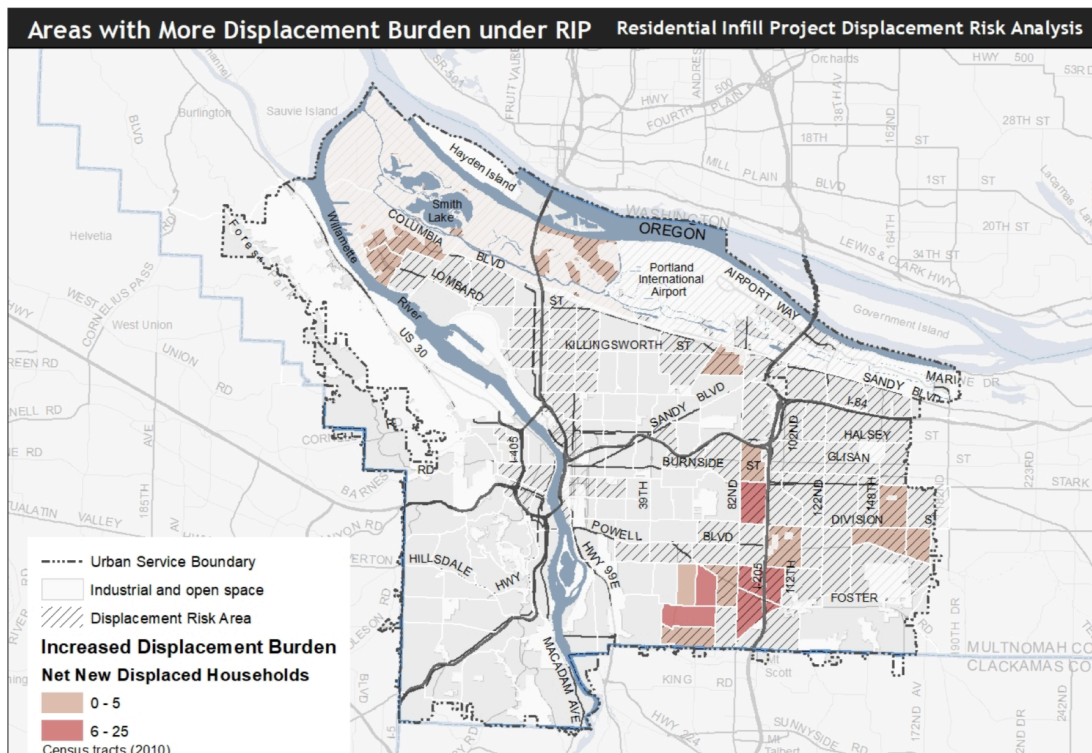


The city's **RIP displacement study**¹ claims RIP will reduce displacement of lower-income, vulnerable, and communities of color. RIP is city-wide **rezoning to eliminate single-family house neighborhoods and encourage redevelopment with quadplex apartments**.

39,950 Portland households, including 14,000 low-income, live in rented single-family houses. The study says *"In RIP zones, low-income renters in single-family structures are the households most vulnerable to displacement."*²

The **study addresses "indirect displacement" of these families when the houses they rent are redeveloped.** The city's economic analysis found that redevelopment will be small, expensive apartments, average 730 sq ft at \$1,823/month. Since these are too small and too expensive for low-income families, they will be displaced.

The study admits *"some areas are expected to see significant increases in redevelopment in the proposal scenario"*. It predicts **more displacement** in St. Johns, East Columbia, Cully, Centennial, Montavilla, Brentwood-Darlington, and Lents - **lower-income areas** with more



vulnerable populations.³

¹ Appendix H "Displacement Risk and Mitigation"

² Study, p. 17.

³ Study, p. 20 map 11.

Conversely, the study predicts RIP may **reduce displacement in higher-income neighborhoods**, as it *“shifts redevelopment activity away from higher-value neighborhoods and towards areas of Portland with more moderate land values”*.⁴

Overall, the study concludes that under RIP, 679 low-income renters will be displaced, compared to 936 under current city zoning. That implies about 285 low-income households displaced by RIP, vs about 393 displaced otherwise.⁵

The city says this makes RIP a good thing. **Focusing displacement on Portland’s lowest-income, most vulnerable communities might reduce displacement in higher-income neighborhoods** and achieve a modest city-wide reduction.

We think **RIP is a terrible thing, another chapter in Portland’s history of urban redevelopment that has already forced out tens of thousands of lower-income, vulnerable, and communities of color** from North Portland, inner Northeast Portland, and elsewhere. Many were displaced to neighborhoods where the city predicts a new wave of RIP displacement.

The study **minimizes and understates RIP’s displacement effect**. Go back three paragraphs: the study says that with or without RIP, only 285 to 393 low-income households will be displaced in the next 15 years. Who thinks that is even close to true?

That gross understatement is because the study only looks at “indirect displacement” and ignores “induced displacement”. As the study explains, *“induced displacement occurs when market conditions respond to new development and changes in neighborhood character and impact existing housing units in terms of increasing rents or prices—for example, expected increases in property values from the introduction of transit or other new amenities”* but *“only . . . indirect displacement — is evaluated in this displacement risk analysis.”*⁶

How can the city call RIP a displacement benefit to Portland’s vulnerable population, without considering how new development increases rents and prices for existing housing units?

