

Constructing a Storm Surge Risk Profile

Lower East Side and Chinatown, Manhattan, NY

Sources: U.S. Census Bureau, the planning department of the City of New York, and the research division of the Furman Center for Real Estate and Urban Policy

Sites: Lower East Side and Chinatown neighborhoods of Lower Manhattan. These neighborhoods were chosen for study due to their status as ethnic enclaves, reservoirs for affordable housing, and continued subjection to value speculation and gentrification. It is important to understand the risks facing different populations in metropolitan areas in order to best approach both short-term disaster preparedness and long-term urban development strategy.

Findings: These maps have shown that

- The Lower East Side represents a unique diversity of ethnic populations in contrast to the majority white populations to the west and above, a population disproportionately housed in low income rent-stabilized and “affordable” housing structures.
- The population of individuals living in affordable housing structures include higher proportions of **seniors and senior living alone**, and these structures often have suffered a **lack of renovation** to protect against flooding, which was only enacted as regulation after 1983, a year before which most of these structures were constructed.
- A majority of socioeconomically vulnerable peoples within hurricane evacuation zone 1 and zone 2. These populations
 - require more active and targeted outreach efforts, along with city initiatives aimed at temporary rehousing and transportation, as limited resources have proven a prohibitive problem during times of severe flooding.
- Future development appears to be in **concentration along the waterfront**, a trend that may accelerate with the construction of increased flood protection and public amenities along the East River waterfront. High-value properties attract families and individuals of higher incomes, and are constructed up to the latest flood protection regulations, limiting the risk for flood damage and disruption for these peoples. However, the increased concentrations of high-income developments points to the
 - This may lead to the continued **displacement of low-income and senior New York residents**, who then are required to find affordable housing elsewhere in New York City, an increasingly difficult task.

Future research: Should focus closer on the insurance initiatives covering the properties in the area and if insurance policies and emergency funding put into place after Hurricane Sandy cover enough of the expenses incurred by damage to ensure the continued presence of affordable housing and rent-stabilized units in the area

METHODS

