The Green Zones Initiative: A Community-Driven Environmental Justice Policy in Minneapolis

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Abstract

Urban environmental policies that explicitly incorporate justice principles are relatively rare but growing in number. The Green Zones Initiative in Minneapolis is one such policy that aims to improve environmental, health, and economic outcomes in two pilot zones that comprise marginalized neighborhoods. This study explores the questions, what drove the implementation of Green Zones in Minneapolis, and is the Initiative's participatory governance model a just outcome for marginalized neighborhoods in Minneapolis? We draw primarily upon city documents, historical research, and 11 interviews with a mixture of community stakeholders and city staff to provide a comprehensive understanding of the Minneapolis Green Zones Initiative. We find that community organizations drove the inclusion of environmental justice in the first Minneapolis Climate Action Plan, and the subsequent creation of the Green Zones Initiative. Because of the community-driven nature of the Green Zones, the initiative has a strong focus on participatory justice in the form of multiple participatory processes that include consultancy, education and outreach, and decision-making power. The Green Zones' representative community task forces are a departure from unjust greening norms and a step towards self-determination for marginalized communities in Minneapolis. However, the City of Minneapolis as an institution continues to pose structural challenges to justice, despite the key roles that individual City allies have played in the Green Zones' existence.

Introduction

The bulk of environmental solutions pursued by governments have passively acknowledged systemic and structural inequities at best, and more often exacerbate injustice and inequality (McKendry 2015). Scholars, activists, and practitioners have stressed that the systemic, place-based nature of socio-environmental injustices necessitates direct community participation in decision-making. However, citizen engagement remains uneven in practice and is rarely inclusive of communities that bear the largest proportion of environmental, economic, and social burdens (Sarzynski 2015; Ayers 2011). Because of this, we see that human and environmental wellbeing has hardly progressed in step with the growth of national GDPs, technological advancements, and industrial capabilities.

An environmental justice analysis argues that our ecological and human crises share roots in the global-scale systems of capitalism and domination of the natural world. While these overlapping crises may be global in scope, cities continue to be "sites of heightened social injustices and disparities," while also becoming "well-recognized as legitimate and authoritative governors of climate change" (Huges and Hoffmann 2020; Bulkeley et al. 2013; Schrock et al. 2015; McKendry 2016). Thus, as cities' political responses to environmental issues grow in urgency and scale, there is increasing attention to the need for justice and equity during development and implementation of these policies. City policies that explicitly incorporate justice principles are scarce, but a small class of emergent initiatives has been growing in the last two decades (Tishman Environment and Design Center 2019). Among these initiatives, the Minneapolis Green Zones is a compelling case of environmental justice planning that centers community decision-making, anti-gentrification, and self-determination.

In 2013, the City of Minneapolis, Minnesota, adopted a Climate Action Plan (CAP). One cross-cutting strategy in the CAP that was created by its Environmental Justice (EJ) Working Group was the development of a Green Zone Initiative, which would "create a city designation for neighborhoods or clusters of neighborhoods that face the cumulative impacts of environmental, social, political, and economic vulnerability" ("Minneapolis Climate Action Plan" 2013). The intention of Green Zones was to

direct city resources and investments to overburdened and previously under-invested in areas. There were three examples of "Green Zones" in the United States at the time in Los Angeles, California; Kansas City, Missouri; and Buffalo, New York. The Green Zones programs in all of these cities had a focus on community-driven solutions for overburdened neighborhoods ("Green Zones F.A.Q." 2020). The Minneapolis model of Green Zones was primarily influenced by the Los Angeles example, "Clean Up, Green Up," a policy strongly driven by EJ organizing and spreading to different areas of L.A. (Kimbrough 2017; Gupta; Villaseñor).

In the eight years since the Minneapolis Green Zones Initiative was first proposed, it has gained formal status and developed a community-driven model of operation. In 2016, the Minneapolis City Council passed the first resolution officially starting the Initiative. The resolution created a Green Zones Workgroup with a mix of City staff and community members, who then used cumulative impact mapping to create the designations for two Zones within the city: a North and Southside Green Zone (NSGZ and SSGZ). A community task force was established to oversee each respective Green Zone and move forward on action strategies for "improving health and supporting economic development [in each Green Zone] using environmentally conscious efforts" in collaboration with City staff in the Office of Sustainability (City Council of Minneapolis 2016). Both task forces finalized 5-year work plans in late 2019 and early 2020, and the task forces are now transitioning into guiding implementation of the work plans.[1]

Research Problem & Question

The Green Zones in Minneapolis are a unique and important case study of environmental justice policy at the urban level. The Green Zone task forces, though still in their early stages, have already demonstrated a commitment to community-driven decision-making and made tangible accomplishments for their communities. However, their newness means that there has been little research into the Green

[1] See Appendix A: Minneapolis Green Zones Initiative Timeline

Zones' process, policy, and current state, and the majority of comparable initiatives are also in their infancy. The Green Zones help advance the scholarly conversation around justice-centered transitions towards low carbon cities, particularly because this case study moves beyond "diagnosing injustices" and instead chronicles a novel "governance practice" that actually takes steps towards just environmental policy (Hughes and Hoffmann 2020). Additionally, scholars have called for a deeper analysis of participatory processes and the factors that affect grassroots contributions and local equity (McKendry 2015; Schrock et al. 2015). The complexities and evolving nature of this pioneering justice-centered policy leads us to the following research questions: What is driving the implementation of Green Zones in Minneapolis, and is the Initiative's participatory governance model a just outcome for marginalized neighborhoods in Minneapolis? We argue that *the Minneapolis Green Zones implement a community-driven model that combines consultancy, outreach, and decision-making power. The Green Zones' representative community task forces create pathways for self-determination within marginalized communities, in a divergence from unjust greening norms and despite structural barriers.*

Literature Review

Environmental justice, the melding of social justice and environmental interests, has a rich and evolving history, usually traced back to the mid-1980s when hundreds of people in a small, predominantly Black community in Warren County, North Carolina were arrested for protesting the nearby siting of a hazardous waste landfill (New York Times 1982; Office of Legacy Management). The protestors, of which a majority were Black women and children, blocked trucks of toxic PCB-laced dirt that were to be dumped on the site (DiChiro 1996). In the aftermath of this mass civil disobedience, the United Church of Christ completed a landmark study that documented how, across the nation, hazardous waste facilities and toxic waste sites were predominantly located in Black and Latinx communities. They found that "three out of every five Black and Hispanic Americans" and "approximately half of all Asian/Pacific Islanders and American Indians lived in communities with toxic waste sites" (UCC

Commission for Racial Justice 1987). The report "ushered in a new era of environmentalism, environmental research, policy analysis, and community activism," and "out of the small and seemingly isolated environmental struggles emerged a potent grassroots community-driven movement" (Bullard, Johnson, and Torres 2011). Further research, like that of Robert Bullard, continued to prove that environmental harms and particularly, waste facilities and high-pollutant industrial sites, were overwhelmingly placed in Black and brown neighborhoods across the United States (Bullard 1983; Bullard 1990).

From this initial anti-toxics focus, the environmental justice movement expanded, particularly with the public naming of "environmental racism," or "racial discrimination in environmental policy-making… the official sanctioning of life-threatening presence of poisons and pollutants in our communities, and history of excluding people of color from leadership in the environmental movement" by Reverend Benjamin Chavis, former head of the NAACP and the UCC's Commission for Racial Justice executive director (Di Chiro 1996; UCC "A Movement is Born"). In 1991, the First National People of Color Environmental Leadership Summit was convened in Washington D.C., and explicitly broadened the environmental justice framework to include "issues of public health, worker safety, land use, transportation, housing, resource allocation, and community empowerment" (Bullard, Johnson, and Torres 2011). The 1991 summit exemplified the power of and need for self-representation and self-determination by communities of color, helped bring attendees together in solidarity over their shared struggle, and culminated in an articulation of the 17 Principles of Environmental Justice as well as actionable plans for the future (DiChiro 1996; Bullard, Johnson, and Torres 2011).

The environmental justice movement has diligently challenged mainstream environmentalism by understanding the "environment" as where we work, live, and play; ultimately placing the daily realities of people's lives at the center of our ecological crisis (Di Chiro 1996). It is built upon "the principle that all Americans have a right to equal protection of the nation's environmental, health, housing, transportation, and civil rights laws and regulations" (Bullard, Johnson, and Torres 2011). Environmental justice is not only distinct because of the diverse race, gender, and class composition of its longtime

advocates (Di Chiro 1996), but because it recognizes that the ecological crisis is rooted in "deep-seated social problems" (Bookchin 1989). In the 21st century, the movement has expanded to encompass an array of concerns about the impacts of "sustainable development" on already burdened communities.

Activists have been advocating for, distinguishing between, and advancing multiple forms of justice since the movement's early years, and scholarly work on environmental justice has recently begun to develop theoretical frameworks around activists' claims. One framework understands justice as an issue of distribution, procedure, and recognition (Schlosberg 2004, Bulkeley et. al 2014, Hughes and Hoffmann 2020). Bulkeley et al. argue that justice must first be grounded in recognition: a thorough, context-specific acknowledgement of the interlocking systems of oppression and inequality that penetrate political, economic, and social decision-making. They state, "it is clear that traditional framings of justice as a matter of ensuring 'fair' distribution of resources [distributive justice] or access to decision-making processes [procedural justice] are captive to the *contexts* in which they are created, suggesting different questions need to be asked" (2014, emphasis added). Though distributive justice ensures that benefits and burdens are equitably spread, and procedural justice creates access to decision-making and solution-creation, if either of these processes are not prefaced by an acknowledgement of the environmental, social, economic, and political factors that gave rise to injustice in the first place, justice may never be achieved.[2] Therefore, environmental justice asks questions about *who* is served by environmental interventions, and *what* structural inequities—particularly racial and economic injustices—bar communities from realizing environmental equity. Justice as recognition draws upon a longer history of recognition theory, including work by Nancy Fraser (1997, 2000), David Schlosberg (2004, 2007), and others. Based on broader discussions of the meaning and practice of justice, these scholars argue that "a

[2] Hughes and Hoffmann (2020) aptly argue, "a purely distributional notion of justice can be problematic by flattening identities and failing to recognize the uniquely different needs of marginalized publics." They go on to point to Schlosberg's conclusions that "since recognition is not something that can be distributed, efforts to enhance recognition typically focus on identifying and changing the social contexts that undermine self-respect within a particular group and prevent them from being fully empowered and valued within a community (Schlosberg 2007)." Thus, we see that justice as recognition is inherently connected to self-respect and self-determination, a concept that we explore in the Minneapolis Green Zones. Recognition works to validate marginalized communities' identities and expertise, as well as recognize systems and structures that act as barriers to community empowerment.

thorough notion of global environmental justice needs to be locally grounded, theoretically broad, and plural – encompassing issues of recognition, distribution, and participation" (Schlosberg 2004). Local, justice-centered activism and policy is thus understood as crucial to the realization of environmental justice globally.

Locally-focused, radically intersectional,[3] and community-driven practice is critical for transferring the different environmental justice dimensions into reality. Approaches to solving mounting socio-environmental issues have diverged substantially, including community-led activism, academic research, and institution-led initiatives. Some of these approaches have ultimately reproduced the unjust structures whose consequences they sought to remedy. Schlosberg and Collins (2014) argue that historically, among three primary articulations of environmental justice, grassroots movements are the only ones whose approach, ideals, and policy thoroughly engage with EJ principles and history. In contrast to those of academics and elite NGOs, grassroots priorities address interrelated concerns "for the basic functioning and provision of needs in vulnerable communities, including ecological communities" (2014). More broadly, Schlosberg asserts that collaboration is the critical vehicle for just outcomes. He writes, "solidarity across locally-based groups" creates "movements that reach and connect beyond the local and particular" to fundamentally guide city effort, procedure, and policy" (Schlosberg 1999). Collaborations of any kind must allow the people *most* impacted by ecological and environmental burdens to be deciding their solutions. Collaborative efforts often result in *co-benefits*, the cross-sector gains that well-designed programs and policies can deliver. This class of thought "calls for building local social capital for more than just [simply] adaptation" (Schlosberg 2014). Environmental justice advocates and

[3] In this paper, we are using the term "intersectional" as defined first by legal scholar Kimberlé Crenshaw in 1989. Crenshaw defines "intersectionality" as a "lens, a prism, for seeing the way in which various forms of inequality often operate together and exacerbate each other" (Crenshaw as interviewed by Steinmetz, 2020). In her seminal paper, Crenshaw argued that "placing those who currently are marginalized in the center is the most effective way to resist efforts to compartmentalize experiences and undermine potential collective action" (Crenshaw 1989). Therefore, in the context of this paper, intersectional refers to an understanding that identities—like race, gender, sexuality, religion, ability, and class—and oppression based upon these identities are not separate but instead complicate and intensify one another.

scholars are thus calling for collaborative, transformative adaptation that centers vulnerable communities and broader social wellness in equitable environmental responses.

Hughes and Hoffmann's framework of "just urban transitions" applies these justice concepts to climate action at the urban scale (2020). The just urban transition ideal posits that urban climate mitigation and adaptation strategies must be rooted in the dimensions of justice discussed above, as well as in inclusion, autonomy, and transparency. Overlapping social and environmental burdens are often compounded at the city level, where longstanding histories of industry and post-industrialization, "involuntary displacement (Gans 1962), destructive redevelopment programs and policies (Jacobs 1961) and uneven investment for urban revitalization projects have created and exacerbated social and spatial inequities" (Hughes and Hoffmann 2020). As climate change brings environmental issues to the policy forefront, cities are trying to address the complexity of climate change, making urban environmental justice more critical than ever. A just urban transition positions environmental, energy, and climate justice central to forward-looking urban environmental policy. Hughes and Hoffmann's just urban transition is a relatively undeveloped idea within the scholarly literature, as they point out: "Developed literatures on urban justice and equity are only beginning to incorporate climate change, and conversely, literatures on urban climate governance are only beginning to explicitly consider equity and justice" (2020). We intend to contribute to this identified gap and further the scholarly conversation on urban environmental governance that explicitly considers equity.

Beyond scholarly research and into practice, the just urban transition appears an unrealized ideal, as prior research analyzing city climate policies has found that cities often lack clear commitments to justice at all. In a 2013 examination of city climate initiatives around the world, Bulkeley et al. found that only 131 (24%) of the 551 surveyed climate mitigation programs and 23 (31%) of the 75 climate adaptation programs explicitly articulated "some form of discourse of justice." Schrock et al.'s systematic review of large American cities' climate action plans prior to 2013 similarly concluded that only a minority featured equity as a prominent theme, though 90% of the reviewed plans included some discussion on equity (2015). This clearly-identified lack of justice-grounded city policy builds upon the

conclusions of an earlier paper by Betsill and Bulkeley that identifies the gap between "rhetoric and reality" within urban climate policy (2007). Even when cities utilize justice and equity rhetoric, there seems to be insufficient progress implementing principles into practice.

City environmental initiatives often lack a clear commitment to justice and equity because there are many barriers to realizing justice at an urban level. Scholars have frequently noted these challenges, arguing that the tension between equity concerns and environmental agendas is a product of the development-driven, neoliberal[4] climate of market primacy in which they originate (McKendry and Janos 2015; Sirianni 2020). Cities' responses to environmental challenges are shaped by the larger, multiscalar power dynamics of politics and the global market (McKendry 2016). In particular, neoliberal globalization in many North American cities manifests as deindustrialization, a loss of funding for urban development and public services, and the prioritization of professional classes (McKendry and Janos 2015). In the Rust Belt, the once-booming industries of 'legacy cities' have deteriorated and produced pronounced racial and socioeconomic inequality (Hughes 2020). And, as sustainability has grown in policy importance, many cities have understood "greening" initiatives to be the future of economic growth and urban development. Rather than conceptualizing sustainability co-benefits as improving welfare for *all*, "forward-looking mayors facing an increasingly competitive global economy" have applied economic growth principles to green development (McKendry and Janos 2015).

