal,” “transportation justice,”

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<sup>1</sup> The population of each city, listed in Table 1, was taken from the most recent United States Census Bureau data (The United States Census Bureau, 2022).

and “gentrification”. Additionally, “affordable housing” often came up in these plans, so I looked for that information as well, to see if any displacement related information was included. I logged every section, paragraph, or mention of these terms in a plan analysis excel spreadsheet. Keeping this information organized and concise was a very important part of my methods. Using the information I collected, I further rated the cities on the amount and/or quality of anti-displacement information or policy included in each city transportation plan.

In my initial review of the transportation plans, there were cases in which I found little to no anti-displacement language or information. To ensure my review of anti-displacement policy was complete, I reviewed each city’s comprehensive plans, paying special attention to the land use and housing sections. This review was like the one conducted on the transportation plans, as I looked for the same anti-displacement language. In my analysis, I used these comprehensive plans to cross-reference any information on anti-displacement policy that might be missing in the transportation plans. Any information, found in a city’s comprehensive plan, on displacement, equity, and historical acknowledgement of urban renewal programs, was inserted into a separate column of my plan analysis spreadsheet.

In comparing how the types of plans included various anti-displacement policy and language, I required an approach to rate them based on different terms used. I followed a typology method used in a 2018 analysis on over eight-hundred European Local Climate Plans (LCPs) (Reckien et al., 2018). The method used to differentiate and rate the various LCPs influenced, and inspired the method I used in rating the extent to which anti-displacement language was included in the transportation and

comprehensive plans. Table 2 includes the various ratings and what they represent regarding the language found in each of the plans. The ratings were broken up by specific terms included in each plan. Those chosen terms were “equity,” “displacement,” and “history.” Plans including the term equity, ranged from “transportation equity” to “social equity” to “racial equity” to at times, even “social justice.”

The Equity rating considered all these relevant terms. Plans that included terms such as “displacement,” “anti-displacement,” or “gentrification” were considered for the Displacement rating. For the History rating, plans that included any historical timelines on transportation infrastructure and investments, mentioned past displacement from urban renewal, or discussed the freeway construction in the 1950s and 60s, were counted. Discussing present day displacement in these plans requires a somewhat detailed history of why this is a concern today and how displacement as a result of transportation has occurred in the past. Therefore, including the history rating in my analysis was a significant metric.

Each category, Equity, Displacement or History (E, D, H) was then provided a subsequent 1, 2, or 3 rating for each term, to represent the degree to which the term or specific language was included in—or absent from—each plan. The meanings behind each letter rating are explained in Table 2.

<b>Rating</b>	<b>Meaning</b>
E (Equity)	Discussion of transportation or social equity
E1	Significant discussion
E2	Average discussion
E3	No discussion

D (Displacement)	Discussion of displacement or gentrification
D1	Significant discussion
D2	Average discussion
D3	No discussion
H (History)	Historical acknowledgements of past displacement from urban renewal programs <sup>2</sup>
H1	Significant discussion
H2	Average discussion
H3	No discussion

Table 2: Plan Analysis Typology Ratings

This table lists the Equity (E), Displacement (D), and History (H) ratings with each subsequent meaning. This method was used when rating each city’s transportation and comprehensive plans on their anti-displacement language and policy.

A summary of the information found in the transportation and comprehensive plans listed in Tables 4 and 5, is compiled in Table 6. A key accompanies Table 6 explaining what each symbol represents and how one can interpret the summarized information. Table 6 lists an overall rating for each city’s transportation and comprehensive plans. These ratings were based on the overall inclusion and discussion of the specific anti-displacement language. Determining whether a plan included significant versus average discussion was conducted by examining whether the information included was brief (i.e., one or two sentences) or was detailed (i.e., an entire paragraph, page, or multiple policies).

For instance, San Francisco received a D2 on their transportation plan and a D1 on their comprehensive plan. The differentiation between these two Displacement

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<sup>2</sup> The History rating considered any information listed in the plans, that included a historical acknowledgement of past displacement from urban renewal programs in the 1950s and 60s, or rather, just a general acknowledgement or nod to the history of displacement related to transportation investments

ratings was determined due to the amount of information on displacement included in the plan. The *San Francisco Transportation Plan 2050* included the word displacement twice, in one single paragraph. This paragraph discusses the city's goals for how to better conduct planning projects for future transportation investments. The section on displacement claims that:

Improved coordination between transportation and land use planning will bring new opportunities to provide more reliable and efficient transportation options for all people regardless of how they travel, paired with new land use opportunities for community priorities to address past **displacement**, support transit-oriented development, prevent future **displacement**, and address negative impacts of major streets and freeways like poor air quality and safety (47). (San Francisco County Transportation Authority et al., 2022)

Therefore, I determined this to be an average discussion of displacement because it was minimal, but still present. Therefore, San Francisco received a D2 rating for their transportation plan. Meanwhile in the comprehensive plan, both the Housing and Transportation sections included significant discussion on displacement. The housing section included the word displacement 70 times, and the transportation section included it once. Since the comprehensive plan specifically tied displacement back to transportation, in addition to the displacement discussion in the housing section, the plan received a D1 rating for significant discussion.

There are three types of symbols associated with each overall rating in Table 6.

A check mark indicates that the city's plan had overall "Good" ratings for all three categories. A circle indicates the city's plan had an "Ok" rating overall. Finally, an X indicates the city's plan had "Poor" ratings overall. The caveat for whether a plan received a "Good" versus "Ok" rating is that a plan with a "Good" rating required two

or more categories with high ratings (1 or 2) and a plan with an “Ok” rating received only one category with high ratings.

To further explain how the individual category ratings translated into overall plan ratings, Table 3 illustrates Portland’s category ratings for both plans.

City	Type of Plan	Date of Plan	Equity Rating	Displacement Rating	History Rating
Portland, OR	Transportation Plan	2020	E1	D3	H3
Portland, OR	Comprehensive Plan	2020	E3	D1	H3

Table 3: City of Portland’s Plan Ratings Summary

Transportation and Comprehensive plan ratings for Equity, Displacement and History

This table demonstrates that Portland’s transportation plan received a high score for Equity (E), and a low score for Displacement (D) and History (H), translating into an E1, D3, H3 rating. Meanwhile, Portland’s comprehensive plan received a low score for Equity and History, and a high score for Displacement, translating into an E3, D1, H3 rating. As a result, Portland received an “Ok” rating for both plans, because the city received high ranks in only one out of the three categories for each plan.

Additionally, it’s important to note that there were a few special cases worthy of note in my review. One being Salt Lake City’s (SLC) transportation and comprehensive plans. When searching for SLC’s published plans, I found that they had not updated their Master Transportation Plan since 1996. Since the other cities I reviewed had published plans from the 2010s, I wanted to review plans all from the same period, as a precaution to not alter the results. Therefore, I chose to review SLC’s *2017 Transit Master Plan* and *2015 Bicycle & Pedestrian Master Plan* instead. This is why there are two dates listed in the “Date of Most Recent Version” column of Table 4, as this is to

show there were two different plans reviewed for SLC. The most recent version of SLC's comprehensive plan is from 2015, and yet its housing section did not include any information on displacement. As a result, to ensure I wasn't missing any updated plan information, I searched for a more recent city housing plan, and found the *Growing SLC: A 5 Year Housing Plan* from 2018. This plan was more up to date compared to the city's 2015 comprehensive plan and included multiple instances of equity and anti-displacement language. In the end, I considered both the city's 2015 comprehensive plan and 2018 housing plan for my analysis. Although the *Growing SLC: A 5 Year Housing Plan* did briefly mention displacement, there was no mention of how the topic related back to transportation. Therefore, I noted this information in the "Displacement in Relation to Transportation" column of Table 5.

It is also important to note that for Portland and San Francisco's comprehensive plans, I chose to review only specific sections for ease of analysis. These city's comprehensive plans were separated by chapter for download, so it made more sense to review only the relevant chapters rather than the comprehensive plan in its entirety. For example, for the Portland comprehensive plan, I reviewed *Chapter 5: Housing*, *Chapter 9: Transportation*, and *Chapter 10: Land Use* because those were the sections that logically made the most sense to review for anti-displacement policy.

From the qualitative data collected in each city's transportation and comprehensive plans, I inserted all significant data into an excel spreadsheet, then summarized that information and inserted it into two tables, Table 4, and Table 5. Table 4 solely looks at each city's transportation plans, whereas Table 5 includes data from the comprehensive plans. Included in these tables is the date of the most recent version

of the plan, the terms included in the plan (equity, displacement, and history), the extent of anti-displacement language and policies, and the subsequent ratings given based on this information. The ratings given to each plan are based on the typology ratings from Table 2, listed in the Methods section. The “Extent of Language in Plan” column of both tables summarizes the language and policy found and collected. The level of detail in Tables 4 and 5 is purposefully minimal for ease of readability.

