Webinar

Receiving Community Webinar
Date: September 22, 2023

00:02:51 --> 00:02:51: All right.
00:02:55 --> 00:02:57: So hello, everyone.
00:02:57 --> 00:02:59: Thank you for joining the webinar.
00:03:00 --> 00:03:01: My name is Leon Plass.
00:03:01 --> 00:03:03: I'm a Senior manager on the Urban Resilience Team.
00:03:04 --> 00:03:07: Today, we'll be focused on the topic of climate gentrification.
00:03:08 --> 00:03:10: We'll kick off discussion with a quick overview of the topic.
00:03:11 --> 00:03:14: Then we'll launch into a discussion with our panelists who will introduce briefly here now and in greater detail just before our panel discussion actually begins, this webinar is brought to you by the Urban Land Institute's Urban Resilience Program, which works with you and I members from all corners of the real estate industry to help buildings, cities and communities be more prepared for the impacts of climate change.
00:03:33 --> 00:03:36: First, I'd like to introduce Joe Backer, Senior Development Officer at the City of Boston.
00:03:38 --> 00:03:41: Then we have Jeff Aber, President of HR and A Advisors.
00:03:41 --> 00:03:45: And finally, Ahmed Mori, Vice President of Community Economic Development with Catalyst Miami.
00:03:49 --> 00:03:51: I'm so excited and honored to have each of these panelists on with us today.
00:03:52 --> 00:03:55: And I'm also excited to be able to share a bit of background about this emerging issue of climate gentrification.
This is a topic that hits close to home for me as someone who grew up and worked in the Southeast Florida region. And this will likely become a growing concern as longtime residents of some communities vulnerable to climate impacts are forced to relocate, and stakeholders and destination communities are in turn driven to adapt to change. Right now, we're faced with a harrowing fact. People worldwide and domestically are being forced to relocate due to climate change impacts, be it from unbearable heat and financial pressure from storm recovery, slow traffic, or flooded homes. People are moving, and according to one report by the Internal Displacement Monitoring Center, in 2020 alone, extreme weather events are estimated to have displaced nearly 31 million people globally. And this is only the beginning. As we grapple with these numbers, it's important to also focus on some of the leading lights, on what some of the leading lights on the subject are calling receiving communities. These are destinations with comparatively lower risks that people relocate to in order to escape hazards in their current localities. But something is brewing in these receiving communities, and it's characterized by rising and cost of development, rising taxes, declining sense of community, declining political agency, declining access to employment centers and quality jobs, rising cost of rent, shifts in demands for types of goods and services, and limited access to facilities and services. And that's something that's being called climate gentrification, a term that describes the influx of real estate investments, rising housing prices, and subsequent residential displacement in areas less exposed, exposed to climate change risks in order to prepare communities for
coming change and possible displacement. It's important to now and in the future recognize, understand and plan for climate gentrification. And that means getting a handle on how it occurs and how to identify it, and, importantly, how to address it on all fronts across the real estate industry. And this may be a difficult task. Climate gentrification happens for a lot of reasons and it can occur as a result of people's movement at many different scales. And this may be a difficult task.

Reaching equilibrium in communities will likely not happen because of policy changes, investment strategies, or grassroots efforts alone. It will demand a commitment and a coordinated approach from all stakeholders in the real estate sector and beyond. You utilize very recently published a report on this topic called Receiving Community Building Inclusive Places that Mitigate Climate Gentrification Driven Displacement. This report offers up a series of strategies to prevent displacement from happening. Due to this forthcoming and in some places already ongoing movement of people. In that report, we emphasize 5 strategies. First is to enhance neighborhood stability through pathways to ownership. That could mean establishing community land trusts or offering tenants rights of first refusal before selling. Next, there is preserving expanding availability of unsubsidized affordable housing, which might entail adoption of inclusionary zoning policies or executing community benefits agreements, which could yield broad positive benefits for community members and developers. Then we have designating spaces as accessible and relevant, and
We could accomplish this by establishing resilience hubs to support communities before, during, and after major events. Then there's applying design standards that could promote building energy efficiency and contribute positively to the health and wellbeing of residents. And that might entail municipalities adoption of sustainable building design standards. And finally, we have supporting retrofit maintenance and disaster recovery which might lead, which might mean leveraging grants to discover disaster recovery and resilience from state and federal agencies. Some these specific solutions post may actually sound familiar, like community Land Trust and community and inclusionary zoning. And that's because many of the strategies employed to combat gentrification driven displacement due to other circumstances are still applicable in the case of climate gentrification driven displacement as well.