McKendry and Janos note that these greening projects often employ "win-win" rhetoric, but those wins consistently exclude vulnerable populations, who are less valuable to high-powered economies. High-profile greening initiatives, like those undertaken in Chicago and Seattle, constitute a modern

[4] Neoliberalism, with its focus on "competitiveness and market primacy" as discussed by McKendry, has to provide the context for an analysis of greening initiatives in North American cities. McKendry and Janos write, "The greening of industrial cities in the USA must be understood in the context of the changing relationship between cities and the globalizing economy and as closely intertwined with broader processes of neoliberal urbanization. For US cities, neoliberal globalization has been marked by two key changes: deindustrialization and the abrogation of national government commitment to funding urban development, both of which have heightened unemployment and left city leaders with diminished funds for spurring economic growth and providing public services" (2015). Neoliberal urbanization has also resulted in the funding and creation of "large-scale prestige projects," like stadiums, reclaimed city centers, and waterfront parks, which hasten and exacerbate gentrification, displacement, and heightened inequality.

extension of environmental injustice (McKendry 2015; Checker 2011). They've contributed to displacement of the very communities most impacted by environmental burdens in a phenomenon now known as eco-gentrification or green gentrification (Checker 2011; Anguelovski 2018; Turan 2018).

In her survey of scholarly pathways on green gentrification, Anguelovski writes, "Urban greening interventions are often formulated in a positive consensual, a-political, and green design-oriented fashion" (2018).[5] Despite the positive rhetoric of projects like Superfund clean-ups, increasing green space, and green development incentives, activists and scholars have recorded cases in which such projects priced out the population for whom they were designed. Melissa Checker conducted an ethnographic study in Harlem, New York City around a PlaNYC's project to increase park space. When the city held meetings to inform the community of their plan to improve a triangle park, residents objected out of concern the improvements would further gentrification. She describes greening initiatives as "pernicious paradox," asking, "must they reject environmental amenities in their neighborhoods in order [to] resist the gentrification that tends to follow such amenities?" (Checker 2011).

The history of what Carmen Sirianni terms 'sustainable cities' illuminates the persistent problem of putting just transitions into practice in an urban landscape where governmental and institutional logics are often at odds with grassroots environmental justice, and greening projects exacerbate social inequality. The environmental subfield of sustainable cities—a broad framework for urban sustainability––emerged with the devolution of environmental policies, driven by local grassroots action for urban renewal and clean communities. It has remained "remarkably resonant and integrative across many issues," such as local bicycling, green building, food justice and urban agriculture, "and among networks

[5] This conceptualization of environmental gentrification was put forth by Checker, who argued "Operating under the seemingly a-political rubric of sustainability, environmental gentrification builds on the material and discursive successes of the urban environmental justice movement and appropriates them to serve high-end redevelopment that displaces low income residents. Materially, the efforts of environmental justice activists to improve their neighborhoods (i.e. the removal of environmental burdens and the installation of environmental benefits) now help those neighborhoods attract an influx of affluent residents. On the discursive side, environmental gentrification selectively adopts a language of sustainability, also put forward by environmental justice activists. Thus, while it appears as politically neutral planning that is consensual as well as ecologically and socially sensitive, in practice it subordinates equity to profit-minded development" (2011).

of field actors" (Sirianni 2020). However, Sirianni characterizes the structure of professional groups and governance institutions as typically "organizationally and cognitively unsuited to the novel forms of urban-environmental civic action" (2020). A self-reinforcing mutual lack of awareness and trust between vulnerable communities and professionals frequently obstructs productive collaboration in sustainability and resilience. Though both parties stand to gain substantially from partnership, most professionals "have little sense that ordinary citizens and diverse urban residents can make their own work more effective, democratically legitimate, and worthy of public support" (Sirianni 2020). Sirianni thus echoes what McKendry, Checker, and others found in their work: often, by not recognizing the expertise and authority held by everyday citizens, institutional and governmental responses to environmental challenges can create deep mistrust between civic actors and governing bodies.

Despite measurable strides in the coproduction of knowledge and tools for practice, Sirianni maintains that even vanguard cities have not reshaped institutional dynamics adequately. The sustainable cities field's trajectory mirrors that of the larger environmental movement: advancements have failed to resolve well-established power inequities. In some cities, however, civic action has begun reconfiguring local governance and urban regimes (Sirianni 2020).

Sara Hughes' recent analysis of climate adaptation plans in Rust Belt cities provides current evidence for Sirianni's long-term conclusions about city and community dynamics. Her survey identifies Detroit, MI, and Cleveland, OH, whose nascent climate adaptation foregrounds justice and equity in formal plans. Hughes examines the climate action plans' justice components, their drivers, policy, and development. Like Minneapolis' more recent Green Zones, Detroit and Cleveland leveraged community partnerships and the "rich network of potential nonprofit sector partners" in both agenda development and implementation (Hughes 2020). Notably, Cleveland has begun integrating a focus on poverty and inequity into government operations, heavily driven by a network of steadily-engaged grassroots organizations. In Detroit, the community organization Detroiters Working for Environmental Justice assembled a cooperative of community, academic, and government representatives to develop their climate action plan (Sampson et al. 2014). Hughes gestures to the possibility that these departures from neoliberal norms may

reflect broader policy shifts, and ultimately calls for a better understanding of the political, institutional, and financial context of justice adaptation planning in legacy cities, a conversation to which we hope to contribute.

Hughes' two cases demonstrate a remarkable inversion of the predominant approaches to city-level environmentalism. Climate action and constructive collaboration between civic and institutional field actors is what Sirianni, and Hughes and Hoffmann, argue we need in order to achieve more sustainable and democratic cities. By formalizing these partnerships, community members can "generate new power resources for producing [public] goods and embed their production in planning and technical systems" to "help modify institutional logics and action repertoires towards sustainability and resilience" (Sirianni 2020). Strategic collaboration across communities and institutions like this is the focus of a large body of literature on *participatory governance*.

Much of the scholarly work on environmental participatory decision-making focuses on natural resource and land use planning. Urban participatory governance literature, on the other hand, does not always have an explicit environmental focus, because many early models of urban participatory decision-making originate in the post-war era and civil rights movement (Sirianni 2020). In the 1960s, urban renewal and housing projects born of the Economic Opportunities Act were some of the first initiatives that included participatory governance, but many were ineffective or outright manipulative.

Sherry Arnstein's seminal "Ladder of Citizen Participation" was one of the first critiques of these early attempts at participatory governance. It was a provocative and influential response to the Model Cities Program in 1969, an anti-poverty campaign designed to invest in "blighted" areas. After working with and studying the program, Arnstein developed a "typology of citizen participation," an eight-rung ladder which remains the foundation of contemporary participatory governance literature. Arnstein identified the lowest modes of participation, like *manipulation* and *therapy*, as "nonparticipation." As one moves up the ladder, participation can take on "token" forms, where citizens are involved but have little to no power. In the middle of the ladder lies *consultation*, "the presentation of proposals for comment and feedback," which many governments mislabel as "stakeholder participation" (Few et al. 2007). This

allows a rhetoric of participation to surround the project, but, as Arnstein argues, "when participation is restricted to these levels, there is no followthrough… no assurance of changing the status quo" (1969). When those in power present *informing* or *consultation* as participatory governance, they remain firmly "embedded within and further enforce persistent, pre-existing relations of social power between agencies and the public" (Few et al. 2007; Sarzynski 2015). The highest forms of participation, according to Arnstein, are models that grant degrees of power to citizens, including *delegated power* or *citizen control*.

Though Arnstein's Ladder remains a cornerstone of the scholarly conversation on participatory governance, many scholars have adapted her model or suggested new frameworks of their own. Arnstein's model has been critiqued for distinguishing between types of participation purely through each's access to power, thus understanding participation as simply a "categorical term for power" (Arnstein 1969; Collins and Ison 2009). Updated models have argued that participation does not always have to follow a linear hierarchy of power, and instead suggested different types of participation must be employed depending on context and can even be combined to be most effective (Collins and Ison 2009). In the context of building participatory capacity for urban climate change adaptation, Sarzynski specifies that rather than reaching Arnstein's zero-sum framing of 'citizen power,' the goals of participation may be to "build a collaborative relationship that gives participants a voice without necessarily subsuming control" (Sarzynski 2015). In the 1980s, there was a devolution of environmental policy making and enforcement in the United States from the federal and state level to local and community groups (Abel and Stephan, 2000; DeWitt, 2006). Proponents argue this devolution coupled with greater citizen participation allowed for greater incorporation of local knowledge that resulted in policies that better fit local needs and had higher rates of adherence. While critics pointed out that the devolution, or "dumping" of responsibility, was not always coupled with a growth of citizen power and that local civic groups were not inherently more democratic. They questioned whether community concerns were co-opted to serve the local governing agenda, and if the participatory model masked this manipulation (Peck and Tickell, 2001; Elwood, 2002; Cnaan, 1991, Buldoc, 1980). Cnaan argues that; "From the representative point of view, NROs (neighborhood organizations) appear to be a mechanism of social control used by local

governments and other authorities. From the participatory point of view NROs appear to be potentially regressive and elitist groups". Paradoxically, Americans, in general, are willing to assume the best of volunteer neighborhood associations and allow themselves to be claimed as part of that organization's base and authority regardless of how well they follow its programming (Buloc, 1991). More recently, studying the Neighborhood Revitalization Project in Minneapolis, Elwood argued that while neighborhood organizations can perpetuate neoliberal norms, they can also positively impact how city planners perceive the autonomy and self-determination of a neighborhood community (Elwood, 2002). More recent studies have begun to look at how climate change is affecting the nature of civic participation.

Adaptation to climate change is critically needed at the local level and must be attuned to local contexts, yet the technical nature of climate adaptation planning and its anticipatory nature can make it challenging to address through traditional participatory models (Few et al. 2007). Though participation has been "frequently promoted in policy responses to climate change," including in the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change, "in practice, the term 'participation' has been subject to considerable interpretation" (Few et al. 2007, 47). Despite the challenge presented by participation, many scholars argue for the necessity and relevance of community engagement and participation in climate adaptation (Sarzynski 2015; Few et al. 2007). Participatory policies can be more reflective of local needs and more likely to be successful in implementation since the early involvement of all groups can offer "a test of the policy processes' overall legitimacy" (Rydin and Pennington 2000). Thus, multiple authors have undergone comparative studies to analyze the participatory processes of climate planning around the globe.

Analyzing participatory regional planning for sea level rise in the United Kingdom and New Zealand, Few et al. found participatory governance was most amenable to priority setting and broad-based deliberation. In their research into coastal zones, the authors found that what was labelled as 'stakeholder participation' was commonly closer to consultation, and several planners and agency staff interviewed "were openly sceptical of the scope for public participation in the context of strategic adaptive response to

climate change, though they acknowledged... [the need for] greater community consultation" (Few et al. 2007, 53). The complicated power dynamics at play between agencies and participants can easily reinforce pre-existing power inequities, especially because there is "retained appeal of 'expert'-driven styles of environmental management" in government (Few et al. 2007). Even engagement which exclusively targets the 'ordinary citizen' community is dominated by "technical-managerialist style of top-down decision-making" (Few et al. 2007, 53). This trend was echoed by Sarzynski in her analysis of urban climate governance around the world. Sarzynski noticed that government-solicited participation often only follows "narrow avenues… such as requests for comment on draft plans and proposed rules" (Sarzynski 2015, 58). Though the existing conversation around climate adaptation argues that robust community involvement is not only ethically warranted, but critical for fashioning functional adaptive measures, the precedent for participatory climate planning has often resulted in only the illusion of consensus and inclusion, deepening public distrust of participatory programs and initiatives.

The Green Zones of Minneapolis meld aspects of environmental participatory decision-making with urban neighborhood-based participatory governance models. Initially only a spatial designation for neighborhoods facing environmental injustices to be prioritized for green investments, present-day Green Zones are led by a task force of community members who determine their community's priorities, coordinate resources, seek out opportunities, and more. Through an examination of this program, our paper seeks to fill a critical gap in the existing scholarly research by bringing multiple bodies of literature into conversation—including environmental justice, urban green development and climate action, and participatory governance. Hughes and Hoffmann propose just urban transitions as sitting at the intersection of these research areas, but clearly ask for "engaged research that foregrounds and supports the work being done by communities and practitioners as they put forward a JUT agenda" (2020). They lay out key questions for future research, including "what combinations of governmental and non-governmental actors from urban areas… are likely to be the source and supportive coalitions for JUT?" We believe that the Green Zones are an observable example of a "programmatic strategy" for JUT, and a coalition of non-governmental and governmental actors, therefore fitting into the research framework set

forth by Hughes and Hoffmann. This case study is grounded in the insights and knowledge of the community organizers and City staff who are shaping the Green Zones, and contributes observations and lessons from their many years of community activism for just and healthy cities.

Methodology

This study employs a case study methodology, using a combination of primary documents, meeting observation, and interviews to synthesize an understanding of the development of the Minneapolis Green Zones Initiative. Our use of documentary analysis and interviews mirrors the methodology of several studies we are drawing from, which similarly study justice-oriented climate policy at the urban level (Bulkeley et al. 2014; Hughes 2020; McKendry et al. 2015).

Case Selection

The Minneapolis Green Zones Initiative appealed to us because of its striking justice-oriented language; it appeared to be just urban policy. The concept of Green Zones originated from environmental justice (EJ) organizing in Los Angeles, California (Kimbrough 2017), and both the Los Angeles and Minneapolis Green Zones are listed in a 2019 national scan of local EJ policies (Tishman Environment and Design Center 2019). The Minneapolis Green Zones are specifically aimed at improving health and supporting economic development in "low-income communities, Indigenous communities and communities of color in Minneapolis [that] experience unequal health, wealth, employment, and education outcomes, and also are overburdened by environmental conditions such as traffic and stationary pollution sources, brownfield sites, blight and substandard housing." Thus, the Green Zones were created to enact distributive justice, and also explicitly incorporated procedural and recognition justice objectives from the outset.[6]

[6] The City Council resolution establishing the Green Zones named "establishing a Green Zones pilot with key community leadership" as the way forward (City Council of Minneapolis 2016).

As one among a scattering of likely examples of just urban policy across the U.S., we settled on the Green Zones Initiative in particular because of our proximity to Minneapolis: as students at Carleton College about 40 miles south of the city, we already had some connection to the area. In addition, the recency of the Green Zones Initiative contributed to a lack of existing scholarship on the policy, heightening the potential for our own research to both build awareness of the Initiative and contribute to a gap in scholarly literature on just urban transition case studies.

Minneapolis is a city of about 430,000 people (as of 2019) that has been growing in size over the last decade ("U.S. Census Bureau QuickFacts" 2019; "Minneapolis, MN Population" 2010). Minneapolis is on Dakota land (Native Governance Center n.d.). The city was founded in the mid-1800s, when Euro-American colonization of Minnesota was escalating. Built around the Mississippi River, the city became an industrial powerhouse in the 1900s, but later in the twentieth century, experienced industrial and population decline (Nathanson 2010; "Minneapolis, Minnesota Population History 1880-2019" 2021). In 2019, people of color constituted approximately 41% of the population of the city ("U.S. Census Bureau QuickFacts" 2019). Minneapolis is considered a liberal city and has had Democratic mayors for the past four decades. While Minneapolis and St. Paul (the adjoining "Twin Cities") have an "impressive social and economic profile," city-wide characteristics belie significant racial disparities (discussed further in the Results and Discussion section) (Metropolitan Council 2016).

Data Collection and Analysis

Review of Primary and Secondary Documents

We collected and reviewed primary documents related to the Green Zones in order to reconstruct their timeline and understand the objectives of the policy. In addition, primary documents gave us an understanding of the formal structures involved in the Green Zones implementation and helped us to identify individuals and organizations involved in their development. The key documents we collected included the 2013 Minneapolis Climate Action Plan; the city webpage about the Green Zones Initiative ("Green Zones Initiative" 2021); the 2019 and 2020 work plans of the Southside Green Zone Council and

Northside Green Zone Task Force, respectively; meeting notes of the Southside Green Zone Council and Northside Green Zone Task Force from the fall of 2019 to the present; and city resolutions regarding the Green Zones since their inception. In addition, we read academic and news sources about the industrial, racial, and EJ history of Minneapolis to provide context for our analysis.

Meeting Observation

Collectively, our group attended four monthly meetings of Northside Green Zone Task Force and Southside Green Zone Council groups to gain first-hand insights into the workings of these groups and the current goals and priorities of each Green Zone.

Interviews

We identified and contacted 26 stakeholders involved in the Green Zones Initiative, covering every major stage of its development—from the creation of the Climate Action Plan in 2012, to the formation of a Green Zones Workgroup in 2016, to the work of individual Northside and Southside Green Zone task forces from 2017 to the present. Stakeholders were a mix of city officials (3), contracted community engagement facilitators (4), members of partner organizations involved in the development of the CAP (3), and community members involved in the Green Zone working groups (17).

