# Asheville's Climate Justice Initiative

**LEADERSHIP North Carolina** 

April 2022

**Kiera Bulan,** Sustainability Coordinator Office of Sustainability





### **Overview**

### I. Asheville Sustainability Goals

- Climate Resilience
  - Climate Justice Initiative, Food Policy Action Plan
- 100% Renewable Energy Goal
- 50% Waste Reduction Goal
- Community-wide 100% Renewable Energy Goal
- 4% Carbon Reduction Goal

### II. Asheville's Climate Justice Initiative



# **Climate Emergency**

In January 2020 Asheville City
Council declared a Climate
Emergency. Resolution 20-25
states that a Climate Justice Plan
be created to consolidate the
various separate sustainability
goals and department initiatives.





### **Climate Justice Initiative**



Mapping climate vulnerability

**PHASE I** Frontline 1:1 interviews

Story circles

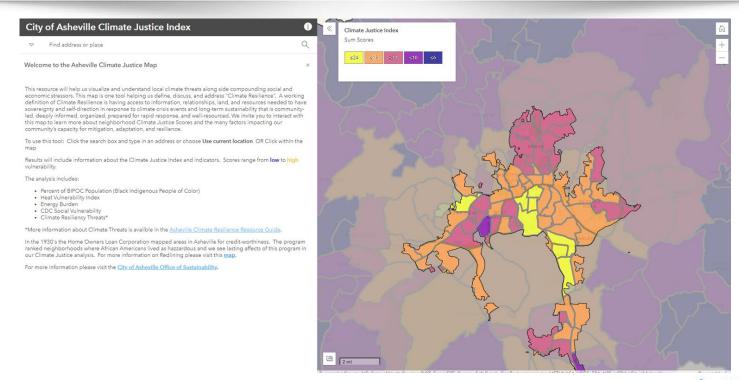
City of Asheville: Listening + Learning

PHASE II Climate Justice Guide + Screening Tool

Voices of Our Youth Public Art Project



## **Climate Data Map**





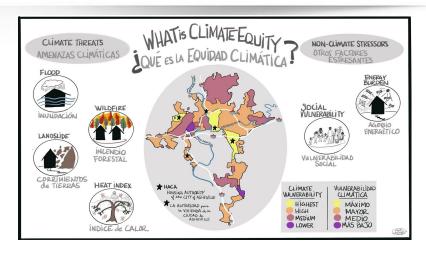
# **Voices from our Community**

### **Community Resilience**

- Economic power
- Healthy environments
- Strong social networks

### **Climate Justice Concerns**

- Displacement
- Inequitable evacuation plans and emergency responses
- Impacts of structural racism
- Access to healthy food and transportation
- Lack of conversation about how to prepare and respond
- Lack of awareness of the impacts on BIPOC homes and neighborhoods





# **Climate Equity Strategies**



- Community-Led Resilience Hubs: Establish community-based spaces already familiar to surrounding residents as a resource hub for the kinds of emergency response, evacuation, and mutual aid needed to survive climate and other crises.
- **Invest in a BIPOC Green Economy:** Invest in BIPOC communities through local contracting around retrofitting the City's infrastructure with renewable energy, supporting the establishment of small green businesses and cooperatives, and land sovereignty through land trusts and reparations.
- **Effectively Engaging Frontline Communities:** Address the divisions that exist between the City and BIPOC communities that exist due to a history of structural racism which, ultimately, exacerbate the impacts of climate change and create breakdowns in the communication of critical information about the issue.



### **Climate Justice Initiative**

### Asheville's Climate Justice Plan

- Defined Climate Justice and Climate
   Equity with BIPOC community members,
- Creation of the <u>Climate Justice Data Map</u>, and
- Created a Climate Justice Screening Tool to complement the work of the GARE Racial Toolkit + Asheville's adopted plans.
- Next steps internal and communityfacing implementation

#### **Climate Equity**

#### Access to:

- information
- relationshipsland
- resources

#### Develops:

 sovereignty and selfdirection in response to climate crisis

### Builds long-term resilience that is:

- community-led
- deeply informedorganized
- prepared for rapid response
- well-resourced

### Ollill

#### Climate Resilience

- people are well resourced, engaged, and informed
- decision makers are community leaders
- emergency response, infrastructure investment, and economic development are rooted in climate equity and justice

### Climate Justice

Foundational understanding that BIPOC communities are:

- disproportionately impacted by structural and environmental racism
- most vulnerable to climate crisis events

Climate Justice solutions

 prioritize long-term BIPOC community resilience

.....