### **Limitations**

It is important to note that this plan analysis was conducted only on cities in the states that I found had quality bike infrastructure, therefore the data collected, and findings are limited to just those cities. Other cities in the U.S., and globally, may have different policies or language in their published plans. In addition, the lack of anti-displacement language in some of the city plans could be on account of the city not planning on building new transportation stations that could potentially displace communities. Cities may include this language and policy in specific project plans or proposals, but not in their published plans. This does not undermine the argument that this information should be included in the plans. However, it’s important to note that this is a possible justification for why this specific language is lacking. This information can also exist in resources or plans outside of a city’s comprehensive or transportation plan. For example, the city of Portland has its own Anti-Displacement Action Plan that includes specific policies and actions that prevent or mitigate the displacement of residents, businesses and cultural organizations (City of Portland, 2023). Although I did look into this information, city anti-displacement policy or resources in other places, this was not the primary focus of my research. My research focused primarily on city



transportation and comprehensive plans; however, it is important to note that there are instances where this information can be found in other city resources. Therefore, I do not claim that these cities do not consider anti-displacement policy to any extent, rather that their transportation and/or comprehensive plans may not include this type of information. Furthermore, equity language or policy may also be considered in other dimensions or stages of the planning process, therefore explaining why it is not included in citywide plans. For example, Equity Priority Areas (EPAs) or Equity Priority Communities (EPCs) are a common trend in a few of the plans reviewed. Cities may also include this concept in transportation projects or requests for proposals, and not in the broader plans themselves. Another limitation to consider is that a plan's reflection of what happens in reality cannot be determined simply by analyzing the plan itself. It's important to note this that plans are subject to change and that they do not always reflect the reality of what happens. Therefore, what plans say and do is very different, and important to consider when analyzing their goals and proposals.

## Results

Tables 4 and 5 display the individual ratings for each category (Equity, Displacement and History) of each plan. Table 6 includes a summary of those ratings. The findings in Table 6 illustrate that only three out of the ten the cities reviewed received a “Good” rating on their transportation plans: San Francisco, Boston, and San Jose. Furthermore, only two cities received a “Good” rating solely on their comprehensive plans: Boston, and Minneapolis. Only one city, Boston, received a “Good” rating on both their transportation and comprehensive plan.

Overall, regarding the transportation plans (Table 4), every single city included language and policy surrounding equity. However, only three cities included specific policies or language surrounding displacement. Five cities included information on the history of displacement and gentrification, specifically from the urban renewal period in the 1950s and 60s. This information typically was in the form of a historical timeline or simply addressing or acknowledging past displacement in the city’s history.

In terms of the comprehensive plans (Table 5), all but three cities included language or policy surrounding displacement. Boston was the only city with a comprehensive plan that included language or policy in all three categories. A majority of the comprehensive plans included information on equity or displacement, but not always both. Only three cities included information on both equity and displacement.

<b>City</b>	<b>Date of Most Recent Version</b>	<b>Terms Included</b>	<b>Extent of Language in Transportation Plan</b>	<b>Equity Rating</b>	<b>Displacement Rating</b>	<b>History Rating</b>
<b>Portland, OR</b>	2020	<i>Equity</i>	Equity in transit funding and access	E1	D3	H3
<b>San Francisco, CA</b>	2017	<i>Equity Displacement History</i>	Addressed history of past displacement; Equity Priority Communities	E1	D2	H1
<b>Fort Collins, CO</b>	2019	<i>Equity</i>	Equity/Health section: ensure transportation investments further equity outcomes	E1	D3	H3
<b>Salt Lake City, UT</b>	2017 2015	<i>Equity</i>	Equity in context of accessibility to transit	E2	D3	H3
<b>Minneapolis, MN</b>	2020	<i>Equity History</i>	Equity one of the goals of plan; Acknowledges historical inequities of transportation investments	E1	D3	H1
<b>Eugene, OR</b>	2017	<i>Equity</i>	Social equity goals	E1	D3	H3
<b>Madison, WI</b>	May-22	<i>Equity History</i>	Equity goals; Acknowledges racial segregation and racism of urban renewal programs	E1	D3	H1
<b>Boston, MA</b>	2017	<i>Equity Displacement History</i>	Goals on avoiding displacement in transportation investments; Historical timeline highlights displacement from urban renewal programs in 1950s/60s	E2	D1	H1

<b>City</b>	<b>Date of Most Recent Version</b>	<b>Terms Included</b>	<b>Extent of Language in Transportation Plan</b>	<b>Equity Rating</b>	<b>Displacement Rating</b>	<b>History Rating</b>
<b>San Jose, CA</b>	Oct-22	<i>Equity, Displacement History</i>	Historical timeline included 1950s-60s freeway projects; Equity & Fairness section describes residential displacement in relationship to transportation	E2	D2	H1
<b>Chicago, IL</b>	2021	<i>Equity</i>	Transportation Equity & Mobility Justice section	E1	D3	H3

Table 4: Anti-Displacement Language and Policy in City Transportation Plans

The ratings for Equity, Displacement and History are all based on the extent to which each plan included these terms or related language. The number directly next to each rating’s letter indicates how high the rating was. See Table 2 for an explanation of what each rating means.

City	Date	Terms Included	Extent of Language in Comprehensive Plan	Displacement Language in Relation to Transportation	Equity Rating	Displacement Rating	History Rating
Portland, OR	2020	<i>Displacement</i>	<b>Housing:</b> Policies 5.15-5.18 on displacement	No relation to transportation	E3	D1	H3
San Francisco, CA	2022	<i>Displacement</i>	<b>Housing Element:</b> Objective 1A-Policies 1-3; Land Use	<b>Transportation Element:</b> Displacement in relation to transportation	E3	D1	H3
Fort Collins, CO	2019	<i>Displacement</i>	Goals to Complete study on Involuntary Displacement; <u>Policy LIV 6.9:</u> Prevent Displacement <u>Policy LIV 6.10:</u> Mitigate Displacement Impacts	Goal for study has partners listed as Planning, Development and Transportation teams, but that is the extent of the relationship	E3	D1	H3
Salt Lake City, UT	2015 2018	<i>Equity Displacement</i>	<b>Plan Salt Lake (2015);</b> Equity as a guiding principle; <b>Growing SLC: A 5 Year Housing Plan (2018);</b> Promote equity and anti-displacement efforts	No relation to transportation in either plan	E1	D2	H3
Minneapolis, MN	2019	<i>Displacement</i>	<u>Policy 43:</u> Housing Displacement. <u>Policy 15:</u> Transport and Equity; <u>Policy 48:</u> Freeway Remediation	Brief mention of transportation in relation to equity	E1	D1	H1
Eugene, OR	2017	<i>Equity</i>	Singular mention of equity; <u>Note:</u> <i>City in the process of updating plan</i>	References transportation but not in relation to equity or displacement	E3	D3	H3

City	Date	Terms Included	Extent of Language in Comprehensive Plan	Displacement Language in Relation to Transportation	Equity Rating	Displacement Rating	History Rating
<b>Madison, WI</b>	2018	<i>Equity</i>	City Racial Equity and Social Justice Initiative (RESJI) tools. Discusses how POC communities/low-income populations affected by transport Projects	Sections on equity/social justice are directly related to transportation	E1	D3	H3
<b>Boston, MA</b>	2017	<i>Equity Displacement History</i>	References racial-equity, history of urban renewal, anti-displacement approach	“establish planning for anti-displacement as a foundation for all investments” (280).	E2	D1	H1
<b>San Jose, CA</b>	2022	<i>Equity Displacement</i>	Avoiding gentrification, Housing policies including anti-displacement language, Social equity regarding housing	Displacement in relation to infrastructure investments, could potentially be referring to transportation	E2	D1	H3
<b>Chicago, IL</b>	2014	<i>Equity</i>	No mention of displacement, some mention of equity, but mainly in terms of funding transportation projects. Brief mention of affordable housing issues.	No connection between displacement/ transportation	E2	D3	H3

Table 5: Anti-Displacement Language and Policy in City Comprehensive Plans

The rating system for this table is the same as Table 4, however, this table includes an extra column that describes whether transportation was connected or related to the anti-displacement language included in the comprehensive plan.

City	Transportation Plan Rating	Comprehensive Plan Rating
Boston, MA	☑	☑
San Francisco, CA	☑	○
San Jose, CA	☑	○
Minneapolis, MN	○	☑
Portland, OR	○	○
Madison, WI	○	○
Fort Collins, CO	○	○
Salt Lake City, UT	X	○
Eugene, OR	○	X
Chicago, IL	○	X

Key	
Symbol	Meaning
☑	Good ratings
○	Ok ratings
X	Poor ratings

Table 6: Summary of Ratings for City Transportation and Comprehensive Plans

This table includes a summary of the specific Equity, Displacement, and History ratings of each city’s plans, listed in Tables 3 and 4.

### Boston, MA

Boston was the only city to receive overall “Good” ratings on both its transportation and comprehensive plans. In terms of transportation plans, I found that Boston had the most extensive anti-displacement policy. Boston’s transportation plan specifically discussed goals to:

Make transit improvements without displacement: [and] proactively invest in transit in traditionally underserved neighborhoods (39). (Martin J. Walsh & Boston Transportation Department, 2017)

This quote specifically acknowledges that transit can cause displacement and there are often inequities in transit projects. Furthermore, the GoBoston2030 transportation plan included a historical timeline (Figure 2) of Boston’s transportation investments, specifically highlighting the Federal Highway Act influencing the Era of the Automobile, and the impacts of urban renewal the 1960s (Martin J. Walsh & Boston

Transportation Department, 2017, 14-15). Although the text is small and the explanation is minimal, by illustrating how transportation has affected the city over the years, the timeline is effective and significant. The acknowledgement of these events is clear, illustrating the planners' consideration of the past in proposing new projects.

