

Shrinking Cities and the Green New Deal:
Lessons from Detroit's Climate Action & Economic Development
Sam Kraus - sok2109
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Abstract:

This paper considers the implications of a Green New Deal in terms of its implementation for cities experiencing chronic economic and population decline. By considering data on urban shrinkage and revitalization, the evidence will show that particular climate mitigation strategies may not suffice in providing a just transition for vulnerable communities. While the Green New Deal would provide these municipalities with the fiscal capacity to augment services which have been diminishing for decades, there is a clear risk that a high skill workforce would benefit relatively more from that urban revitalization compared to vulnerable communities. Declining cities must address the problems at the root of the vicious circle of urban decline: poor public services, especially education, urban blight and distressed housing, and equitable connectivity to the rest of the city.