So having said that, we're going to move along to our panel discussion where our panelists will first share a bit about themselves and then discuss this issue of climate gentrification, including its effects, its implications, and foremost, what can be done to address it in greater detail. So panelists, if you wouldn't mind, please offer a few words to introduce yourselves and then we'll dive right in. Thanks, Lee. I'm Joe Backer. I'm a Senior Development Officer with the Mayor's Office of Housing in the city of Boston. Work primarily in the space of affordable housing and how we can both create and preserve it in the neighborhoods of Boston. More recently. And and what I'll be talking about today is the
work that we're doing and in consultation with a lot of different colleagues to promote decarbonization, energy efficiency and resilience as part of the overall approach to housing affordability in the City of Boston.

Hi, I'm Jeff a Bear.

I'm President of HRA Advisors.

I'm also a partner in the firm where my focus is supporting our climate resilience practice, where I work in communities across the country and really help communities and organizations think through the intersection of climate what's happening in the world.

And public policy support and also economic development, real estate support on how do you get from where we've been, where we are now and frankly what the future holds for us?

Thanks.

Jack, thanks so much for having me.

My name is Ahmed Mori.

I'm the Vice President of Community Economic Development.

At Catalyst Miami, which is a community based organization that operates in Miami and Miami-Dade County, Florida, I specifically oversee our worker and real estate investment cooperative development.

We'll be talking a bit about that real estate investment cooperative strategy and. And how and its intersection specifically accurate its intersection with climate gentrification as it specifically intends to model an equitable development strategy that serves as a sort of anti displacement buffer specifically in the city of of North Miami.

So I'll stop there for now.

Thank you, everyone.

I'm just so excited to have you on board and just to like launch right into our first round of
I'm going to start with Jeff. Jeff, how is climate change influencing the locations where people live and work?

Well, I mean, I would say climate has always influenced where people live and work. I think the way, and I'll speak just from a North American perspective right now, where cities were built and we're situated. Had geographic and climate sort of reasons why they are where they are, right for industry or for farming or for access to water, for trade, for all those things. I mean that that is why we've found ourselves where we are and that and that has been for some time. The difference is climate. Has been changing over time and really has seen a tremendous change over the past couple of decades. And it's calling into question the livability of places who is impacted most.

And since we are in places that have been built over a long period of time, whose responsibility is it to make change? Individuals have always made decisions about where they want to live, but. What we have been faced with over the past couple of decades, and if you just look this year, which will be the hottest year on record, we've seen flooding and drought, wildfires, extreme heat, tropical storms, winter storms or lack of winter storms. We've seen all of it happen and the frequency of that has been increasing over the past couple of decades.

It starts to back the question of our communities. Are many communities reaching tipping points? And when you reach that tipping point, it calls into question who has the ability to relocate and who doesn't and what we're seeing and the whole purpose of this conversation and when we think about climate gentrification.
are already movements being made by people who have the
ability to move and to reduce risk. And the other side of that is people who don't
have the ability to move and will be faced with
risk. And then the third part of that is where people
are going to lower risk. In many cases like in Southeast Florida are places where
communities already exist and are in many cases poor communities
that are now being gentrified out of what are safe
areas but weren't waterfront areas and therefore less desirable at
the time.

So we have changing patterns of.
I wouldn't say land use, but land desirability, that is
going to have a huge impact across the country, not
just in places like South Florida, but if you think
of the context of the Northeast in a similar sense
with waterfront development or in places that have that have
been flooded in the past, you know who's responsible for
moving people out of harm's way.
How do we manage those risks?
And then on another side of it, the issues of
drought, the issues of wildfire and extreme heat which is
actually impacted all the cities in the country in the
US and and and frankly in Canada, how do we
start to make better decisions there as well.
So you know, I think there's we're at a turning
point in decision making both at the sort of governmental
level, the institutional level and the individual level.
But all of those are predicated on where are the
resources and who has the ability to manage risk, right.
And so you mentioned briefly like because these are all
like really critical points, right.
And but you mentioned recent that some of the locations
where this is occurring right.
And I think it's it's helpful to sort of create
a just a better picture of what's going on on
the ground and you know what what's physically being done.
So we now we we sort of understand, we understand
the broader picture, but what specifically and this is
a question for you Ahmed.
So for in Miami-Dade County, which is like one of
the one of the first places that was like assessed
for the possibility that climate gentrification might be
occurring and
you know the foundational paper having been published in
2018.
So in that locality, could you tell me a little
bit more about what Catalyst Miami is doing through the
NMCIC program to you know get, get the OR rather
move, move from the the recognition of the problem to
the OR some some forms of resolution of the problem?
Here, so I should begin by saying what Catalyst Miami
and who we are and sort of what we do
because we kind of have our toes in a few
different things I would say you know Catalyst Miami we're
a community based organization that we work specifically
with community
members across all of Miami-Dade County to provide.
Services that address immediate needs, healthcare access,
financial security, and
to build more equitable futures together right through a
combination
of policy advocacy and our community economic
development work.
Much of that policy advocacy work, of course, centers on
climate justice advocacy, whether it's focusing specifically on
development practices
or enabling local policies that further.
or policies, or sort of advocating for or against certain
policies and depending on their impact on, say, climate
gentrification.
Or policies that address extreme heat that our frontline
communities
are face just to sort of choose a few our
economic development work centers sort of worker and
community ownership
as an essential component, equitable development.
We operate with the belief that communities know what
communities
need.
And that folks in their communities that should and must
have a seat at the table with regards to, you
Our focus on climate justice, of course, is pervasive throughout our economic development work.

