



NY GREENWORKS INITIATIVE REPORT

2021



HESTER ST



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**Department
of State**

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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INTRODUCTION

The New York Greenworks Initiative was envisioned as an opportunity to support a variety of organizations across the state of New York replicate components of PUSH's internationally recognized Green Development Zone in their own communities. Informed by the Just Transition Framework and within the context of a then newly adopted Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act, the NY Greenworks Initiative is an effort to support a transition to sustainable, resilient communities by leveraging partnerships to support high-road economic development that specifically focuses on jobs in the green infrastructure, restoration, and environmental stewardship sectors.

In partnership with Hester Street and with the support of the New York Department of State (NY DOS), PUSH introduced the NY Greenworks Initiative as a green sector technical and capacity-building lead and Hester Street as planning technical and capacity-building lead to coach and support organizations in New York to implement state-funded tangible green infrastructure and climate justice projects.

PROJECT HISTORY • TIMELINE

History

In 2016, the Secretary of State visited Buffalo, New York and learned first-hand about the incredible work to transform conditions on the West Side of Buffalo as part of a place-based Green Development Zone strategy that PUSH was carrying forward and was inspired to support PUSH help actively replicate components of their green infrastructure and climate justice and economic development efforts in other communities across New York State. Building on a relationship to engage and plan for the transformation of School 77, PUSH partnered with Hester Street to put forth a three-part leadership institute that aimed to introduce the Just Transition framework to diverse organizations, bring real-life case studies and examples of work areas to inspire and inform the work of participating organizations, and support the state-funded implementation of projects through technical assistance.

Timeline

In **2017**, PUSH and Hester Street submitted a plan and scope of work to NY DOS that outlined the training components, key strategies, and potential technical assistance services.

In early **2019**, NYDOS released a Request for Proposals to invite organizations in New York to apply to become a Green Leader and participate in the 2-week leadership institute. PUSH and Hester Street conducted targeted outreach to potential applicants (of varying sizes and focus areas) across the state.

In **2020**, PUSH and Hester Street transitioned materials from an in-person leadership institute to a virtual setting due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

In **2021**, PUSH and Hester Street conducted a 2-week virtual leadership institute and provided preliminary technical assistance and guidance to participating Green Leaders.

Key Takeaways

When the NY Greenworks initiative was first conceived, PUSH Buffalo and Hester Street set out to develop immersive, in-person and peer-to-peer learning and technical assistance exchanges in and out of Buffalo for organizations representing environmental justice and disadvantaged communities across the state. The launch of the initiative coincided with the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic in March 2020, seriously compromising the ability of the NY Greenworks training team to realize that original vision. The initiative was then re-conceived as a mostly virtual experience that would run over a four month period beginning in June 2021. In light of these constraints, key takeaways from the initiative can be summarized as follows:

- There is no one size fits all model for pursuing and achieving a Just Transition.
- A community of practice model is potentially a more effective approach than a training and technical assistance model that centers the expertise and knowledge of one or two organizations that have found some success implementing a Just Transition in their community.
- Flexibility in approach, modes of delivering training and technical assistance, timing, depth and breadth of content, and requirements around participation are critical to meeting communities where they're at.
- Training, technical assistance, First Mover project planning that included robust community engagement, and project implementation needed to be better aligned and coordinated between the training team and NY DOS.
- The equitable investment mandate in Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act (CLCPA) is a powerful new tool to target climate, clean energy, and sustainable development resources to environmental justice and disadvantaged communities; The NY Greenworks initiative in many ways served to demonstrate the kind of community-government collaboration and capacity building investments that will be required to achieve the Just Transition that the legislation imagines.

Next Steps

Following the Greenworks leadership institute, NY DOS will release a non-competitive request for proposals to participating Green Leaders to help fund the implementation of their First-Mover Projects.

Due to significant timeline delays on the part of NY DOS, PUSH and Hester Street have closed their contract with NY DOS. Prior to the closing of the contract, PUSH and Hester Street provided some preliminary technical assistance and guidance to participating Green Leaders to help support and strengthen their potential application focus in anticipation of the release of funds from NY DOS.

INTRODUCTION

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THE NY GREENWORKS INITIATIVE

INTRODUCTION

The NY Greenworks initiative was a project funded by the New York State Department of State. It sought to build and refine the capacity of organizations working in and with environmental justice and disadvantaged communities to be Green Leaders in their communities. The initiative aimed to provide participating organizations with technical assistance and training to develop equitable and sustainable community development projects that can serve as building blocks for a just transition in their neighborhoods. These so-called “First Mover” projects would then qualify for funding from NY DOS to support implementation.

