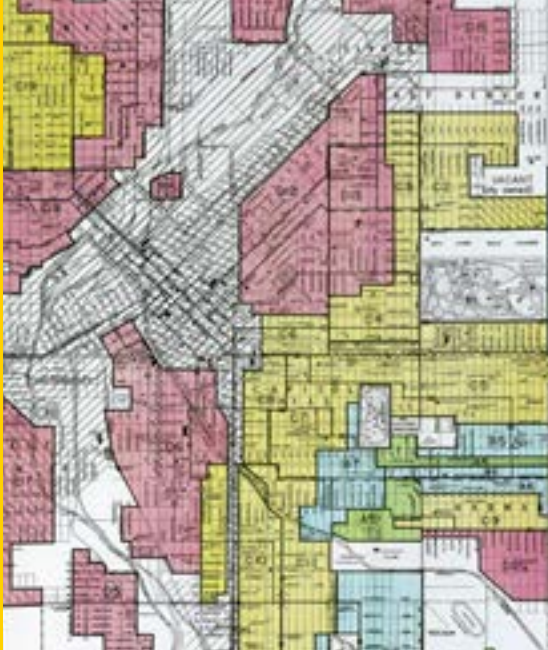




• GES COALITION ORGANIZING FOR HEALTH AND HOUSING JUSTICE •



**GLOBEVILLE ELYRIA-SWANSEA:  
THE PEOPLES' SURVEY**

# A Story of Displacement



## Message from the Community

We are vulnerable to the rapidly increasing threat of involuntary displacement from our homes, and this housing crisis has deep consequences for the well-being of our families. While Denver's economy thrives, our families and our neighbors carry much of the burden of Denver's upcoming economic redevelopment. We urge you to consider the disproportionate hardship that our families are facing, and we compel you to bear witness to the damages that Denver's housing crisis are inflicting on the families of Globeville, Elyria-Swansea (GES). Safe and accessible housing is considered a primary social determinant of health, and families involuntarily displaced from their homes face major disruption to mental and physical health, relationships, broken social networks, disrupted family life and damage to well-being. While we ask you to hear from those directly affected by this public health crisis, please recognize that involuntary displacement is a form of structural violence that threatens the health of our families and neighbors, and jeopardizes the stability of the greater metropolitan region as a whole.

While Denver's housing crisis is most exaggerated in GES, the crisis comes as an afterthought of billions of dollars of public and private investment. The high concentration of marijuana grows and dispensaries in our neighborhood, the redevelopment of I-70, National Western Center, Brighton Boulevard, and four new RTD rail lines are having the most detrimental effects on families that have long-resided in these historically marginalized communities; most vulnerable are those that pay more than 50% of their income to housing. In Globeville and Elyria-Swansea, the majority of our families are "rent or mortgage stressed," and have become extremely vulnerable to involuntary displacement. These dangerous conditions continue to push working families and long term neighbors out of their homes with no affordable place to go while the people most affected by this crisis usually receive little to no relief from public or private spending.

To better understand how the housing crisis has impacted our neighborhoods, we went directly to our neighbors, knocked on their doors, and listened. What you will find in this report comes from talking to and surveying 500 people that live here. While the dangerous threat of gentrification-driven displacement has only skyrocketed since our survey began, a group of organized residents, neighborhood groups, and community organizations have been working as a coalition, and looking for community-based solutions to this threat. We stand united with our families and friends in Montebello, Westwood, Five Points, North Park Hill, Sun Valley, Cole, the North Side, Westminster, Commerce City, Aurora and everywhere where communities are being broken apart by market-driven gentrification and displacement.

We do not want to sensationalize this narrative nor rush our truth telling, but we are losing neighbors and family members to displacement, and we are losing any hope for keeping families in their homes. Preventing and stopping families being displaced from their homes means stability and well-being for our communities, and for the city as a whole. Preventing displacement means our families and neighbors can stay in their homes. We ask for your support to protect families that are fighting to stay in their homes.

*To schedule a community presentation of this report or to learn more about the GES Coalition, please contact: [info@gescoalition.com](mailto:info@gescoalition.com)*



## Vision

The vibrant, working class communities of Globeville, Elyria and Swansea have welcomed immigrants and others to their community since the 1800s. While **the entire state has benefitted from the regional transportation and industrial infrastructure located in these neighborhoods, it has been at the expense of the health and well-being of the residents of these communities.** Public investment and governmental decisions have caused local residents harm and failed our neighborhoods for more than a century.

The Globeville, Elyria-Swansea Coalition Organizing for Health and Housing Justice is a **group of resident leaders and community organizations working to align community health and the well-being of our neighbors** through advocacy campaigns to **prevent displacement of our neighbors**, activate resident-driven leadership, protect historically marginalized neighborhoods, **preserve affordability in housing**, and promote a culture that welcomes neighbors who value our longstanding culture, interconnectedness, and commitment to equity.

The vision of the coalition is based on neighborhood leaders and community organization's individual and shared commitment to economic, racial and environmental justice. By leveraging our collective networks and resources through collective and cooperative governance, coalition activities are driven by resident membership and community-based grassroots organizing. **Our vision is neighbor-to-neighbor and community-driven. We are organizing because the health of our families cannot be separated from the well-being of our neighbors.**

**Coalition membership is cooperatively organized and open to all community members in and around the Globeville, Elyria-Swansea neighborhoods who support the vision of the coalition.** Coalition partners support the work of coalition members. Coalition partner organizations currently include Project Voyce, FRESC, Habitat for Humanity, Groundwork Denver, Clinica Tepeyac, Focus Points Family Resource Center, The GrowHaus, and Colorado Community Land Trust.



