

Across the United States, postindustrial cities are exploring different creative strategies to revitalize the vast swathes of vacant and abandoned land left by the exodus of residents and industry. However, many redevelopment strategies have failed to incorporate the social, ecological, and economic activities already occurring, which can further the marginalization of current residents. Displacement of residents and their informal land use practices can occur when they are not included in plans for neighborhood change. This project investigates rapid socioecological change and its influence on local residents in Philadelphia's South Kensington neighborhood, which is currently undergoing rapid residential and commercial revitalization. Specifically, we use Remote Sensing and GIS to document land uses and demographics in the neighborhood so that they can be integrated into redevelopment plans. Preliminary results find a reduction in both the number and average size of greenspaces in the neighborhood between 2010 and 2016 due to residential construction. Planners should ensure that these environmental amenities are preserved for current and future residents to enjoy.

Terra Nullius or Terra Incognito? Documenting Land Use Practices in Philadelphia