In 2019, after years of grassroots organizing led by the statewide NY Renews coalition, the New York State Legislature passed the most comprehensive and progressive climate legislation in the country, the Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act (CLCPA). The CLCPA sets in law a transition to net-zero energy economy in NYS by 2050 and mandates a minimum of 35% of beneficial climate and clean energy investments are directed to disadvantaged communities to ensure the transition to a new, renewable energy economy is just and equitable. The CLCPA sets the context for the NY Greenworks initiative. And it brings into view powerful new regulatory, legal, and programmatic tools and opportunities for front-line communities to leverage to draw support for sustainable community development projects.



PARTNERS

The NY Greenworks Initiative was conceived and developed by PUSH Buffalo and Hester Street:

PUSH BUFFALO

The mission of PUSH Buffalo is to mobilize residents to create strong neighborhoods with quality, affordable housing; to expand local hiring opportunities; and to advance economic and environmental justice in Buffalo. PUSH utilizes a place-based strategy known as the Green Development Zone (GDZ) to practice, demonstrate, and innovate methods for achieving a Just Transition from the extractive economy on the West Side of Buffalo and across the City and wider region.

HESTER STREET

Hester Street is an urban planning, design and development nonprofit that works to ensure that neighborhoods are shaped by the people who live in them. They bring over 18 years of experience providing technical and capacity-building assistance to community-based organizations in low-income neighborhoods, private firms and government agencies on land use processes, neighborhood planning and design and public and private community development projects. Together, we strive for more vibrant, equitable, sustainable, and resilient neighborhoods.

The Green Leader teams participating in the NY Greenworks initiative represented a diverse cross section of urban and rural disadvantaged and environmental justice communities from small and medium-sized towns and cities stretching from Albany, NY south into Kingston, NY and the Hudson Valley, and finally into the Catskill region of Sullivan County. The teams were composed of small people of color-led grassroots community-based organizations, larger non-profit community development corporations (CDCs), quasi-governmental agencies, and government institutions. Full Green Leader community profiles are included in the report.



GREENWORKS INSTITUTE

GREENWORKS INSTITUTE

APPROACH:

Building on the historical and ongoing work PUSH leads at the intersection of economic development, climate justice, green infrastructure, and cooperative-led initiatives in Buffalo and the growing experience of Hester Street to meaningfully engage residents and stakeholders in planning and development projects and process, PUSH and Hester Street partnered to craft a 2-part leadership institute that introduced the Just Transition framework, which is based on climate justice principles and connected applicable and replicable strategies and precedents paired with technical assistance and coaching to build the capacity of up to 6 organizations across New York State to be Green Leaders in their communities and provide them with technical assistance to develop equitable and sustainable community development projects that can serve as building blocks for a just transition in their neighborhoods.

To support the capacity of participating Green Leaders, the NY Greenworks Training Institute, gave the Green Leaders the opportunity to explore pathways to cultivate sustainable communities through bottom-up organizing, utilizing techniques for inclusive engagement in planning and design, and leveraging partnerships for collective impact. While originally planned as an in-person training in Buffalo, New York, the training institute took place virtually in June and July 2021 due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

WEEK OVERVIEW

WEEK 1 OVERVIEW

During the Week 1 training, Green Leader teams from Albany, NY, Kingston, NY, and Sullivan County, NY were introduced to Movement Generation's Just Transition framework and the ways it's been embodied and practiced in PUSH Buffalo's place-based work in the Green Development Zone on the West Side of Buffalo. Week 1 sought to root Green Leader teams in the particular social, cultural, economic, and political history of extraction, exploitation, and uneven development in and across Buffalo's neighborhoods and also reveal the power of intersectional approaches to community organizing and community development work through the voices and direct experiences of frontline PUSH staff, non-profit partners, and community leaders. Week 1 cast the Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act (CLCPA) in a central role in community-driven efforts to achieve a just transition to a sustainable, inclusive, and prosperous future that benefits all New Yorkers.

Week 1 of the NY Greenworks Training Institute was comprised of a 6-day virtual training workshop. Green Leader teams came to this training with their project idea and spent a week with their cohort and TA providers to lay the groundwork to develop a community-based Greenworks Action Plan for revitalization. The workshop week provided attendees the opportunity to hear from their peers, and learn from examples and practitioners in the field, giving them tools and resources to plan their projects with their communities. After the workshop, Community Green Leaders returned to their communities to further develop and vet their Action Plan ideas with local stakeholders before returning to participate in a Week 2 of the NY Greenworks Training Institute.

