

Let's talk about gentrification

Defining the issue

“...a profit-driven racial and class reconfiguration of urban, working-class and communities of color that have suffered from a history of disinvestment and abandonment.

The process is characterized by declines in the number of low-income, people of color in neighborhoods that begin to cater to higher-income workers willing to pay higher rents.

Gentrification is driven by private developers, landlords, businesses, and corporations, and supported by the government through policies that facilitate the process of displacement, often in the form of public subsidies.

Gentrification happens in areas where commercial and residential land is cheap, relative to other areas in the city and region, and where the potential to turn a profit either through repurposing existing structures or building new ones is great.” – Causa Justa :: Just Cause report

1. Displacement is a racial justice issue



Income and wealth inequality make certain communities more vulnerable

**50 Years after MLK the Median White Family is Worth
70 times that of an African American Family**



by Antonio Moore.esq
Inequality.org



**BLACKS ARE
UNEMPLOYED AT MORE
THAN 3X THE RATE OF
WORKERS OF OTHER
RACES IN THE BAY AREA.
#StopStayExpand**

Health and Safety

theguardian

The long read

Death by gentrification: the killing that shamed San Francisco

Alejandro Nieto was killed by police in the neighbourhood where he spent his whole life. Did he die because a few white newcomers saw him as a menacing outsider?

by [Rebecca Solnit](#)



2. Displacement is driven by global capital

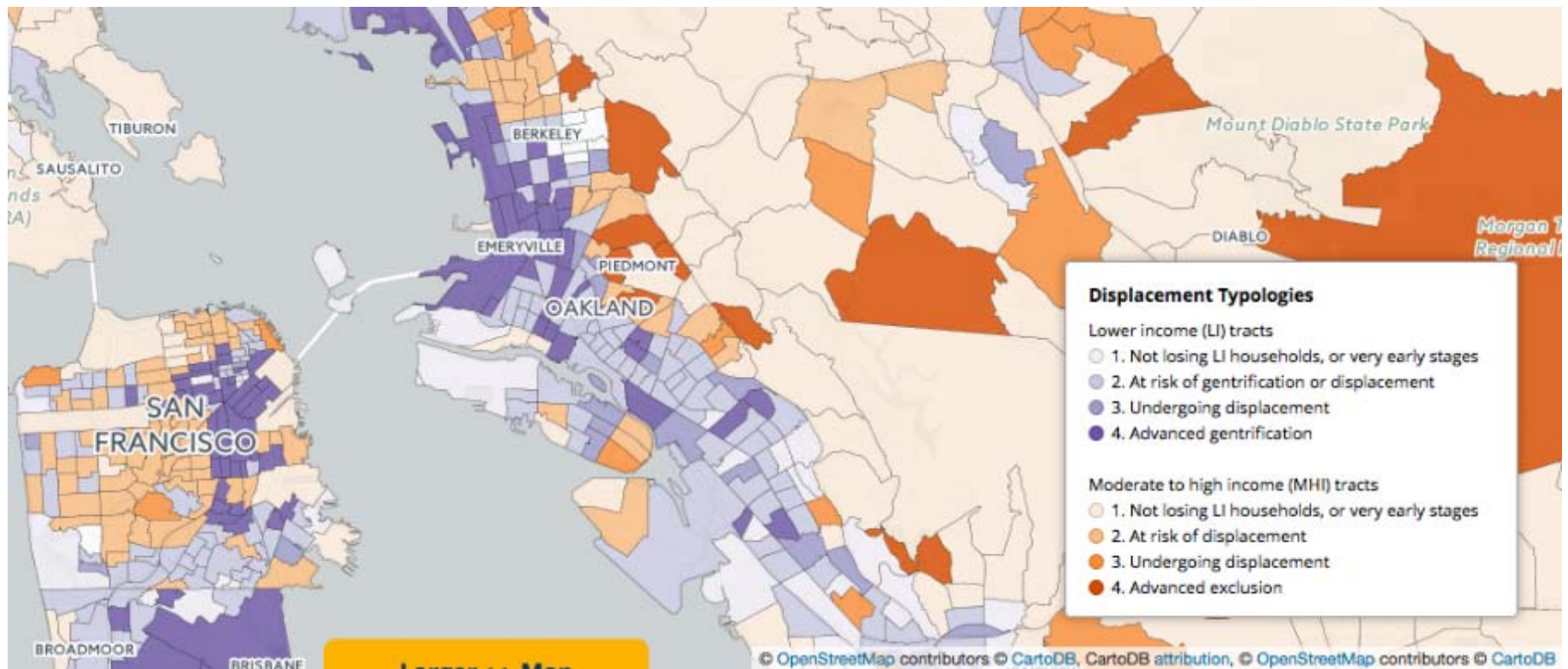
According to a [2015 report by Real Capital Analytics \(RCA\)](#):

“Chinese investment in major metros in the U.S. has increased from about \$3.5 billion in 2014 to \$10.2 billion year to date (2015). In Manhattan, Chinese volume has gone up from \$645.1 million in 2014 to \$5.3 billion so far this year.”

Urban land ownership continues to be highly concentrated in the hands of absentee landowners and for profit companies.