The city knows that market-driven redevelopment displaces lower-income residents. The city’s 2013 Gentrification and Displacement Study by PSU professor Lisa Bates says: ***“The changes to neighborhood housing markets that lead to the displacement of lower-income residents are not and should not be unpredictable*** (particularly not when increased market activity by higher-income households and consumers is an express goal of the development/redevelopment). *Public sector actors must anticipate the speed and intensity with which the private market can turn—private market actors can act quickly to acquire and develop, to buy and sell properties, and to respond to new demand.”*⁷

⁴ Study, p. 12.

⁵ Using average 2.38 persons per household. 2019 State of Housing report.

⁶ Study, p. 4, fig. 4.

⁷ 2013 Gentrification and Displacement Study,

Just last year, a [Curbed](#) article looked at Portland’s supply-side housing policies, described by the Bureau of Planning and Sustainability’s director: “Portland is trying to attack affordability on all fronts, including redoing zoning codes and rules to permit more multifamily units, make room for bigger infill projects, including residential infill, and, ultimately, increasing supply.” In response, Professor Bates explained that new development raises prices and displacement. “According to Bates, the Albina neighborhood is seeing change accelerate, as more and more buildings come on line and new residents move in. **In the short term, ‘new housing supply in a neighborhood increases prices and displacement,’ she says.**”⁸

Zoning to higher density, called “upzoning”, drives up rents even for existing housing. As explained in a 2017 article at [City Limits](#): “Activists, and many urban planning experts, too, contend that both the attention brought by a rezoning and the actual development that follows can transform a neighborhood into a destination, **increasing demand for housing in that neighborhood and prompting landlords to raise rents.** As Lisa Bates, a professor of urban studies at Portland State University and a leading displacement scholar, puts it, “It’s like: ‘announcement, this is a place, everyone! Take your money, come over here.’”⁹

None of this is a surprise to the city. From a 2015 article in [the Guardian](#), “none of this is new. Lisa Bates, who teaches urban studies at Portland State University, points out that gentrification in Portland has been going on for decades. “In some dimensions, the scale of the problem has not changed much.” **“When cities direct reinvestment to an area, it sends a signal: ‘OK, time to invest.’ A lot of African Americans never owned property there. The easiest group to push out is a renter.**”¹⁰

Studies of upzoning in other cities confirms what we’ve seen in Portland. An MIT study, described at [CityLab](#), assessed the effect of upzoning in Chicago and found “instead of falling prices, as the conventional wisdom predicts, the study finds the opposite. **Housing prices rose on the parcels and in projects that were upzoned**, notably those where building sizes increased.” As the CityLab article explains: “easing [zoning] codes would do little to address housing affordability and might actually serve to increase housing prices in the neighborhoods in question, for the simple reason that **developers would use the land not for affordable units but for luxury construction**” and “the markets—and neighborhoods—for luxury and affordable housing are very different, and **it is unlikely that any increases in high-end supply would trickle down to less advantaged groups.**”¹¹

⁸ Curbed <https://www.curbed.com/2018/6/26/17506094/portland-neighborhood-displacement-gentrification-albina> “**In Portland, a neighborhood designs its own solution to displacement**”.

⁹ City Limits <https://citylimits.org/2017/01/10/will-rezoning-cause-or-resist-displacement-data-paints-an-incomplete-picture/> “**Will Rezoning Cause or Resist Displacement? Data Paints an Incomplete Picture.**”

¹⁰ The Guardian <https://www.theguardian.com/society/2015/nov/23/portland-housing-rent-increase-gentrification-hipster-culture> “**Is hip Portland over? How the rent crisis is displacing the city’s creative soul.**”

¹¹ CityLab <https://www.citylab.com/life/2019/01/zoning-reform-house-costs-urban-development-gentrification/581677/> “**Does Upzoning Boost the Housing Supply and Lower Prices? Maybe Not.**”

One member of the city's Planning and Sustainability Commission understands this intimately. On February 12, **Commissioner Andre Baugh** spoke at the RIP hearing:

"My issue is we're displacing minorities and they can't come back in, because there is no – even though you are creating housing through RIP, that housing is not affordable to them because of their income levels. You're talking about Hispanics, African-Americans, they're not at 80% [of median family income], the city just did a report in 2017 about African-Americans having the lowest income levels. So when you displace them, how do they come back – they can't come back."

"You're asking me, as an African-American, to approve displacing African-Americans who can't come back."

"I get redlining. Redlining was, I couldn't live in this section of town and I could live across the tracks. Now I can't even live in Portland anymore. I just can't approve that. I just can't, in all conscience, say that people in the city of color are not going to be able to live in certain parts of the city and are going to be displaced and they can't even come back to the city. There's just not a market for them."¹²

RIP will displace lower-income Portland families, vulnerable persons, and communities of color. It will continue the damage of Portland's past urban redevelopment and force out tens of thousands of Portlanders. The worst displacement will be suffered by Portland's most vulnerable communities, who won't be able to remain in the city. The real beneficiaries of RIP are developers.

Portland is supposed to be "The City That Works". The question with RIP is: **works for who?**

¹² February 12, 2019 Planning and Sustainability Commission hearing, Andre Baugh statement, video at <https://youtu.be/sFwSk6wQFoU>