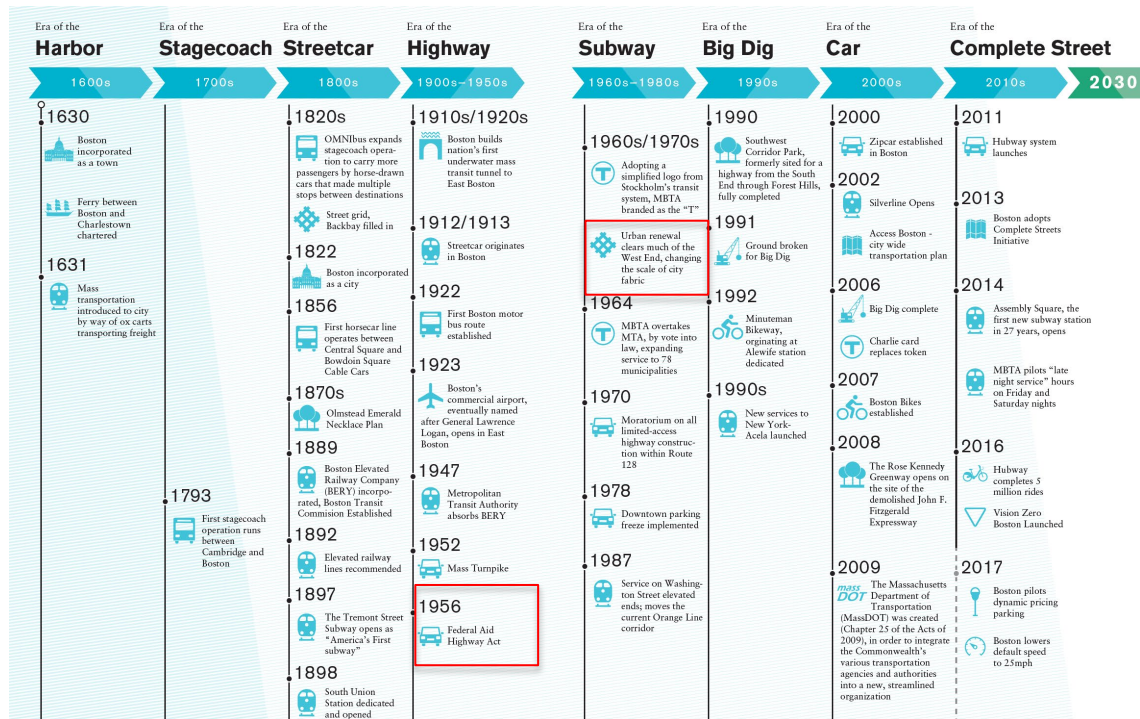


Figure 2: Transportation Historical Timeline from GoBoston2030: Boston Transportation Plan

Additionally, the city describes one of its guiding principles within its vision framework that surrounds equity. The guiding principle says:

Boston will proactively address transportation infrastructure gaps in chronically under-served neighborhoods (8). (Walsh & Boston Transportation Department, 2017)

By including these guiding principles in the plan, the city of Boston is making the claim that they will prioritize equity in transportation planning, to better serve under-served neighborhoods. Overall, due to the significant discussion of displacement, principles on equity, and the inclusion of a historical timeline featuring the impacts of urban renewal,



Boston received an E2, D1, H1 and overall “Good” rating on its transportation plan. For the comprehensive plan, Boston included a lot of information on affordable housing and acknowledged the history and impacts of urban renewal. The plan discusses how:

Physical infrastructure, gaps in transportation access, and the enduring impact of past policies—from redlining to busing to urban renewal—have created areas where the urban fabric separates communities and reinforces physical, social, and economic inequalities (262). (City of Boston & Walsh, 2022).

This quote encapsulates how urban renewal and other racist policies used infrastructure, housing and transportation to harm and discriminate against marginalized communities. By including this, the Boston planning department is acknowledging the atrocities of the past, and thereby setting goals to prevent and mitigate these issues from reoccurring. Boston’s comprehensive plan received the same score as its transportation plan, E2, D1, H1, resulting in a “Good” rating overall.

### **San Francisco, CA**

San Francisco’s transportation plan received an E1, D2, H1 rating, translating into a “Good” rating overall. San Francisco’s transportation plan highlighted the disparities in transportation, specifically how marginalized communities are affected. Therefore, the plan included goals to:

[Provide] more reliable and efficient transportation options for all people regardless of how they travel, paired with new land use opportunities for community priorities to address past displacement (42). (San Francisco County Transportation Authority et al., 2022).

Not only does this quote demonstrate the acknowledgement of histories of displacement, but it also cites specific goals to address past displacement. This was one of the few mentions of displacement in the transportation plan, however the plan also

went on to discuss equity in a variety of contexts, therefore giving it the higher rating.

More specific quotes and information on San Francisco's equity policy can be found in Figure 6 and 10.

San Francisco also had an extensive and detailed comprehensive plan, including a significant amount of displacement-related policy. Known as the San Francisco General Plan, it included a section on housing, with a variety of specific policies relating to displacement. For example, in Objective 1.A Ensure Housing Stability and Healthy Homes, in the challenge section, the plan discusses how:

Rent control, however, has been critical but insufficient to fully protect low-and moderate-income residents, as well as American Indian, Black, and other people of color from being at risk of eviction or displacement (see Figure 2). Evictions and displacement increased during recent economic booms during which time rental prices in San Francisco rose to among the highest in the country. (San Francisco Planning Department, 2022a)

Additionally, in Objective 1.B: Advance Equitable Housing Access, the final line of the challenge section highlights that:

While Black, American Indian, and other people of color would most benefit from greater affordable housing access, federal regulations, and California Proposition 209, which bans institutions from affirmative action based on race, sex, or ethnicity, pose a challenge to the City to implement preference programs for the communities of color most affected by homelessness, eviction and displacement, such as the American Indian, Black, and Latino(a,e) communities. (San Francisco Planning Department, 2022a)

These quotes illustrate the significant detail the San Francisco Planning Department included in implementing anti-displacement policy in the General plan. In the Transportation element, there is a section titled Impacts of Automobile Travel in the City. In this section, the plan explains that:

As a land use, off-street parking facilities compete with and displace land uses that provide greater social and economic benefit to the city. Widened streets, numerous curb cuts and narrowed sidewalks come at the expense of the safety and comfort of the pedestrian. Displacement of housing and small businesses upsets the delicate neighborhood scale and economies that help make the city unique, attractive and livable (San Francisco Planning Department, 2022b).

By considering how vehicle accommodations such as off-street parking can have displacing effects, the San Francisco Planning Department is highlighting how people, businesses, and homes are impacted by transportation infrastructure. This is an important acknowledgement to include in a comprehensive plan as it shows the planners' consideration of how vehicle infrastructure can negatively impact the community. The quote above illustrates a prioritization of community benefits over vehicle infrastructure and economic benefits. The transportation and housing elements of the San Francisco General Plan included significant discussion of displacement, therefore awarding this comprehensive plan a D1 rating (Table 5). However, due to the lack of language surrounding equity and historical discussion, the plan received an E3 and H3 rating (Table 5). Therefore, San Francisco's General Plan received an "Ok" rating overall.

### **San Jose, CA**

Another city that excelled in its transportation plan was San Jose. The city's transportation plan included a historical timeline describing the 1950s-60s freeway construction and subsequent displacement of POC communities (San Jose Department of Transportation, 2022, 13). In addition, the plan includes an Equity and Fairness section, shown in Figure 10, highlighting residential displacement as a result of transportation investments (San Jose Department of Transportation, 2022, 39). Overall,

this plan received a high rating because it highlighted issues of equity, displacement and acknowledged the history of transportation related displacement.

The city's comprehensive plan, Envision San Jose 2040, included specific policies on gentrification and anti-displacement efforts. For example:

Policy H-1.18: Develop tools to assess and to identify neighborhoods and planning areas that are experiencing or that may experience **gentrification** in order to identify where **anti-displacement** and preservation resources should be directed (209). (City of San Jose Planning Division, 2022)

This policy specifically cites anti-displacement efforts, therefore providing San Jose with a high rating in the Displacement category. However, the plan also received an E2 and H3 because there was one policy on equity, yet no acknowledgement of the history of displacement or urban renewal programs. Therefore, the plan received an "Ok" rating overall.

## **Minneapolis, MN**

Minneapolis received an "Ok" rating on its transportation plan, but a "Good" rating on its comprehensive plan. I discovered that the transportation plan didn't have a lot of anti-displacement language, however the comprehensive plan made up for it.

Minneapolis' most recent transportation plan is from 2020, yet it had no mention of the word's displacement or gentrification. However, this plan did include equity as one of its primary goals. One significant goal was to:

Build and operate a transportation system that contributes to equitable opportunities and outcomes for all people, and acknowledge and reverse historic inequities in our transportation system (13). (Minneapolis Transportation Planning Department, 2020)

This quote reflects the acknowledgement of past transportation inequities; therefore, I decided the plan should receive an “Ok” rating. Additionally, it’s important to note that there is another section in the foreword of the plan, that discusses resiliency and racial justice.



Figure 3: Aerial photos of Minneapolis; Top: 1953, Bottom: 2014

Despite the transportation plan including very little anti-displacement policy, the history of displacement from transportation in the city is quite significant. Figure 3 shows two aerial views of Minneapolis, one from the 1953 and the other from 2014 (Hampton, 2014). These photos highlight the differences between Minneapolis, 60 years apart,

illustrating how the construction of the interstate freeway system as well as other developments displaced the neighborhoods once there in the 1950s. One large section to look at specifically is the four-lane I-35 Saint Anthony Falls Bridge that crosses the Mississippi River. This freeway not only crosses the river, but rather continues through the entire southeastern portion of the city, displacing over 20 blocks of neighborhoods. The red boxes highlight where the freeways were placed, thereby demolishing many communities and forcing many households to move.