We completed eleven 30-45 minute interviews (see Appendix C: List of Interviewees), with all community members receiving a $50 stipend for their time. Interview questions were tailored to the individual depending on their involvement with the Green Zones, but focused on the process of creating the Green Zones and/or the participatory structure of the initiative (see Appendix D: Interview Questions). The interviews were semi-structured, and we asked follow-up questions about topics that came up in conversation. All interviews were consensually recorded and transcribed, and transcripts were provided to interviewees. We also listened to and transcribed a 30-minute podcast interview about the Green Zones with Kelly Muellman (the City staff person running the Green Zones) from 2017 (PlanIt Podcast).

To analyze our data, we first broke our research question into a number of claims based on hypotheses pulled from our theoretical framework. The purpose of case study research is to explore the

complexities of a single unit (such as a city) and "[approach] that case as *one example of a class of phenomena*" to contribute to the scholarly understanding "of the larger social processes that govern this whole class of phenomena" (Smith n.d.). We studied the Minneapolis Green Zones as one example of just urban policy and of an urban participatory governance model. Drawing claims from similar case studies therefore allowed us to investigate how the Minneapolis Green Zones Initiative aligns with or diverges from other cases of just urban policy and/or participatory governance models. We do not expect our findings to be inherently generalizable to other cases (a predictable limitation of case study research), but we intend to contribute to "a larger effort on the part of the scholarly community to amass lots of case studies that focus on a similar set of variables, processes, and questions" (Smith n.d.) in order to, in this case, better understand practical approaches to just urban policy.

We then added claims generated from recurring themes in our interviews that were relevant to our research question. We wanted to focus on the themes highlighted by our interviewees, whether or not they were emphasized by other researchers, because we wanted to understand the drivers and processes of the Minneapolis Green Zones Initiative specifically, and the people we interviewed who lived in the Green Zones and served on Green Zones task forces and working groups are the experts on this topic.

After accumulating a full list of brainstormed claims (see Appendix E: Research Claims), we studied our document and interview data more comprehensively for evidence for or against each claim. We ordered and grouped the claims for which evidence came from multiple sources (documents or interviewees), which produced our five-part analysis in the Results and Discussion section below. We also provided our thesis and major claims in bullet-point form to our interviewees asking for optional feedback on our claims and conclusions (and we did conduct one follow-up interview to discuss our claims).

Results and Discussion

In the following subsections, we present and analyze our collected evidence in order to understand shared themes among our sources of data and identify different aspects of participatory governance in the Green Zones. We begin by investigating how underlying, systemic conditions in Minneapolis, particularly in the neighborhoods now included in Green Zones, gave rise to the community organizing that was instrumental in creating and designing the Green Zones. Second, we analyze how this crucial environmental justice organizing brought a needed justice and equity focus to the City's Climate Action Plan that was not included in the CAP process originally. Moving chronologically, we then turn to the formation of the Green Zones as an initiative, arguing that the initiative was informed by other participatory policies in Minneapolis that had ineffectively engaged Green Zones neighborhoods. After these past negative experiences working with the City, community members advocated for and created a uniquely representative and community-defined initiative. Finally, we investigate the current state of the Green Zones by analyzing the different forms of participation that they utilize in order to set actionable goals and practice self-determination.

I. Inequalities in Minneapolis have driven environmental justice organizing

Glaring and persistent inequalities along multiple dimensions were central drivers for North and South Minneapolis residents to organize for environmental justice, for effective political representation, and against displacement. This finding aligns with case studies examining the conditions in which equity-centric urban initiatives have arisen. For example, Sara Hughes identified growing scales of poverty and inequality as a key bottom-up driver of justice-oriented policy in other legacy cities (Hughes 2020). Schrock et al. (2015) list disparities as one of three essential conditions which may give rise to more robust social justice components within local sustainability initiatives. When inequities on the ground are particularly stark, their visibility raises the profile of such concerns for local officials, whose priorities typically lie far from responding to marginalized and minority communities. Schrock et al. (2015)

therefore argue that redistributional agendas[7] are more likely to gain traction in urban areas where significant disparities exist for large populations of racial minorities despite high aggregate economic activity and incomes. We found that bottom-up, but not top-down, factors drove the Green Zones Initiative as a policy grounded in distributive and procedural justice.

Hughes's identification of poverty and inequality as bottom-up drivers of just policy in other legacy cities also applies to Minneapolis (Hughes 2020). She uses the term "legacy cities" to describe post-industrial U.S. cities where job losses in manufacturing were not balanced by job growth in other sectors, and the cities have seen substantial population loss from their peak (Hughes 2020). As a result of economic instability and suburban flight, legacy cities have rising poverty and unemployment, often high racial and economic inequality, and environmental contamination from past industry (Hughes 2020). Minneapolis certainly fits this description. In the early 1900s, the city's river-front industrial district made it a "flour-milling capital of the world," but later in the twentieth century, the city experienced persistent industrial decline (Nathanson 2010). The population of Minneapolis peaked around 1950—at the time, the 17th largest city in the U.S. with a population of around 520,000—before dropping to 370,000 by the 1980s ("Minneapolis, Minnesota Population History 1880-2019" 2021). Minneapolis also has stark racial disparities in income, education, health, employment and environmental benefits and hazards ("Green Zones Initiative" 2021; "Mapping Prejudice" 2020; Metropolitan Council 2016). A Metropolitan Council report investigating racial disparities in the Twin Cities stated,

> The Twin Cities metro continues to have an impressive social and economic profile… In 2015, the Twin Cities metro ranked first among

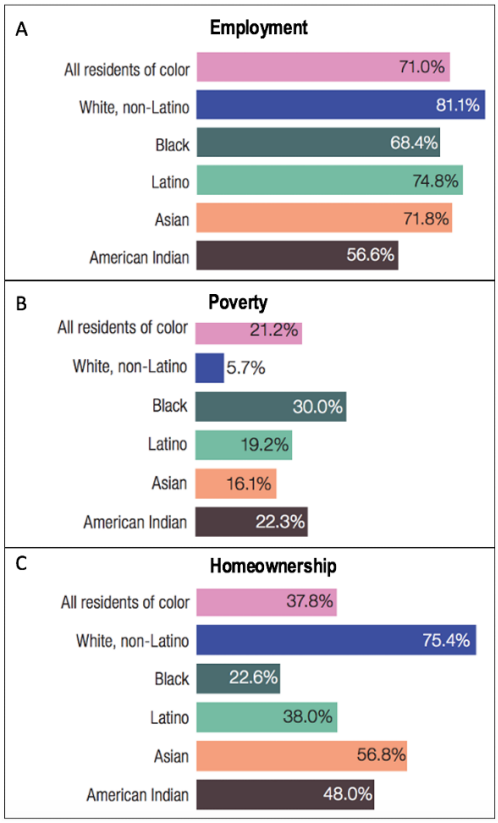

Figure 1. *Racial disparities in employment, poverty, and homeownership in the Twin Cities metro.* Adapted from "Behind the Curve: Racial and Ethnic Disparities in the Twin Cities Metro in 2015." Data from the U.S. Census Bureau and American Community Survey.

[7] Refers to the redistribution of economic, social, or environmental resources in a more equitable and just way.

> the 25 largest metros in the U.S. for our high rates of employment and homeownership, and second for our low poverty rate. When these indicators are calculated by race and ethnicity, however, significant disparities are revealed. In fact, the Twin Cities metro continues to have the highest racial and ethnic disparities in the U.S. between White, non-Latino residents and residents of color in employment, poverty, and homeownership (see figure 1) (Metropolitan Council 2016).

Racial inequality in Minneapolis stems from long and enduring histories of settler colonialism that trace back to the founding of the state and capital in the early to mid-1800s. Mni Sota Makoce (Minnesota) "is a Dakota place" (Westerman and White 2012); Mni Sota Makoce has been the homeland of the Dakota people for many thousands of years,[8] and is also the land of Anishinaabe people and Indigenous people from other Native nations (Native Governance Center n.d.). In the early 1800s, Euro-American colonization of Minnesota escalated quickly due to the Louisiana Purchase and, beginning in the 1830s, Dakota, Anishinaabe, and other Native nations in Minnesota "dealt with the intensifying consequences of American colonialism: the dispossession of their lands, the appropriation of their resources, the disruption of economic and political systems, and the assimilationist assault on their cultural identities" (Davis 2013). It was in response to these pressures[9] that increasing numbers of Indigenous people, and especially Ojibwe people, established urban Indian communities in the Twin Cities in the early 1900s, which grew dramatically between the 1950s and 1970s (Davis 2013).

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[8] According to Dakota oral history, the first Dakota peoples' spirits came down the Caŋku Wanaġi (Spirit Road, the Milky Way) to Bdote—the place of creation (Westerman and White 2012). Bdote is the confluence where the Minnesota and Mississippi Rivers meet, which now lies in between Minneapolis and St. Paul. It is sacred land to the Dakota peoples, as both the place of creation and the center of all things.

[9] The information we provide here is only a brief and incomplete recognition of the profound violence, loss, and injustices of Euro-American colonization of the Midwest that continues in the modern day. Pressures in the early 1900s included that Indigenous peoples were forced off of their homelands through treaty cessions, violently marched out of the state during the Dakota War, displaced with federal land allotment programs like the Dawes Act of 1877, and targeted by federal "termination and relocation programs," (D'Arcus 2010) all of which reduced the land in Minnesota controlled by Indigenous peoples and undermined tribal economies (Davis 2013). It is important to state that legacies of genocide, displacement, and otherization of nonwhite populations persist, as do their systemic drivers. Spiralling modern-day crises including gentrification, one of the alienating forces of neoliberal capitalism, continue to disrupt the often tight-knit social fabric of communities of color. Surveyed communities of color in Minneapolis overwhelmingly indicated displacement to be one of their biggest fears. In the face of continuous structural adversity, these communities have tended to create humanistic cultures of solidarity and mutual support. Within hostile systems which fail to meet people's needs, least-advantaged communities rely on each other. Displacement tears the stabilizing social safety nets out from under them, deepening marginalization further.

The growth of urban Indian communities in Minneapolis is important context for this study, as Indian communities in Minneapolis have a long history of organizing in response to injustice that continues today, and these communities—including Little Earth in Phillips —overlap with the present-day Green Zones.[10] Cassandra Holmes, a community organizer, Southside Task Force member, and leader in the East Phillips community, describes Little Earth as "a one of a kind in [the U.S.]." "The only Indian preference housing off of a reservation," it houses between 800 to 1,800 people (Holmes). The Little Earth housing project is just one outcome of organizing during the American Indian Movement (AIM),[11] an ongoing movement that emerged in Minneapolis in 1968. AIM, which built on decades of urban Indigenous activism in Minneapolis, was a response to pervasive anti-Indian discrimination.[12] Indian organizers' continued calls for racial justice encompass demands for environmental justice. For example, sovereign Native Nations demand to be represented in climate change agreements (Native Peoples Native Homelands Climate Change Workshop 2009). The braided strands of colonialism, racism, and ecological destruction have roots in the violent capitalist conquest from which Western economic dominance grew (Whyte 2018; Ahmed 2020). Environmental and social justice scholars have often framed contemporary disparities as natural symptoms of America's capitalist, white supremacist system. The dehumanizing impacts of combined injustices continue to deeply affect Indigenous communities' lived experience. Describing pollution like East Phillips' arsenic pollution, Cassandra Holmes, a member of Little Earth United Tribes, said, "To be honest, it's just scary as hell. It's another form of genocide. We have over 38 tribes represented here in Little Earth."

[10] In the mid-twentieth century, Indian communities in Minneapolis became increasingly centralized in North Minneapolis and in the Elliot Park and Phillips neighborhoods of South Minneapolis. The Southside Green Zone does not incorporate Elliot Park but does incorporate the Phillips neighborhood, which, by 1970, was where about two-thirds of the population of Indians in Minneapolis lived (Davis 2013).

[11] In 1971, American Indian Movement (AIM) organizers secured federal funding for Indian-controlled affordable housing in Phillips, which later became the Little Earth housing project (Davis 2013).

[12] Pervasive anti-Indian discrimination caused high unemployment, poverty, substandard housing, health disparities, and disproportionate incarceration rates of Native people, a lack of access to social services, and multigenerational cultural loss from displacement and racist federal assimilation campaigns (Davis 2013). AIM leaders first organized against police harassment of Indian people, but the movement grew to address disparities in housing, health care, and employment, and support for tribal sovereignty and cultures (Davis 2013; Wittstock and Salinas n.d.).

Minneapolis' history of anti-Black racism and its intersection with environmental injustice is similarly vital for understanding the context of the creation of the Green Zones Initiative. Due to forty-year use of racial covenants in Minneapolis in the 1900s, Minneapolis is a highly segregated city. Mapping Prejudice is a University of Minnesota project exposing structural racism in Minneapolis by tracing the history of more than 30,000 racial convents, which barred people of color from owning or renting property ("Mapping Prejudice" 2020). "The restrictions were adopted in such a universal, overwhelming way," (Holder 2020) explained Kirsten Delegard, a co-founder of the project, that "people who weren't white were sorted into just a handful of very, very small neighborhoods" (Waxman 2020). "A lot of these contemporary disparities that are so pronounced and brutal have roots in the history of deliberate efforts to make sure that all land in the city remained in the control of white people" (Holder 2020).

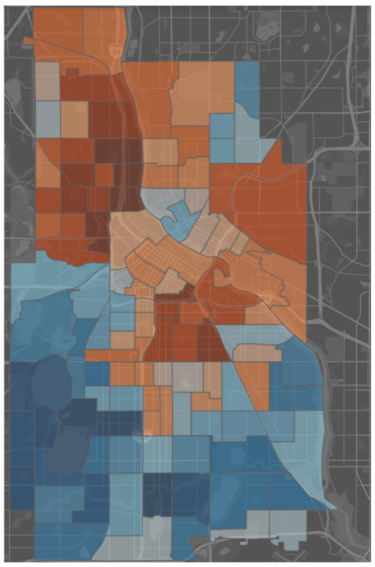

Figure 2. *Map of population characteristics and environmental indicators in Minneapolis*. Areas with darker red have lower rankings (e.g. low-income, high pollution), while areas with a darker blue have higher rankings (e.g. wealthy, low pollution). Rankings took into account demographic, economic, employment, greening, air quality, soil contamination, housing quality and affordability, and food access variables.

This history of racial discrimination in Minneapolis is crucial context for understanding the Green Zones Initiative because the explicitly "place-based" Initiative is a reflection of residential segregation in Minneapolis that remains pronounced today and underpins a multitude of contemporary inequities. The Northside and Southside Green Zones were designated based on cumulative impact mapping of a variety of factors including equity, displacement, air quality, brownfields and soil contamination, housing, green jobs, food access, and greening (see Figure 2) ("Green Zones Initiative" 2021). The recognition and consideration of cumulative impacts is a central feature of the Green Zones initiative and Work Plans, and is made necessary because of racial discrimination—historical and ongoing. As the Mapping Prejudice website summarizes, "Separate is not equal. In the United States, racial segregation channels the flow of resources. Where you live determines access to community assets."

Additionally, the South Side police precinct was the site of George Floyd's brutal murder by Minneapolis police in May 2020, an event which ignited ongoing nationwide mass protests against racial

injustice and police brutality. Holmes powerfully connected this symbolic example of deadly racism to the more obscured and systemic environmental ones: “That was our area, you know. And, unfortunately, it happens all over... and not only are they taking our lives like that, they're doing it slowly. With the pollution and their plans and them just not giving a crap about us when we're speaking up.” Even less publicly recognized is the accelerating cruelty of climate change, which exacerbates issues like urban heat islands, air and water pollution, and extreme weather events. All of these environmental changes are compacted by the racist and classist residential segregation discussed above, which has forced communities of color and low-income communities into hotter, more polluted neighborhoods with fewer trees, less green spaces, more asphalt coverage, and closer proximity to toxic facilities (Schell et al. 2020).

