

Race and Equity Pocket Questions

Title and purpose of this initiative: Restore Our Watersheds, Support Our Communities, Carrboro Residential Assistance Program—NC Water Resources Division, Grant Application

Department: Public Works

What are the racial and equity impacts?

The Residential Assistance Program impacts equity by requiring homeownership, which may disproportionately benefit White residents due to higher homeownership rates. While the program supports lower-income homeowners, renters—who are often more racially diverse—are excluded unless landlords apply. However, because participation is available town-wide, and the enhancement of ecosystem services are felt cumulatively in the community, no negative environmental impacts on BIPOC or marginalized communities are anticipated.

Who is or will experience community burden?

Renters, who are unable to apply directly, may face significant barriers to accessing program benefits unless property owners choose to participate—potentially reinforcing existing housing inequities and leaving renters more vulnerable to flooding and other environmental hazards. Homeowners who encounter language barriers or lack awareness of the program may experience difficulty navigating the application process. Additionally, constrained funding could result in delays for eligible applicants, prolonging stormwater management challenges within affected communities.

Who is or will experience community benefit?

Homeowners benefit from professional technical guidance, cost savings, and improved property resilience against stormwater-related issues. These improvements also strengthen green stormwater infrastructure for Carrboro and downstream communities, reducing runoff and enhancing local water quality.

What are the root causes of inequity?

Inequity in stormwater management and environmental sustainability arises from intersecting social and economic factors, including race, gender, income, physical abilities, and neighborhood conditions. Disparities in homeownership, driven by systemic barriers such as historical exclusion from educational advancement, property ownership, and financial security. These challenges are compounded by a history of environmental injustice, where diverse communities have faced bias through practices like eminent domain, forced relocations, or the placement of undesirable industries in their neighborhoods.

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

Ownership requirements will limit participation among renters, particularly if property owners elect not to apply on their behalf. While renters do not directly pay stormwater fees, their



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exclusion may nonetheless hinder engagement among those facing stormwater management challenges. Additionally, linguistic barriers, mistrust in government initiatives, and a general lack of awareness of the problem and program's resources may prevent eligible homeowners from applying.

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

Efforts will focus on expanding access and equitable outreach. Since renters cannot apply directly, property owners will be encouraged to participate on their behalf, and broader education initiatives will increase awareness of stormwater solutions. Targeted outreach, multilingual resources, and partnerships with local organizations will address language barriers, financial insecurity, and distrust in government programs. Prioritization strategies based on financial need and environmental impact will guide funding distribution, while monitoring participation rates and outcomes will help identify gaps. To address these concerns, targeted outreach, multilingual resources, and collaboration with community organizations should be implemented to enhance equitable access and broaden awareness. Strengthening engagement with historically marginalized communities will further enhance inclusivity and ensure those most in need can benefit from the program.