The North Miami Community Investment Cooperative or NMCIC is our, I guess, the cornerstone right now of our community development.

Efforts, it's specifically based in North Miami.

We have embarked on a project to launch a few, a few groups around the country, I should say are doing this and doing this quite well as well, a real estate investment cooperative.

What we're doing and how we're operationalizing this specifically is by acquiring commercial sites in the city of North Miami, specifically on high elevation parcels and opening up ownership opportunities through the purchasing of shares.

To community members who can then either run for elected board positions or join an Advisory Council to engage in cooperative governance of commercial property.

We have, we've been negotiating, we've been spending the last few months negotiating the purchase of our first site which is pretty exciting and have you know developed a plan for a four to five site acquisition fund which we're currently raising capital for.

You know, the idea is this is not only a wealth building platform, which of course it is, and it sort of addresses one of the sort of pillars of what we do at Catalyst Miami.

But as I mentioned a little bit earlier, it's a buffer against, you know, forms of gentrification that promote displacement.

It's prefigurative in some sense, right?

Because you know, of course, four or five sites aren't going to reverse massive gentrification.

Transmitted is a model.

Of one of the things that can be done in particularly one that centers community decision making and community priorities.
00:19:15 --> 00:19:20: There's a story of acquisition and preservation here, and specifically
00:19:20 --> 00:19:24: preservation of of violation parcels, which I guess you know
00:19:24 --> 00:19:26: from a from a larger picture.
00:19:27 --> 00:19:31: All of our economic development work aims to hone in
00:19:31 --> 00:19:33: on power building and.
00:19:34 --> 00:19:37: Specifically with you know in in when it comes to
00:19:37 --> 00:19:41: community development with an anti displacement lets and
taking into
00:19:41 --> 00:19:45: account the market and extra market dynamics that
contribute displacement
00:19:45 --> 00:19:49: of course and importantly including the dynamics that
catalyze and
00:19:49 --> 00:19:54: that perpetuate climate gentrification it's related displacement
effects that's.
00:19:55 --> 00:19:58: So this program is is really something that that that
00:19:58 --> 00:20:01: struck me as as it's pretty it's pretty novel even
00:20:01 --> 00:20:04: but now that you now that you mentioned there are
00:20:04 --> 00:20:09: like several other initiatives across the country that's really
inspiring
00:20:09 --> 00:20:09: too.
00:20:09 --> 00:20:13: So I I think this is something to get excited
00:20:13 --> 00:20:17: about, but pivoting from this the focus on you know.
00:20:17 --> 00:20:22: A commercial property and you know the specifically with the
00:20:22 --> 00:20:26: intention of like allowing community members to build wealth
and
00:20:27 --> 00:20:31: also geographically shifting away to another part of the
Northeast,
00:20:31 --> 00:20:33: to the Northeast.
00:20:33 --> 00:20:36: I wanted to ask Joe if if you could tell
00:20:36 --> 00:20:40: us a little bit more about what Boston, another community
00:20:40 --> 00:20:45: that's received some attention around the subject of climate
gentrification
00:20:45 --> 00:20:49: since it is, it is coastal what what the city
00:20:49 --> 00:20:53: of Boston is doing to prevent gentrification driven
displacement and
00:20:53 --> 00:20:56: facilitate more equitable development.
00:20:56 --> 00:20:58: So Joe, could you, could you speak to that please?
00:20:59 --> 00:21:00: Yeah, definitely.
00:21:00 --> 00:21:02: And and thanks again for having me join.
00:21:02 --> 00:21:05: Exciting to hear Jeff and Ahmed speaking.
00:21:05 --> 00:21:09: There's already themes that I think connect directly to how
00:21:09 --> 00:21:10: we approach some of this.
00:21:10 --> 00:21:12: So I will, I'll try to pick those up.
And I'll, I'll do the same as I'm going to give a little context about you know, where I am and in my work and how that has brought me to this, this topic.

So the, the Mayor's Office of Housing writ large is, you know, a department that primarily seeks to support homeowners, renters, landlords and to promote housing affordability across the city of Boston and I think. I've I've been here for about 5 years and it's been a really interesting moment to see the focus or the intersection of of climate and climate change really seep into so much of that work.