Each organization began training with the following:

- 2-3 Identified Green Leader participants
- Completed Greenworks Application
- Greenworks Implementation Project Ideas
- Community Profile
- Signed Contract with NYS-DOS

WEEK 1

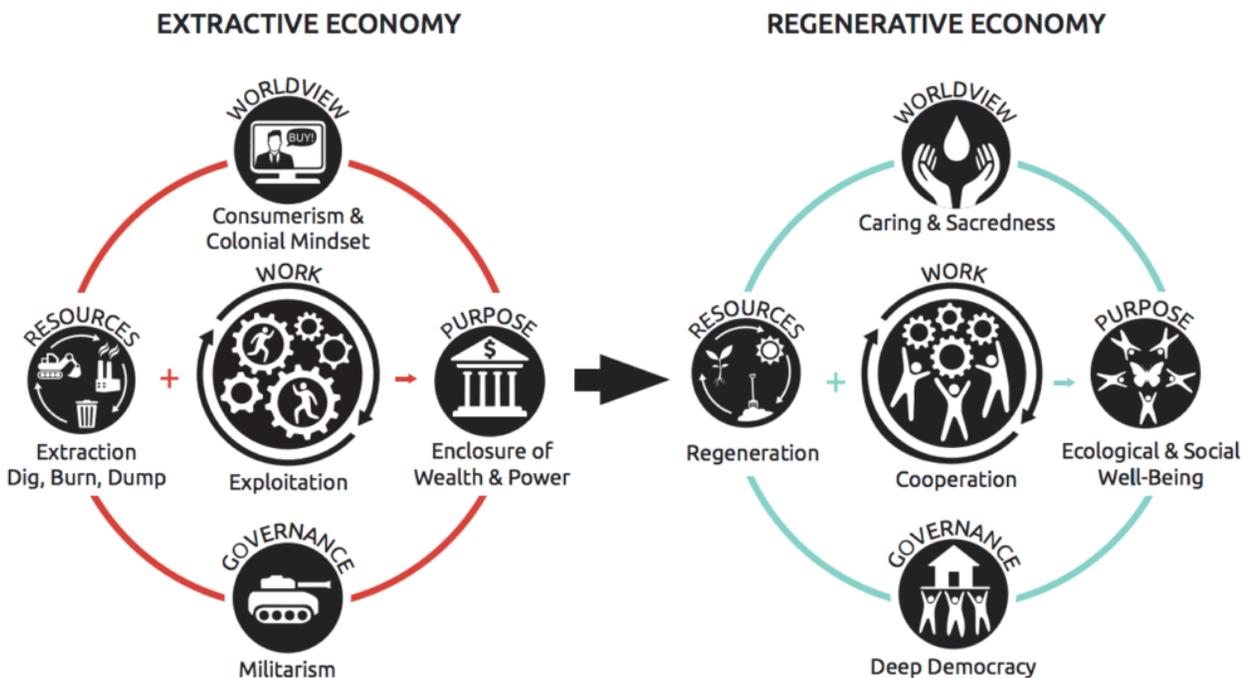
INTRODUCTIONS, LAYING THE FOUNDATION FOR THE JUST TRANSITION FRAMEWORK.

Throughout Week 1, the training team supplemented daily training materials and content that were delivered virtually with other “take home” materials and resources. For example, Green Leaders were given access to a virtual Green Development Zone tour video as well as video recordings of a devised theater performance produced by PUSH’s partner, Ujima theater company, that depicts a just transition in action. Both sets of videos could be used by Green Leaders as popular education teaching tools in their communities.

DAY 1:

Day 1 of the training institute introduced Green Leader teams to one another and to Movement Generation’s Just Transition framework, a conceptual foundation for re-imagining place-based and issue-oriented community development work and its practical applications in marginalized communities. Green Leaders were introduced to PUSH Buffalo’s Green Development Zone, a place-based community-driven just transition strategy on the West Side of Buffalo.

Just Transition is a vision-led, unifying and place-based set of principles, processes, and practices that build economic and political power to shift from an extractive economy to a regenerative economy. This means approaching production and consumption cycles holistically and waste-free. The transition itself must be just and equitable; redressing past harms and creating new relationships of power for the future through reparations. If the process of transition is not just, the outcome will never be. Just Transition describes both where we are going and how we get there. - Just Transition Alliance



Extractive vs. Generative Economy



I found the steps to go from an extractive to regenerative economy was very useful along with this new definition of economy.