The Green Zones Initiative was fought for by community members (as we argue in Section II) and created in response to the glaring inequities in Minneapolis. Our interviewees consistently described widespread experiences of environmental racism and adverse health impacts, along with a pattern of being disregarded by the city, as the driving forces for historical and current community organizing and political engagement in North and South Minneapolis. We cannot represent the true gravity of issues like chronic community health impacts or root shock[13] within the scope of this research, and without lived experience. As Yolonde Adams-Lee said to us, “This is about life, this is about people’s life, this was not a school project for me. This is about saving lives in my community.” Interviewees emphasized health problems from air, soil, and water pollution in the Green Zones, including from lead, asbestos, and arsenic poisoning and high rates of mild to severe asthma. Multiple interviewees said that they themselves, family members, friends, and neighbors suffering from serious pollution-caused health complications led them to advocate for EJ in their community (Adams-Lee, Holmes, Urvina Davis). The Green Zones work plans also highlighted problems like lack of access to healthy food, high cost of energy

[13] Root shock refers to the emotional and psychological trauma a person or community experiences as a result of displacement, including the loss of interpersonal relations social, cultural, political, and economic capital.

bills, lack of affordable housing, increasing gentrification, and more ("Achieving Climate and Environmental Justice in the Southside Green Zone" 2019; "City of Minneapolis Northside Green Zone 5-Year Work Plan" 2020). Interviewees highlighted combinations of these injustices as driving community groups to organize (Abdinur, Adams-Lee, Villaseñor). Indeed, there is a rich tapestry of community organizing and strong community capacity in both of the Green Zones—from historical examples like the Black Patrol and Indian Patrol reducing police brutality and harassment in Minneapolis in the late twentieth century, to contemporary examples like Hope Community maintaining affordable housing and community spaces in Phillips. But "any movement comes with a cost," said Adams-Lee, speaking to the creation of the Green Zones Initiative: it comes at the cost of years of community members volunteering their time and energy, she said, and also "quite frankly, it comes at the cost of someone's life."

Further, marginalized communities in Minneapolis including neighborhoods in the Green Zones have consistently been disregarded by the City when giving voice to such problems. "Minnesota was third in the nation [for health disparities] for 20 years running. Why is that? Because nobody gave a darn about us," Adams-Lee said. Holmes described the same sentiment. Several interviewees described a City pattern of disinterest to past community activism, and community members needing to "hold the city accountable to the community" (Villaseñor). "I think that there's a lot of history, in particular from what I know and have been involved in in East Phillips, of always having to fight for space on the pathway to equity, justice, and environmental justice, even to the extent of the idea that, you know, bicycle lands and urban farms are at times contributing to the gentrification of our communities," said José Luis Villaseñor. "The work plan development process acknowledged the years of history and hard work done by the community in its fight for their right to clean and healthy community for their families and children," states the Southside Green Zone work plan ("Achieving Climate and Environmental Justice in the Southside Green Zone" 2019).[14] Interviewees cited EJ issues unfolding both prior to and during the Green Zones—such as

[14] Notably Statute 116.07.4a (2008), the Clark-Berglund Law (championed by former representative Karen Clark, and non-voting member of the Southside Green Zone), requires the MPCA to consider "cumulative levels and

a settlement with a metal scrapper violating pollution levels in Northern Minneapolis (Goddard; Orenstein 2019) and ongoing tension between the City of Minneapolis and East Phillips over plans for a former industrial site, among others (see Figure 3) (Holmes; Villaseñor; Morrell 2020)—as evidence of the City disregarding or actively going against community desires and repeatedly failing to hold industry and planners accountable for overburdening communities with environmental ills. "The environmental disparities we face as a community has been institutionalized through decades of planning, decision-making and investment patterns that have sacrificed the health and well being of our community and families," members of the Southside Green Zone Council wrote in an 2019 letter to the City ("Achieving Climate and Environmental Justice in the Southside Green Zone" 2019).

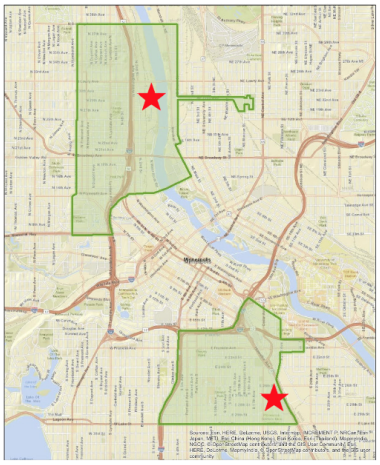

Figure 3. The red stars indicate the former location of Northern Metals Recycling (top) and the location of East Phillips' Indoor Urban Farm/the City of Minneapolis's Hiawatha Campus Expansion (bottom) within the Green Zones boundaries. Adapted from the City of Minneapolis Green Zones Boundaries map.

The dominant narrative of Minneapolis broadcasts an illusion of progressivism, belying a City structurally ill-equipped to address environmental justice. In fact, the city has been ranked among the top cities in the nation for climate change goals by the Washington D.C.-based American Council for an Energy-Efficient Economy (ACEEE) scorecard. In 2018, Samuel Myers Jr.[15] coined the term "Minnesota paradox" to describe the dichotomy between Minnesota's reputation as one of the best places to live and the reality of severe racial inequalities in the state (MPR News Staff 2020). Shalini Gupta similarly described that, at the time of the creation of the City's CAP, "There was a real sort of narrative about the City of Minneapolis having the best parks, being such a bikeable city, [and] having relatively clean air, but there wasn't language yet around the disparities that

effects of past and current pollution" before issuing a permit to new facilities wanting to locate to the Southside area.

[15] Samuel Myers, Jr., is the director of the Roy Wilkins Center of Human Relations and Social Justice at the Humphrey School of Public Affairs at the University of Minnesota.

existed, or the concept of environmental racism that was institutionalized in implementation of sustainability programming." There were also racist false narratives perpetuated in city decision-making spaces that people of color weren't really interested in environmental issues or didn't have the knowledge to guide legislation on environmental issues (Abdinur, Foushee, Gupta). The City's neglect to address EJ and racial issues during the Climate Action Planning (CAP) process was part of a pattern of these issues being overlooked in Minneapolis, and this historical pattern contributed to the City's neglect to prioritize justice in the CAP.

In summary, while much more research could be devoted to the EJ history of Minneapolis, it is clear that historical inequities from "racism built into the system" (Gupta) not only quite literally led to the designation of the Northside and Southside Green Zones, but also drove the organizing that led to the creation of the Green Zones from the start.

II. Community organizations drove the adoption of environmental justice in the Minneapolis CAP

EJ groups and advocates muscled their way into key opportunities during the CAP's development, obtaining an initial foothold in a piece of City decision-making; documentation of the creation of the Minneapolis Climate Action Plan (CAP) overwhelmingly demonstrates that grassroots and community organizations drove the adoption of justice-oriented policy in the CAP. By contrast, top-down factors played a negligible role in writing EJ into the CAP. This conclusion is consistent with the literature, particularly Schrock et al.'s finding that grassroots capacity and opportunity are instrumental to integrating equity in sustainability initiatives (2015). Schrock et al. argue that grassroots capacity to organize around particular issues is one necessary component of generating enough political pressure to transcend institutional exclusion. Additionally, equity-oriented organizations within communities of color were key actors in mobilizing around the third factor: the opening of a catalyzing opportunity in the form

of the CAP. Certain institutional allies internal to the City were critical for cultivating intentionality, chipping away at obstacles, and helping empower marginalized populations.

Around two months after the City's first public CAP kickoff meeting, a group of self-described "environmental justice organizations and community members representing communities of color, Indigenous Peoples, and low-income communities within Minneapolis and St. Paul area" sent a letter to the City's Office of Sustainability titled, "Environmental Justice Community Concerns with Minneapolis Climate Action Planning Process" ("Minneapolis Climate Action Plan Appendix C" 2013). Part of the letter read:

> We garner serious concerns that the communities that will be most impacted by both climate change and the policies that will be developed as solutions (namely communities of color, Indigenous, and low--income communities) are not adequately represented and supported within a decision-making capacity in the planning process. Of deep concern is the fact that the environmental justice constituency, (specifically communities of color, low-income communities and the most vulnerable) is being disenfranchised from the process.

Our interviewees, including current City officials, consistently noted that participants on the technical working groups were a majority "white technocrats" and gravely lacked representation of different populations of color in Minneapolis (Foushee, Gupta, Havey, Muellman). "They had over 100 sort of different experts and individuals. There were no people of color in the whole process, maybe one… It hadn't even been on their radar, even though the City of Minneapolis is almost 45% people of color, and so it's pretty glaring," said Gupta, one of the key individuals advocating for EJ representation in the CAP. Lea Foushee echoed the same fact. The omission of people of color from the City-initiated CAP process speaks to the extent of the City's neglect to consider the need to implement just transitions through climate action planning, let alone prioritize justice.

Scholarship on urban sustainability planning and community engagement has generated ample evidence that across US cities, economic development, business interests, and mainstream environmental advocates construct Climate Action Plan agendas. At the structural level, the pre-existing neoliberal

imperatives institutionalized in governance carry into sustainability objectives (McKendry 2015; Schrock et al. 2015, Hughes 2020). The majority-white and wealthy constituencies who benefit from the market-driven political and economic order are often also the ones in control of urban planning and climate adaptation, enabling climate action to reproduce unequal power relations, whether intentionally or not (Schrock et al. 2015; Few et al. 2007; Sarzynski 2015). Schrock et al. explain that "the objective focus on GHG emissions reductions tended to lead officials toward strategies such as commercial and institutional energy efficiency programs rather than programs likely to yield tangible benefits to impoverished communities" (2015). Cassandra Holmes articulated her understanding of the City's motives: "I truly believe [their actions have] to do with money and space." In stark contrast, "the community's actions have to do with life, and the right to the right to live" (Holmes). Before the initiation of the Minneapolis CAP came to organizers' attention, the Sustainability Office had not even made a perfunctory effort to involve marginalized populations. Kim Havey, who has been the City's Director of Sustainability since 2018 and was coordinating a large City solar program in 2013, said at that time "it was very cutting edge to be talking about environmental justice." In Gupta's eyes, the Sustainability Office was only just beginning to understand EJ issues. The Office's inertia was reinforced by the narrative that ordinary citizens of color were neither interested in participating in planning nor useful. This is characterized by a number of scholars as a widespread phenomena in American professional institutions (Sirianni 2020; McKendry 2015, 2016; Schrock et al. 2015).

The undertaking of a "huge negotiation process" (Gupta) to establish the EJ Working Group group and gain seats on the CAP Steering Committee[16] allowed EJ organizers to begin climbing the ladder of participation (Arnstein 1969). After about four months and a series of written and in-person communications between City officials and community EJ representatives, a handful of community representatives that were largely organized by the Center for Earth, Energy, and Democracy (CEED) sent

[16] The recommendations of all of the Working Groups (including the EJ Working Group) went to a Steering Committee that comprised two representatives from each working group as well as three additional city staff. The Steering Committee was responsible for adopting a final draft of the CAP.

the City a detailed proposal for an EJ Working Group to be included in the CAP process. The proposal even named eighteen individuals nominated through "community outreach and recommendations" for membership on the proposed group—one indication of the significant work put into the proposal. The City, with some alterations to the original proposal, accepted the establishment of the EJ Working Group to review the goals drafted by the three technical working groups and develop recommendations to be incorporated into the CAP ("Minneapolis Climate Action Plan Appendix C" 2013). Despite the onerous and inequitable demands on organizers' time and energy, EJ organizers demonstrated persistence and strategic mobilizing, which enabled them to successfully advance justice in the City's CAP. Gupta conveyed that the group had a strong awareness of the City's limitations and jurisdictional intricacies. Like Kelly Muellman, the City of Minneapolis Sustainability Program Coordinator, Gupta emphasized the City's technical capacity and resource flows are concentrated within the interests of the affluent, there is high staff turnover, overburdened staff workloads, and need for codification to secure real commitment to justice.

Based on their past organizing experience and knowledge of the City, the EJ Working Group fought for documentation of their recommendations within the final Climate Action Plan to ensure the longevity of the CAP's justice lens and the responsiveness of an array of resourced technical experts (Sirianni 2020, Schrock et al. 2015, Schlosberg 2007). Despite the pressing need for robust institutional resources to be directed towards just policy, "a lot of times… racial justice issues get programs, they don't get policy… in terms of codification in law" (Gupta). Organizers also ensured that the Green Zones proposal made it into CAP documentation so they could make "the City think [this outward driven effort] was their idea to begin [with], because over time people leave, but what's there is the institutional... paper trail" (Gupta). The EJ Working Group reserved the right to publish documentation on their work; this led to the creation of Appendix C of the CAP, which documents communications between the City and EJ organizers before the establishment of the EJ Working Group as well as all edits suggested by the EJ Working Group. As Gupta described, city staff have a high rate of turnover where, in comparison, "the community is always there; the community has been there for 30 or 40 years, [so] the community at some

point is like, 'We can't educate you [City staff] anymore'... So our contribution is these documents and these workplants, and the next staff person is actually being held accountable to those." Thus, the EJ Working Group's documentation of the CAP process overall (along with the later Northside and Southside Green Zone Work Plans) was an important tool of advancing justice (Gupta, Holmes, Villaseñor).

The comments and recommendations eventually submitted by the EJ Working Group to the Steering Committee in February 2013 substantially increased the justice-orientation of the CAP. The EJ Working Group introduced establishing Green Zones as a cross-cutting strategy ("Green Zones Initiative" 2021) and added equity considerations under all of the major implementation areas of the plan ("Minneapolis Climate Action Plan Appendix C" 2013). Appendix C to the CAP, which details the recommendations of the EJ Working Group, states, "The review of the body of recommendations by the Environmental Justice Working Group found a large number of critical environmental justice concerns missing." For example, "in buildings, renters weren't even included until the EJ groups [and] in transportation, public transportation… There was no conversation about co-pollutants; it was very greenhouse gas focused, there was nothing about particulate matter or those other sorts of health intersections," said Gupta. Similarly, Havey described EJ and racial inequities as "a bit of an afterthought" during the initial development of the CAP. As Muellman said, "[The EJ Working Group] made a lot of recommendations for both specific action item changes, but also some significant overarching changes around the goals and implementation of the CAP." Notably, a number of our interviewees pointed to the City Council's unanimous approval of the updated CAP as something of a special "momentary eye-opening" for the City; it was a confirmation that equitable and just policy was viable within Minneapolis. Community organizers seized the opportunity created by the major public undertaking of the CAP, and were able to break through the City's resistance and ignorance and win power through the securing of key promises. Organizers' efforts to codify an EJ lens in climate action and energy plans ensured that the City would initially have greater accountability to marginalized and climate-vulnerable communities.

In comparison, top-down factors played a negligible role in writing EJ into the CAP. A few "very responsive City Council members" were key to getting an EJ Working Group established (Gupta). Otherwise, the City regularly failed to respond to the demands of EJ representatives. For example, the City accepted less than the full extent of the EJ Working Group proposal (which included writing an EJ chapter to the CAP, among other deliverables) and EJ representatives had to fight for their desire for the "full and original comments provided by the EJ Working Group [to] be forwarded to the Steering Committee" ("Minneapolis Climate Action Plan Appendix C" 2013). In addition, the City did not respond to EJ representatives' demands for stipends. From the beginning—in their letter to the City about the CAP process in April of 2012—community representatives demanded that the city provide the "resources required for *effective and meaningful* participation by EJ representatives from smaller, community-based groups and organizations" to match the capacity to participate of representatives from the private sector and large non-profit organizations. Despite this and subsequent requests for stipends, for anywhere between three high-need members to all of the members on the EJ Working Group, the City's Office of Sustainability did not provide stipends on the grounds that "the budget for the Climate Action Plan [did] not include stipends to members of any Working Group" ("Minneapolis Climate Action Plan Appendix C" 2013). Here, the City failed to practice justice as recognition because it did not acknowledge the needs and positionality of EJ Working Group members as compared to the other CAP Working Groups staffed with white technocrats.

In addition, the relationship between EJ community representatives and members of the City's Sustainability Office was consistently tense during the creation of the CAP. Lea Foushee, the eventual EJ Working Group representative on the Steering Committee, said: "They did not respect us at all… How they treated us, compared to how they treated others that were part of their process, there was just a difference—in venues, in hospitality." Appendix C of the CAP tells the same story. For instance, in response to the City's request that the EJ Working Group provide the name/title/organization of its members, EJ representatives wrote in a letter to the City:

> We would be happy to provide the other details requested regarding the 'Minneapolis neighborhoods [that nominated EJ Working Group members] work in and the name/title/organization of the person who nominated them to the group' if we are provided those same details for the members of the 3 other Working Groups. We are extremely concerned that the EJ Working Group is being held to a higher standard of recruitment and justification than other Working Groups have been by the City, not setting a good precedent for inclusive and equitable participation.[17]

Interviewees involved in the CAP process consistently underscored that as an institution, City structures blocked the means of advancing procedural justice and justice as recognition. Their collective action won from the City a pledge to establish the Green Zones Initiative, which opened up inroads into a resource jackpot: initial funding, interagency attention, and the sustained commitment of a City staff person.