## Executive Summary & Key Findings

In the Spring and Summer of 2016, a coalition of Globeville, Elyria and Swansea (GES) residents, youth leaders, community organizers, service providers, and nonprofit organizations united to address and understand the displacement and gentrification occurring in their community. The following findings are the result of this effort. Surveys were collected between May and August of 2016, through door to door surveying in each of the three neighborhoods. In total 500 surveys were collected.

### ► **Key Finding: Residents Want To Stay in Globeville Elyria Swansea.**

GES neighbor's social networks are critical to the survival and wellbeing of our community. Given the option GES residents want to stay in their community (80%), but absent intentional policy and advocacy this will be an unrealized dream. Projects like the I-70 expansion, National Western Center, and RTD's A Line, are having a substantial impact on the market, as is private speculative real estate transactions.

### ► **Key Finding: GES Renters Are Extremely Vulnerable To Displacement.**

Survey responses show that 51% of renters have no lease at all, and 61% earn less than \$25,000 a year. GES renters are families with 3 or more adults (50%), and 2 or more children (64%). Given the shortfall of affordable housing units in Denver, the large family sizes, and incomes below the 30% AMI level, few affordable units currently under construction meet the needs of residents. The lack of leases and renters rights means these families are vulnerable to evictions, forced relocation, and homelessness.

### ► **Key Finding: GES Homeowners are Long Term Residents With Low Incomes.**

Homeowners report that they have lived in their residence 7-10 years (74%), with 51% being unemployed or retired. 34% are over the age of 55, and have low educational attainment rates (75% high school diploma or less). 58% of owners have been approached to sell their homes. With Denver's largest property value increases occurring in GES, aggressive private real estate pressure, and large scale construction disrupting the way of life; GES homeowners are facing extreme pressure to sell and move.

### ► **Key Finding: GES Residents Have Low Educational Attainment Rates, High Unemployment, and Extremely Low Incomes.**

Responses indicate that 80% of residents have a high school diploma or less. With 52% earning less than \$25,000, and 76% earning less than \$35,000 a year, many residents are faced with choosing between rent, food and health care. GES residents face an unemployment rate ten times greater than that of the city of Denver (37% Unemployed).

### ► **Key Finding: GES Residents identify as Latino/a or Hispanic and Deeply Connected Communities of Multi-Generational Families.**

66% of Survey responses were collected in Spanish, with 87% of respondents self-identifying as "Hispanic" or "Latino". 54% of respondents have two or more children, and 48% have three or more adults residing in the home. Despite the high poverty, residents have called GES home for multiple generations and decades, with strong relationships between neighbors and original landlords and tenants (73% great relationships).

## The Crisis

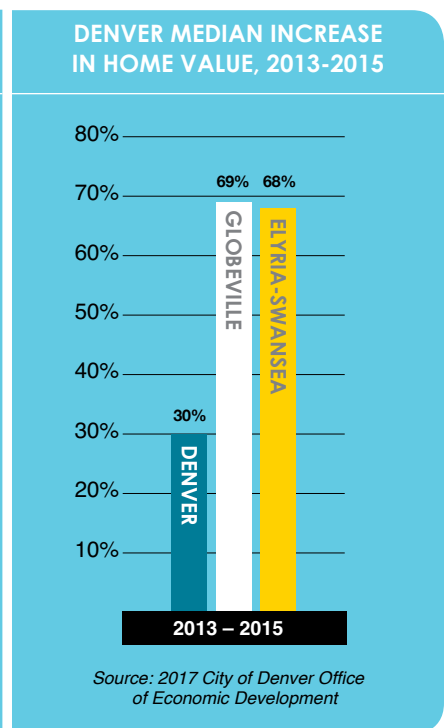
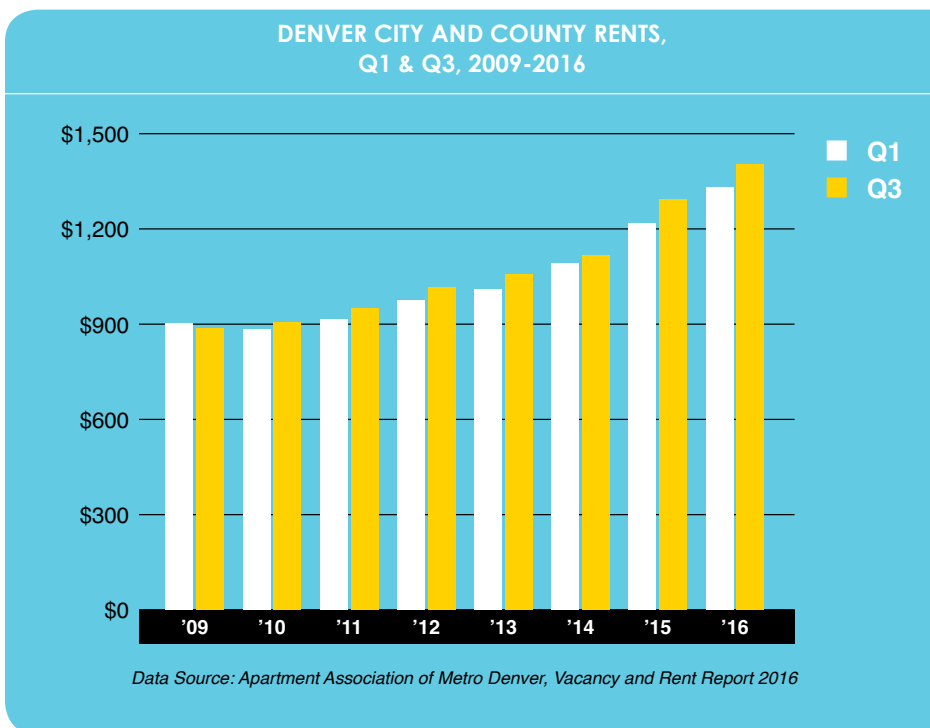
The compelling story of the people of Globeville, Elyria and Swansea (GES) like many of our region's communities of color, is under threat of being erased. The City and County of Denver, Regional Transportation District (RTD), Colorado Department of Transportation (CDOT), and the National Western Stock Show (NWSS) are investing billions of dollars to "revitalize" our historic neighborhoods. Coupled with the private market's entourage of developers, predatory property investment firms, and construction contractors, we are losing our community to an outside vision, that roots out the current people from the place they have embraced. The "public" investments hailed as "improving the community" are creating a crisis of displacement.