Conversely, the city's comprehensive plan had significantly more policies relating to displacement. Regarding transportation and displacement, the plan makes very little connections, however, the word "displacement" is found 34 times in the entire comprehensive plan. In the plan's goals, there is a paragraph on increasing the housing supply, explaining that:

This means allowing more housing options, especially in areas that currently lack housing choice and in areas with access to **frequent and fast transit**, employment, and goods and services. It also means creating and expanding new resources and tools to produce and preserve affordable housing, to **minimize the displacement of existing residents**, and to ensure housing is maintained to promote health and safety (22).  
(City of Minneapolis, 2019)

This is a significant example of language because it ties in providing accessible transportation with minimizing displacement to increase the housing supply. Although the connection is minimal and somewhat indirect, it demonstrates the connection between transportation issues and displacement. Another specific policy on displacement found in the plan was Policy 43: Housing Displacement. The policy states that the city's goal is to:

Minimize the involuntary displacement of people of color, indigenous people, and vulnerable populations such as low-income households, the

elderly, and people with disabilities, from their communities as the city grows and changes (176). (City of Minneapolis, 2019).

Although this does not specifically relate to issues of transportation, it is still a significant example of anti-displacement policy. Furthermore, the city of Minneapolis lists some action steps they are promising to take in order to meet the goals of Policy 43. Some of these action steps include looking at early indicators of neighborhood change, prioritize the inclusion of affordable housing in development activity and expand programs that support existing homeowners with a focus on marginalized communities and vulnerable populations (City of Minneapolis, 2019, 177). These specific goals add to the significant discussion of anti-displacement policy within the comprehensive plan, therefore increasing the plan's overall rating. Finally, one policy that stood out was Policy 48: Freeway Remediation, which discussed the plan to repurpose space that was taken during the construction of the interstate highway system in the city, to reconnect neighborhoods and provide other community benefits (City of Minneapolis, 2019, 182). This policy appeared to be an interesting approach to repairing the damage done from the urban renewal period in the mid-twentieth century, however, nonetheless creative and acknowledged the history of displacement. Overall, despite there being limited relation between displacement and transportation in the plan, due to the high volume of policy on displacement, equity, and freeway remediation, the plan received high scores in all three categories, therefore translating into a "Good" rating.

### **Portland, OR**

Portland was an example of a city that did not include much anti-displacement policy within its transportation plan. Portland's transportation plan received an E1 for

its equity rating because *Chapter 2: Goals and Policies* discussed equitable transportation, transit equity, and social justice. However, the plan had no mention of displacement or historical references to displacement or gentrification, therefore resulting in a D3 and H3 rating. Overall, the plan received an “Ok” rating because there was a high rating in one out of the three categories.

The city’s comprehensive plan had an average discussion of displacement, equity and the history of displacement and gentrification. In the housing section of the plan, there were many cases of displacement related policy. The transportation section included a brief discussion of equity policy, however nothing specifically surrounding displacement. For example:

Policy 9.25:

...improve service to areas with high concentrations of poverty and historically under-served and under-represented communities. (GP9-12)

Policy 9.25.a:

Support a public transit system and regional transportation that address the transportation needs of historically marginalized communities and provide increased mobility options and access. (GP9-12)

(City of Portland, 2020)

The land use chapter included no mention of equity, displacement, or history; therefore, the plan overall received an E3, H1, D3 rating. As a result, Portland’s comprehensive plan received an “Ok” rating overall because it included adequate displacement policy, however the plan was lacking in the other two categories. Despite the lack of anti-displacement policy in both of Portland’s plans, the displacement of homes was still present, specifically from the construction of Interstate 405 in the 1960s (Hampton, 2015). The red boxes in Figure 4 indicate the neighborhoods and city blocks where I-405 was built.





Figure 4: Aerial photos of Portland; Top: 1951, Bottom: 2014.

## **Madison, WI**

The transportation plan for Madison had no mention of displacement. However, the plan did include a variety of goals and language surrounding equity. For example:

### Goal 4: Equity

Ensure that the benefits of the regional transportation system are fairly distributed, taking into consideration current inequities resulting from past decisions, and that environmental justice populations are not disproportionately impacted (28). (Greater Madison Metropolitan Planning Organization, 2022)

This quote demonstrates the city’s plans to distribute transportation benefits equitably and consider populations affected by environmental justice issues when planning future projects. The plan also illustrates the history of racist strategies in transportation that discriminated against marginalized communities. In the equity section of *Our System Tomorrow: 2050*, the plan highlights:

The critical connections between equity, land use, and transportation are clear in the long history of racial and economic segregation in the U.S., perpetuated through policies, programs, and projects such as urban renewal, urban freeways, exclusionary zoning, and more (4-2). (Greater Madison Metropolitan Planning Organization, 2022)

Overall, the transportation plan received an E1 and H1 because there was discussion of equity and historical references to past displacement and inequities. However, because there was no mention of displacement in the plan, it received a D3, hence translating to an “Ok” rating overall.

The city’s comprehensive plan, *Imagine Madison*, received similar ratings to its transportation plan. There was no mention of displacement anywhere in the plan. And yet, there was quite a significant discussion of equity. For example, the plan included an entire section on plans to use a racial equity and social justice analysis. The plan claims that:

Racial Equity, Social Justice and Transportation:

The City’s RESJI tools can help facilitate conscious consideration of equity and examine how communities of color and low-income populations will be affected by proposed City transportation projects (38). (Madison Department of Planning, 2022)

Despite this equity language and policy, the plan did not include any historical references to urban renewal or past displacement; therefore, Madison’s comprehensive plan received an E1, D3, H3, and an overall “Ok” rating.

## **Fort Collins, CO**

The transportation plan for Fort Collins, overall, received average ratings, because there was no mention of displacement. However, the plan received high ratings in the Equity category. There were many instances of equity language throughout the plan, including an entire section titled “Health and Equity,” that detailed how the city will promote social equity through healthy, sustainable transportation services. One quote discussed how the city has goals to:

To ensure that new transportation investments can further equity outcomes, the City could further develop the Health and Equity index and apply a scoring process that includes criteria such as race, ethnicity, median household income, average percentage of household income spent on housing, percent of the population that is non-ambulatory, and level of educational attainment. When determining where to prioritize investments, the scoring process can guide the City in making more equitable decisions that promote economic well-being within its communities (199). (City of Fort Collins, 2019b)

Other than the goals and strategies listed in the “Health and Equity” section, the plan did not discuss displacement or the history of displacement or urban renewal. Therefore, the plan received a high equity score, E1, but a low score for displacement and history, D3, and H3, translating into an overall “Ok” rating.

The comprehensive plan received a similar score; however, it included more displacement-related policy, and yet no language acknowledging the history of displacement from urban renewal. Specific policies on displacement and affordable housing were listed under the “Neighborhood Livability and Social Health” section. These were some of the policies included:

Monitor Housing Affordability:

Collect, maintain and disseminate information on housing affordability such as cost, demand and supply of affordable housing stock (44).

Prevent Displacement:

Build the capacity of homeowner groups, affordable housing providers and support organizations to enable the purchase, rehabilitation and long-term management of affordable housing. Particular emphasis should be given to mobile home parks located in infill and redevelopment areas (44).

Mitigate Displacement Impacts:

Consider mitigation strategies to assist residents displaced through the closure of manufactured housing parks or conversion of rental apartments, including single-room-occupancy units, to condominiums or other uses (44).

(City of Fort Collins, 2019a)

Despite the inclusion of these policies, there was no connection made between transportation and displacement included in the plan. Overall, the comprehensive plan received a low score for Equity (E3) and History (H3), and a high score for Displacement (D1). This translated into an overall “Ok” rating for the plan.

**Salt Lake City, UT**

An example of a city with poor ratings due to little or no anti-displacement language is Salt Lake City. In reviewing both SLC’s 2017 Transit Master Plan and 2015 Bicycle & Pedestrian Master Plan, I found no language on equity, displacement, or history of displacement related to transportation. The only mention of equity was in the context of accessibility to transit. For example, *Figure 2.1: Key Themes and Targets from Prior Planning Efforts of the Transit Master Plan* lists includes “transportation [systems] should be accessible to all income levels” (Salt Lake City Division of Transportation, 2017, A.2-3). There were some other brief instances of equity, but they were all regarding access to transit rather than the historical disproportionate inequities experienced by communities of color through transportation projects. SLC’s comprehensive plan, *Plan Salt Lake (2015)*, included little to no anti-displacement

policy, only some instances of equity as a guiding principle. The Growing SLC: A 5 Year Housing Plan (2018), included some anti-displacement language. This plan cited a goal of “[promoting] equity and anti-displacement efforts” (Salt Lake City Housing and Neighborhood Development, 2018, 69). There were other brief mentions of displacement in relation to housing, but no relationship to transportation was included.

