

AHSRF RACIAL EQUITY ASSESSMENT LENS - SUMMARY

The long-term consequences of slavery, Jim Crow, disenfranchisement, segregation, unjust lending practices, red lining and continued racial bias affect the ability for people of color to obtain equitable opportunities for education, employment, economic mobility, generational wealth, positive health outcomes, and access to safe and affordable housing.

The Town of Carrboro's Affordable Housing Special Revenue Fund (AHSRF) was established in 2007 with the intention to improve housing access for low-income Carrboro residents. Specifically, the Fund advances the Town's goal to preserve and expand the stock of affordable housing within Carrboro and its planning jurisdiction. As part of the Town's commitment to racial equity, the Affordable Housing Advisory Commission (AHAC) and town housing staff conducted a racial equity assessment on the AHSRF in the summer and fall of 2022.

Data gathered to conduct the assessment showed that lack of housing access and affordability disproportionately affected BIPOC residents in Carrboro. Root causes of this disparity were poverty (caused by intentional actions to deny wealth and equitable education), as well as policies & practices (government-sponsored intentional racism such as redlining, restrictive zoning ordinances, lending practices that create barriers; the illegality of rent control in NC, and white power structures' lack of willingness to address disparities).

The assessment provided several key findings that contributed to the ongoing lack of available affordable housing and provided a list of recommendations to be explored initially which could deepen the impact of the AHSRF. These recommendations included: (1) increase funding, (2) use plain language so residents know how to access the AHSRF, (3) leverage funding to support projects that create more units, (4) use a "score sheet or checklist" to help center equity in deliberations, (5) prioritize projects that support residents earning 30% AMI or less in household income.

The assessment also highlighted that the AHSRF's funding mechanism produced a key consequence and challenge. "Increasing taxes to support the AHSRF will exacerbate the wealth gap, fuel gentrification, and continue to make housing unaffordable. BIPOC, low-income, fixed income and no-income people will continue to experience the burden of paying the same amount of taxes as someone who's benefitted from generations of wealth building, had access to economic and educational mobility opportunities and benefits from a system designed to provide for and meet their needs."