The very community-driven justice orientation in the Minneapolis CAP aligns with the findings of other researchers like Sara Hughes, who found that "a focus on justice in climate change adaptation" in the CAPs of other Midwestern legacy cities (Detroit and Cleveland) "reflects the influence of grassroots and community organizations on each city's plan" (Hughes 2020).[18]

III. Community-based organizations push for civic engagement

The Green Zones were not created in a vacuum: many state and city initiatives that address inequalities with community models preceded the Zones, and others were concurrently vying for the community's attention. In this policy landscape, community-based organizations played a key role. More

[17] Other comments include, "We would like to set the record straight that the initial engagement of EJ representation was not 'because the City was interested in including representation from the environmental justice community in February 2012' as stated in your letter," instead going on to list instances where "EJ community representatives pointed out the omission of equity and transparency in the climate planning process," and, "While we generally approve the Outline of the EJ Working Group Meetings provided, please note that not consulting EJ representatives on the agenda development of the meetings is counter to the principles of environmental justice and citizen consultation" ("Minneapolis Climate Action Plan Appendix C" 2013).

[18] In Detroit, for example, a community organization led the creation of a CAP that was later adopted by the City Council, and "Cleveland similarly credits its focus on justice and equity on the consistent engagement and drive of community and grassroots organizations" (Hughes 2020).

capable of meaningful community engagement than the city and state government, the community-based organizations were recruited by policymakers to help reach the community, but they also levied their strong organizational capacity to push back on inadequate engagement models and support community ownership.

Before the city began work on the Green Zones, community-based organizations in the Phillips neighborhood took ownership of the Green Zones concept in order to develop a Health Impact Assessment, and in the process, demonstrated what community engagement could look like to the City. The Health Impact Assessment (HIA) began in 2014, when the Minnesota Department of Health recruited Nexus Partners, a civic engagement and community non-profit, to enlist organizations for a Community Steering Team that would help the MDH conduct a HIA. The community HIA was designed as a place-based environmental health initiative to consider geographic and social determinants of health and allow the communities most affected by inequities to "take the lead in the design, development, implementation, and evaluation of the efforts." (Health Impact Assessment, 8). The MDH initially identified five areas in the Twin cities with facing significant cumulative impacts but chose the Phillips neighborhood because of its robust community-organizing capacity.[19] However, the CST grew frustrated with the MDH's "fast tracked timeline," and a lack of trust and follow-through.[20] The community-based organizations involved in the HIA decided continuing to work with the MDH was "not in the best interests of the community"

[19] The Community Steering Team was composed of community organization representatives from Nexus Community Partners, Hope Community, Land Stewardship Project, Waite House, and Isuroon, and Center for Earth, Energy, and Democracy (CEED). These community-based organizations have such long ties to the area they maintain an informal record and institutional memory of previous grassroots campaigns and city initiatives. For example, government investors built the Green Institute EcoEntreprise Center, now the Greenway Office, next to a Superfund site known as the "Arsenic Triangle" at the time the Philips' community was fighting a waste incinerator that wanted to move to the neighborhood. The center was intended to be for the community but the project gradually changed to external leadership and staff. The Green Zone Health Impact Assessment, compiled by the Center for Earth, Energy, and Democracy states, "Many consider it a case study on how sustainability projects that start with an environmental justice vision can be shifted away from community control, resulting in green technology without racial equity."

[20] "1) The impending deadline for MDH to submit the HIA as a deliverable required a fast-tracked report due to the lack of progress in 2015
2) The CST trust level with MDH had eroded and the later time sensitive requests from MDH were challenging for the community organizations given the extensive time already invested with the previous staff member
3) The data and indicators which the CST requested were not included in the draft report, likely because of the staff transition." *Green Zones: Health Impact Assessment for the Phillips Community*

and chose to pursue a "scaled down" HIA on their own. The resulting HIA, produced under the leadership of the Center for Earth, Energy, and Democracy emphasized community concerns like anti-displacement that were more "limited" in the MDH draft HIA. Independent of the City, the HIA speaks directly to the Green Zone concept, "The CST determined that health in the Phillips Community is based on cross-sectoral issues, and as such the Green Zones was an appropriate policy for a comprehensive assessment of health impacts." [21] But when the City asked community organizers involved in creating a community Health Impact Assessment to join the Green Zones planning, they declined, wanting to "maintain its integrity as a community-based body" (Green Zone Health Impact Assessment)[22].

The City's first step on the Green Zones demonstrated a deeply flawed concept for community engagement and leadership that rivaled the MDH's mistakes. The City Council passed a resolution in 2016 appointing a Workgroup to determine the boundaries of the Green Zones and establish the scope and goals of Green Zone task forces. The resolution assumed city control of Workgroup's methods,[23] composition (the determination of relevant stakeholders and decision-makers),[24] priorities and goals,[25] and timeline.[26] This was despite the resolution stating "policy developed by impacted stakeholders ensures that decisions are informed by local knowledge and creates buy-in for effective implementation and community empowerment for positive change." By subsuming control over all of these decisions, the City took away the potential for legitimate community empowerment and made it possible for the city to

[21] LA Green Zones appealed because of the "centrality of environmental justice and equity in the development and implementation of Green Zones in California."

[22] Shalini Gupta, former Executive Director of the Center for Earth, Energy, and Democracy, was the only member of the HIA team to join the Work Group. She was also instrumental in the Climate Action Plan EJ Work Group and later co-facilitated the Southside Green Zone task force.

[23] "Be It Further Resolved that the City of Minneapolis directs the Workgroup to identify Green Zone recommendations based on specific data sets, including environmental issues (land, air and water) as well as race and income, to create basic overlays to demonstrate the intensity of the intersection of these factors"

[24] "Be It Further Resolved that this Workgroup shall be led by the Coordinator's Office, including Sustainability and Equity and Inclusion staff, in conjunction with the following relevant City staff and external partners…"

[25] "Be It Further Resolved that this Workgroup shall then review the gathered data and shall draft recommendations regarding Green Zone priority areas; designation criteria and eligibility; goals and metrics tracking progress within each designation; and strategies aimed at improving health and supporting economic development based on the results of the above data analysis"

[26] "Be It Further Resolved that this Workgroup shall present its recommendations to Council for approval no later than fourth quarter 2016"

manipulate local knowledge to fit their agenda (Arnstien, 1969; Few et al., 2011). Additionally frustrating to the community leaders involved in the HIA, the resolution mentioned the HIA as an accomplishment "facilitated" and "established" by the MDH.[27] Ultimately the Work Group pushed back against the constraints of the resolution. Concerned about the lack of wider community voice, the Work Group members successfully secured funding for a summer series of community focus groups that would review the recommendations before they were brought to the City Council (City of Minneapolis Green Zones webpage). Work Group members were also essential to shaping the next stage of Green Zone development, making clear that Work Plan development would need to follow community timeline not the City or facilitators' timelines, and that trust building and community outreach would need to play more central roles (Gupta, Muellman).

One of the EJ Working Group's intentions was to "start the conversation on environmental, racial and economic equity in environmental decision making in the city" (Climate Action Plan Appendix C). Green Zones, with the help of community-based organizations, have pushed this conversation with the city and state but equitable decision making requires their continued attention. For example, in 2019 the Minneapolis Fund and McKnight Foundation collaborated with the Office of Sustainability on a Climate Action and Racial Equity Fund to finance small organizations and individuals working on projects that would facilitate a more just green transition. However, the leaders of the fund failed to inform the Green Zones of the opportunity until the first round of applications had closed. The Southside Green Zone wrote a letter to the director of the Sustainability Office regarding the framing and implementation process stating: "Community leadership in the drafting and design of the grant framework was absent." They argued that leaving out community leadership "severely limited the access of the fund to the targeted community experiencing environmental and climate injustice" ("Achieving Climate and Environmental Justice in the Southside Green Zone" 2019). Unlike these regional foundations, community-based

[27] "Whereas, the Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) Climate & Health Program facilitated a health impact assessment (HlA) with community based organizations on the possible implementation of a Green Zones initiative in Minneapolis, and established a Steering Committee that has developed recommendations to inform a Green zones Policy for the City"

organizations that did not have an explicit environmental focus, but linked EJ more broadly to community wellbeing, set the bar for community engagement and played a crucial role in increasing the Green Zone's ability to advocate for marginalized voices. Furthermore, the inadequacies of these previous engagement programs, like the HIA and the Climate Action and Racial Equity Fund, informed and shaped the Green Zones, as community members applied lessons from past experience with these insufficient participation models to the design of the task forces and work plans.

IV. Community representation in Green Zone task forces

To recruit task forces that would be more representative of Green Zone resident demographics, the Green Zones (GZs) need additional resources. Given their limitations, however, current task forces are still far ahead of most advisory groups in the degree to which they represent their community demographically and advocate for the concerns of the most marginalized voices and those not at the table.

Critics of civic participation argue that participatory decision-making can become dominated by the concerns of a vocal minority, whether explicitly, by a special interest group (Few et al. 2007), or more subtly in the makeup of participants. Sometimes called the “usual suspects,” these participants are active community members involved on multiple civic engagement boards and neighborhood associations (Silverman 2003). Since white homeowners are systematically more privileged with time and resources to devote to community meetings they often compose the majority of the “usual suspects” (Fagotto and Fung 2006). The dominance of white homeowners was a major criticism of the Minneapolis Neighborhood Revitalization Program (NRP), which operated/ran from 1990 to 2010. NRP aimed to disperse $400 million to neighborhoods across the city to spend on community-determined needs. Every neighborhood, even wealthy ones, could receive funding but amounts would be graded based on whether the neighborhood identified as “protection,” “revitalization,” or “redirection.” To acquire funding, existing neighborhood associations went through an approval process and drafted a Neighborhood Work Plan outlining the community’s goals (Fagotto and Fung, 2006). In the Phillips Neighborhood (a large area of the current Southside Green Zone) representatives of social justice-focused nonprofits and white

homeowners in the neighborhood association clashed over how best to spend the money and split into four groups. Of the resulting groups, the East Phillips Improvement Coalition, was the most social justice minded. They stressed affordable housing and environmental initiatives in their Work Plan, which fell outside the "homeownership and material investment goals of the NRP revitalization priorities" (Elwood, 2002, 127).[28] In many ways, the Green Zones resemble the more social justice oriented NRPs, since on the whole they strive to be representative of their communities, especially those with whom they do not share an identity.

The Green Zones are not dominated by white homeowners, but they are made up of experienced activists who have been involved in their communities for long periods of time. Council members include a former member of the Minnesota House of Representatives who served the district covering the Southside Green Zone for over 38 years, two alumni fellows of the Boards and Commissions Leadership Institute (a prestigious 7-month leadership program of Nexus Community Partners whose alumni including US House Representative Ilhan Omar), members of state and city public health and pollution advisory boards, former leaders of EJ campaigns against a metal processor and a garbage burner, and staff and directors of several community-based organizations. Among the GZs' non-voting members are an environmental inspector for the Minneapolis Health Department and a city planner in the Department of Community, Planning and Economic Development. Most council members know each other from other neighborhood associations and volunteer circles (Goddard). Bolduc would argue these factors make the task forces resemble an oligarchy (Bolduc, 1980). But while the Green Zones members are highly experienced, they are also deeply embedded and invested in their communities. Yolonde Adams-Lee's explanation for her involvement makes clear her intense empathy and outrage at injustice: "I am a person of color. I have worked and socialized with members of my family and our faith communities, etc., and so

[28] Presciently, EPIC also secured NRP funding for "'Green' Economic Development Strategies: Economic development strategies encouraged within 'green' zone to be established in District 4 that encourages development of a solar/wind village demonstration area and eco-city model feasibility and implementation plan" (Action Plan, Phase 1). This underscores that community activists were working to make green investments serve their communities long before the concept of "just transition" existed.

these are folks that look like me, these are children who are going to school, elders who are living in this community that have never had any voice… [they] are out there dying and living with some pretty egregious symptoms or diseases. And I wanted it stopped." Members indicated connecting with and representing the broader community was one of their primary goals. These residents' practice of environmental action is thoroughly fused with justice, as it's grounded in the daily realities and needs of the community (Schlosberg and Collins 2014).

Like many participatory organizations, Green Zones struggle to divide their time between developing action plans and making sure they are representing and reaching the broader community. It is typical for a group to focus on increasing community engagement and outreach only after they have taken considerable steps to define their focus and major goals, which can lead to biased goals. Fagotto and Fung (2006) found NRP task forces that chose to put funds toward hiring a staff person were generally more representative of their community populations, since that staffer could plan outreach events and develop publicity materials. The Green Zones currently have only one city staff member (Muellman) responsible for both zones and limited funding.[29] Muellman promotes the task forces at neighborhood association meetings and has successfully experimented with compensating members who invite 20 neighbors they think would be a good fit for the Green Zone task force, but she expressed frustration that she cannot work more recruitment (Muellman).[30]

The GZ task force and council members individually put significant effort into more direct forms of engagement like door knocking and neighbor-to-neighbor conversations, and work actively "to remember that there are a lot of voices missing" (Goddard, Villaseñor). Villaseñor said: "Sometimes we're too quick to move with these code words and efforts, without bringing along the folks that don't have the luxuries to be in Green Zones. If we're not connecting with those folks, if we're not building up those places, or what people are experiencing day to day, then we're missing the mark." Holmes said, "I

[29] During the Workgroup and Work Plan stages, contracted facilitators were able to give more time to connecting with individual members and working on engagement strategies (Adam).
[30] As a City appointed council, the Green Zones also do not reflect a participatory democracy

will even hit up our people, our relatives, experiencing homelessness at shelters and talk to them, try to get them involved." This reach and effort is reflected in the discussion topics at GZ task force and council meetings. In the last 12 months council meetings presentations have covered homeless camps, housing policy, and COVID relief. It is this diversity of topic focus, that more than anything indicates the Green Zone task force members are moving toward representing the concerns of all members of the community.

V. Green Zones Embody Multiple, Intersecting Forms of Citizen Participation

As evidenced by the inadequacies of preceding engagement initiatives discussed above, and the pitfalls of participatory governance identified by scholars, opportunities for citizen participation within the City of Minneapolis have been unevenly distributed among the diverse population of Minneapolis residents in the past. In contrast, Green Zones seem to be intentionally representing their communities and seeking further engagement with their neighbors because they are aware of the temporal and financial limits to civic participation many of their peers experience. This distinguishes the Green Zones from other community engagement programs undertaken by the City, so we turn now to an examination of the different participatory processes operating within the Green Zones to understand how participatory governance has impacted their goals and action, as well as role[31] and power within the city.

Green Zones as Community Outreach and Education

The Green Zones are different from other City boards and commissions (Muellman) partially because they do not serve an exclusively advisory role: the design of the Green Zones intentionally weaves multiple forms of participation together, including consultancy, education and outreach, and decision-making power. This combination makes a significant impact on how the Green Zones are received by their communities and the City, and empowers the Green Zones in unique ways compared to other Minneapolis environmental initiatives. Further, the combination of participatory processes aligns

[31] It is important to note that the Green Zones are still in their early years, and thus, the "role" they play is dynamic and malleable to the priorities and emerging identity of the Green Zones task forces, as well as somewhat dependent on the politics and agenda of the Sustainability Office and the City Council.

the Green Zones closely with Collins and Ison's vision for participatory adaptation as "social learning," rather than a "linear, hierarchical model of involvement" (Collins and Ison 2009). Anita Uvina Davis remarked, "I think the role of the Northside Green Zone is to act as overseers, protectors, and educators on environmental justice. Overseers because of the dangers of our air quality and water quality… protectors because we have more information and access than my neighbors, for example, and so I might talk to my neighbors about what's happening." The importance of connecting and listening to neighbors, friends, and family members in order to hear their concerns was echoed by many of our other interviewees (Adams-Lee, Goddard, Holmes, Villaseñor).

The Green Zones task forces are a crucial point of connection between their neighborhoods and the City. Task force members listen to and gather insights and concerns from their network of community members, in order to best share their neighborhoods' priorities and goals with the City and others. Our interviewees emphasized that community outreach came in the form of daily interactions with their neighbors. Villaseñor explained: "A lot of us have just been oriented to a small area. For me it's just been on my block, like a block radius, to just say 'What's up, what do you think about this?'" Goddard echoed the importance of this intimate scale of advocacy and outreach work: "People see that you're just the person they see at the grocery store. You're your neighbor and you're concerned about them." Interviewees also discussed a diverse list of other outreach strategies,[32] including gatherings with food and childcare, newsletters, fliers, posting to a community 411 page, and targeted communication with well-connected individuals—family matriarchs, for example (Holmes).