These public and private investments offer opportunity, yet these opportunities, and the benefits created by them, come with a significant cost. A cost borne by the neighbors, families and children of GES. As Denver now ranks toward the top of the fastest increasing and most expensive rental markets (9% year-over-year cost growth) with an average rent of \$1,404, our neighbors are being forced out of the region and their homes. These investments are driving the private market's speculation of the neighborhoods land value, increasing property assessment by more than 65%, making the homes passed on for generations unaffordable. Neighborhood children are attending schools where enrollments are declining, and they constantly witness more and more friends and their families departing their community. The "opportunity" created does not come even close to the grave loss of families, destruction of social networks, and undoing of the naturally interwoven durability that the community currently thrives from.

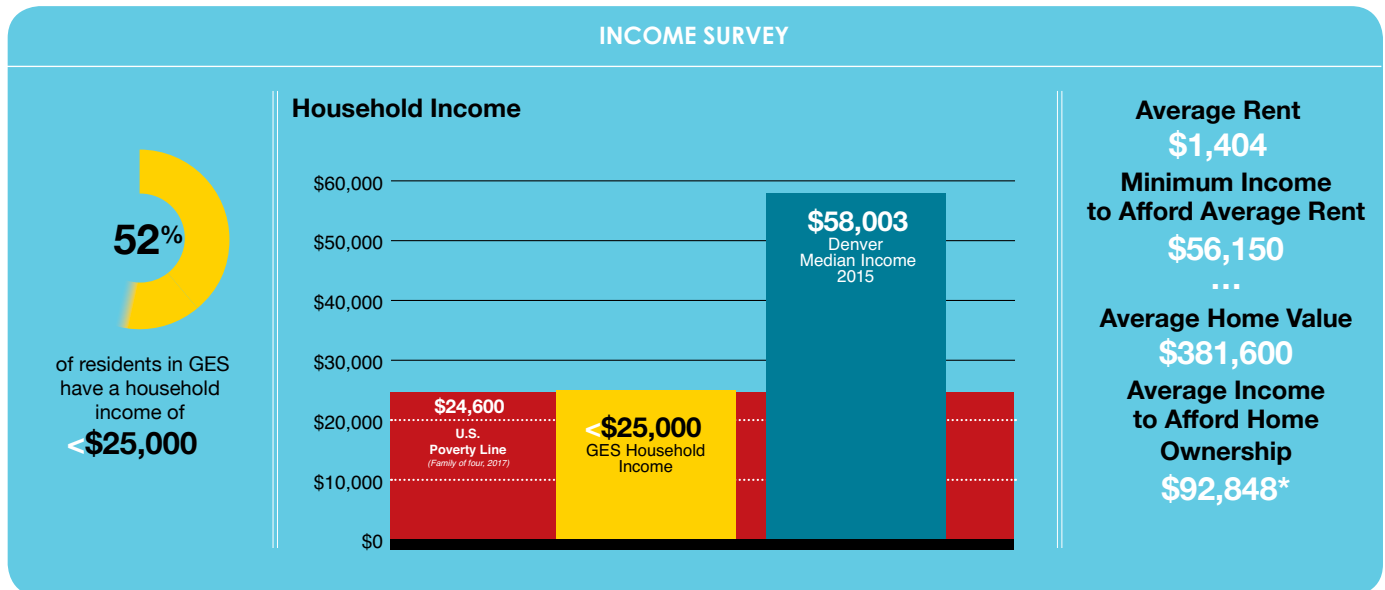
The story of the GES neighborhoods is a common story in many U.S. cities where low-income people have to bear the burden of industrial and transportation damage, yet never benefit from its profits. Intentionally stunted by the red lines of the past and



*The "Corridor of Opportunity" is not serving our community, it is displacing it.*



intended deprivation of capital, the GES neighborhoods are now the markets last resort to maintain the boom or bust cycle of development. Formerly considered “blighted”, or too racially and ethnically “diverse” for investment; the communities are in the midst of a historic first investment. Evidence of the systemic racist past, and present, lay bare for anyone to see. A lack of historic public investment is evinced by the poor infrastructure



“GES have the highest value increase in Denver – creating a new tax burden for low-income home owners.”

and industrial uses surrounding the homes. Pothole covered streets, framed by absent sidewalks connecting to dangerous shadowed underpasses, with broken street lights are the playgrounds of children. Our children, are left to crawl between or under stalled trains, as they walk to and from school. The past private investment, focused on dense industrial, manufacturing, and commercial uses, served by highways carving the neighborhoods—drains the natural capital of the area and leaves poor air quality, and severe health impacts to the people. There is no doubt, that the neighbors want and need investment in the GES communities. These investments, however, need to take the people into consideration, create sincere opportunities for our participation in their implementation, and make it possible for current families to remain in their homes and neighborhoods; not only for the health and stability of families, but for long deserved justice to the neighborhood families whose health has endured consequences.