DAY 2:

Day 2 of the training institute interrogated Buffalo's social, economic, and political history to ask, "How does where we've been affect where we're going?" Participants learned from guest panelists about the legacies of the extractive economy in Buffalo - deindustrialization, racial segregation, poverty, and political power - that present themselves as challenges and opportunities for PUSH in its organizing and community development work. PUSH and Hester Street introduced participants to Movement Generation's values filter, a useful tool for planning, negotiating, and advancing a just transition to a regenerative economy. Some of the values integral to PUSH's work and consistent with the Just Transition framework that were presented to participants, included:

- Shift economic control to communities
- Democratize wealth and the workplace
- Advance ecological restoration
- Drive racial justice and social equity
- Relocalize most production and consumption
- Retain and restore cultures and traditions

In addition, the training introduced several community organizing and community development principles or mantras that PUSH has developed or borrowed from Movement Generation to popularize Just Transition values with its members:

- We know what we need where we live
- Community control of resources
- Real people have real power
- We deserve a seat at the table because people are policymakers
- What the hands do, the heart learns
If its the right thing to do, we have every right to do it
- If its not soulful, its not strategic
- What you do to the land, you do to the people.
- What you do to the people, you do to the land

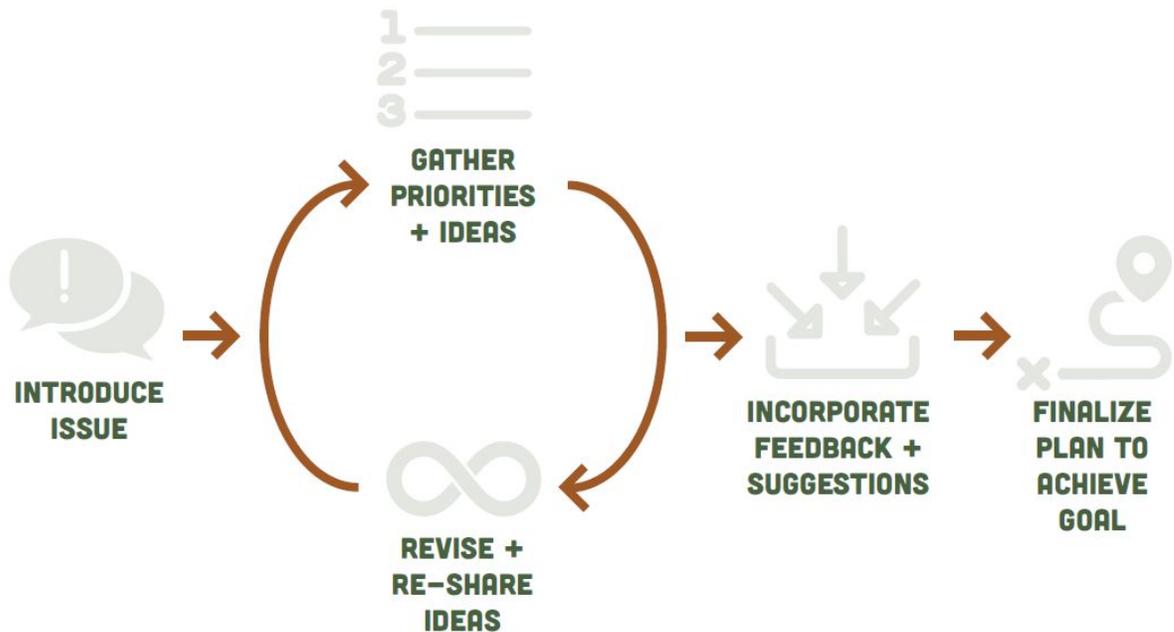
The Values Filter tool is a vertical graphic divided into several sections. At the top is the title 'JUST TRANSITION FRAMEWORK' in large, bold, white letters on a dark green background. Below this is a smaller text box explaining the framework's purpose. The next section is 'JUST TRANSITION VALUES:' followed by a bulleted list of six values: 'SHIFT ECONOMIC CONTROL TO COMMUNITIES', 'DEMOCRATIZE WEALTH AND THE WORKPLACE', 'ADVANCE ECOLOGICAL RESTORATION', 'DRIVE RACIAL JUSTICE AND SOCIAL EQUITY', 'RELOCALIZE MOST PRODUCTION AND CONSUMPTION', and 'RETAIN AND RESTORE CULTURES AND TRADITIONS'. Below the list are two large, light green rectangular boxes with dashed vertical lines, labeled 'OUR VALUES' and 'OUR WORK'. The 'OUR VALUES' box has a small text prompt: 'What values are laid out in your mission statements? What other values do you use, explicitly or implicitly, in your decision making and day to day operations?'. The 'OUR WORK' box has a prompt: 'Brainstorm what values you implement in your work, group similar themes from your brainstorm. Is there an umbrella term or phrases to capture each bucket?'. Below these is a 'QUESTIONS' section with a prompt: 'Now that you've identified your values and considered how they inform your work, what questions can your team use when making decisions informed by your values?'. At the bottom are two more boxes: 'POTENTIAL ISSUES + TENSIONS' with a prompt: 'What are the barriers do you see in carrying out these values? Where do other systems and structures need to shift to be more in line?' and 'SOLUTIONS + NEXT STEPS' with a prompt: 'How can you address potential barriers and implement your just values in your organizational process? What steps do you need to take to formalize these?'. The entire graphic is titled 'Values Filter' at the bottom right.