In turn, the Green Zones task forces are also responsible for bringing critical education and information to their families, neighbors, faith communities, and workplaces. In the Northside Green Zones Work Plan, this objective is articulated in Goal 8 as "Organize the community to develop

[32] However, bureaucratic restrictions imposed on Task Forces' public digital presence constrain their outreach capacity. As Adam explained, as "City of Minneapolis group, we cannot make a statement as a group without having the city's approval first, which impacts us in a lot of ways". The Zones aren't allowed to run social media pages, which leaves word of new positions to primarily be spread through personal networks. Sarzynski points to social media as an factor which is potentially innovating and expanding participation for democratic governance – the Zones may be missing out on such benefits (2015).

ecological consciousness and foster a healthy future for the earth and people" ("City of Minneapolis Northside Green Zone 5-Year Work Plan" 2020). Villaseñor spoke about the importance of also educating community members about the Green Zones, saying "Sometimes… we would go to a community meeting, and just hop it up with people about what we were talking about… 'this is happening at the Green Zones.'" As Anita Urvina Davis and Maryan Abdinur emphasized, at-risk populations often suffer from a lack of critical information. Narrowing the knowledge gap between these citizens and governance institutions fosters community self-reliance and a culture of public participation, and "participation may serve a developmental purpose in helping citizens understand complex problems and articulate value and policy preferences" (Sarzynski 2015). However, outsiders who attempt educational outreach are often out-of-touch and convey disrespect for the community (Abdinur). In direct contrast, the decentralized, horizontal nature of community members' methods of keeping people in the loop lends to inclusivity, trust, and a more engaged civil society (Sarzynski 2015). Individual community members recognize the heterogeneity of their communities, and are thus committed to finding ways they can reach across cultural and language barriers, as well as time and financial constraints, so that underrepresented pockets don't get overlooked (Abdinur, Holmes, Urvina Davis).

This rich fabric of neighbor-to-neighbor connection and commitment to each other grounds the Green Zones, but is hard-earned. The communities of North and South Minneapolis both have "been studied and surveyed to death" (Goddard), but with few sustained improvements to health, wellbeing, and livelihoods of the residents. Thus, education and outreach can quickly turn into an invalidation of community-held expertise, rather than co-creation of knowledge between the City, the Green Zones task forces, and the Zone's residents. A key aspect of this initiative, then, is the task force's priorities are envisioned by the community and informed by the lived experience of task force members, who are lifetime residents of these neighborhoods themselves. The Green Zones seem to be working towards "social learning" as proposed by Collins and Ison, which envisions participatory climate action where "learning occurs through some kind of situated and collective engagement with others" (2009). In this case, the Green Zone's "collective engagement" stems from enduring relationships within the community,

and a familial commitment to and solidarity with one another that existed long before the Green Zones. These sustained relationships are what Adams-Lee described as the "precipice of Green Zones," saying, "we gathered, we fought together, we cried together, we were perplexed together, and we were numb together. But we stuck together." Urvina Davis reinforced this by saying, "Everybody that lives in North Minneapolis is my family. We will do whatever we need to do to reach everybody in our family." Thus, the Green Zones "have a lot of power only because we have our community backing us," as Holmes said.

As almost all of our interviewees mentioned, the work of the Green Zones has to be based on substantive relationship-building: "without the trust building, and the relationship building… that's how a lot of things happen, is through your relationships" (Gupta). One of the ways that the Green Zones built trust among their task force members was having paid facilitators guide part of their early process. The facilitators took time to meet one-on-one with individual members (Muellman), would reach out to task force members before meetings, checking in on certain issues or tasks (Adam), and intentionally built in group relationship-building to ground the task forces' work (Gupta). Recent urban planning scholarship on "the potential utility of more compassionate and emotional approaches to planning as a means of fostering meaningful engagement and envisioning alternative futures" also supports the importance of relationship and trust-building (Hughes and Hoffmann 2020).

While creating this trust was invaluable for bridging gaps between task force members' backgrounds, it actually exacerbated some of the differences between City and community. This period of relationship building, which slowed the pace of actionable "work" at the beginning, felt counterintuitive to the City. Our interviews provide evidence for Sirianni's theory that the structure of governing institutions can be incompatible with procedural justice. As Muellman discussed,

> What we were consistently hearing from these engagement partners is: 'we need to slow down, this timeline is moving too fast.' … They felt like what they were doing was stressing the relationships they had with residents that they were trying to engage, and they felt like it was too much content, too many issues to go through so quickly, and they were absolutely right on every single point of that. At the same time, I was working with the facilitation consultants and we're

like, 'No, we have this plan for all the agendas, and the meetings are going to go like this, and we have to end by this because the contract [and the funding] ends here.

Thus, the normal timeline of City "participatory" initiatives was at odds with the actual pace of intentional community engagement and listening sessions.

The community pace, however, was invaluable to the Green Zones development of the Work Plans and current goals. The GZ task force and council are intentionally resident-only, and in 2018, the task forces began an eight-month series of community engagement events to hear from other South and Northside residents, neighbors, and community members to identify the issues they saw in their own communities (Abdinur; Green Zones Community Report 2018). Once the issues and priority areas were identified, the GZ task forces incorporated this input and brought in policy experts to consult on the various solutions put forth by the community. The consultants' advice then was brought back to the GZ task force and council for them to ultimately decide what their recommendations and solutions were; all working to bridge the disconnect between community members and governing institutions ("Achieving Climate and Environmental Justice in the Southside Green Zone" 2019; Gupta). These listening sessions, and the subsequent back and forth between community recommendations and policy consultants, were instrumental in forging new ground for collaborations between the City and the Green Zones communities by forcing the City to adapt to the pace of relationship-building and to start with community concerns instead of technocratic concerns. Muellman reflected: "I would say that was the biggest lesson learned for me: when you're working on an initiative that is intentionally new and different, you have to approach it differently than what is the traditional way the City would do things… the whole point is that we need to change our process!"

Building relationships between the Green Zones and the communities they represent—listening to their identified needs and challenges—fostered the development of the Green Zones' unique anti-displacement and anti-gentrification focus. As Maryan Abdinur, who helped facilitate these community engagement sessions, articulated, "We were able to develop the lenses of anti-displacement and equity as the pathway for *any* decision that's made within the Green Zones...that came from excessive listening, and

back and forth between the task force and community members" (emphasis added). The importance of the anti-gentrification and anti-displacement focus that now foregrounds all decisions made within the Zones' boundaries cannot be understated. As Villaseñor summarized: "If it's not built to build wealth for communities and challenge gentrification… we're gonna fail." The centering of anti-gentrification and wealth-building within an environmental and health initiative like the Green Zones evidences the influence of environmental justice organizing, which understands the "environment" is where we live, work, play, and pray. Further, the intentional relationship-building and community priority-setting is indicative of the key community outreach and education role that the Green Zones play, which, when in combination with other participatory roles, as discussed below, sets the Green Zones apart from other programs.

Green Zones as Consultants

Green Zone task forces play a unique consulting role within the City at large, and for many interviewees, this was a crucial part of both their power and their impact in Minneapolis. Within this paper, we understand consultancy in similar terms to scholars Arnstein and Few. Few et al. define consultation as "the presentation of proposals for comment and feedback" (2011, 49). In discussing consultation, Arnstein argues, "when [informing and consultation] are proffered by power-holders as the total extent of participation, citizens may indeed hear and be heard. But under these conditions they lack the power to ensure that their views are *heeded* by the powerful" (1969, 217). Despite the mixed reception about consultancy in participatory theory, this feedback-based consultancy is a core function for the Green Zones.

Task force members often responded with discussions of policy advising and consulting for the City Council when asked about what the role of the Green Zones was, and consultancy seems to be a role that task force members see as a priority. As Samara Adam discussed: "The point of [the] group [is] to advise the city council members and the mayor specifically," which is also the charter-defined legal authority held by the Green Zones task forces (Mulleman). Joanne Goddard furthered Adam's sentiment,

saying, “One of the things that… the Green Zones can really do... is working with the city on policy changes to make the city overall, more green and more just…. There's a lot of people who work in the city who… want to do it, they just don't know which direction to go in… because they don't know what people want.” Further, in each of the Green Zones meetings we attended, there was a presentation about an external project or initiative, given by a non-Green Zones member, with the intention to receive feedback from the task forces. For example, the task forces listened to presentations about the Hennepin County Climate Action Plan, Public Works’ stormwater management program, the Edible Boulevards project, and the Xcel Energy Non-Wires Alternative pilot program, among others. The external presenter would always ask for feedback and comments from the task force members after giving a presentation, clearly fulfilling the consultancy role set forth by Few.

Before the Green Zones’ formation, consultancy-based participation was common within the larger context of Minneapolis governance, but did not necessarily advance justice and equity. In the January 2021 meeting of the Southside Green Zone, Muellman offered that the GZs could continue to “invite folks from City offices when they have a particular initiative in the community where they want Green Zones input and feedback on it.” Muellman went on to note that “this is a way other advisory committees are often used, but the Green Zones are a little different.” The fact that Green Zones task forces are acting as advisors for other initiatives and projects makes sense within the context of Minneapolis—the participatory precedent set by the City sits squarely within a stakeholder consultancy framework. The City of Minneapolis has over 50 community boards and commissions, making these one of the primary ways citizens can influence City decisions (Muellman). These boards and commissions have been an important part of community representation within Minneapolis politics.

However, as initially argued by Arnstein, and reiterated by Gupta in our interview, community engagement commissions “sort of give voice… but that doesn’t [equate] into decision-making power” (Gupta). And, even though these commissions and boards exist, Minneapolis’ diverse population has not been accurately represented. As evidenced by the Climate Action Plan, before environmental justice organizers fought for representation there were over 100 advisors involved, but almost zero people of

color (Gupta). Other initiatives, like the Roof Depot project,[33] were also composed almost entirely of white consultants and participants (Villaseñor). Thus, while stakeholder consultation itself can be seen as a "token" form of participation (Arnstein 1969), even the existing stakeholder consultation in Minneapolis has granted voice unevenly. We thus see a consistent barrier to just policy in Minneapolis is that different actors have unequal access to participatory processes as a result of layered systemic and institutional marginalization. This dynamic correlates with scholarly discourses at the intersection of participatory governance, neoliberal urban planning, and environmental justice literature (Few et al. 2007, 49; Ayers 2011; Sarzynski 2015; McKendry 2015).

Within the neighborhoods represented by the Green Zones, historic opportunities for participation in Minneapolis decision-making have been limited, and often the City has purely *informed* rather than granted power to these communities, as our interviewees pointed out: "City outreach is: they come in with a plan in mind and try to tell people" (Goddard), and "we definitely need to have a space to be… driving that narrative… and not having the structures put on top of us" (Villaseñor). Minneapolis governance thus appears participatory in nature, with numerous opportunities for citizen input through boards and commissions, but EJ organizers and Green Zones members repeatedly identified the long-standing gap between Minneapolis' progressive, participatory rhetoric and the on-the-ground reality. As Villaseñor summarized, "Sometimes we allow trust of these [elected] individuals to… lead us in a direction that benefits the most vulnerable… and sometimes it doesn't do that." Minneapolis setting a participatory precedent of informing and consulting (which itself was not representative nor inclusive of vulnerable

[33] The Roof Depot refers to a contested plot of land in the East Phillips neighborhood. Currently, the unoccupied Roof Depot building sits on this plot, which is one of multiple former industrial sites that were designated as EPA Superfund sites for extremely high levels of arsenic and lead in the soil (Stanley 2019). After years of EPA testing and remediation for arsenic levels, the East Phillips neighborhood had envisioned the Roof Depot site being rebuilt as a community center, with a large indoor urban farm and affordable housing (Morrell 2020; Bjorhus 2020). However, the City acquired the land in June 2016 with the intention to build a public works maintenance and water distribution facility, in connection with the City's other public works buildings close by. East Phillips neighborhood residents were outraged by the proposal to build yet another industrial facility in their already-overburdened neighborhood. They fear that demolition of the Roof Depot building will uncover more arsenic and the planned operations will add more exhaust and fumes to the neighborhood's air. East Phillips Neighborhood Institute has filed a lawsuit against the City and is waiting for an environmental impact assessment to be completed. For location on map, see page 26.

communities) creates a cycle of non-participation within or frustration with City governance. A cohort of researchers have found that when community members have had negative or disappointing experiences with civic participation, there are lasting ramifications on the relationships between agencies and communities (Few et al. 2007; Potter 2012). The disheartening ubiquity of illusory community engagement has contributed to rising nationwide distrust of government. This macro-level phenomenon erodes public trust in institutions, which is critical for fostering a civic culture of participation and democratic hope (Sirianni 2020; Sarzynski 2015). Unsurprisingly, this appears to have happened in Minneapolis prior to the development of the Green Zones, with many community members and interviewees losing trust in City governance, feeling disenfranchised, or becoming exhausted by repeated, fruitless efforts to educate City officials that kept leaving. Gupta evidenced this by simply saying: "Engagement is only powerful if you've shown accountability to previous engagement...why would anybody want to show up, if…it hasn't proven to be useful?"

Do the Green Zones depart from this legacy of limited participation and non-representative consultancy, and if so, how? While consultation is portrayed in multiple scholars' writing as a form of participation that can simply perpetuate existing power dynamics—and previous Minneapolis consultation seems to have also set this precedent—Green Zones consultation is power-inverting because it recognizes and relies on the expertise of marginalized groups, and ultimately creates pathways towards community self-determination. One of the key differences is Green Zones' consulting formalizes community consent within the policy or project development process. As the Green Zones Community Report states, there must be "clear pathways for community consent and leadership in the decision-making process" (2018). These neighborhoods have been historically burdened by the nonconsensual location of polluting industries, waste facilities, and highways near their homes. The Green Zones' consultant role then, is "addressing a long history of harm *placed* on this neighborhood" by "decentering whiteness and centering communities of color" (Community Report, 2018; emphasis added). The Green Zones are guided by citizen expertise, which recognizes the lived experience and invaluable knowledge held by traditionally marginalized communities, and acknowledges that those overburdened by

environmental harms have the expertise in the room. By consulting on all new projects being proposed for their communities and guiding investments, the Green Zones empower community members to consent or object to projects that were previously forced upon them. However, because the Green Zones do not have City policy-making power, there are no legal systems in place to ensure that Green Zone recommendations or objections are incorporated[34] (Adam; Gupta; Muellman). Green Zones' consultancy thus takes steps towards increased accountability at the City and private company level, and creates tangible pathways towards self-determination. Green Zones residents get to define what is healthy, safe, and beneficial for themselves, their families, and their neighborhoods. Therefore, in this case, consultancy operates as a validation of community expertise and an acknowledgement that they know what is best for themselves (self-determination).

Green Zones as Citizen Power and Decision-Making

The Green Zones are also inverting traditional power structures by making their own decisions, directing funding towards environmental justice efforts, and creating actionable goals based on community expertise. This final piece of the participatory Green Zones puzzle is a critical piece for understanding how the Green Zones create opportunities for self-determination within their communities. As argued above, the Green Zones are novel within the Minneapolis landscape because they are place-based, community-driven, and combine a different set of responsibilities than other community initiatives. Though Green Zones are in their early years, they have already created a number of tangible products as task forces, evidencing their final role as decision makers. After the creation of the Northside Green Zone Task Force in 2018, and the Southside Green Zone Council in 2019, both groups worked tirelessly to create work plans that would then guide the Green Zones from 2020–2025. Both work plans were the

[34] Green Zone recommendations for other programs or offices are simply that: recommendations. As Kelly described, "If there is a recommendation...I figure out, is that someone in another department who needs to take action? And if so, I can't tell them necessarily what to do, but I can share that this is a directive from the Green Zones and they're asking for X, Y and Z, and then it's usually in conversation with that other department that we figure out, are they willing to just do that thing or is this going to be a bigger process where we actually have to get City Council involved and have it go through an official council action?" There are no legal commitments holding the City to act on GZ requests.

result of "months of work by dedicated community members and City staff" ("Achieving Climate and Environmental Justice in the Southside Green Zone" 2019), and have both been adopted as of 2020. They recognize the background of environmental racism in Minneapolis and the necessity of the Green Zones, and articulate focus-area organized actions and goals for each Zone. Because both Work Plans were commissioned by the City Council, the Council-sanctioned recognition of environmental racism and injustice that is incorporated into the plans reveals the power held by Green Zones as decision-makers themselves. The literal documentation of environmental racism in the Work Plans incorporates justice as recognition into a City-partnered initiative in a lasting way. As Villaseñor remarked of the Southside Work Plan, "It's not going to dismantle environmental racism… [or] tear down capitalism, but it's definitely going to influence or, hopefully, pause. When there is legislation… there is a moment to say, *will this further impact these vulnerable communities?* … And what's in that document [the Work Plan] says you need to center… those are highly vulnerable." In addition to recognition-based justice, the Work Plans clearly lay out an extensive list of actionable items for the Green Zones and recommendations for the City, giving the Green Zones a clear decision-making role as they guide the next five years of environmental investment in their neighborhoods.