Amidst this crisis, neighbors are put in an impossible conundrum of wanting improvements in their community, but not at the cost of having to leave their community. There is no choice but to try to contribute to the planning and watch as the infrastructure and investment slowly alienate and price out the community, as promises for improvement will only be kept for mostly people not yet here. The long heralded “promises made and not kept” in GES now have a new dimension in the form of displacement. An out of control housing market, driven by these investments, and a lack of rights, is causing displacement of the GES people. Our elected officials, who have continually chosen to ignore warnings from the community, now look to us for “solutions”. If they are sincere in their concern and care, our displacement, driven by the impacts of their projects, would be more than an afterthought--and preventing displacement would

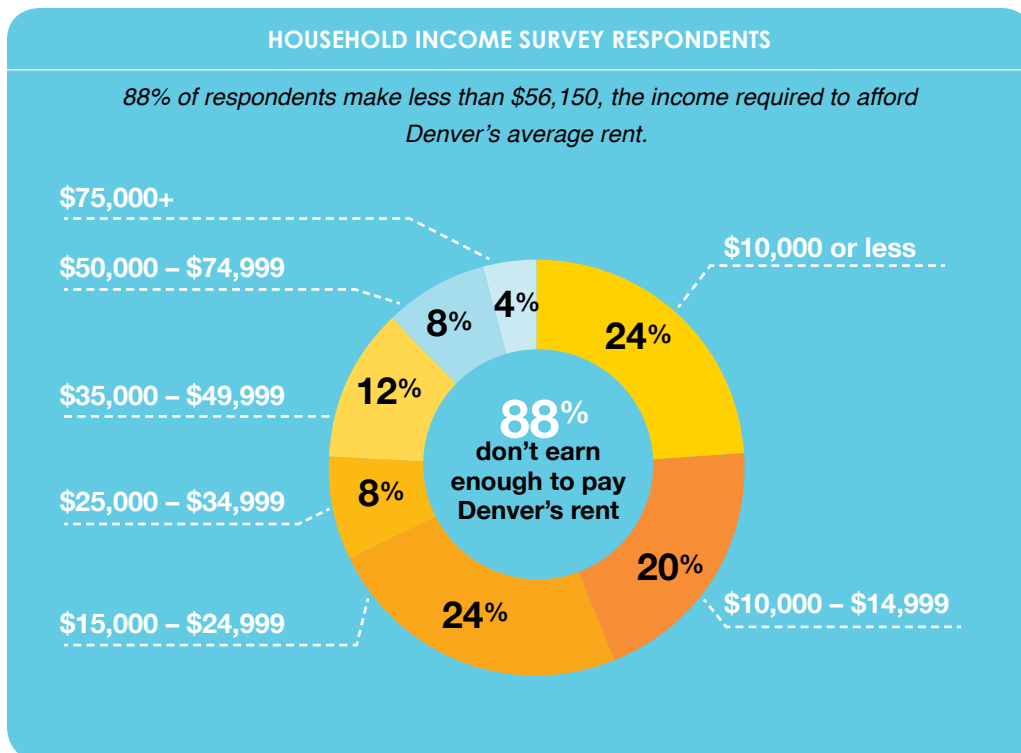
\*Colorado Department of Local Affairs. *Affordable housing: A guide for local officials*. And *Blueprint Denver Growth Scenarios presentation to Denver Public Schools June 19, 2017*. And *Metro Denver Economic Development Corporation. Monthly Economic Indicators – April 2017*

be their biggest priority. To reverse this pattern of abuse that is at the root of poverty, incarceration and failing health--the change in current systems of development and economic gain must be completely re-strategized and invested in from the grass-roots. Mayor Hancock stated in his State of the City in 2016: "The test of our progress is not whether we add more to the abundance of those who have much, it is whether we provide enough for those who have little". This is not a statement to be made lightly. We ask that this become real practice, not just a slogan, that includes stopping displacement with rooted solutions and resources comparable to those contributing to the displacement. Only with real, honest examination of current practices that have contributed to this crisis, will we be able to truly support the communities of GES, and keep the community story conscious of its past, and its people.

## Housing Profile

The survey revealed several positive as well as concerning insights into GES, and the housing issues residents face. GES is a unique community in the metro region given the level of poverty, density of people of color, high property ownership rates, and historically affordable rents. Although, like many of the region's low-income communities of color, these residents face growing pressures of displacement due to large-scale investment by public and private actors. Given the dearth of owners and the lack of information about the limited renters' rights and protections that currently exist, this recent influence of capital investment in GES makes current-resident retention unlikely.