So I think you know Ahmed mentioned acquisition and preservation. That's a huge part of what we do and I think it's a key set of tools and how we can approach.

The intersection of housing affordability, climate change, climate gentrification, and development a couple of guiding principles. One is, you know, we know that while climate change is impacting all of Boston and and all of the country in the world, low income residents in our city are more likely to be energy cost burdened and they're generally more likely to.

Be contending with the impacts of climate change in a disproportionate way.

So just to give one example, if you look at formerly relined areas of Boston, they those residents are experiencing greater burdens during hotter summers.

So during a heat wave, the temperatures in those areas could be 7.5 degrees hotter during the day and 3.6 degrees Fahrenheit hotter.

At night than the rest of Boston.

So that's one example of how certain geographic areas and and certain residents who live there are bearing those the brunt of climate change in a different way.

And I think another guiding principle is that efforts by the city to mitigate climate change and to build resilience have to be paired really thoughtfully with efforts to shore
up affordability and to actively push against. Displacement and the sort of climate gentrification trends that we are talking about and I think the Mayor's Office of Housing comes in because we are really well positioned to leverage existing programs and policies. These are the the parts of the city and the residents that we have worked with the most for decades and so building climate and in a climate change lens into those existing. Programs and into new programs can really be effective. So I'll highlight a few of those programs that we've launched just in the last few months at the intersection of climate and housing affordability. One is a pilot that actually just launched a week ago and that is targeting 2 to 4 unit homeowner, sorry, owner occupied buildings. Where the the owner lives in that building but rents out the other apartments to low income families and we've launched a pilot program that is aimed at recruiting about a dozen such buildings to work with the owners and residents understand the building's current energy performance. Map out a road map to really deep and significant energy savings and and decarbonization measures. And you know use our existing expertise within the Mayor's Office of Housing to help those residents and owners identify the scope of work that has to be performed whether it's installing heat pumps or adding insulation or ventilation, identifying contractors who are really well qualified to do that work and then remaining as a partner as that work is done and as as it's monitored. Afterwards to check the impacts of it and we're prepared to put up to $50,000 per unit into that work cost free to the the building owner. So I think that's a really good example of how we are tackling the building stock in the city. But also making sure that we are protecting long term affordability for the residents who are there and and trying to limit displacement as much as possible. We have a similar program that we just launched for
larger scale multifamily buildings, again putting up to $50,000 per unit into the the work that can increase weatherization and resilience as well as switch from fossil fuel systems to all electric. And we’re working really closely with our partners. You know we partner every day with affordable housing developers and owners. And so we have sort of a a built in network that we can tap to deploy this new source of funds in a very familiar set of buildings that we’ve been working with for years. So I think the the key to what we are. Doing now is using existing services and networks to bring a new focus on resiliency and retrofits and decarbonization. But we really are trying to leverage what we already know how to do in terms of preserving affordability and and expanding the stock of. Apartments and and homes that are available to low income residents. Thank you so much Joe. It's it's really well just the fact that weatherization is isn't always like a core consideration and what do you what can be done to improve housing affordability is it's something that's like slowly starting to come to the foray and I think people are are starting to realize like yes we need to make our buildings more efficient so that our our residents can actually or to remain in in our communities. So I want to open up a question to all of our panelists here and maybe get a get a bit of a discussion going. So in the markets in which you work, what are some of the ways that climate change has directly influenced gentrification trends? Like what are you seeing on the ground? I'll go, I'll go first and then I can go after me. You know, I I, I think about one of the first examples that I think we saw very clearly.
Really thinking about risk and risk profile and you know one of the things that happened in New Orleans and continues to happen particularly in the housing market, it's communities that were working class low income neighborhoods that were situated next to the port because it house port workers for generations. You know, had names like the Irish Channel and and you know, because of the folks that were connected to court jobs, because of the relative lower risk closer to the river, which may not make sense for most people. But the geography of New Orleans is the closer to the river, the higher the ground it is. Those communities over the past 15 years have changed dramatically from where they were when Katrina hit. To where they are now because of the relative lower risk of the neighborhoods that are nestled against the river. So you're talking about working class neighborhoods that historically going back to, you know, mid 19th century were Irish, German, Italian neighborhoods that supported families, African American neighborhoods for people who worked at the port. Which are now totally changed. So you have a situation today where those are the neighborhoods that people have invested in because they're seen as safer in terms of being on higher ground. The spine of that corridor has always been Magazine St. which is now you know has a tremendous transformation of retail, food and beverage, all of that that sort of goes along with the change in in sort of residential character. And sort of on the downtown side of that, a change in additional multifamily market rate and luxury apartments and condos along the river as well and an investment in a riverfront park that sort of goes along with that. So all of that together is a dramatic shift in sort of the social demography of the city.
And as a response in a response to risk and that risk you you started seeing it in New Orleans and Louisiana after Katrina and you're seeing it in Florida also as a response to insurance and the transformation of the insurance industry in in insurance rates. And the affordability of insurance and people who have the means try to manage their risk inside a certain geography. So I mean that has had a tremendous transformation in New Orleans. I'm not going to talk about Miami because I'm in can talk about Miami, a place that I've spent a lot of time working and actually with folks at Catalyst Miami. But you also see these sorts of transformations in Miami. You see them other places. I mean, it's it's in New York. There's a conversation around. You know there are thousands upon thousands of units of public housing that are in coastal risk zones and how do you think about the transformation of those those areas over time? We we can model with sea level rise what will happen there. And and something else we can talk about a little later, which is about how do you absorb communities that have to move. But you know what I see in many of the places I work is it is a tremendous change and particularly over the past couple of years and thought process around where to build or where people are. And as usual, it comes down to who has the resources to make certain decisions. And in many places, just to be direct about it, the cat is already out of the bag and it's about how do you as Joe was saying, how do you think about strategies around the preservation of affordability either being very direct and government sort of managed or naturally occurring affordable housing, which is what happened was happening in New Orleans, which is my experience in places in Miami.
This was just what the neighborhood was, and without some effort to preserve that affordability for people and frankly, thankfully, in places that are relatively safer than others, they will. The gentrification will take its toll, as we're already seeing, and those who have the least resources will again be shuffled around.

