

# PRESERVING COMMUNITIES: KEY ANTI-DISPLACEMENT STRATEGIES AND CASE STUDIES

## Land Acquisition Investment Funds

Funds to **increase affordable housing** by helping developers quickly acquire land for affordable housing without relying on lengthy public funding cycles. These funds are supported by capital from public sources, financial institutions, and investors, and are managed by Community Development Financial Institutions.

### Example in Practice:

New York City Acquisition Fund: Launched in 2006, this fund has provided over \$350 million in financing, supporting the creation and preservation of more than 14,000 housing units.

### Example in Practice:

Maryland's Moderately Priced Dwelling Units Program, is an inclusionary zoning initiative providing affordable housing for residents earning up to 70% of the Washington Metro AMI. It requires 12.5%–15% of units in new developments to be affordable during a "control period," with resale and occupancy restrictions ensuring long-term affordability. Managing 4,000 units with 400 households on a waiting list, the program allocates homes through random drawings and funds future projects by sharing profits from market-rate sales after the control period.

## Inclusionary Zoning

Requires developers to **include affordable housing units in market-rate developments**. These policies typically mandate a specific percentage of affordable units, such as 10% for households earning 50% of the Area Median Income (AMI). One of the more widely adopted anti-displacement strategies. States like New Jersey, Massachusetts, and California are leaders in using these policies, often supported by state laws that incentivize affordable housing production.

## Construction Excise Tax

**Promotes affordable housing** by imposing a tax of up to 2% on new developments, with the **revenue** used to **fund affordable housing**. Cities like San Jose and Sacramento in California, as well as areas in North Dakota and Oregon, have implemented this approach. This tax captures property value increases to benefit the community while holding developers accountable for addressing community needs.

### Example in Practice:

In 2006, Bend, Oregon implemented a construction excise tax of 0.3% on residential, commercial, and industrial development. This tax has generated over \$13 million going towards the development of affordable housing. Read more about Oregon's excise tax [here](#).



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## Tenant Opportunity to Purchase

### Example in Practice:

Enacted in 1980, D.C.'s Tenant Opportunity to Purchase Act has facilitated the preservation of thousands of affordable housing units. Read more [here](#).

**Promotes homeownership** by granting tenants the first right to purchase their rental property when the owner decides to sell. By bypassing the traditional renter-landlord relationship, it **supports long-term housing stability** and empowers residents.

## Zero to Low-Interest Rehabilitation Loans

### Example in Practice:

[The Detroit, Michigan 0% Interest Home Repair Loan Program](#) offers interest-free loans of up to \$25,000 to eligible homeowners for critical repairs. This program has been instrumental in preserving housing quality and affordability, allowing residents to remain in their homes amidst redevelopment efforts.

**Promotes homeownership** by offering zero to low-interest loans to homeowners for rehabilitating their housing. Low-interest financing for home repairs is crucial to support existing residents. Cities and development agencies fund these loans, with eligibility often based on factors like residency duration, income, or location. Some programs offer **loan forgiveness for long-term residents**, which helps preserving community.

## Land Use Restrictive Agreements

**Protects tenants and stabilizes existing housing** by attaching development requirements to the property deed. These restrictions, such as setting aside units for households within specific income brackets or capping rents, remain in effect if the property is sold. This approach is commonly used across the U.S. through the federal Low-Income Housing Tax Credit program.

### Example in Practice:

The Florida Housing Finance Corporation applies these agreements to properties developed under the Low-Income Housing Tax Credit program, ensuring developers meet long-term affordability standards. Under Florida's "Live Local Act," affordable housing properties are required to have a Land Use Restrictive Agreement with the Florida Housing Finance Corporation, recorded in the county's official records, mandating that they provide affordable housing to eligible individuals for 99 years. [Learn more about Florida's approach here](#).

## Mandatory Relocation Assistance

### Example in Practice:

Portland, Oregon has explicit thresholds that once they are surpassed, landlords are required to provide relocation assistance. [Click here to learn more about how this works in Portland](#).