Elyria and Swansea are more than neighborhoods in Denver. They represent one of the few remaining communities rich in social fabric that give Denver a history and unique character. Walking these streets and talking to the residents, one understands that this



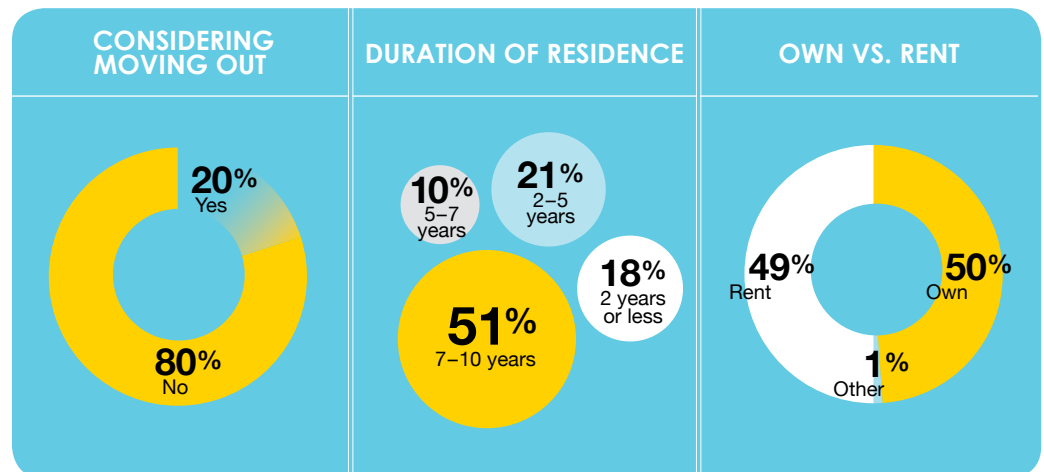
community is one of unbelievable relationships that have evolved over decades between families and friends who have lived in these neighborhoods as long. As Denver continues to grow, adding over 1,000 residents each month<sup>1</sup>, it will be neighbors and neighborhoods like GES that will anchor the city in its historic roots. This unprecedented population growth in Denver comes with consequences for residents like those in GES. As Denver faces a growing 80,000 unit affordable housing shortfall, GES renters are being priced out of their own community, experiencing 30% rent increases with no notice on month-to-month leases. Owners seeing skyrocketing property taxes are at risk to sell as the cost of living in an inherited home becomes either uninhabitable or unaffordable to maintain. With an absence of renters' rights, anti-displacement strategies, or a commitment to keep these residents in their homes, GES, like many Historic Denver neighborhoods before it, are at great risk.

### Homeowners

GES property owners are older in age, low-income, and long term residents. They face overwhelming market pressure to sell, and name construction projects and new marijuana business operations as cause for their leaving. Owners, in many ways, are the social fabric of this community and display a resilience to the impacts of gentrification; they also provide an opportunity, if supported in staying, for Denver to mitigate its housing crisis. Homeownership rates in GES are consistent with the Denver's average, which was 50% in 2010<sup>2</sup>, though this is remarkably high given ethnicity, income, and education rates in the neighborhood. To afford a mortgage in Denver, it is estimated that an individual would need to earn at least \$93,000 a year.<sup>3</sup>

A notable data point in the survey is the 83% of property owners who identify as Hispanic. This is almost double the national average of home ownership rates for Hispanics, and 9% higher than nationwide ownership rates for non-Hispanic whites (74%)<sup>4</sup>. Given the recent housing crisis, GES is a remarkable outlier of homeownership for

*Walking these streets and talking to the residents, one understands that this community is one of unbelievable relationships that have evolved over decades between families and friends who have lived in these neighborhoods as long.*



<sup>1</sup> Murray, J. (March 28, 2017). Denver's growth spurt slows down — a little — as the city's population nears 700,000. *The Denver Post*.

<sup>2</sup> Housing Denver: A Five Year Plan, Denver Office of Economic Development, 2015,

<sup>3</sup> Blueprint Denver Growth Scenarios presentation to Denver Public Schools June 19, 2017

<sup>4</sup> Social Benefits of Homeownership and Stable Housing, National Association of Realtors, 2010



Latino families, with lengths of tenure exceeding 10 years (70%). This is especially notable considering the disproportionate impact the housing crisis had on Latino and African-American families<sup>5</sup>. The income levels of owners varies only slightly when compared with the total sample as 42% of owners earn \$25,000 or less. These income levels, coupled with low education attainment rates (51% have no high school diploma or G.E.D), make it unlikely that these owners could afford homes elsewhere in Denver, especially considering that even Denver's high-income earners are currently being priced out of home ownership<sup>6</sup>.




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GES owners, if pressured to move, will be at risk of displacement and homelessness, will likely see a negative impact on their credit and financial health<sup>7</sup>, and will face long-lasting negative consequences to their health and well-being.<sup>8</sup> Furthermore, owners in the neighborhood tend to be older (56% over 46 years old) with high unemployment rates (51% unemployed) and significant levels of retirement (18%). It is estimated that one-third of those between 54-60 spend more than 30% of their income on housing, while the majority of those 85 and older spend more than half of their income on housing<sup>9</sup>. Given

<sup>5</sup> Bocian, LI, Ernst, *Foreclosures by Race and Ethnicity: The Demographic Crisis*, 2010

<sup>6</sup> 2015 Housing Report, Denver Office of Economic Development, 2015,

<sup>7</sup> Ding, Hwang, and Divringi, *Gentrification and Residential Mobility in Philadelphia*, Federal Reserve Bank of Philadelphia, 2016

<sup>8</sup> Maqbool, N., Viveiros, J., and Ault, M. (April, 2015). The impacts of affordable housing on health: A research summary. *Center for Housing Policy*.