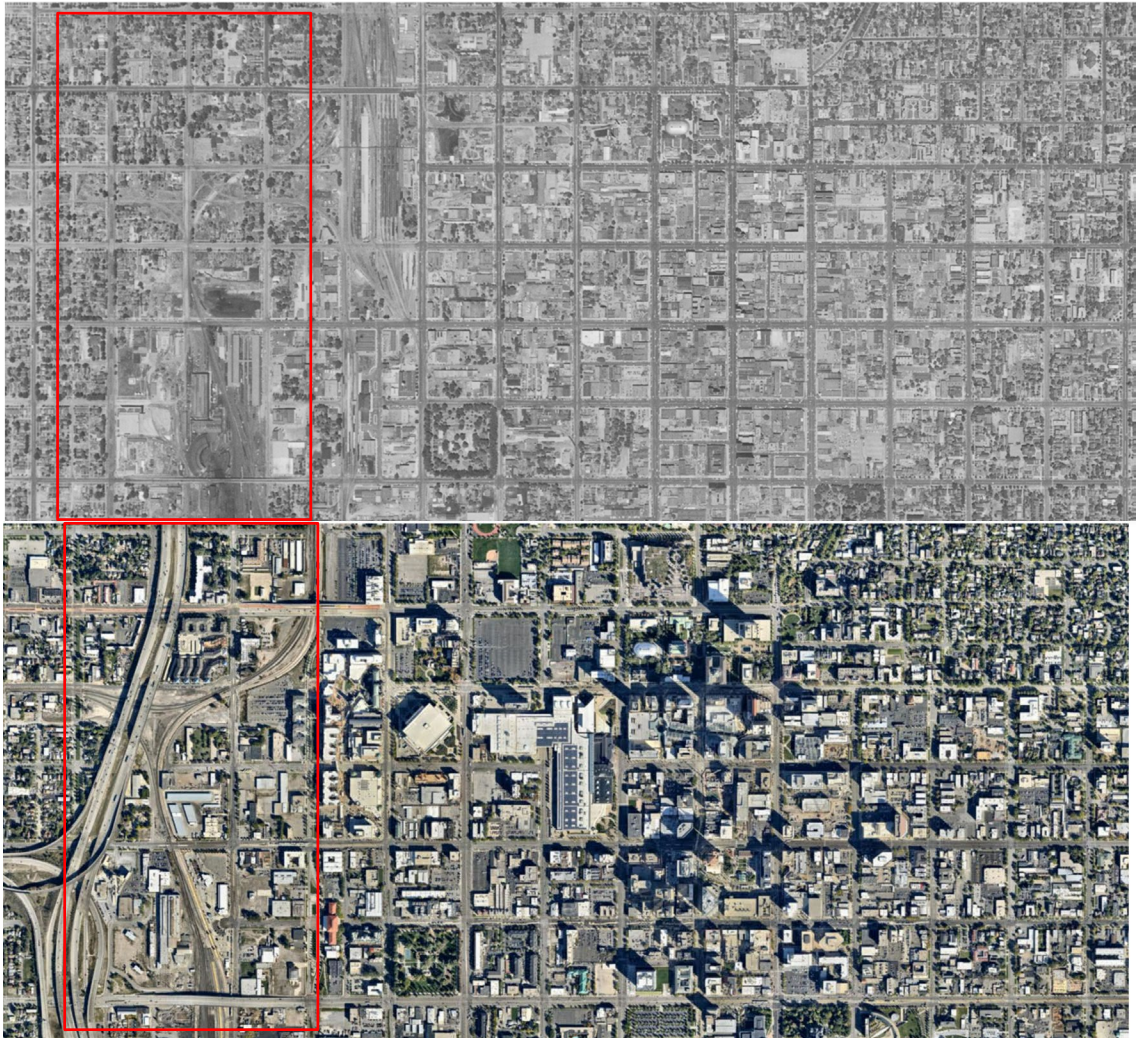


Figure 5: Aerial photos of Salt Lake City; Top: 1950, Bottom: 2015

Figure 5 shows an aerial view of Salt Lake City (Hampton, 2015). The black and white photo was taken in the 1950s and the photo in color is from 2014. One may notice that on the left side of the top photo, there are street blocks filled with neighborhoods.

However, in the more recent photo, those neighborhoods are replaced by multiple lanes and directions of freeways from Interstate 15. Entire city blocks can be seen in the photo from 1950, filled with homes, and yet in the photo from 2015, those homes are gone, and those city blocks have freeways running directly through them. This is just one example of how Salt Lake City has displaced neighborhoods, entire communities, because of the implementation of I-15 and other developments funded through urban renewal programs.

### **Eugene, OR**

Eugene's transportation plan had no mention of the term's displacement, gentrification or historical inequities and urban renewal. As a result, the city received low ratings in the Displacement and History categories, therefore translating into a D3 and H3 rating. However, there was a significant discussion of equity in the plan. One of the goals of the plan was to:

Advance regional sustainability by providing a transportation system that improves economic vitality, environmental health, social equity, and overall well-being (15).

(City of Eugene Transportation Planning Department, 2017)

In addition, *Table 3.2: Evaluation Criteria* includes a row on social equity that discussed the:

Use future transportation investments to reduce or eliminate disparities between neighborhoods in access, economic benefits, safety, and health (39). (City of Eugene Transportation Planning Department, 2017)

These quotes from Eugene's transportation plan highlight the significant consideration of equity within the plan, resulting in an E1 rating. However, due to the complete lack

of discussion of displacement or the history of displacement in past transportation investments, the plan received an “Ok” overall rating.

The Envision Eugene comprehensive plan had no inclusion of anti-displacement policy, any information on gentrification, or history of displacement. There was one brief mention of equity, in the context of equity issues the city needs to address, however, no specifics were provided (City of Eugene, 2017, ED-1). The only policy that was related to the topic was on the preservation of affordable housing and commercial properties. The policy stated that the city strives to:

**3.35 Neighborhood vitality.** Recognize the vital role of commercial facilities that provide services and goods in complete, walkable neighborhoods throughout the community. Encourage the preservation and creation of affordable neighborhood commercial space to support a broad range of small business owners across all neighborhoods (ED-9). (City of Eugene, 2017)

This policy prioritizes the need to maintain neighborhood affordability, however, does not specifically discuss displacement or the potential effects that may occur if affordable housing is not preserved. It’s also important to note that City of Eugene planning commission is in the process of updating their comprehensive plan. In general, this plan received a low rating in all three categories as the discussion of all the topics was minimal, therefore translating into a “Poor” rating overall.

## **Chicago, IL**

Chicago’s transportation plan, *City of Chicago: A Strategic Plan for Transportation*, received an “Ok” rating overall, as it included a section on “Transportation Equity and Mobility Justice,” detailing a wide variety of goals, policies and strategies surrounding equity. Chicago was also one of two cities that included little

to no anti-displacement policy in its comprehensive plan. It's important to note, however, that the Chicago GO TO 2040 Comprehensive Regional Plan was last updated in 2014, which is not as recent compared to the other plans. Neither the Regional Mobility, which focuses on transportation, nor Livable Communities chapter, which highlights land use and housing issues, included any information on displacement. Limited information on equity was included, primarily discussion was on equitable pricing of transportation. No information on the history of displacement or housing issues was included. The only significant discussion related to displacement was the inclusion of affordable housing being implemented in TOD areas. The comprehensive plan discussed how:

TOD represents one of the principal linkages between the issue areas addressed by CMAP, and is a particular focus of GO TO 2040. The higher value of land near transit services often makes it more difficult to plan for affordable housing in these locations, so affordability needs to be addressed specifically (75).

(Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning, 2010)

This quote was one of the very few included in the GO TO 2040 plan that highlighted issues discussed in anti-displacement policy. As a result, Chicago received an overall “Poor” rating on its comprehensive plan.

Ultimately, these ten U.S. bicycling cities varied in the extent to which they included anti-displacement policy in their transportation and comprehensive plans. Therefore,



## **Implications**

My primary research question explores whether U.S. city transportation planners today are integrating policies to combat displacement into their transportation plans. This research focuses on the extent to which current transportation planners, of bicycling cities, consider the displacing effects of transportation investments, as expressed in local planning documents and with a particular focus on bicycle-related investments. I do not claim that bicycle-related investments cause displacement; but rather how do transportation planners acknowledge or consider the effects of past large-scale transportation investments such as those created because of urban renewal programs, when implementing bicycle-related investments? The analysis in this thesis looks broader than just bicycle investments. After identifying ten top-cycling cities in the United States, based on three different rating indices and then analyzing local municipal transportation and comprehensive plans, only 3 out of 10 cities included significant language on equity, displacement, and the history of urban renewal in their transportation plans. These cities were San Francisco, Boston, and San Jose.

### **Keep Your Eye on the Plan**

Why is it important that anti-displacement policies are included in city planning documents? It is likely that many of these planners in these cities indeed recognize and know the histories of displacement in America, however from a perspective of practice, it is important that these histories are also acknowledged in these plans. Without acknowledgement in published planning documents, how else can city planners demonstrate their understanding of this history and their consideration when proposing future transportation projects. Ultimately, the purpose of including this language and

policy in these plans is to try to grow, to progress, from the atrocities of the past. If planners don't demonstrate this growth, then how can scholars, residents, and impacted communities see the change that is being made? Even if the plans do not reflect what actually occurs, it is important that these goals are made, and if they are not met, things are re-evaluated. Strategies and plans are re-evaluated to see how cities can better meet those goals. At the very least, this progress and acknowledgement needs to be highlighted in these plans, because after all, many people's lives were ruined by these urban renewal programs. City neighborhoods were bull-dozed, families displaced, communities separated, all over the country. Even if every planner in the nation understands and considers this history, implementing this information in these plans is about acknowledgement. Without acknowledgement or recognition in these published documents, these past mistakes can potentially be forgotten, and there are little ways to hold city planners accountable when they fail to implement these policies. This is about protecting current residents, current neighborhoods, from harmful displacement as a result of transportation investments. If these plans don't include this active work, purposeful strategies, and goals, to avoid making those same mistakes, then how else can residents keep their planners accountable for plans if they are not being completed or accomplished? Cities create plans to set goals for themselves, to improve city life and infrastructure, so if they don't include anti-displacement policy in these plans, then how can the public be sure they are progressing towards preventing displacement as a result of new public investments.