Did you want to respond to that? Yes, or add to it, I guess and I and Jeff alluded to you know the Miami case or what's most frequently mentioned, you know the the sort of prevailing dynamic of climate gentrification in Miami. But, and especially during Jeff's first answer. But I don't think it could be really stressed enough, frankly.

Particularly as frequently as Miami and Miami-Dade County generally is mentioned as one of the Ground Zeroes for climate gentrification. I think as probably a lot of folks here know, you know we've been seeing that as sea level rise affects our coastline, there's been an increase in the values of higher elevation parcels. This you know some folks maybe point back or at least by some measures the point that these higher elevation parcels in Miami-Dade County's urban core have been increasing in value at a faster rate than non higher elevation parcels for approximately 21/22/23 years. So really, you know, we can, we can start.

To get a sense of when this cycle again which is in many ways aligned with you know these 2020 plus year cycles of gentrification that we normally see with regards to you know perhaps if we can cause non climate forms of gentrification. I think, you know, now what's important to keep in mind is that there's an extraordinarily strong correlation in Miami-Dade County between higher elevation land and low wealth communities of cover. And partly because you know lower elevation land is coastal
land, it which typically attracts of course both your populations
but in tandem with this increase in residential and commercial values in the world communities, we've seen a huge uptick in developer interest and thus you know the speeding up of increased gentrification and displacement. So there's a mega development in 2019, the Magic City development. That was approved and began going up in Miami's Little Haiti neighborhood, which is actually in the city of Miami, which at the time was also seeing one of the fastest rises in residential property values in the US. And this Magic City development is a mega mixed-use development with you know, wealthier residential units with, you know, ton of office space, entertainment spaces, etcetera. And so it's kind of an important sort of like microcosm of a lot of the developer interest that we're seeing in areas with these high elevation parcels, whether it's Little Haiti or or sort of Liberty City, which is you know adjacent, which are traditionally Little Haiti of course is a hub for the Haitian immigrant community in Miami, Little Haiti being a a traditionally black neighborhood and of course North Miami where we're working where. We see you know broad swaths of different immigrant, immigrant communities of color from throughout the Caribbean and Latin America. You know where where we just see these dynamics sort of recurring I think for us to to sort of to zoom out of TAD and thinking of strategies for preservation affordability you know say apart from government directed strategies and Noah which was mentioning there's also a determination or. So thinking of climate gentrification in terms of how it can help determine community organizing and advocacy strategy, you know that I think that is a challenge for us, right? Climate gentrification, You know, we can, we can think about the dynamics of climate gentrification, shedding a light on
more generally.
To the extent that we're describing a process, you know, we're part of the urban is being remade for wealthier communities or wealthier constituencies. But that doesn't always happen because these constituencies are moving in already.
Right developers also help propel this.
So to the extent that climate gentrification could be a predictor, or these dynamics of climate gentrification be a predictor of what areas may gentrify next alongside, say, market dynamics,
local government decisions about land use, and efforts perhaps to court certain industries that attract a certain class of of professionals to urban cores, how do we? Sort of help preempt some of this right like and how do we mobilize and organize in ways that can actually begin to address these dynamics significantly ahead of time to the extent that we can, right, which is you know that's sort of the challenge from our perspective and the work that we do.
How do we grasp or how can we use climate justification as a lens to grasp the activity we may expect to see in the next 10 or 20 years.
So we've been talking a little bit about these sort of longer term trends in which people generally speaking in which you know that people have been slowly starting to redevelop certain locations based on you know basically speculation on the on the value of land in the coming years.
But what about sudden events.
So Jeff, this is a question for you.
For sudden relocations, particularly for vulnerable groups, what are some of some examples of communities accommodating an influx of new residents and accommodating them not just in the short term but also in the long term?
Is that is that something that's feasible or and like how can it be done so?