Using the work plans as a foundation, the task forces have already utilized the Green Zone's power to make near-term environmental change in their communities. The Southside Green Zone has leveraged their decision-making power to design and execute an Environmental Justice Pop-Up Fund. The Pop-Up Fund awarded a total of $65,000 to a variety of proposed environmental justice projects in the Southside community, all within different focus areas of the Southside Green Zone work plan. These projects all had clearly defined timelines and outcomes, setting an early precedent of "near-term impact work as an emergent expression of Self-Determination," while the longer term work of the Work Plan was still being developed (SSGZ Work Plan). Secondly, now that both Work Plans have been adopted, the Green Zones are jointly creating a set of "development criteria" which would guide and limit future development within the Green Zones boundaries. These development criteria are an ambitious exertion of power, as Muellman points out: "the development criteria that the Green Zone is working on… is going

to be a huge lift, like really the biggest ask that the Green Zones have made in their existence." We therefore see that the Green Zones are not only falling into a consultancy role, nor are they only community educators and connectors. The work plans, pop-up funds, and development criterias are strong examples of the power and community control fostered by the Green Zones.

Conclusion

The emergent Green Zones have carved out hard-won space to situate citizen representatives in the driver's seat of their design. Over their chronology, the Zones have developed a pioneering, multi-pronged participatory design. At City-scales, this design incorporates consultancy, and at neighborhood scales it revolves around community self-determination, co-creation and education, and solidarity. The Zones' representative community task forces hold the environmental justice principles of recognition and procedure at their core, because they are formulated by the frontline communities who have long borne the brunt of intersecting injustices.

Within the urban institutional landscape, which originally generated these enduring histories of dominance, racism, and displacement, City-codified initiatives with this level of community direction are rare (Hughes 2020). Urban climate justice scholars, however, have identified city climate action as a prime opportunity to advance more transformative social justice (Bulkeley et al. 2013, 2014; Hughes and Hoffmann 2020. In a remarkable achievement, Minneapolis EJ organizers and a network of local community organizations successfully took advantage of the City's CAP development as an avenue to push equity during the early- to mid-2010s. Through a long, difficult process of negotiation and relationship-building, they formed the CAP EJ Working Group and won seats on the CAP Steering Committee. Their recommendations substantially strengthened the Plan's equity lens around goals, implementation, and specific action items. Driven by the city's striking socioeconomic disparities and enabled by a few receptive City Council members, these dedicated grassroots advocates were able to lay the groundwork for what would become the Green Zones. Leveraging their collective power and savvy,

they bound the Green Zones in documentation and secured instrumental City resources—initial funding and a staff member.

The Southside and Northside's Work Plans envision a roadmap for environmental and social co-benefits in Green Zones neighborhoods which revolve around self-determination, anti-displacement, and greening. An intensive and collaborative process involving iterations of listening sessions between community members and Green Zones members resulted in the identification of communities' core concerns and priorities. Critically, staff and engagement partners learned that the normal pace of operation for City projects could not do justice to this process and had to be adjusted to fit the community's needs. Within the Green Zones task forces and community, the vital, extensive work of creating meaningful trust needed more time to come about organically (Hughes and Hoffmann 2020). In addition, these documents profited from their co-production by community members and policy advisors.

The Green Zones' representative task forces have progressed to a hybrid participation system of consultancy, education and outreach, and decision-making power. The intensive dedication of time and resources to community engagement sessions and the cultivation of deeper relationships has powerfully centered core community concerns. Task Force and Council members tend to be highly-active community leaders, and collectively have an extensive range of organizing experience with local EJ-related campaigns, working with a variety of organizations and institutions, and serving on neighborhood and community boards. They embody a deep solidarity with and investment in their community "families," which naturally comes from their shared cultural and personal experiences of injustice. This powerfully informs a natural ethos of justice as recognition and practice of direct community engagement, making them representative beyond their individual identities. The outreach dimension of task forces chips away at layers of informational and language barriers to strengthen community connectedness, communication, and engagement (Abdinur; Hughes 2020). Members sustain active efforts to acknowledge and reduce the impacts of differential privilege on which voices are heard. They engage in diverse methods within diverse spaces to keep diverse populations informed: talking to other community and family leaders, local publications and postings, gatherings with food and childcare, and simply casual conversations with

neighbors. Faith communities, workplaces, homes, and digital communications are common sites for outreach. Many of these direct interactions are a simultaneously social and educational activity, and involve not only two-way exchanges of information, but also strengthening relationships. This collective engagement and learning has been emphasized as a powerful means of participatory EJ action by scholars (Sarzynski 2015; Collins and Ison 2009).

Even in the absence of formalized power within City decision-making & policy, the Zones have generated citizen empowerment among its members. Members frequently discuss their role as consultants for City projects as an important role of the Green Zones. Since the completion of their Work Plans in recent years, meetings have shifted to dedicate more capacity towards advising a range of external environmentally-related initiatives (Muellman). By and large, standards of stakeholder consultation within Minneapolis, as well as in most neoliberal governance institutions, have soundly failed to engage in real participatory justice. Members expressed tension with and distrust of the City due to such extensive experience with exhausting phony engagement. Green Zones' consultation, however, diverges in important respects from these legacies. Citizen knowledge of marginalized communities – which is systematically devalued, particularly in privileged decision-making – is elevated to the level of expertise here. This validation has a radical element to it which builds avenues towards self-determination and self-reliance, which is a major component of justice as recognition. Members gain a measure of empowerment in the ability to directly give input rather than only passively being affected. In addition, they gain skill and experience in key policy development processes. However, there is no legal authority to the Zones' recommendations, and as such their degree of incorporation is left to other staff. As Hughes writes, "the highly structural nature of inequality" limits local efforts to redress them, "but nonetheless a change in the rhetoric around urban policy from a focus on competitiveness to a discourse about justice can improve the quality of life for urban residents" (Hughes 2020). Consultation gives members the opportunity to shift rhetoric towards equity at the face-to-face scale with the designers of urban policy.

A through-line in this relatively novel initiative is that many parties involved from "inside the system" have faced a steep learning curve in the unfamiliar terrain of EJ – and that progress has been

piecemeal. Community organizers have continually pushed city, state, and private institutions to move towards equitable decision-making processes, and they have been continually met with structural inertia. Despite the advantage that local governments are free from some of the bureaucratic barriers that block transformative action at higher government levels, the City of Minneapolis still possesses a considerable share of barriers. Friction between "multiple and competing logics," and unequal forms of power, (Sirianni 2020) is evident in the City's established outreach and engagement routine. The majority of its community engagement falls squarely into what scholars characterize as the "technical-managerialist style of top-down decision-making" (Few et al. 2007, Arnstein 1969). This faux-participation is informed by a neoliberal framework which fails to grapple with the reality that public engagement is fraught with layers of complex political, economic, cultural, and ideological contexts (Sirianni 2020, Minkler 2008, Schrock 2015). Such narrow-mindedness is clear in Minneapolis' initial approach to the CAP and their false narrative that the people of color in "hotspots of environmental injustice" (Abdinur) are uninterested in being involved in solutions (Abdinur, Gupta, Muellman). Community advocates who shared their objections and suggestions taught City staff the hard way that the conventional engagement exercises often not only fail to bring about just, sustainable outcomes—they often "lead to heightened mistrust, hostility, defiance, and opposition" (Few et al. 2007). Muellman readily admits committing a host of mistakes in the first several years of constructing this form of participatory governance, embarking on a gradual departure from the City's status quo. However, she has learned immensely, demonstrated responsiveness and humility, and earned members' overwhelming respect and trust.

Despite interviewees' pride and hope for the Green Zones, organizers' experiences do not give them faith that the overall City structure has begun a trajectory towards its reform. Interviewees repeatedly expressed a sense that the City's bureaucracy is fundamentally disconnected from and apathetic to their troubles, bearing out Sirianni's claim that neoliberal governance conventionally conflicts with those of economically devalued demographics. Despite the Green Zones' achievements, even beginning to modify City logics that are solely operationalized in the Green Zones' context has proven thorny. Task force members, facilitators, and Muellman alike underscored the complicated and

frustrating nature of navigating within City structures. Muellman lists the key lesson that the "structures, systems, and processes of government are difficult to understand, yet are crucial for making strategic decisions on whether to work within the system or recommend alternatives to the system" (The Funder's Network[35]). There continues to be tension and justified distrust of the City. Abdinur, who was involved in gathering comments from over a thousand community members, attributes institutional unresponsiveness to "the root of how the City functions currently" in "white supremacy and systematic oppression." Gupta shares this understanding, stating that racism is "built into the system." The "multi-sector people" inside it must identify "hooks and leverage points" that can loosen inequities (Gupta).

Staff like Muellman have played key roles organizing resource flows in service of equity, but more like her are critical for reconfiguring power relations. Scholars like Sirianni emphasize that more professionals must facilitate democracy through providing "ways for civic actors to engage productively with other institutional field actors and help modify institutional logics" (Sirianni 2020). However, most individual staff members' goodwill fails to yield benefits when "they don't have policies" (Goddard) and "most of the time… they don't have the tools to deal with it, the City does not prepare them enough, and they're put in really compromising positions to both be the experts and then also talk about communities that they have no clue about… the things that they face" (Abdinur). While "the smaller pieces feel good" and "maybe there's hope for the future;" "Individuals have changed… but not the overall city structure. Because it's not going to change unless they start to see that they are a part of a system, and that they need to move in that way" (Abdinur). The ability of organizers to be heard hinges on a "continuously changing tapestry" of City officials and coordinators, which destabilizes grassroots power-building and undercuts systems change (Abdinur).

Ultimately, the Green Zones are an inspiring step towards realizing environmental justice in Minneapolis. They advance justice and equity for the City, particularly by pushing the City to realize and

[35] The Funders Network is a network of philanthropic environmental organizations with a mission to "leverage philanthropy's unique potential to help create communities and regions that are sustainable, prosperous and just for all people." It has been involved with some of external funding granted to Green Zones through the McKnight Foundation in Minneapolis.

act upon its progressive ideals. Already, the Green Zones have driven and encouraged a more institutionalized justice focus. Minneapolis Sustainability Director Kim Havey reported the exciting update that the city's Climate Action Plan is scheduled for a revision soon, and that the agency plans to integrate community organizations and train staff in environmental justice from the start. Therefore, Green Zones, and the community activism that sustains them, has motivated key decision-makers to center marginalized communities. As we have argued here, the Green Zones have major promise; their trajectory in the coming years as City Council changes will yield fascinating insights. Their durability is uncertain, but if they can be sustained, their ability to produce substantive improvements and hamper gentrification for North and South Side neighborhoods will have meaningful implications across domains and urban spaces.

Limitations

For this process-tracing paper, we only interviewed people involved in the Green Zones or in their development. For a more accurate understanding of how well the Green Zone task forces represent their communities' concerns, and how well the initiative is known by residents not involved in the taskforce, research would require a wider sample of the community. In addition, our dozen interviews centered around non-City individuals; we interviewed only two members of city staff: the Green Zones coordinator and the Director of the Office of Sustainability. Furthermore, the recency of the Green Zones Initiative was a significant limitation for our research, because work developing the Initiative is only in its third year. At this time it is too early to assess its efficacy in achieving its goals, how it has evolved in practice, or any unexpected outcomes. In fact, the "big lift" undertaking (Muellman) of discussing influential development criteria, which could dictate planning processes and development within the Green Zones, has only begun in the past several months. Further, we cannot yet assess potential limitations of the Green Zones regarding their dependence on a receptive city council and uncertain

funding status.[36] Not least, we would be remiss not to acknowledge the influence of the subjective lenses and likely biases each of us bring.

Future Study

Participatory urban governance in the current socioeconomic and climate context is positioned to address ever more pressing issues. This calls for bold and instructive scholarly work which focuses attention on developing process-oriented, actionable, and forward-looking direction for implementation. As Hughes and Hoffman astutely point out, analysis of policy and institutional deficiencies must "translate into design principles, governance practices, and engagement tactics for a JUT with a global perspective" (2020). Literature on recent JUT solutions is needed by municipal governments which are "forging ahead, seeking to pursue just transitions in multiple ways as they pursue transformation and address climate change, essentially building the plane while flying the plane" (Hughes and Hoffman 2020).

The Green Zones will remain relevant and consequential across these contexts as they continue to mature. Another significant and evolving area of investigation would be the intersections between the Zones, the South Side as ground zero for the 2020 police murder of George Floyd, and ensuing mass racial justice protests. Additionally, further research in Minneapolis could investigate the role of the third sector (nonprofit and community-based organizations) in a just urban transition, specifically the capacity of longstanding community-based organizations to provide community engagement or support

[36] The Green Zones were established through a resolution which does not expire but also does not require the City Council to devote staff or resources toward the initiative. The Green Zones are currently managed by one city staff member and must apply yearly to the City and external grants for funding. Due to the budget deficit from the COVID-19 pandemic, the Green Zones do not have any funding from the city for the 2021-2022 year. The next City Council election will take place in 2022, and much of the Green Zone's decision-making influence is dependent on the receptiveness of the City Council to their demands. Southside Green Zone council member Anita Urvina Davis said Green Zones are fortunate many current members of the City Council understand the importance of environmental justice, but she noted it is a long game: "Our agenda doesn't change, whether it's equity or human rights, it doesn't change. But the people we work with, and their agenda and their mindset, does. So right now, I think we're good. In 2023, I don't know, we'll see."

community ownership of JUT policies (Mathews, 2020). Future study in Minneapolis could also evaluate the participatory experience of community stakeholders across other existing participatory engagement models in the city (something also called for by Sarzynski 2015). We recommend the adoption of a participatory action research model, in which members of the Green Zones task force and council identify future areas for research and guide those projects. Both the Southside and Northside Green Zones have extensive collective policy and community organizing knowledge and capacity for legislative advocacy but they also have many action items within their Work Plans and limited time and resources (as members are volunteering their time).

As several of our interviewees voiced, state actors 'inside the system' are instrumental and responsible for finding levers to weaken institutional white supremacy and oppression. Along these lines, scholars recommend developing the capacity and quantity of these people (Sarzynski 2015, Sirianni 2020, Schrock 2015, Hughes and Hoffman 2020). Throughout our research, we were continually drawn to the bureaucratic side of the Green Zones which hinged on the City's interior operations. This rich perspective proved beyond our scope, but we often found ourselves asking the question, "What lessons can be drawn from its genesis and development about the interface between the City institution and civic advocates?" We have witnessed firsthand the importance of recognizing structural injustice, taking advantage of interdependencies and co-benefits, and organizing a spectrum of professional and citizen actors around these objectives (Hughes and Hoffman 2020). Thus we would be interested in a deeper dive on the City's receptiveness to this progress as a governance institution, and the stories of any shifts which have occurred. Additional exploration could look at awareness of the initiative among City staff, philanthropic foundations, and developers.

Since environmental justice necessitates the radical reconfiguration of existing power relations, its pathways are guaranteed to be extremely hard fights that will require the learning and application of specialized skills by more people both inside and outside of the system. Shalini Gupta is a prime example of Sirianni's "democratic professional" whose experience incorporating equity into City climate action has fostered skills for navigating across the diverse sociopolitical and disciplinary dimensions involved in

environmental justice work. Such individuals are valuable for spreading and scaling up similar initiatives. In light of the value of catalyst actors, constructive future research could conduct interviews to synthesize lessons and strategies from them. Harvesting, operationalizing, and disseminating the critical knowledge and lessons learned in opening doors for meaningful grassroots participation within neoliberal structures would hold great utility. Such research should continue to develop "the specifics of how meaningful and sustained participation was achieved in pursuit of urban climate adaptation" and push "beyond reporting of the potentialities of participation for improving governance (Sarzynski 2015). This can contribute to strengthening strategies for overcoming resistant mindsets in influential decision-making spaces.