<sup>9</sup> Housing Policy Solutions to Support Aging in Place, AARP Public Policy Institute

**“ Look and see the humanity of the people who are living in these neighborhoods—the hardworking people who have lived here for generations—the people who have built these neighborhoods.”**



**Rey** has lived in north Denver most of his life, and his family has been in north Denver for five generations. He is a home-owner in Globeville, a community leader, a micro-entrepreneur, and father of two. Rey and his family bought their home in 2013, and they want to stay in the neighborhood to make roots for their children.

**“ My mom used to be a teacher’s aide at the school that my daughter goes to (Garden Place Academy.)”**

Rey knows more than a dozen families personally that have already been displaced, or are leaving now

because rising rents, or are under threat of foreclosure from property taxes that have skyrocketed more than 70% in the last few years.

**“ It’s a big change coming to a small, low-income neighborhood. *Gentrification is terrible for families in our neighborhood*, and displacement has a big impact on families and kids, because when they leave, they have no stability, and they have no real foundation to build a good education or life on.”**

Rey would like to see people in the neighborhood flourish, ultimately by getting the same opportunity his family received when they began to purchase their home for an affordable and reasonable price.

**“ The thing that bugs me is that the neighborhood is low-income so *we’re ignored by the city as far as maintenance and infrastructure spending*, and yet we’re still getting taxed and having to pay while being pushed out and not being able to afford to live in our own neighborhood”**

Given the chance, Rey would tell the Mayor and Denver’s City Council to look out for the people most affected by Denver’s housing crisis, and to consider this issue with their hearts instead of being guided by markets and the promise of dollar signs.

the property value increases (between 63% and 74% in GES) and the resulting tax increases to come, these elderly owners are at risk of being displaced.

GES homeowners have a deep history and social connection within the neighborhood, rooted in their tenure and overwhelming intention not to sell their homes (88%). Owners name a number of issues they face, including market pressures to sell (64% approached to sell) and severe impacts of gentrification and construction. Specific issues identified include: “I-70 development” (37%), “marijuana commercial impacts” (20%) and “construction in general” (17%). Of the few respondents considering selling their homes (8% of owners), only 11% wish to do so because of the “profit” of the property value increase. Rather, those who plan to sell are doing so because an offer has been made (67%), and “fear of future development” (28%). While owners’ current intentions are to stay, if forced to leave, these residents will face the most expensive and competitive non-coastal housing market in the nation<sup>10</sup>. The loss of these neighbors from our community will mean a decrease in social fabric and ties<sup>11</sup>, financial harm<sup>12</sup>, and long-lasting damage to individual and family health.

## Homeowners Summary

- GES **homeowners** are predominantly **unemployed** or **retired** (51%) with low educational attainment as **75% have a high school diploma or less**. Owners are likely to see a negative economic impact if forced to move.
- Homeowners in GES tend to be older, with 34% older than 55 years, and most have lived in the community for **10 years or more (70%)**. To help these owners age in place, home rehabilitation services will be crucial, as will education programs to prevent predatory real-estate practices and provide information about tax abatement opportunities.
- Owners in GES **have no plans to move (89%)** and **have no intention to sell** their homes (88%). Those who do wish to sell or move name the **I-70 expansion (37%)** and **Impact of marijuana (20%)** as their top listed reason for choosing to leave.

## Renters

The renter population in GES is made up of large household sizes, with “extremely low-income” (HUD) renters experiencing high unemployment rates. Renters face increasing rental costs with minimal lease guarantees, and an absence of renters’ rights or protections from predatory rental practices.

The renter community is quite young (68% are under the age of 45), and has low levels of educational attainment (75% high school diploma or less). Most renters responded as having a strong intent to stay in the neighborhoods (72%). For, renters who want to leave, the reasons given signify gentrification (I-70, National Western Stock Show, and construction, 44%) and impact displacement (rental increase, 38%). Half of the renter population earns less than \$15,000 a year 61% \$25,000 or less). According to the

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*Of those surveyed, over half (51%) of GES renters have no lease at all, while 61% have a 6-month lease or less.*

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<sup>10</sup> Covert, Metro Study, 2016

<sup>11</sup> Sampson, R., S. Raudenbush, F. Earls. 1997. Neighborhoods and Violent Crimes, Science 277: pp 918-24

<sup>12</sup> Ding, Hwang, and Divringi, Gentrification and Residential Mobility in Philadelphia, Federal Reserve Bank of Philadelphia, 2016

Apartment Association of Metro Denver, the average rent was \$1,404 per month<sup>13</sup>, indicating that more than 91% of the renters surveyed are unable to afford the average Denver rent at the end of 2016. Renters in GES have a long length of tenure for renter communities (56% 3 years or longer).

As rents continue to increase in Denver at one of the highest rates nationwide<sup>14</sup>, GES renters will be pushed out of their homes as a result. Furthermore, GES renters have large household sizes, as 50% have three or more adults and 64% have two or more children, making the average rental cost closer to \$1,500 or greater for these large household sizes<sup>15</sup> were they to move. The size and incomes of these families drastically limits housing options for GES residents outside of their neighborhoods. GES fills a niche in the Denver housing market, as it provides rental homes to large, low-income families who otherwise would be unable to afford the city's high rental costs.

