

## Partners for Places Project Lessons Report

**Project Name:** *Equity in Climate Action: Resilient Communities for a Sustainable City*

- **Year Complete:** 2019
- **Local Government:** City of New Orleans, LA
- **Local Foundation:** Greater New Orleans Foundation

### Project Purpose

---

To engage the community in making equity a priority in implementation of the City of New Orleans' Climate Action Strategy and to help the City meet the strategy's climate mitigation goals equitably.

### Key Lessons Learned

---

*Lessons learned about tools and tactics through the project that other sustainability directors could use to advance their work.*

The Climate Action Equity Project showed that community-based organizations representing those most affected by climate issues should be included in the development of sustainability plans early on in order to ensure more equitable outcomes. There are times when sustainability practitioners target ambitious environmental outcomes without knowing how these would adversely affect communities of color and low-income communities. This was evident during the Climate Action Equity Project. For example, one of the recommendations that the Advisory Group was contemplating was decreasing trash pick-up frequency in order to encourage more recycling. There was at least one community expert on the Advisory Group who said that if this was implemented, there would be a lot of trash lying out on streets in vulnerable neighborhoods, which would be unhealthy for residents. The Advisory Group chose to focus on an education campaign around recycling and waste reduction.

Another lesson was the value of integrating workforce development and small business development into the conversation of sustainability and resilience early on. Positive impacts on workforce and small business development made sustainability initiatives more relevant for residents in communities of color and low-income communities.

*Lessons for developing a collaborative process between a local government sustainability director and local place-based foundation(s).*

This project was implemented during a transition in mayoral administrations. One factor that ensured that a collaborative relationship was maintained was the existence of staff members that remained through the transition. As sustainability directors hired their staff, it was good to have some staff members that would stay across administrations. This was important for the continuity of this project.

### **Additional Information and Resources**

---

The Climate Action Equity Project built a foundation towards the equitable implementation of the City's Climate Action Strategy and increased the capacity of community leaders to advocate for and work towards climate action. The Lower 9<sup>th</sup> Ward community forum was well attended and [promoted on the local news](#). Learn more about the Resilient New Orleans strategy [here](#).