It's I would answer that two ways and I'm, I'm glad you said you said short term and long term and I will preface that by saying we don't have a good system of that in the United States to manage. Sort of the flows of people and I and I, I can't pull this apart from the migration that we're seeing in the country right now because you can sort of look this up, a good percentage of that migration is attributable to climate change itself. So, you know, the flows of people coming into the United States is being triggered by a lot of. Sort of climate impacts in Central and South America, which is part of a sort of a triggering of a lot of things that are happening and you'll see more of it particularly in the context of the Caribbean and other places we're seeing it in, in the South Pacific, all these things happening and there there is not currently a good system of how. How we manage the flows of people. There are lots of community organizations, faith-based organizations and others who in a sort of a shock situation in a disaster situation, we have been somewhat successful as setting up temporary systems of shelter and for long term displacement. There have been some examples you know after Hurricane Sandy, after Hurricane Katrina, after Hurricane Andrew, in in the wildfires in the West of communities being able to absorb populations. Katrina probably being the biggest example of that in this country where you had displacement that was really absorbed in Texas. But moving forward, you know we, we don't have any good examples of how to do that. And I think there are a couple reasons for that. Where is there, I will say something academic in a second as a response to this, but where is there an excess of of capacity, like where is there the capacity to accept, right. That's, that's the first piece.
And secondly, you know even in I would call sort of intra city migration where people are moving from place to place, neighborhoods are very distinct and different. And so how do you think through absorption of people from one neighborhood into another neighborhood, right, that has its own issues and constraints on top of that that usually leads to conversations about increasing density. Some places this is looking a little bit longer term. That's a zoning issue, that's a planning issue. It's very much a political issue. That's also a neighborhood character issue. And in much of this country we are mostly less dense than we probably could be and having those conversations have lots of political sort of connotations to them. And then the the academic side of this is where are there places to accept people, right. So one of the things that you learn, and I know this is something you ally has has looked at before is like where do people go, right. People go with their social connections. So part of the reason, you know, not not to not to pick on Ahmed and and and South Florida and Miami-Dade in particular, but part of the reason why Miami frankly has already been a receiving community is because the connections in the Caribbean, right, people have ties to Miami. Something happens, someone told me this, you know, if there's a sneeze in the Caribbean, it's felt in my end, right? That's that's the experience, right. So it's about ties. So one of the things to think about as we as we move forward and think through this process is a human perspective of how do you keep social ties together cuz it's so important for communities and and their ability to thrive and survive as the social connections. And so the receiving communities need to be places where people can integrate and socially connect either with the people
that they were with before and they're coming with them or that there are are preexisting social connections. But I think it's really, really important as you think about this, the third piece just from if you go like 50,000 foot level, there's been a lot of conversation about sort of the Rust Belt of the country and the what is some would some data might suggest relative less risk as it relates to climate and the excess sort of capacity that's there to receive people frankly where there's been depopulation before. And so that's sort of a very macro scale conversation that that I know is out there, but I continue to go back to social ties, fabric of community, why people are where they are. And at the end of the day, the reason why people have historically flocked to places is because of jobs and opportunity and you can't sort of leave that out. So as people are moving from place to place, in some instances they might find a better economy. In other instances people have to support themselves. And so the economy is also a big part in thinking through receiving communities and how those communities can absorb. Right. Understood. Yeah, absolutely the. This there's there have been some questions in the chat to this effect right How do how can we how can we go about accommodating and then also like what specifically can be done to address. To address these trends And then also what is the role of some of these other actors, I mean it's not just people, right. It's also jobs and where businesses choose to choose to locate or can locate due to these known risks. So moving into this into some of the specifics here, I wanted to ask a two-part question. So the first is what what specific role can developers, investors, consultants and a EC. So that's architecture engineering. Construction professionals do have in helping communities adapt to this
change and then to that point, what can be done to further community engagement or strengthen the voice of community in places in these receiving communities specifically?

Well, I can, I can speak to the Boston contacts and I talked a little bit about the new programs that we are launching to, you know, really decarbonize existing affordable housing.