Renters responded as having issues with maintenance (47%), rent increases and costs (41%), and not having a lease (14%). Maintenance issues speak to the age and quality of housing these renters are living in, indicating a need for rehabilitation. As to the rental increases, these are being driven by the wave of investment property purchases in recent years, and compounded by a lack of formal leases.

Given renters' demographics and the unaffordability of the city's housing stock, it is unlikely that Denver is retaining these residents<sup>16</sup>. A recent market analysis of GES by Shift Research Lab shows that nearly half of all property transactions in GES were not owner-occupied. Of those renters surveyed, over half (51%) of GES renters have no lease at all, while 61% have a 6-month lease or less, making them extremely vulnerable to no-fault, involuntary displacement. These conditions jeopardize the long-term stability, health and well-being of renters and their families across the neighborhoods.

## Renters Summary

- **Renter households are large**, with half of the units home to 3 or more adults, and 56% home to 2 or more children. New affordable units should prioritize large family's needs.
- Renters earn below the poverty line. **61% of respondents earn \$25,000 or less**. New affordable units should target household incomes of 30% AMI (\$24,300) and below.
- The renters of GES name a number of **priority issues**: maintenance issues (47%) and **rental increases** (41%). There is a lack of leases, **61% of renters have a 6 month lease or less**.
- Few policies exist to protect residents from displacement and homelessness.

<sup>13</sup> Throupe, Stroh, *Vacancy and Rent Survey*, Apartment Association of Metro Denver Third Quarter, 2016

<sup>14</sup> Gudell, *The Rent is Still Too Damn High – And getting Higher*, Zillow 2015

<sup>15</sup> Throupe, Stroh, *Vacancy and Rent Survey*, Apartment Association of Metro Denver Second Quarter, 2016

<sup>16</sup> Throupe, Stroh, *Vacancy and Rent Survey*, Apartment Association of Metro Denver Third Quarter, 2016; McMullin, T. (May 3, 2017). Denver home prices continue to rise. *Forbes*.





**Imelda** is a community leader, micro-entrepreneur, and mother of two. She and her family have lived in Elyria-Swansea for more than 20 years. Imelda has seen many of her neighbors pushed out of the neighborhood during the last few years, many who have been displaced from rapidly rising rents.

“ I was very surprised—my neighbor was evicted in a terrible way last year. Each month the owner was raising the rent by \$100 and finally asked for my neighbor and her family to leave when they could not pay. I came home one day to find out that my neighbor and her four children had been thrown out of their home. Unfortunately this really breaks up families—I know several of her children were sent to live with family in Thornton, and the other children were sent to live with family in Montbello. When I asked her why they had less than a week to leave her home, she told me it was because they didn't have a lease. I couldn't believe it.”

Imelda says that low-wages and limited work opportunities prevent families from being able to afford the possibility to buy their own home, or stay in homes when faced by skyrocketing rents.



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*Nena has asked for a yearly renter's lease, but the property management company refused and offered her only a month-to-month lease, which under Colorado law, gives Nena and her family only 7 days to find a new place to live in the event that the owner or the property management refuses to renew her month-to-month lease.*

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**Nena** is a Swansea resident and community leader, mother, grandmother and micro-entrepreneur. She and her family have lived around the Swansea neighborhood for more than 18 years. She and her family began buying a home in the early 2000's, but in 2005 her son was diagnosed with Lupus, and he was no longer able to work. Without the support from their son, Nena and her family were unable to pay off their ballooning sub-prime loan, and they lost their home to foreclosure just two years before the housing market began to collapse.

After relocating to her current address in 2007, the home where she and her family have rented for the last 9 years was purchased without her knowledge by an investing firm and handed off to a property management company last summer. Her rent was suddenly raised more than \$1000 without any improvements to her side of the duplex, even though the home is facing serious plumbing, heating, and structural issues including problems with the ceiling, doors and windows. Nena has asked for a yearly renter's lease, but the property management company refused and offered her only a month-to-month lease, which under Colorado law, gives Nena and her family only 7 days to find a new place to live in the event that the owner or the property management refuses to renew her month-to-month lease. Her family, including her grown children, have been looking for a new place to live in the neighborhood, or nearby, but because her husband does not earn much, there are few homes they can afford with what they have been pre-approved for a loan. Besides the price of neighborhood homes being highly-inflated, there are almost no homes on the market-- and the possibility of relocating in the neighborhood looks grim for Nena and her family.

*What we want is that hopefully the owner doesn't think to kick us out right now because my son is back in the hospital."*

Displacement from the neighborhood would be devastating to Nena and her family and their health, work opportunities, stability, and well-being. Through her participation in many activities, Nena and her family are deeply connected to families, friends and neighbors in the neighborhood. Her grandchildren attend the Swansea school, and Nena participates regularly in activities at the Valdez-Perry library, and at neighborhood non-profit organizations like GES Right To LiveWell, Focus Points Resource Center, and the GrowHaus.

Nena and her family would like to stay in the neighborhood, but face an uncertain future under Denver's housing market, and Nena and her family have to be prepared for the worst. Denver's most vulnerable residents do not qualify for most housing support or subsidy, and are already being rapidly pushed out of the city -- some of Denver's most hard-working neighbors, like Nena, who have worked to improve their neighborhoods for two decades, are faced now with the threat of involuntary displacement. Nena and her family deserve to live in accessible and dignified housing in the neighborhoods that they have been a part of for decades, and deserve to have rights that protect the health and well-being of her family.