Values Filter

DAY 3:

Day 3 of the training institute focused on community needs and promoting community control and self-determination. It included sessions on asset mapping and community engagement techniques that PUSH Buffalo and Hester Street rely on to drive a people-centered development agenda across multiple efforts.

Cycle of Community Engagement:



****TIPS: 1. Be Nimble + Proactive; 2. Be Expansive + Inclusive; 3. Don't Overcomplicate**

DAY 4:

Day 4 of the training institute kicked off with a presentation from the Green Leader team based in Albany, NY and led by Radix Ecological Sustainability Center. Day 4 built on prior sessions by focusing on some of the experiences of PUSH's partners in Buffalo who lead issue-based organizing campaigns, community-driven research, neighborhood planning efforts, arts integration, and the provision of direct services. The training team facilitated a round-table conversation with this group of community experts, which included representatives from PUSH Buffalo, Ujima theater company, CoNECT (formerly the Community Health Worker Network of Buffalo), Partnership for the Public Good, and the Fruit Belt Community Land Trust. Following the round-table discussion, Green Leader teams consulted directly with community engagement experts about early project ideas, or opportunities and challenges from their community engagement work in their home communities. These consultations were carried out in virtual breakout rooms in a round robin format where pairs of community experts from Buffalo asked questions and shared strategic thinking with Green Leader teams wrestling with issues around jump-starting projects in their communities.



DAY 5:

Day 5 of the training institute began with a presentation from the Green Leader team based in Kingston, NY and led by RUPCO. The session focused on one of PUSH's signature just transition projects in the Green Development Zone - the former Buffalo Public School 77. A guest panel of project partners shared insights about working together on the project to realize the community's vision for a multi-purpose facility that could serve as a symbol for and creative engine against gentrification and displacement on the West Side.

Participants of the panel included: a neighborhood-based MWBE contractor and training provider who was hired to manage the implementation of the project's community workforce agreement; a representative from NYS Homes and Community Renewal who provided direct oversight and support to the project team based at PUSH; a long time PUSH member and community leader who shaped and participated in the early campaign to win community control and developer rights over the publicly-owned School 77 building; PUSH's former Director of Housing and Community Development who led the project team; and the owner of a local commercial solar installer who partnered with PUSH's Community Hiring Hall to source local workers to complete installation of the 64 kW rooftop community solar array sited on the building.

The day ended with a conversation among NYS agency representatives from NYSERDA and NYDOS, and a Hester Street Board member involved with recent efforts at NYSERDA to center racial and economic equity in the Authority's stakeholder engagement and program design processes. The conversation focused on the investment mandate in the state's new climate law, the Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act, and what it means for community-led just transitions.

In their own words - key takeaways from Green Leaders

“

Optimism from the agencies regarding sustainability becoming the norm, and the invitation to present our projects in ways that emphasize holistic conceptions and implementations across potential funding sources and community issues was something I took away from today's session.

”



DAY 6:

Day 6 followed the form at of the previous two sessions and began with a presentation from the Green Leader team based in Sullivan County, NY and led by the Sullivan County Land Bank. The session opened working time and space for Green Leader teams to either begin or continue brainstorming ideas for first mover projects in their communities that could be supported by the training team throughout the remaining summer months into mid-September. The training team introduced Green Leaders to action planning tools and provided consultation during the working sessions. The day concluded with each team engaging in peer-to-peer sharing to reveal emerging project ideas and to solicit feedback.

ACTION PLANNING

INSTRUCTIONS: This Action Plan provides the guiding framework for why and how you engage stakeholders for the Greenworks initiative. We expect that it will change and evolve as you begin the project. Please fill out the columns below for each of the activities you are planning. Work in small groups to review each others Action Plans and share your strategies and ideas.

INTERVENTION /ACTIVITY What projects or activities would you like to implement?	DESIRED OUTCOME What is the intended goal/outcome of this project/activity?	TARGET COMMUNITY Who are the key population groups this initiative will benefit?	PARTNERS Who are the key community organizations or agencies that should be involved or that you should partner with?	ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY What level of engagement would do you need to have with each priority population?

WEEK 2

IN-DEPTH TRAINING

WEEK 2 OVERVIEW

During a second training session in July 2021, participants received more in-depth training on the following tracks:

- Community-based clean energy strategies
- Cooperative business development
- Land acquisition and affordable housing development
- Training to employment pathways
- Green infrastructure and nature-based climate solutions
- Power mapping and community engagement as tools in project planning

Week 2 sought to center the subject matter expertise of key PUSH staff and partners who work on the frontlines of the Just Transition. Week 2 focused on the practical application of sector specific strategies and lessons learned. Following the Week 1 training session, PUSH and Hester Street sent an online survey form to Green Leader teams, and scheduled conversations, to capture and record preferences for content to feature during the Week 2 session. The training team also queried Green Leaders on any emerging 1-on-1 technical assistance needs.



