Gentrification is increasingly evaporating businesses marketing to working-class immigrant families and consumers in downtown commercial districts of central cities nationwide. City officials and their private partners play a large role engineering gentrification. This presentation draws on a case study of new urbanism, creative class, and transit oriented development models of planning and their implementation in Downtown Santa Ana, focusing on La Cuatro, the working-class and Mexican immigrant commercial heart of the area. Through a review of archival planning documents, print media sources, participant-observation, and a survey of downtown business storefronts, I examine how city narratives about problems and imagined communities changed and remained similar from the 1970s to the 2010s and explore the extent by which private-public arrangements lead to a particular spatial configuration of commercial gentrification.

Eualdo González is a Professor in the Department of Chicana and Chicano Studies at California State University, Fullerton. He received his Ph.D. in Urban and Regional Planning from UCI. His areas of research are community development, neighborhood planning, planning and health, and urban governance and policy. He contemplates urban questions by combining his interests with social justice and equity, race, ethnicity, class, and immigration lenses, with an emphasis on Chicanx/o-Latina/o communities and communities of color generally. Eualdo is intrigued with understanding how and reasons local community development practices and policies are made, implemented, questioned, and associated outcomes. He is interested in how community engagement responds to urban issues and the outcomes, challenges, and contradictions that may come with engagement. His work is also applied. He has 20 years of experience as a program evaluator and strategic planner of healthy communities and community building initiatives in communities of color and rural and urban settings. Dr. González’s recently published book Latino City: Urban Planning, Politics, and the Grassroots (2017) by Routledge addresses a critical urban policy issue confronting working-class municipalities around the world—the increased roles of elected leaders and private partnerships on redevelopment in downtown cores and displacement and gentrification.

LUNCH WILL BE SERVED.
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