## Education and Workforce

The billions of dollars of public investment in this community should prioritize and address the unjust and inequitable living standards present in GES. Currently, 52% of residents earn \$25,000 or less a year, and 57% are under the age of 45. While severe poverty, unemployment, and low educational attainment rates exist, if the right resources are invested in the GES community, thousands of people could be lifted out of poverty.

## Education and Unemployment

- 80% of respondents have a high school diploma or less. This is likely one driver of the high unemployment rate (37%) of respondents.
- Almost half of unemployed respondents have been without work for 3 or more years (48%), while those who have been unemployed for less than a year represent a quarter (25%) of the total sample. Jobs programs should target long-term unemployment, with short-term efforts to assist the recently unemployed.

## Current Employment and Job Training

- Half of all respondents are employed (50%), with the primary sectors of employment being skilled labor and manufacturing (26%), food and janitorial services (18%), and self-owned (8%). Job training and increased union density would support upward advancement in these industries as well as increased wages and benefits.
- Respondents showed an interest in job training (29-45%), specifically targeted at: skilled labor and manufacturing (31%), and computer technical training (20%), and small business entrepreneur (16%).

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*While severe poverty, unemployment, and low educational attainment rates exist, if the right resources are invested in the GES community, thousands of families could avoid displacement, and stay.*

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## METHODOLOGY

### The Community's Survey

Traditional community surveying processes often neglect or survey small percentages of underrepresented communities. The intentional efforts by community organizers and resident-driven survey processes yielded input from residents who are often ignored.

The result of community outreach done by community rooted institutions:

- 500 surveys Collected & 1,500 (+) doors knocked.
- 87% of respondents self-identified as Hispanic
- 56% self-identified as multiracial.
- 66% of all surveys collected were given in Spanish
- 35 community leaders participated in the Survey Collection
- Statistically accurate sample of G.E.S. with a Margin of Error at 4.27% (+/-)

### Demographics of Survey Participants: General Profile of Survey Respondents

Survey respondents self-identified as predominantly Female (72%), with a diverse range of ages: 9% were 24 years old and under, 48% between the ages of 25-45, and 44% at least 46 years old or older. Household sizes are generally multi-generational with three or more adults (47%) and two or more children (54%). Respondents overwhelmingly identified as "Hispanic" (87%), with more than half identifying as multiracial (56%), a little under a third identifying as "White" or "Caucasian" (32%), and the remainder identifying as "Native American, Alaskan Native" (5%), "African American or Black" (4%) and Asian, Pacific Islander (3%).



## **Possible Solutions and Remedies to Mitigating Displacement in Globeville and Elyria-Swansea**

### **Support GES Families to Stay in Their Homes**

1. Pass a local affordable housing bond; raise and leverage dollars to increase the funding for affordable housing in the City of Denver.
2. Fund a community-directed Community Land Trust in GES to create permanent affordability in the neighborhood; support and fund land-banking that allows residents to be able to stay in the neighborhood.
3. Create targeted hire and apprentice utilization policies that give preference to GES residents for new employment opportunities created by construction work in new developments.
4. Discourage predatory real estate practices; require LLC/LLP's that own and buy residential property (or property management firms) to register and list owners and managers names and contact information on a city database.
5. Support community organizing and education programs to that allow residents to make informed real estate decisions, including building resident capacity to develop community-driven land banking.
6. Create cooperative lending and banking options; leverage funding for creative ways to lend and invest dollars that stay in the community.
7. Create preference programs that offer displaced residents opportunity of "First Right of Return".

### **Retain Low-Income and Senior Homeowners**

1. Invest in creative solutions like community-driven land banking; support neighbors, community organizers, and non-profit developers to acquire and steward rental and single family homes available for residents vulnerable to displacement.
2. Provide property tax limits or rebates in high-risk gentrification areas affected by TOD.
3. Create policies that grow financial opportunities for homeowners to keep them in their homes by earning additional income. One option would be to create lending opportunities for low-income homeowners to build accessory dwelling units.
4. Support and develop home rehabilitation, weatherization and energy efficiency programs with priority given to owner-occupied homes in high risk gentrification neighborhoods.

## Maintain Affordable Rental Units

1. Pass local renters rights policies that protect renters from predatory rental hikes and no fault evictions.
2. Create a legal defense fund and provide legal aid to meet needs of most vulnerable families and households.
3. Fund and leverage funding for specific support to meet housing needs for most vulnerable households in areas with highest threat of gentrification-driven displacement.
4. Find creative ways to incentivize and maintain existing naturally occurring affordable rentals (non-subsidized) affordable units. Work with landlords and provide incentives for opt-in programs that support rental affordability.
5. Create a “Right to Purchase” policy for current tenants, or non-profit developers in areas with highest threat of displacement.
6. Support and create affordable housing developments with city financing that will create permanently affordable housing in TOD/High risk gentrification areas.










Globeville Elyria-Swansea Coalition Organizing for  
*Health and Housing Justice*

This report was written and produced by FRESA: Good Jobs, Strong Communities in partnership with community members, coalition staff and partners of the Globeville, Elyria-Swansea Coalition: Organizing for Health and Housing Justice.

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