

Study reveals 'targeted' housing policy key to preventing transit-induced gentrification

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Researchers at the University of Maryland's National Center for Smart Growth have leveraged an innovative land use model to predict how different policies surrounding Transit Oriented Development, or TOD, will affect housing, gentrification and opportunity in the Washington, D.C. region.

The study, "Transit-Induced Gentrification: Who Will Stay, and Who Will Go?", suggests that affordable housing requirements, specifically those targeting new construction surrounding TODs, will result in less gentrification and a more diverse mix of incomes within the community. The paper is featured online in Housing Policy Debate and will appear in a forthcoming issue of the journal's print edition.

Executed and authored by Associate Professor Casey Dawkins and Assistant Professor Rolf Moeckel, the study examines 10 different housing policy scenarios and their potential impact on low-income housing near transit centers in the Washington, D.C. region. To simulate the scenarios and measure their impact on the housing market, the researchers integrated the Maryland Statewide Transportation Model (MSTM) with the Simple Integrated Land Use Orchestrator (SILO), an open-source micro-simulation model that can account for "real world" constraints—like travel time and housing costs—particularly those faced by low-income households. The National Socio-Environmental Synthesis Center (SESYNC) provided support for further development of SILO and its integration with the transportation model. Traditionally, SILO has been used for land use and transportation scenarios; this is the first time

the model has been applied to examine housing policies.

"A novelty of SILO is that it explicitly accounts for constraints in housing location choice," said Moeckel. "The model ensures that no one moves into a home that is significantly above the household's budget, and that no households choose locations that are too far away from their workplaces. This makes SILO much more realistic, particularly when housing policies are to be analyzed."

The results show that supply-side policies, such as requiring a percentage of new construction to be low-income housing, have more effect on mitigating transit-induced gentrification than programs like rental vouchers. The results also show that affordable housing policies targeted towards transit were significantly more effective than a region-wide approach. "You can require new housing near transit to be affordable without having a major impact on [housing](#) affordability in the region," said Dawkins.

The paper offers important clues for lawmakers looking to increase access to jobs and opportunity for low-income households; the study could be especially significant for the Washington, D.C. region as they prepare for the expansion of the Silver Line and the construction of the region's Purple Line.

More information: Casey Dawkins et al. Transit-Induced Gentrification: Who Will Stay, and Who Will Go?, *Housing Policy Debate* (2016). [DOI: 10.1080/10511482.2016.1138986](https://doi.org/10.1080/10511482.2016.1138986)

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