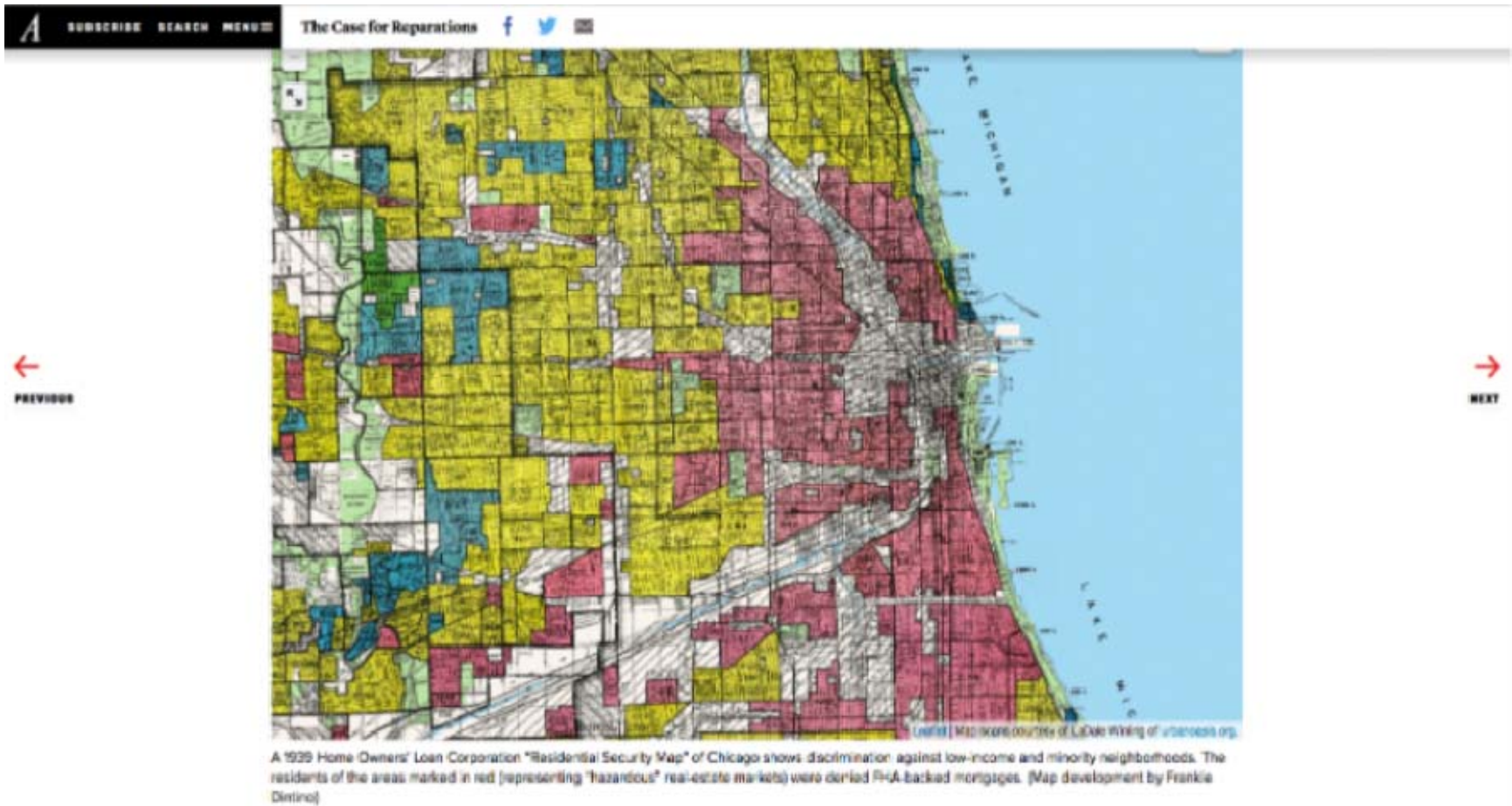
As a group of researchers has stated, the 2008 subprime lending crisis was the greatest loss of wealth for people of color in modern US history.

But it's carried out block by block



From Urban Displacement Project

3. Displacement is furthered by state policy



From *The Atlantic*

Zoning and Inequality

- Restrictive zoning has been shown to increase land values by increasing the cost of construction due to artificial scarcity
- Also used as tools of exclusion to keep certain tenants and construction out

4. Efforts to prevent or mitigate displacement need strong affordability mechanisms and democratic control!

Pillars of Just and Equitable Housing

Right to the City Alliance's five pillars:

- affordability,
- accessibility,
- long-term stability,
- health and sustainability, and
- community control

Cooperative Models

According to a Right to the City Report:

“...are successful when:

- 1) the ownership of land and property was collective;
- 2) strong price restrictions on the resale prices of housing units were present and enforced;
- 3) cooperatives were designed to be accessible to historically marginalized communities, particularly poor people and people of color;
- 4) the management of the property promoted the mobilized participation of tenants; and
- 5) cooperatives had financial and political independence from municipal governments or other agencies from which outside resources had to be secured.”

Recommended Reading

- Ta-nehisi Coates, “[The case for reparations](#),” *The Atlantic*
- Rebecca Solnit, “[Death by gentrification: the killing the shamed San Francisco](#),” *The Guardian*
- [Causa Justa::Just Cause](#), “Development without Displacement” report
- “[There goes the neighborhood](#)” podcast, *The Nation* and WNYC
- [UCB Urban Displacement Project](#)