I think what I've learned, because I've had to learn an awful lot in the last couple of years to think about how this can be folded into housing work, is that it's an incredibly technical and building by building approach or solution that needs to happen. So I think there's a really important role for that community of developers, owners, engineers, architects, we we see them as in some ways the next evolution in our work is engaging with them to look at specific buildings in the affordable housing portfolio and building stock of Boston and translate what we know are are broadly based strategies for decarbonization and resiliency.

That community of developers, owners, engineers, architects, we see them as in some ways the next evolution in our work is engaging with them to look at specific buildings in the affordable housing portfolio and building stock of Boston and translate what we know are are broadly based strategies for decarbonization and resiliency.

But.

You know, when you look at a building that was built 100 years ago with crumbling masonry or you know any number of deferred maintenance issues, it really is going to be a very specific set of interventions. And the city can help partner on that.

But we cannot do that work ourselves and you shouldn't expect owners and residents to take that on themselves either.

That's it's a very complicated. Nothing to do at any scale. So we've launched technical assistance grants in the last few months to encourage the owners of affordable housing buildings to bring in the specialists who can really help them map out decarbonization scopes of work.

You know what, what kind of insulation can go where, what old wiring needs to be replaced. It's going to be incredibly.

In the weeds.
And you need really dedicated and specialized folks to do that.

On the other question of community, it's something that I hit on earlier.

We the the Mayor's Office of Housing relies on a network of affordable housing owners and developers, and that that won't change in our approach to decarbonization.

We need those folks to be really, really deeply engaged.

And many of those partner organizations are fueled and and directly connected to residents and and community members because they are community development organizations.

So we the city has a real role to play in convening and and supporting that work.

But I think to both questions you when you get to specific buildings, the vision and the execution has to be driven by the folks on the ground.

So if I, if I may, I actually I think to some extent the, the at least the work that we've been trying to do when they're doing on the ground, it's almost like the two questions or two parts of the of like 1 strategy for us.

Because, you know, to the extent that we work with folks in our communities to be deeply involved in the economic development process.

We also need to think of a sort of or constantly thinking and rethinking of an engagement strategy for say developers and investors and consultants etcetera.

I think you know as we continue raising capital and engaging with.

You know, like folks who can help us actually say engage in weatherization efforts for our first and future acquisitions and things of the sort.

What's become apparent to us is that there are many stakeholders within the industry that want to play a role inclusive development, but the ecosystem isn't especially connected in South Florida in order to do it.

So you know.

In addition to a need for basically shared value creation
among developers, investors, consultants, you know, architecture, engineering and construction professionals that we know want to engage in equitable development work.

And doing, you know, working on shared values with folks in our communities that are deeply involved in the projects that that we're working on, I think there's a need to, you know, sort of develop.

That ecosystem I guess and there are there I think some important local initiatives that are bringing together these diverse groups of stakeholders to engage in more equitable development practices.

There's you know, the the Miami Foundation for instance, through its Community Real Estate Ownership Initiative is trying to do a lot of this.

We Co run a program called Florida Thrives with the South Florida Community Development Coalition that brings together economic development organizations.

And the public sector and local funders from across the county to sort of think through some of these issues and engage in ecosystem building in that way.

So I think there's really a lot of work to do to sort of build an enabling environment, right.

We do a lot of education around impact investment for instance, you know and which is is something that's still not super commonly seen throughout the South Florida area, right.

So, yeah, it's almost like to the extent that we do pretty deep community engagement and organizing. I need to do something pretty similar with with such a diverse set of stakeholders that want to to actually play a role.

Could I just leak it. I just say add one thing to that from from sort of the consulting side and maybe I'd say consulting plus engineering is, you know, one of the best things that we're able to do is provide a shared set
of facts and data.

Because in many instances people don't know what they don't know.

And I've been in many rooms where once people actually see the data and what's actually going on, there's a big aha moment and people who don't even know have not been able to understand what the movement actually is like.

Oh no, this is already taking place.

So how do we wrap our arms around it?

But having a shared set of facts that is data-driven through analytics and also community engagement is really important to set the table of what's going on and what the future can be.

Without that, things happen in isolation and usually to the detriment of of a great deal of people.

And so the ability to have the data visualize it and communicate it in a way that everybody can understand, I think it's extraordinarily important.

There've been leaps and bounds on that and and ULI has done some work on that as well.

Like how do you, how do you think through sort of democratizing risk data not just at sort of the real estate asset level for the asset holder, but also for the wider community?

That is extremely important, particularly when you look at this year for example, when based on historical precedent, nothing actually has made since this year at all, right.

We just have to look at what's actually happening.

So that part is really important.

So this is this has all been just some fantastic responses to this really complex question.

Right?

There's so the the the array of needs and and potential solutions are vast and.