DAY 1:

Day 1 of the second week of Greenworks training opened with a review for Green Leader teams of some of the key takeaways from Week 1, including:

- Reimagining sustainable community development around the Just Transition framework;
- Understanding the historical underpinnings of the extractive economy in our communities;
- Leveraging the Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act for community investment and environmental impact;
- Embracing intersectionality in issue-based community organizing and community engagement;
- Learning about PUSH Buffalo's place-based sustainable community development model;
- Learning about Hester Street Collaborative's community engagement best practices

The remainder of the session was split in two parts. Green Leaders received an introduction to community-based clean energy and healthy homes strategies deployed by PUSH Buffalo's PUSH Green and PUSH for Clean Heat teams to address root causes of energy poverty and increase access to benefits of energy efficiency and building electrification. They were also introduced to cooperative business development and social enterprise strategies and the work of Cooperation Buffalo, from one of Cooperation Buffalo's team members. PUSH Buffalo is a fiscal sponsor and host of Cooperation Buffalo.

In their own words - key takeaways from Green Leaders:

“ Deep dive into re-ordering our economy is imperative. It is a false notion that businesses need higher profits to survive. ”

“ Leveraging: PUSH Buffalo leveraged GJ-GNY to create the program Buffalo needed – which went beyond GJ-GNY parameters to benefit local contractors, encourage start-ups, create allied initiatives and generate economic development for the community. ”

“ Building retrofits must become more robust, to the point of being net-zero ready if we are going to meet the carbon reduction needed for our Mother, Earth, to survive and thrive. ”

“ Pro-active strategies: PUSH found ways to deal with those problems through alternative funding sources and programs/sometimes initiating the programs needed. ”

“ Troubleshooting: PUSH Buffalo identified classic problems with GJ-GNY including underlying problems with dilapidated aging housing and the program's inability to address/rectify those problems because of the narrow focus on energy efficiency. ”

DAY 2:

Day 2 again opened with reflections on key takeaways, this time from the previous day's presentations and discussions led by PUSH Buffalo and Cooperation Buffalo staff. Green Leader teams were encouraged to focus their reflections on the practical applications of PUSH's strategies in their own communities. Following the opening reflection, PUSH Buffalo facilitated a deep dive and discussion around it's land acquisition and green affordable housing development strategies in the Green Development Zone and practical steps Green Leaders can take to initiate visioning, planning, and development in line with organizational values and project goals. To close the session, Green Leader teams learned about the origins, evolution, and future of PUSH Buffalo's workforce strategies including challenges and opportunities for building community-based training-to-employment pathways for disadvantaged workers and Black, Indigenous, and People of Color Communities (BIPOC).

In their own words - key takeaways from Green Leaders

“ Help workforce develop soft skills to address potential clash of cultures on worksites, and make shared core values a part of the contractual agreement, with a representative on-site to foster communication and conflict resolution. ”

“ Strategy Screen: shapes the project, keeps the project from going sideways. ”

“ Urban areas have more access to funding opportunities than rural communities. Challenges to developing significant programs are different. ”

“ We should learn from PUSH's experience with Americorps partnership to develop effective strategies for possible collaborations through the proposed Civilian Climate Corps. ”

“ Street Team as part of recruitment. ”



DAY 3:

Day 3 opened with shared reflections and then shifted away from the direct, field level and programmatic experiences and practical knowledge shared by PUSH staff with specialized expertise in particular Just Transition strategies, to examine foundational approaches to conducting internal and external assessments of organizational and community strengths and the power needed to transform good ideas into viable, community-driven projects that are both broadly and deeply supported across different stakeholder and constituent groups. Green Leader teams developed power mapping skills to assess the landscape of opportunities, challenges and threats to their First Mover projects. And they learned about the different types of power they need to build and contend with across the development-implementation-maintenance life cycle of First Mover projects.