**Protects tenants** by requiring landlords to provide financial support to tenants forced to move due to circumstances beyond their control, such as extreme rent increases.

## Housing Cooperatives

**Promotes community ownership** by allowing multiple entities to collectively own properties, **maintaining affordability** by eliminating landlord profit. Members purchase shares, granting them decision-making power over matters like maintenance and budgeting. Without rent payments, cooperatives are often more affordable, covering only operational costs.

### Example in Practice:

Penn South Cooperative, New York City: Established in 1962, this large housing cooperative with over 2,820 apartments provides affordable housing in Manhattan, maintaining low costs through efficient management, bulk purchasing, and tax subsidies.

## Community Benefits Agreements (CBAs)

### Learn More:

Community Benefits Agreements have been successfully implemented across the United States. [Explore a database of these agreements by clicking here.](#)

For a more in depth description of the steps to take to implement a successful Community Benefits Agreement, [click here.](#)

**Promotes community ownership** by enabling residents to negotiate legally binding agreements with developers that **ensure redevelopment projects provide tangible benefits to the community.** These contracts between developers and community organizations trade public support for commitments to community-focused contributions. These benefits may include living wage requirements, affordable housing targets, and local hiring initiatives. These agreements empower historically marginalized neighborhoods to secure redevelopment benefits.

### Example Flowchart for CBA



## Anti-Displacement Property Tax Funds

### Example in Practice:

In Atlanta, Georgia the Westside Future Fund's Anti-Displacement Tax Fund program helps homeowners by covering property tax increases for up to 20 years. Funded through philanthropic contributions, the program ensures residents can remain in their homes amid revitalization without the burden of rising taxes.

**Absorbs tax increases** by providing property **tax relief to long-term residents at risk of displacement** due to rising property values from gentrification. These programs target homeowners in specific neighborhoods who meet income thresholds and have lived in their homes before redevelopment.

## Affordable Housing Trust Funds

### Example in Practice:

In Massachusetts, housing trust funds, established under the 2005 Municipal Affordable Housing Trust statute, enable municipalities to collect and manage resources dedicated to affordable housing. Common revenue sources include Community Preservation Act funds and developer contributions. Overseen by a board of trustees, these funds are allocated based on local housing priorities. Learn more about how these funds are utilized in Massachusetts [here](#).

Allocated by state and local governments, these funds **support the construction and preservation of affordable housing for renters and homeowners**. Funded through sources like property taxes, legislation, and matching funds, they **provide grants to assist low-income households with housing needs over a defined period**. With a U.S. housing shortage of 7 million units, these funds are vital for preventing displacement and expanding affordable housing development.

## Right to Counsel Laws

**Protects tenants in neighborhoods facing gentrification**, legal representation in eviction courts helps low-income renters, particularly people of color, avoid displacement. These protections **ensure tenants can defend against unjust evictions** and retain stable housing. Cities like Cleveland, Ohio and Philadelphia, Pennsylvania have adopted such measures.

### Example in Practice:

In 2017, New York City became the first in the U.S. to implement a Right to Counsel law, offering free legal services to low-income tenants facing eviction. This initiative has significantly decreased eviction rates and influenced similar laws nationwide, read more about it [here!](#)

## Community Land Trust

### Example in Practice:

In Durango, Colorado, residents of the Westside Mobile Home Park came together to prevent a corporate buyout that threatened their community. Collaborating with the Elevation Community Land Trust, they converted the park into a hybrid model of a housing co-op and community land trust. [Learn more about Elevation Community Land Trust here.](#)

**Promotes community ownership** by separating the value of the land from the buildings reduces overall property costs, making it more affordable. The land itself is owned by the trust, while individuals, families, or businesses own the buildings or properties on it. To preserve affordability, owners agree to resell their property at a capped price, while the trust retains ownership of the land.

## Proactive Code Enforcement

**Reduces tenant vulnerability** to landlord retaliation by relying on government inspections to address maintenance issues. This approach increases inspection frequency in marginalized communities, **ensuring safer housing conditions**.

### Learn More:

San Antonio, Texas, is putting this approach into action; learn more [here](#).