**Boston, San Francisco, and San Jose**

These three cities stand out as a group due to their plans’ extensive consideration of how public investments, particularly transportation projects, can have unintended consequences on marginalized communities. Additionally, the relation of displacement back to transportation and other public investments was all a significant part of these cities’ plans. Finally, these cities all included historical timelines on their city’s past displacement and recognized the significant damage from urban renewal programs in the mid-twentieth century.

**Vision**  
Community aspirations will drive strategic government investments. Our leaders will embrace Boston as the hub of a region designed around public transportation and walkable neighborhoods that can move people effectively without relying on driving. When public officials select transportation projects and funding priorities, they will consider the mobility, housing, and employment needs of historically marginalized groups including youth, seniors, low-income residents, and people of color.

Figure 6: Excerpt from GoBoston2030: Boston Transportation Plan

Figure 6 highlights the city of Boston’s vision—for their transportation plan—when it comes to implementing and decision-making for transportation projects equitably

(Walsh & Boston Transportation Department, 2017, 76). This figure is just one example of how Boston’s transportation plan prioritizes the needs of marginalized communities in their published plans. San Francisco’s transportation plan included an entire section and various goals surrounding a term they referred to as Equity Priority Communities or EPCs, referring to a set of census tracts designed to track vulnerable communities (San Francisco County Transportation Authority et al., 2022, 16). These are examples of how the plan highlights issues of present equity and displacement, as well as specific instances of history of displacement.

It is important to note that the concept and strategy of Equity Priority Communities is often mentioned in specific transportation projects or requests for proposals, because transportation companies are often required to provide certain levels of service in equity areas. For example, the city of Chicago used Equity Priority Areas when implementing an E-Scooter pilot program in 2020, as the companies that applied for scooter contracts in the city were required to provide certain levels of service in equity areas (City of Chicago, 2020). However, the concept of EPCs should be expanded to published transportation and comprehensive plans as well, to further illustrate a city’s commitment to providing equitable services.

Figure 7 is another example of how the San Francisco Transportation plan uses equity goals and strategies to serve the needs of marginalized communities.

Figure 7 is an excerpt from “Table 3: SFTP Investment Categories, Total Needs, and Investment Levels, in Billions of Dollars, 2020” (San Francisco County Transportation Authority et al., 2022, 27). The strategy illustrated in Figure 7 describes how “equity-focused planning” can be used when planning transportation improvements to address

housing efforts to increase density. Housing density is important to consider in transportation planning because transportation investments often require a significant amount of land use, as we saw with the implementation of the freeway system in the 1950s. However, if these proposed transportation investments are directly paired with efforts to increase housing density, then potential housing that may be eliminated can be restored through increased density.

<b>Transportation System Development and Management</b>	
Transportation Demand Management	Cost-effective projects intended to shift trips to more sustainable modes like transit, walking, and biking, and to shift travel to less congested times
Transportation, Land Use, and Community Coordination	Citywide and community-based planning to improve equity-focused planning and identify transportation improvements that support increased housing density in existing low-density neighborhoods.

Figure 7: Excerpt from San Francisco Transportation Plan 2050

A city’s comprehensive plan is often the place where these various topics come together in a more cohesive way, thus looking into these comprehensive plans for anti-displacement language is important to consider. Many of the comprehensive plans reviewed discussed displacement or the history of displacement in their cities, however, many of them did not mention any connection to transportation investments. Only San Francisco’s comprehensive plan included information on displacement in relation to transportation, whereas Boston and San Jose briefly mentioned displacement in relation to infrastructure or other public investments but did not specify transportation investments. The Transportation element of San Francisco’s General Plan explains how the focus on automobile accommodations in transportation planning can have potential displacing effects (San Francisco Planning Department, 2022b). Including this section illustrates how the planners are outwardly acknowledging the fact that transportation

efforts catered towards driving have, whether it is intentional or not, resulted in the displacement of housing. This is just one example of how the San Francisco is using their comprehensive plan to acknowledge the potential relationship between displacement and transportation investments.

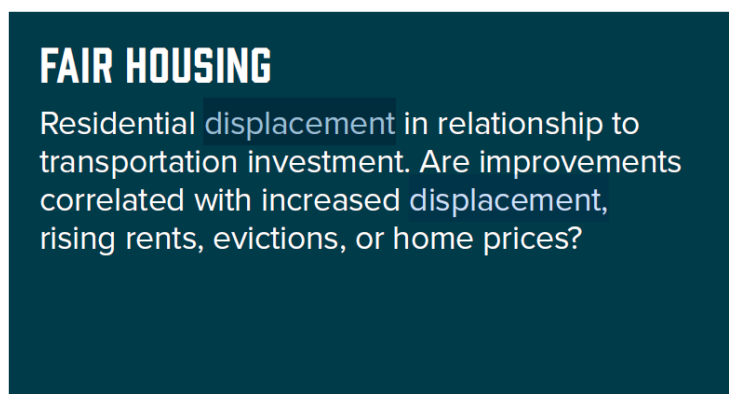


Figure 8: Excerpt from San Jose Downtown Transportation Plan

San Jose, another city that stood out in the plan analysis, included many instances of displacement related language. Figure 8 highlights one example of anti-displacement language and goals within the city’s transportation plan (San Jose Department of Transportation, 2022, 39). This figure from a page titled “Equity and Fairness” and this excerpt specifically focuses on the Fair Housing element, a measure that the city wishes to evaluate over time (San Jose Department of Transportation, 2022, 39). This figure illustrates the relationship between residential displacement and transportation investments.

### **The Silent Disco of Planning**

At a silent disco, nobody speaks to one another. Each individual just listens to the music in their own headphones, enjoying the music separately. Despite some dancing and mingling between individuals involved, there are no chances for people to

speak to one another, as the music in one's headphones drowns out any conversation. Plans should never wish to be compared to a silent disco. It is important that these plans are not isolated, but rather, that they cross reference each other. This cross-referencing should be like they are talking with to one another. But why is the silent disco a poor approach to city planning? Because without this talking between plans, this collaboration, then the plans will not be on the same page in terms of goals and strategies. And if they're not on the same page, then how can progress truly occur? Especially when we should be concerned with the displacement of communities.

Madison's transportation and comprehensive plans are examples of plans that exhibit signs of the silent disco approach. For example, Madison's comprehensive plan primarily solely highlighted equity with information on how the city uses Racial Equity and Social Justice Initiative (RESJI) tools to inform transportation projects and the plan took into consideration how communities of color and low-income populations today are affected by proposed transportation projects. However, their transportation plan included more in-depth information on their equity goals and acknowledged the history of racial segregation of urban renewal/freeway programs. Overall, the comprehensive plan highlighted equity, meanwhile the transportation plan highlighted equity and history. This history section was lacking from the comprehensive plan, therefore showing some disconnect between the two plans. An example of a city that had plans that did not take the silent disco approach and did "speak" to each other was San Francisco. San Francisco's transportation plan highlighted issues from all three categories: equity, displacement and history. The comprehensive plan included a housing and transportation section that discussed all of these issues highlighted in the

transportation plan. For example, the housing section included specific policies on displacement and the transportation element discussed displacement in relation to transportation investments. This all coincided with the information included in the transportation plan. San Francisco is a perfect example of a city breaking through the silent disco approach and ensuring their plans “speak” to one another.

The history of displacement from urban renewal is important to not only recognize, but acknowledge when proposing new transportation investments. The consequences of that period were significant, and many people lost their homes. If these planners are additionally recognizing their city’s history of displacement in their published plans, then one may hope that they are considering this history when proposing new transportation investments, whether those be large-scale such as road reconstruction or small-scale such as the implementation of new bicycle lanes. Furthermore, if the transportation plans of the other seven cities do not include this language or considerations, then where—if at all—is this information located in city published documents?

These findings raise a few key sub-questions:

- Why is it important that planners from different departments collaborate on these issues?
- Why is it important that these various plans relate back to each other in terms of their language, goals, and policies?
- Why is it important that these published city plans mention the potential effects of displacement?



To start, multi-agency and interdisciplinary work is important in all city planning, as departments must consider how their plans and proposals impact other areas of residents' life. Many of the issues planners in varying departments must consider are interconnected. When reviewing the city comprehensive plans, it was important for my research to consider whether the plan was relating any displacement or equity language included, back to transportation. If cities' comprehensive plans include anti-displacement language but do not relate it back to transportation, then this may demonstrate a failure for planners to acknowledge the potential displacing effects of transportation investments. Therefore, this was an important aspect to distinguish in my findings, as although it is good for comprehensive plans to include this type of policy and language, if they are not considering how transportation is connected to these policies then the transportation planners may not be working with other city planning departments to discuss these connections.

## **Recommendations**

My primary research question surrounded finding the extent to which city transportation planners in the United States include anti-displacement policy in their published documents. In conducting my methods, I discovered the lack of anti-displacement policy and language in many of the city transportation plans I analyzed, therefore leading me to look at the cities' comprehensive plans for this policy. After cross-referencing the information found in each city's transportation and comprehensive plans, my findings raised further questions. My findings suggest that a majority of the city transportation plans I reviewed lack substantial policy surrounding issues of displacement, gentrification, and housing. Despite the United States' extensive history of displacement from transportation investments through urban renewal programs in the mid-twentieth century, many cities failed to acknowledge these atrocities or consider how these effects may occur in today's landscape. Overall, I discovered that although many of the city comprehensive plans included some information on issues of displacement in relation to housing, the relationship between displacement and transportation was often not discussed in these plans. This relationship between transportation and displacement was not discussed in a majority of the plans, transportation or comprehensive, despite the historical tragedies that affected many marginalized communities.