In their own words - key takeaways from Green Leaders:

“ You can tackle the three circles paradigm in a variety of ways: create, codify, oppose + expose! ”

“ Power mapping tools helped us visualize the balance of power -- discover and enumerate strengths of projects and networks. This is empowering. ”

“ Power mapping is such an amazing tool to help see the power structures in play, and also to name sources of power which we traditionally see as powerless. ”

“ Power mapping helps to understand the landscape and can be applicable to a any project/campaign/goal in mind. ”

“ The Three Circles tool is excellent for aligning priorities with action items and strategizing a robust educational component to a project. ”

“ Power mapping is a powerful tool! It helped concretize the issues of identifying and defining power. ”



3 Circles of Movement Generation

DAY 4:

Day 4 represented the final session of the two week Green Leaders Training Institute. It began with shared reflections and transitioned into a presentation and facilitated conversation on green infrastructure and nature-based climate solutions led by PUSH's Executive Director with participation from representatives of the Lyceum at Silo City, including a former PUSH staff member who launched the PUSH Blue stormwater management and green infrastructure social enterprise. The back half of the final session, returned to content on community engagement introduced by Hester Street during Week 1. This time around, Green Leader teams were provided the opportunity to caucus together in virtual breakout rooms to take the next step in planning or talking through early community engagement strategies that could jumpstart First Mover projects. Teams used a project planning tool developed by Hester Street to chart the benefits and challenges of particular First Mover project ideas, list out the key stakeholders to engage, and assess different community engagement methods that might be tailored to certain audiences. Day 4 closed with the training team outlining next steps in the overall NY Greenworks initiative.

In their own words - key takeaways from Green Leaders:

“ Great presentations and guided conversation about green infrastructure. Again, I appreciated everyone's candor about the real life challenges. You set a great tone of trust and mutual respect for all of these sessions. ”



TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

The training team conceived of technical assistance to Green Leader teams as a series of consultations along with a potential in-person visit to the Green Leader's community to help organize and facilitate a community engagement event that would serve to kickoff and energize community residents and other stakeholders around an initial vision for a First Mover project. The training team committed to providing up to 10 hours of consultation time to each team from the beginning of August 2021 through the end of September 2021, and would draw from the deep bench of community experts, PUSH members, and staff who were introduced to Green Leader teams during the Training Institute. For example, if a Green Leader team was interested in focusing a First Mover project on rehabilitation of a vacant storefront and opening up the work as a hands-on job training opportunity for disadvantaged workers in the community, PUSH would recruit its workforce development and Community Hiring Hall team along with community development staff to directly provide technical assistance.

The focus areas for technical assistance aligned with PUSH and Hester Street's areas of practical expertise and included:

- Community-based clean energy strategies
- Green infrastructure and nature-based climate solutions
- Land acquisition and green affordable housing development
- Training-to-employment pathways
- Cooperative business development
- Community engagement strategies
- Outreach plan + materials
- Meeting format + materials
- Facilitation + logistics
- Engagement findings + report back

- Physical planning basics
- Site analysis
- Plan/Conceptual design materials

As a condition of providing technical assistance, the training team scoped out expectations for Green Leader teams to help ensure that joint work was collaborative, efficient, and effective. Green Leader teams were asked to provide a point person and a proxy representative from the team, to clearly identify project goals and technical assistance needs prior to the beginning of technical assistance consultations, and to identify a timeline and milestones for First Mover project planning.

Despite the training teams efforts to sustain momentum around the development of First Mover projects following completion of the two-part Greenworks Training Institute by Green Leader teams, participation in the Technical Assistance phase of the NY Greenworks initiative tapered off by the end of the training team's contract term with NY DOS on September 30, 2021. Technical assistance scoping meetings were held in August 2021 with Green Leader teams from Sullivan County and Albany. The meeting with the Albany team included participation from a representative at NY DOS. Multiple attempts to schedule a scoping meeting with the Green Leader team out of Kingston failed to secure a meeting or reestablish contact with members of the team. Ahead of the Week 2 training, the training team was notified by the Kingston team's lead representative from RUPCO that they were leaving the organization and would do their best to reassign lead responsibilities to another team member. This did not appear to happen.

At the scoping meetings the training team reviewed how technical assistance hours would be allocated and what expectations would be for each Green Leader team. It became clear in these conversations that Green Leader teams needed additional information from NY DOS about the parameters and requirements of the First Mover project implementation funding solicitation to feel comfortable moving forward in substantial ways with technical assistance. Even with the lack of certainty around NY DOS requirements for implementation funding, the Sullivan County Green Leader team met virtually on several occasions in September 2021 with PUSH and Hester Street to present and discuss three potential First Mover project ideas.

Project 1: Broadway Theater Marquee Restoration



Project 2: North Delaware Extension Renewable Energy



Project 3: Strong Building Decorative Board-Up + Training



FIRST MOVER PROJECT IDEAS

Project 1: Broadway Theater Marquee Restoration

The Sullivan County Land Bank currently owns the Broadway Theater, which was acquired in a state of disrepair and has been working on interior clean up and shoring of the building. The outside fronts on the Village of Monticello's main street, Broadway, and includes a marquee at the entrance of the theater and additional storefronts, all of which are in dire need of rehabilitation.