I think that we, you know in our individual roles, you know in the in the real estate industry can sort of reflect on what we, what we do and what we can offer.
But pivoting now to some of the questions that we have from our audience, I do want to remind our audience. Members, at least verbally that if you have any questions you'd like to ask our panelists, please go ahead and share them in the chat. We can address some of these last five minutes here. In the interim, we'll go ahead and address the ones that have already been posed more explicitly. So we have a question here from Kate. She would like to know. So one of the what she's saying is one of the most impactful tools in reducing carbon emissions and minimizing climate impacts on vulnerable communities. It's abundant, dense Housing and Urban cores. So in your work, how are you balancing these preservation displacement protections with housing production in abundance?

And Joe, I think you might be well positioned to address this question. Yeah, both things are is that that's what the Mayor's Office of Housing does. You know we we deal with creation, acquisition and preservation of affordable housing. So I think. All of those things are on the table. There is a a very healthy pipeline here for development of new construction, large multifamily, affordable housing across the city. It's really exciting and dating back three or four years at this point, the city of Boston has held developers of those buildings to very high standards around sustainability and carbon footprint. In our design guidelines so we you know at this point we don't really see proposals for large multifamily affordable housing that is using fossil fuels in their systems. We see very high performing often passive house designed buildings and that's super exciting and I totally agree with the underlying premise that density and.
You know, transit oriented development is key. I would encourage anyone to take a look at Mayor Wu's recent proposal for an overhauled zoning system in Boston, which puts climate and resiliency at the center and really aims to accomplish exactly what the commenters is mentioning, that balance and that synergy. Thanks, Joe. I'm going to move on to the next question here because we're a little bit pressed for time. So I have a question from Ambika. They're asking to Jeff's point of having a shared set of information and data, How do we account for outdated climate data? How do we demonstrate climate risk data, or rather democratize climate risk data? And are there strategies for using climate data more holistically? Got a few questions. Yeah. So I'm gonna try to remember maybe a couple of them. You know, I think there we are in the process, right? And we I'm saying the collective week of really trying to understand what's going on because the historical precedent data is out the window, right. It really doesn't matter at this point. And what that means is to be technical about this, the projection data, calculating projections gets more difficult because the sort of the baseline historical data is not as does not have as much relevance today as it may have had in the past because the trend lines have changed, right. So what we know is things are going up, but through data we see on what's coming from the ice eats and what's happening there, what's happening to glaciers, what's happening, all those things we we do have an understanding.
of where we’re going and at least for the past three years on the heat side. And I always take a moment to remind that urban heat, extreme heat, particularly in urban environments, is the number one killer in all disasters. Not hurricanes, not wildfires. It's actually extreme heat, extreme heat as an example. We've reached a turning point where we’re not going backwards, right? So we know we have to deal with extreme heat moving forward, and we know that there will be hotter days. We know that there will be longer time periods. And there's some discussion right now about, you know, what we've experienced this summer being attributable to El Nino and El Nino compounding climate change. But all that's to say there is a lot of current work going on in really thinking through the projections and moving forward and and democratizing that data across communities. There's a lot of foundations, local foundations and national foundations invested in that. ULI is partnered with one organization in the past that's looking at flood data and democratizing that. So I that's to say I think we're in a much different place than where we were before. But I will say that with a caveat and I am not the expert on this. One of the things I think has been difficult over time is how that's translated to all of our community members so that people can actually understand and and it's partially because of scientists speak to themselves and aren't in most cases the best communicators. And so there's a division between. Hard scientific data and what a normal person like me can understand. And so I think that's part of what we
have to get in front of and but it is changing.

I mean what we, what we're seeing, what we saw this year or what we've seen thus far this year, we're just in September is unprecedented. And I think that in and of itself is a cause to think about.

We absolutely have to think about things differently.

This isn't something that's going to happen in 10 years. It's now.

And in many people's worst case scenarios that actually is happening now.

And so action needs to be taken to to move forward much more quickly than we have in the past.

These are all really fantastic points and it looks like we are at time.

She was, I've just been wowed by, you know, all the insights that you've shared and I just want to direct our attendees over to the receiving community report which has a few which has like a summary of this issue along with the the strategies that I've mentioned in our in our lead in here.

So thank you all again and have a wonderful rest of your days.

Thank you all for attending the webinar panelists. Thank you so much for participating in this webinar. I've learned so much on top of, on top of you know our previous, our our shorter discussion before we even got on the call.

So I've just been, I've just been wowed by, you know, all the insights that you've shared and I just want to direct our attendees over to. To some of the reports we published on the subject. If you are interested, if you have a minute, please check out the receiving community report which has a few which has like a summary of this issue along with lead in here.

So thank you all again and have a wonderful rest of your days.

All right, that.

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