

ACES 2018 Town Hall Description

Title: *Green for What?*

Description:

In addition to being a resilient, effective, and sustainable solution to urban challenges, green infrastructure (GI) is frequently presented as an opportunity to simultaneously improve environmental quality, public health, social cohesion, and overall quality of life. By the very nature of these economic, social, and community benefits, GI is often viewed as a more equitable solution than grey infrastructure alone, because it delivers an expanded set of benefits to a broader network of beneficiaries. Thus, it can be a valuable tool in addressing inequity and delivering services to underserved communities. However, as these services and benefits are delivered, property values tend to increase. Just as disinvestment is replaced with investment in communities most in need of it, the resulting increases in cost of living push residents out, pulling apart the fabric and traditions of cherished neighborhood cultures and destroying valuable social capital.

This town hall discussion seeks to engage participants in a conversation about how to address displacement as a potential negative outcome of green infrastructure implementation. As we continue to push our cities to adopt more resilient, cost-effective, and nature-based approaches to planning and development, we must consider the full range of potential impacts in order to arrive at a holistic understanding of project design, implementation, and maintenance as well as the supporting policies and frameworks. All attendees are encouraged and expected to engage and contribute ideas and insights. The conversation will be led by Jessie Martin, Program Director for Community Engagement at Earth Economics and Ronda Chapman, Executive Director of Groundwork DC and RLC Consulting. The goal for this session is to hear a broad set of ideas and insights that fuel a conversation about approaches to preventing green infrastructure adoption from exacerbating one of the issues it is meant to address.

Problem Statement or Question:

How can we mitigate the negative impacts of green infrastructure implementation, namely displacement, while still affording all communities the broad range of benefits that GI assets deliver?

Conference Themes:

The town hall conversation will inevitably touch on a number of the conference's stated themes - like Government Decision-Making, Human Health Dimensions, and Valuation of Ecosystem Services – but, more importantly, it will serve as an active Stakeholder Engagement session. As practitioners of applied economic research that frequently supports the implementation of green infrastructure projects, Earth Economics is actively seeking to engage the broadest range of stakeholders possible in this examination of equity in GI implementation, and we see this town hall as an opportunity for other practitioners to do the same.

Intended Audience:

This session will be highly interactive and seeks to attract a broad range of stakeholders to the conversation. Indeed, the conversation cannot succeed without this. Thus, we aim to attract practitioners, government and agency staff, academics, NGOs, community organizations, and more to the conversation, with a primary focus on urban environments.

Session Agenda Outlining Presentation Format:

The session organizer, Jessie Martin, will moderate this session.

Session Organizer:

Jessie Martin

Program Director

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Qualifications of Organizer:

Earth Economics informs investment decisions around green infrastructure adoption by valuing an expanded set of co-benefits that engage a greater network of beneficiaries and stakeholders. The question of displacement as an outcome of GI adoption is one we face repeatedly in our work in communities across the globe, with partners like the Kresge Foundation, The Summit Foundation, and 100 Resilient Cities. Jessie Martin has over a decade of experience in community and stakeholder engagement on issues ranging from environmental contamination to green infrastructure to public health. In her role at Earth Economics, she directs the organizations' community engagement and awareness-building practice with an aim to include more voices in the decision-making process, and she works on GI process and valuation projects with a diverse set of partners across the U.S.