Three out of ten cities stood out in their significant inclusion of displacement policy, meanwhile the rest of the cities included the bare minimum of information or no information at all. Overall, I see that city planning departments wanting to improve their anti-displacement policy in their published plans, should look to these three cities as an

example. Boston, San Francisco, and San Jose excelled in including information in all the categories I analyzed. These plans all included specific information and/or graphics on the historical displacement of marginalized communities because of urban renewal programs. Additionally, they all included specific policies and goals surrounding equitable transportation efforts. Finally, these cities all included specific information on displacement, their acknowledgement of the relationship between transportation and potential displacement, and strategies or goals on how to improve transportation in their cities without displacement. Moving forward with this research, a potential future research question could be to see if these cities are also acting more on these plans. How are they implementing the goals and strategies laid out in their plans? Does having these more robust plans translate into concrete differences in action? How do the cities selected vary in their goals met and the implementation of the policies in their plans?

From my research and plan analysis, I have concluded that city transportation plans failing to include anti-displacement policy are a fault that requires consideration and resolution. Published city plans are important documents that reflect city values and goals; therefore, by not including these policies, planners fail to acknowledge the history of displacement in transportation, nor do they reflect their consideration in future projects. If transportation plans lack inclusion of these policies, then at the very least, their inclusion should be required in other published documents, such as comprehensive, housing or land use plans. Communication and cross-referencing between city departments, such as transportation, housing, and land use, is necessary for proper inclusion of these policies in the appropriate city plans. Planners need to do better. Table 7 includes a summary of the recommendations described below.

### Timid Recommendations

At the very minimum, I highly recommend that transportation planners include more anti-displacement policy or language on the topic in their published plans. One approach may be through cross-referencing information with city published housing plans or include links to more information on the topic. This is a highly workable approach for planners to better implement anti-displacement policy and language into their published documents. In addition, I believe all city transportation plans include historical timelines of displacement and gentrification because of transportation investments.

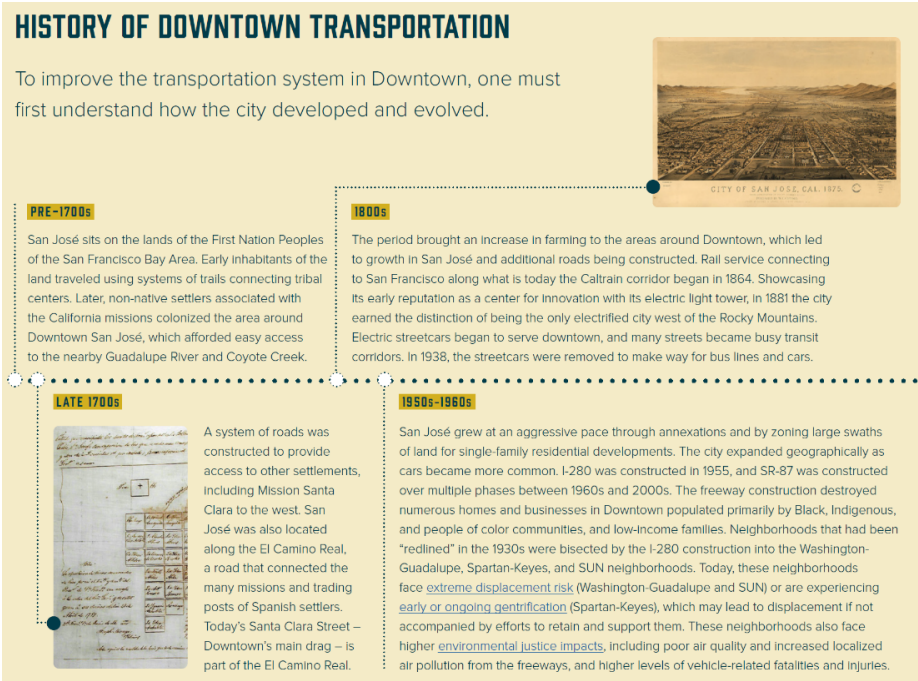


Figure 9: Historical Timeline from San Jose Downtown Transportation Plan

For example, Figure 9, shows a timeline in San Jose’s transportation plan on the “History of Downtown Transportation” describing how the city has developed over the decades through transportation (San Jose Department of Transportation, 2022, 13). This figure explains how transportation investments in San Jose resulted in displacement and

environmental justice impacts. This timeline is a great example of how planners can adequately illustrate displacement history in relation to transportation in their plans.

Transportation planners should be including these types of timelines in their plans because it highlights their knowledge of past displacement, how it can relate to transportation, and their consideration of the topic when proposing new policies and transportation investments. These timelines do not have to be complex, simply a visual understanding of the history of displacement, zoning, and change within the city, so that the public can better understand how planners are taking these events into account. Additionally, I would recommend that transportation plans cross-reference any anti-displacement policies or goals with other published city plans. This may involve using hyperlinks in transportation plans, allowing people to click on them and find further information on policies in other plans, such as housing, land use, or comprehensive plans, that may relate to the subject of transportation. Therefore, if the information is lacking in the transportation plan, planners can include links to more resources where individuals may discover more regarding how other city departments are considering anti-displacement and equity policy.

### **Moderate Recommendations**

Before publishing city documents, planning departments must meet at least once to discuss how anti-displacement policy can be further implemented into plans and ensure all information is cross-referenced. For example, before publishing an improved version of a city transportation plan, the transportation planning department must meet with the land use and housing departments to review the proposed document and ensure that adequate anti-displacement language is included in the goals and policies of the

document. In addition, any information regarding displacement, gentrification, and equity must be included in all appropriate and respective planning documents. It is also important that the plans reference each other so the public can know where to find more information on specific topics. Additionally, I suggest that transportation planners include representatives from neighborhoods that may be impacted by proposed transportation investments when designing the plans. Including representatives from neighborhoods will allow planners the ability to hear new perspectives on proposed projects and provide them an insight on how families, individuals, and communities may be harmed by public investments.

By having specific representatives from individual neighborhoods, more voices can be heard, and displacing impacts can in turn, hopefully be avoided. Therefore, planners can use this information to adjust proposed transportation investments, within their transportation plans, or rather come up with solutions to address issues brought up by neighborhood representatives. Although public comment and review processes are often included in transportation planning processes, specifically including representative voices in the planning documents, and addressing them by making physical changes to the language or goals of the plan is key. Boston's transportation plan includes a recurring section called "Questions Bostonians Asked" highlighting the concerns of the public (Walsh & Boston Transportation Department, 2017). Figure 10 highlights one page of the plan titled "Securing Affordability" which includes questions from the public, in this case, about displacement and transit services (Walsh & Boston Transportation Department, 2017, 72). This is a great example of how transportation

planners can include the voices of their residents to influence their plans and keep the public informed on how they are addressing public concerns.

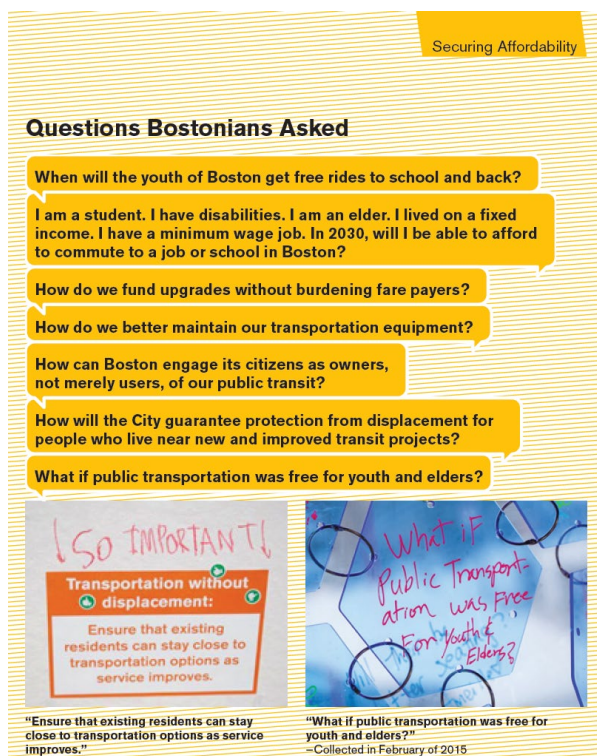


Figure 10: Excerpt from GoBoston2030: Boston Transportation Plan

Finally, another moderate recommendation I suggest is that city transportation planners work with regional planning entities to use census tracts to identify underserved communities and better address their transportation needs. The methods and findings from this practice should then be included in their published plans. The city of San Francisco is a great example of this practice. The San Francisco Transportation Plan has a section on Equity Priority Communities (EPCs) that shows how the planning department works with their regional planning authority to designate a set of census tracts for underserved communities in the city (San Francisco County Transportation Authority et al., 2022). Figure 11 is an excerpt on EPCs, demonstrating how the San Francisco Planning Department works with a regional transportation

planning agency to identify underserved communities in the Bay Area (San Francisco County Transportation Authority et al., 2022, 16). I see this as a reasonable suggestion because planners already often use census data to make a wide variety of decisions. Therefore, implementing a strategy like this will aid in the identifying of communities with underserved transportation needs. The data and information collected can be included in a city's equity goals within their plans and highlight which communities the department is prioritizing.