Since her 2018 facilitation role with the Green Zones, Gupta has gone on to help midwife a Green Zones for Providence, Rhode Island and give policy advice to the City of Boston. The facilitation framework and lessons learned from Minneapolis transfer well between cities because "sustainability offices are very similar… in terms of government." A comparative analysis of different Green Zones models in the US (Los Angeles, Minneapolis, Kansas City, Buffalo, Providence, etc.) and their evolution would produce much deeper instructive detail into pitfalls, best practices, and geographical expansion. This could also begin to address a question of "How much variation is there between cities in the visioning and implementation of just urban transitions?" (Hughes and Hoffman 2020). Undoubtedly, our thesis has only lightly probed the rich and consequential fruitful areas of study.

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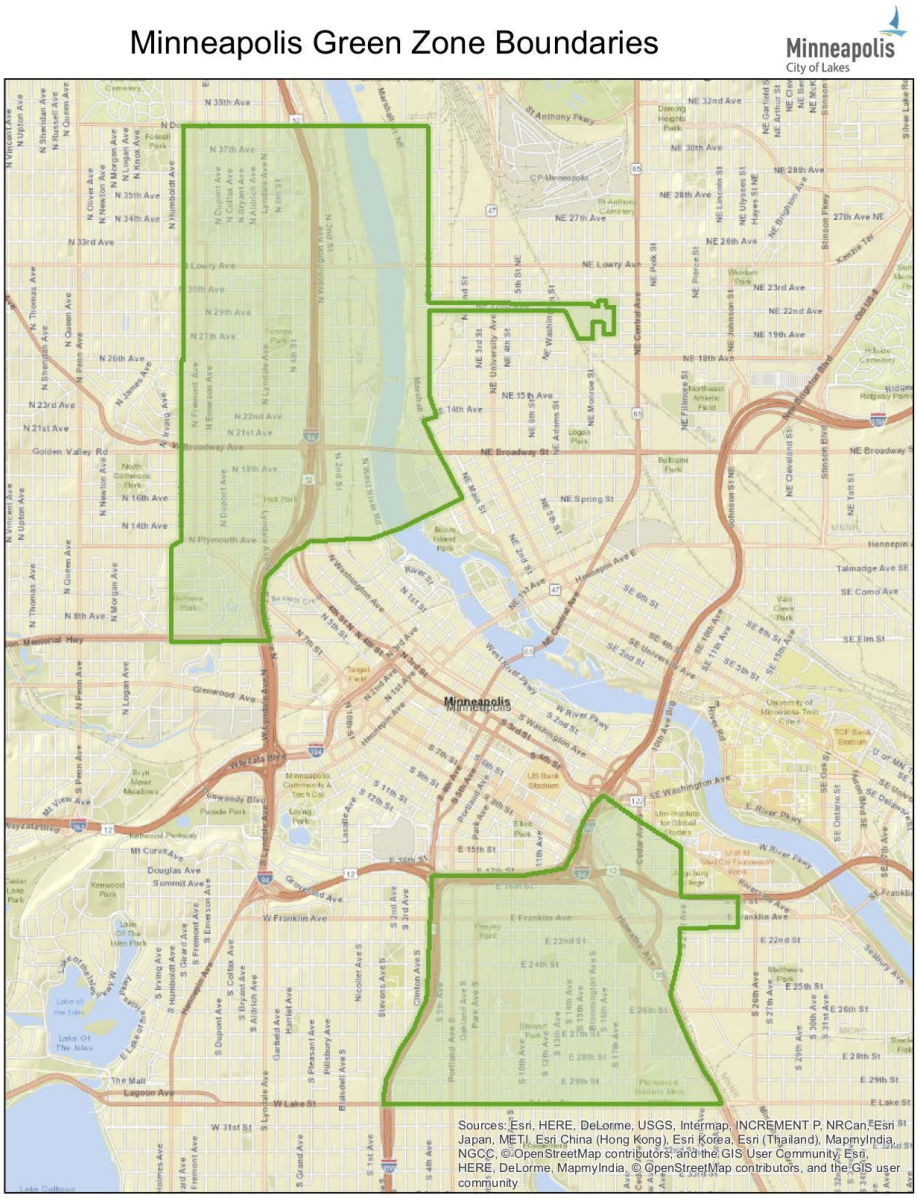
Appendices

Appendix A: Minneapolis Green Zone Boundaries



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Appendix B: Minneapolis Green Zones Initiative Timeline

While this timeline includes major developments in the formation of Green Zones policy in Minneapolis, it does not cover many important events related to and driving the Green Zones Initiative (like, for example, the passage of the Minnesota Cumulative Health Impact Analysis law in 2008, or the Twin Cities Peoples Agreement on Climate Change finalized in May 2012).

- **December 2010:** The Los Angeles Collaborative for Environmental Health and Justice publishes a report called Hidden Hazards, proposing that the city create Green Zones as one solution to disparities in cumulative impacts (Kimbrough 2017).
- **August 2012:** The City of Minneapolis accepts community organizers' proposal for an Environmental Justice Working Group for the Climate Action Plan.
- **June 2013:** The finalized Minneapolis Climate Action Plan is adopted by the City. This is the first time that Green Zones are written into Minneapolis city policy.
- **March 2014:** The City Council adopts Minneapolis Climate Action Plan priorities for 2014-2015, including developing the Green Zones Initiative. The City Council adopts the Minneapolis Energy Pathways Study, which lists establishing a Green Zones pilot with "key community leadership" as a next step (City Council of Minneapolis 2016)
- **2014-2016:** A community steering team develops a Health Impact Assessment for the East Phillips community (at first in collaboration with the Minnesota Department of Health and Minnesota Pollution Control Agency, but completing it as a community to reflect the community's health equity framework).
- **February 2016:** The Minneapolis City Council passes a resolution officially starting the Green Zones Initiative. The resolution creates a Green Zones Workgroup (composed of both City staff and community members) to develop recommendations on the designation of Green Zones and strategies for "improving health and supporting economic development using environmentally conscious efforts" in communities facing cumulative impacts (City Council of Minneapolis 2016).
- **2016:** Los Angeles passes the Clean Up, Green Up Ordinance establishing pilot Green Zones.
- **May 2017:** Resolutions establish the Southside and Northside Green Zones (area designations) after the Green Zones Workgroup presents recommendations to the City Council.
- **September 2017:** City Council appoints the Southside Green Zone Taskforce.
- **2018:** The Environmental Justice Coordinating Council, a council "composed entirely of African American residents and agents of change in North Minneapolis," provides direction for the City to adopt 12 goals for the Northside Green Zone Task Force ("Public Policy Project" n.d.).
- **June 2018:** Southside Green Zone Task Force completes the 2018 Southside Green Zone Work Plan, recommending that a Southside Green Zone Council be formed to serve as an advisory board to the City Council and Mayor.
- **September 2018:** City Council appoints the Northside Green Zone Taskforce. Members serve for two years.
- **November 2018:** The Southside Green Zone Council is established (based on recommendations of the prior Southside Green Zone Council). Members serve for two years.

- **December 2019:** The Southside Green Zone 5-Year Work Plan is adopted by the Southside Green Zone Council.
- **March 2020:** The Northside Green Zone 5-Year Work Plan is adopted by the Northside Green Zone Task Force.

Appendix C: List of Interviewees

Name	**Involvement with the Green Zones in Minneapolis**
Lea Foushee	Member of the Environmental Justice Working Group and the Steering Committee for the Minneapolis Climate Action Plan (2012-2013)
Shalini Gupta	Co-facilitator of the Environmental Justice Working Group for the Minneapolis Climate Action Plan (2012-2013); Member of the Green Zones Workgroup (2016-2017); Co-facilitator of the Southside Green Zone Council (2019)
Yolonde Adams-Lee	Green Zones Workgroup (2016-2017), Northside Green Zone Task Force (2018-present)
Maryan Abdinur	Community engagement facilitator for the Southside Green Zone Task Force (2017-2018 and continuing)
José Luis Villaseñor	Southside Green Zone Task Force (2017-2018); Southside Green Zone Council (2019-present)
Cassandra Holmes	Southside Green Zone Council (2019-present)
Samara Adam	Southside Green Zone Council (2019-present)
Joanne Goddard	Northside Green Zone Task Force (2018-present)
Anita Urvina Davis	Northside Green Zone Task Force (2018-present)
Kelly Muellman	City of Minneapolis Sustainability Program Coordinator (2015-present)
Kim Havey	City of Minnneapolis Director of Sustainability (2018-present)

Appendix D: Interview Questions

Interview Questions for Community Members (Activists, Facilitators, Task Force Members)

1. How did you originally learn about the Green Zones and become involved?
    - What compelled you to be part of the Green Zones? What issues were you particularly interested in, and how did the Green Zones seem to address those concerns?

A. Climate Action Planning Process

1. How did you originally become involved with the development of the Minneapolis Climate Action Plan?
2. Can you describe the process of forming the Climate Action Plan's Environmental Justice Working Group? What individuals, groups, or partnerships helped bring about the EJ Working Group?
3. Did you feel like the City of Minneapolis recognized the historical contexts that have created racial and economic inequities in Minneapolis and was actively seeking to change those during the creation of the CAP?
4. What was successful or what was limiting about the way the City included EJ and community perspectives in the creation of the CAP?
5. Were the EJ Working Group's recommendations incorporated into the CAP by the Steering Committee?
    a. How were the recommendations incorporated into the CAP?

B. Green Zones Creation

1. How did the idea for the Green Zones initiative come up?
    a. How has it changed over the period (and roles) you've been involved with?
2. What individuals, groups, or partnerships helped were instrumental in bringing the Green Zones about?
3. Did you feel like the City of Minneapolis recognized the historical and contemporary contexts that have created racial and economic inequities in Minneapolis, and was actively seeking to change those inequities through the GZs policy?
4. When developing the idea of Green Zones, what existing policy, networks, or models did the Working Group draw upon?
5. *For Facilitators:* How did you navigate your role as a facilitator? In what ways did yours and others' facilitation impact the group's function?
    a. Can you describe the kind of community engagement efforts that you and other facilitators led?
    b. What sort of feedback did you receive from community members during that process?
    c. How would you say the concerns of task force members aligned with community members' concerns?
6. Could you talk about the economic, health, and environmental challenges and disparities faced by GZ communities? Have these challenges spurred grassroots organizing or residents demanding a voice in city governance?

C. Current Green Zones Operations

1. Can you briefly describe how the Green Zone task forces work?
2. What do you see as the role of the Green Zones (both ideally and in reality)?
    a. How does the Green Zone divide its time/energy between advising the city and implementing its own initiatives?
3. What are the relationship dynamics between the City and the Green Zones task forces? When the task forces make recommendations, where do those go next?
    a. What decision-making power do GZ working group members have? What do you feel like you have a voice in, or influence over?
    b. When the GZ gives feedback on an external project or presentation, how do people usually receive that feedback, and how is it incorporated?
    c. Has the City's receptiveness to community advocacy/ interests changed over time?
    d. How would you characterize the relationship between the City and your neighborhood/community?
4. Can you outline how work in the Green Zones has been and is currently funded?
5. Does the group feel representative of the community? How do you engage with the rest of the community that does not have the time to be on the task force? How do you make sure you are representing everyone?
    a. How does the task force recruit new members?
6. During your work with the Green Zones, what has gone well; what have you been pleasantly surprised about?
7. What have you been frustrated with? What have your largest challenges and/or obstacles been?
8. How have the Green Zone task forces navigated differences in experience and background?
    a. Do you feel like the group learned and refined techniques for working together, and if so what did you all learn? Was intentional group self-reflection built in?
    b. We heard there was an introductory meeting for new members. Were you part of that, and if so, do you feel it helped prepare you?
9. What do you understand environmental justice to mean in the context of your community?
    a. Do you feel like GZs fit in within your definition of environmental justice?
10. How does the task force decide which initiatives to work on?
11. How does the Green Zone task force differ from your experience with neighborhood groups?
12. After being on lots of different environmental justice projects/City boards/community or neighborhood groups, how do the Green Zones compare in terms of participation/inclusion, decision-making power, and impact?
13. Has your participation in the Green Zones exposed you to initiatives you would otherwise have not heard about?
14. How would you describe Kelly's role in the Green Zones Initiative?

Interview Questions for City Staff

A. Green Zones Creation

1. How did the Green Zones idea first come up? What were the driving forces behind, and who was part of, the environmental justice community group that brought the idea of Green Zones to the City?

2. On podcast PlanIt, Kelly Mulleman mentioned the City learned many lessons about running city-organized, community-driven projects (or made many mistakes). Can you share more about that?
3. How would you characterize the relationship between the City and community, particularly throughout the last decade of Climate Action Planning and Green Zones?
4. Are there other city programs with a similar structure of participatory governance or is this one pretty unique?
5. What is your vision for sustainability in the City of Minneapolis, and where and how do the Green Zones fit into this?

B. Current Green Zones Operations

1. How have the task forces worked together and how has that been refined? How have the task forces navigated differences in experience and background?
2. What was your role during the GZ work plan development period? What is your role now?
3. When the Green Zone task forces make recommendations, where do those go next?
    a. How has the City incorporated the GZ recommendations thus far?
4. What have you been frustrated with? What have been some of the largest challenges and/or obstacles of the GZs process?
5. What has gone well? What has been successful so far?
6. Could you break down how and where the Green Zones receive funding? Do you think there ever could be efforts to fund the Green Zones through the City?
7. How has recruitment to the Green Zones task forces worked?
8. How will the current revising process for the CAP look different from the initial planning process?
9. How has institutionalizing of EJ come about in MLPS city governance?
10. How well are you equipped to respond to the GZs?

Interview Questions for Media/Reporters

1. Is it your sense that the Green Zones Initiative is what's driving investment in disadvantaged neighborhoods in Minneapolis (or is it other factors)?
2. Before the Green Zones, what was the atmosphere around green energy in MLPS?
3. How will the Green Zones change the landscape?
4. How do Green Zones fit in the broader landscape of local and national environmental policies? In other words, what makes the Green Zones stand out in the broader landscape of local and national environmental policies?
    - How can energy policies like solar installation increase community resilience without leading to gentrification?
5. What's your understanding of the dynamics between the City, organizers, and community members?
6. What is the story of initiatives like these in MLPS? GZs sound really progressive, but is that true?
7. How has the media reacted to and portrayed the Green Zones? What has the public response been?

Appendix E: Research Claims

Drivers of the Green Zones

Hypotheses from Theory

- There existed both bottom-up and top-down drivers for justice-oriented climate change policy. (Hughes 2020)
- Growing scales of poverty and inequality motivated both residents and policymakers to focus on justice in climate change adaptation planning. (Hughes 2020)
- Grassroots and community organizations significantly influenced the adoption of justice principles in climate change policy (e.g. Hughes 2020; Bulkeley et al. 2013)
- Grassroots movements are the only ones whose approach, ideals, and policy thoroughly engage with EJ principles (Schlosberg and Collins 2014)

Additional Claims from Interviewees

- Dominant narratives in Minneapolis create an illusion of progressivism that has impeded work in recognizing and addressing racial disparities.
- Communication among EJ organizers nationally helped move the Green Zones concept forward.
- Community advocates fought for better community involvement during the framing and implementation of the Green Zones.
- The documentation of the EJ Working Group in the Climate Action Plan is an important tool of advancing justice.

Green Zones' Implementation of Participatory Governance

Hypotheses from Theory

- There are many pitfalls of participatory governance models, including (1) that the government institution manipulates local knowledge to fit a preconceived city plan and retain top-down decision-making, and (2) that participation takes on "token" forms where citizens are consulted without having the power to ensure that their views are heeded (Arnstein 1969; Few et al. 2007). Participation is an idea that is always hard to practice (Few et al. 2007).
- Another pitfall of participatory governance is that decision-making becomes dominated by the concerns of a vocal minority (Silverman 2003) and by privileged white homeowners (Fagotto and Fung 2006).

Additional Claims from Interviewees

- The anti-gentrification and self-determination bases of the Minneapolis Green Zones Initiative came from community outreach and listening.
- Receptiveness to equity and environmental justice efforts has advanced unsystematically within the city, driven by civic advocacy work and shirting composition of City Council and staff members; the format of participation often boils down to particular individuals working in a City office.
- Key trust-building processes often feel antithetical to the institutional logics of the City.
- Learning processes have been essential in moving past standard mistakes of faux community participation.
- COVID-19 has had a large impact on the early implementation of the Green Zones work plans.