

Race and Equity Pocket Questions

Title and purpose of this initiative: UNC Energy Transition and Rail Line Transformation

Department:

What are the racial and equity impacts?

Overall, this project offers significant opportunities for developing a more equitable and inclusive community. The largest opportunity being for developing new affordable housing on the large portions of land that are along the rail line. Economic development opportunities can also provide jobs and wealth building opportunities for various communities, some of which have been marginalized for a long time. We should pay special attention to the Pine Knolls, Tin Top, and Northside communities that live within close proximity of the rail line. The new amenity of a greenway could drive up housing prices and contribute to the gentrification in those neighborhoods.

Who is or will experience community burden?

The largest burden may fall on communities along the rail line that could be victims of gentrification.

Who is or will experience community benefit?

The UNC energy transition promises to benefit everyone by reducing climate, emissions and air pollution from burnable fuels. The rail line transition will provide significant benefits to the entire community through economic, housing, and other community development opportunities. One major upside is the potential for a bike and pedestrian commuter pathway between thousands of units of new housing and the major employment centers of downtown Carrboro, downtown Chapel Hill, and UNC.

What are the root causes of inequity?

The rail line itself has contributed to inequity by being a dividing line in our community. Redevelopment of the rail line to a multimodal. Greenway gives us the opportunity for a connected community and breaking down barriers.

What might be the unintended consequences of this action or strategy?

As with any community development, there is a chance that this project could exacerbate gentrification and drive up housing prices. On the other hand, there are ample opportunities to use this opportunity to develop affordable housing and build inclusive community opportunities.



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How is your department planning to mitigate any burdens, inequities, and unintended consequences?

We are committed to a considerable community engagement process. We anticipate ample opportunity for community engagement in planning for economic development, community development, and affordable housing development. We already have community partners at the table who are specifically focused on equity issues.