**EQUITY PRIORITY COMMUNITIES**  
The Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC), the Bay Area's regional transportation planning agency, has designated a set of census tracts as Equity Priority Communities (EPCs). EPCs include census tracts that either have both a concentration of people of color and low-income households or have a concentration of low-income households and three of the remaining six factors – people of color, low incomes, limited English proficiency, zero-vehicle households, seniors 75 years and older, people with disabilities, single parent families, or cost burdened renters.

In San Francisco, vulnerable communities are often located in the same census tracts with more affluent neighborhoods. Because of this proximity, the SFCTA conducts an analysis similar to the MTC's at a more fine-grained level to capture San Francisco's EPCs more accurately, shown in Figure 4.

Figure 11: Excerpt from San Francisco Transportation Plan 2050

In identifying and addressing EPCs, transportation planners can use this data to conduct further surveys on how communities are impacted by current transportation investments and discover what they hope to see from future transportation proposals. The transportation plan can also include the survey information, similarly to Boston, seen in



Figure 8. This strategy can help city planners better meet their community engagement goals as well as include the voices of a higher percentage of their residents.

### **Bold Recommendations**

To adopt anti-displacement policy in connection with transportation, I suggest transportation plans include proposals and/or goals investing in affordable housing near newly proposed transportation investments. This might require a city's transportation planning department to collaborate with the housing department to obtain funds, seek developers, and potentially rezone areas near transportation investments if necessary. This requirement may also necessitate the implementation of policies that protect affordable housing developments that are already in place near transportation investments. As a result, the transportation department would need to work together with the housing department to ensure the protection of these policies. My hope is that by adopting these policies and including them in the published plans, displacement surrounding transportation can be mitigated and/or prevented. The adoption of these policies can be a next step for cities who are attempting to address housing crises and further show their support for anti-displacement policies.

It's important to note that these policies may be included on a project-by-project basis and not in the broader city plans. However, that does not diminish the fact that it is important for cities to include this information in the citywide plans, because it highlights their goal and promises to include these policies in all stages of the planning process. Without this information consistently highlighted in these plans, how can the public, scholars, and researchers keep cities accountable for implementing this policy? These plans are meant to demonstrate progress and growth; if these plans don't include

this policy, then how can cities expect their planners to meet these goals and illustrate such progress?

Equity plays a significant role in planning today, as well as most anti-displacement policy. Therefore, I recommend transportation planners use an Equity Framework when proposing goals and projects for their published plans. This sort of framework would entail that equity is a prioritized and considerable factor in all decision-making processes. This framework would require that planners must highly consider how they can further implement equity into their plans as well as how they can make their proposals for transportation investments as equitable as feasibly possible. Planners today should be going out of their way to find the most equitable solutions to serving their city’s transportation needs. Without these sorts of frameworks driving their plan-making process, anti-displacement policy will be an afterthought in transportation planning. This Equity Framework should include various forms of equity including social and racial equity, as well as consider historical events of displacement so that planners can do their best to propose policies that will avoid repeating the past.

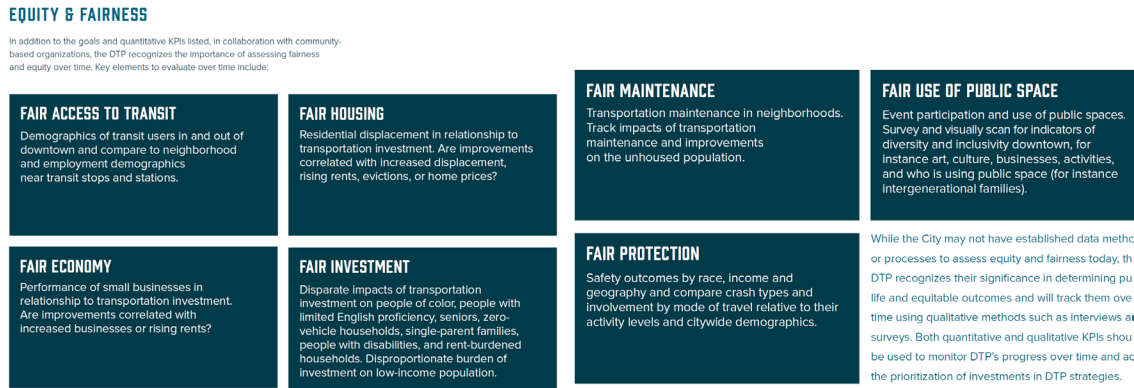


Figure 12: Excerpt from San Jose Downtown Transportation Plan

For example, Figure 12 highlights goals for Equity and Fairness that the city of San Jose includes in their transportation plan (San Jose Department of Transportation, 2022, 39-

40). These pages of the plan highlight San Jose's specific elements and goals to prioritize when planning transportation investments. These goals are an example of a potential equity framework that cities could use when evaluating their proposals and plans.

Multi-agency collaboration is important in city planning, as many issues in the public sector cross over into multiple departments. For example, issues and policies surrounding transportation coincide with land use and housing. Therefore, I suggest city transportation planners be required to collaborate with other department planners within the public sector during all phases of the plan-writing process. Every stage of proposing projects, conducting research, surveying the public, community engagement, and revisions should all be conducted with help from multiple agencies or departments. This ensures that any policies or issues that might coincide with other planning departments can have various expertise and knowledge behind the decision making of the plan. Published plans typically must be consistent within a city, so one would assume that they include similar policies in both transportation and comprehensive plans. Therefore, if the information or policies are somehow inconsistent between plans, there is clearly a missing link. This recommendation builds on this existing requirement by hopefully increasing inter-department communication to prevent a variety of perspectives in the conversation on equity and displacement. Planners from other sectors might have perspectives on how to better implement equity and displacement policy into other plans they may not be actively working on. Anti-displacement policy in relation to transportation must consider a variety of outside factors, such as housing and land use. When transportation investments are proposed or constructed, the land use and/or the

housing of the surrounding area is in some way impacted. Whether these impacts are negative depends on how transportation planners predict and plan for unintended consequences. By working with city housing, land use or other planning sectors, transportation planners can be better informed with how transportation might impact the communities surrounding the investment. This collaboration can better inform anti-displacement policy in city published plans, consequently making the public feel less concerned about the potential impacts their communities might face because of new transportation infrastructure.

## **Conclusion**

Whether it's a protected bike lane or a bus rapid transit line, communities have a right to understand or be aware of how they will potentially be impacted. It's the planners' job to include community outreach efforts when designing these published plans, as an approach to avoid these potential unintended consequences. Therefore, I see it is vital that all city transportation departments be required to collaborate with other city planning departments to ensure their anti-displacement policy is well-informed, well-researched, and at the very least, included in published planning documents. Despite this seeming like a bold requirement, I see this as a starting point for transportation planners to improve their anti-displacement policy in these plans. Based on my findings, the purpose of including this type of policy and language is to improve plans for communities. Specifically, communities that are most at risk for displacement or gentrification because of public investments. If planners don't have some set of requirements in regard to equity or displacement, how can we be sure that they are doing everything possible to support the needs of marginalized communities, as well as

planning mitigation strategies to avoid these tragedies. Ultimately, the recommendations suggested in Table 7 are all possible.

<b>Level of Feasibility</b>	<b>Recommendations</b>
<b><i>Timid</i></b>	<i>Implement more anti-displacement policy and language in transportation plans</i>
	<i>Include historical timelines detailing displacement &amp; gentrification from transportation investments</i>
	<i>Cross reference anti-displacement policy or language in other published city plans to ensure the information provided is uniform</i>
<b><i>Moderate</i></b>	<i>Require transportation planners meet with other planning departments, at least once, before publishing plans</i>
	<i>Include representatives from neighborhoods that are affected by transportation investments in the decision-making process</i>
	<i>Implement census tracts that look for communities overlooked based on equity-based factors</i>
<b><i>Bold</i></b>	<i>Implement proposals or goals in transportation plans, for affordable housing projects near transportation investments</i>
	<i>Use an Equity Framework when proposing new transportation investments</i>
	<i>Multi-agency collaboration on all levels of the plan writing process</i>

Table 7: Summary of Recommendations

Summary of recommendations discussed above. The recommendations are divided into three categories based on their level of feasibility. Those three categories are timid, moderate, and bold.

If transportation planners wish to improve their anti-displacement policy in their published plans, these recommendations are a solid start. By implementing these recommendations, planners can better represent the interests of their communities, particularly those that are marginalized and/or unrepresented in the public sector.

Including the voices of these communities is just one approach to how planners can highlight the concerns of the public as well as further prevent future displacement from occurring because of transportation investments. After all, a city's plans reflect their values, goals, and growth strategies. Therefore, if a city does not include this valued information in their plans, then how can they be held accountable for implementing these policies? These plans are meant to highlight growth, progress and how cities are improving their inclusion of equity in all phases of city life. By not including this policy, how can they be expected to meet any goals? The answer is: they won't. If scholars and city residents don't push back and demand more from planners, then they won't necessarily strive for better. It is the job of the people to demand more from their local government. These plans act as a reflection of improvement and progress; therefore, it is not unreasonable to demand more. Even if planners are aware of the history of displacement from the interstate freeway system, then why would they not acknowledge these past atrocities in their plans, as a way to show progress, and a change in future projects. These are the questions we must continue to ask ourselves, as the risk of displacement of marginalized communities continues to grow in American cities today. Cities must keep transportation planners accountable.

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