The SCLB would like to use Greenworks funds to restore the façade of the building and the historic marquee, possibly with solar energy. We foresee a partnership with Sullivan Renaissance and/or Nesin Cultural Arts for painting the façade and marquee. Sullivan County Office of Sustainable Energy will be completing research on the potential for solar lights and connections. The public has expressed the desire to see the marquee lit up again and doing so would activate the space on Broadway while we plan for the overall redevelopment.

Potential Budget Items:

- Scaffolding Rental
- Pressure Washing and Scraping Facade
- Labor (for pressure washing)
- Paint and related supplies
- Light Bulbs
- Solar Hookups

Hester Street Comments: The Broadway Theater Marquee restoration is the most straightforward of the three options. For the restoration of the facade, an architect might also be necessary depending on the type of restoration work necessary/intended and the city's building code requirements. After estimation of the total budget, if there is cap left, an energy consultant and a licensed electrician may also be considered. Additionally, what relationship exists currently between SCLB and Nesin Cultural Arts, Sullivan Renaissance and the Sullivan County Office of Sustainable Energy? What resources (funds, materials, labor, engagement, etc.) Might these potential partners bring to the project?

Sullivan County Comments: Focus on curb appeal. Architectural costs submitted as part of CFA. Works with electrician on how to light up marquee without turning on lights/utilities in entire building. Office of Sustainability has expertise and data but no funding. Could help with electrician and how to hook up. Sullivan Renaissance offer small 50-50 grants. Volunteer core to mobilize. Never really worked with Nesin before. Small murals around the village. Greenworks funding to look at electricity issue and some paint.

PUSH Buffalo Comments: This project as outlined could allow for engagement of local workforce

partners to leverage the restoration opportunity to carry out hands-on training in historic preservation and sustainable energy. Are there workforce partners locally that your team has engaged previously or around this project? If the project goes out to bid to general contractors or solar developers, you could use the bid process to define workforce goals/expectations/requirements that could range from shadowing/mentoring to employment. NYSERDA has several workforce programs that could help subsidize costs of trainee labor if they were brought onto the project as paid workers - e.g., <https://www.nyserda.ny.gov/All-Programs/Programs/Clean-Energy-Workforce-Development/On-the-job-training>. Re-painting and re-lighting the marquee would help to bring new life to an iconic historic structure in a visible public location. As a place-making activity it could help to create interest in and potentially financial support for a more full-scale reinvestment and re-imagining of the entire building or block. It could serve as a site for conversations, in-person and via social media, about the past/present/future of Monticello and the role your organization and residents can play in stabilizing the community and securing a more sustainable future for it.

Project 2: North Delaware Extension Renewable Energy

The Sullivan County Land Bank owns a number of vacant parcels on North Delaware Ave Extension in the Village of Liberty. The parcel may be a good candidate for a small-scale renewable energy campaign, such as solar panels or a wind turbine. We would like to work with our Office of Sustainable Energy and the school system (i.e. Liberty Central School or BOCES) to provide a space and funding for students to learn more about renewable energy and be able to see the methods in practice or conduct experiments at the property. This would provide both a source of renewable energy and a training opportunity for local youth who are about to make decisions on higher education or the workforce.

Potential Budget Items:

- Instructor Stipend
- Supplies
- Solar Panel
- Mini Wind Turbine

Hester Street Comments: The North Delaware Extension Renewable Energy Project would be a long-term benefit for the school district it serves. Aside from purchase cost of solar equipment and instructor cost, would there be a structure built on-site for learning opportunities? Are there staffing needs that can be identified early on for site/equipment maintenance? More information on the relationship between the Office of Sustainability, the school system, and the Land Bank would help determine how this project comes into focus under the grant.

PUSH Buffalo Comments: This could be a great opportunity to develop a small scale community solar facility that provide direct energy benefits to both the school/school district as well as residents in the community. How large are the parcels when grouped together? Municipalities across NYS are making moves into Community Choice Aggregation - an opt-out scheme renewable energy services scheme for residents of a given political jurisdiction. A solar array on the site could potentially feed into a local CCA. Has the Village of Liberty or the Office of Sustainability explored developing a CCA model?

Project 3: Strong Building Decorative Board Up & Training

The Sullivan County Land Bank owns the Strong Building, located at 430 Broadway in Monticello. This building is a part of a larger LIHTC housing project on Broadway and is a recipient of a HUD Main Street grant. The building is currently undergoing stabilization while the majority of the windows are broken and boarded up. The SCLB would like to engage Chris Toepfer from the Neighborhood Foundation to present an interactive, hands-on Decorative Board up training for volunteers. Toepfer has used his methods to board up other Land Bank properties with sustainable materials that decrease the impression of blight on the neighborhood, often incorporating art on the boards that cover the windows. We would like to collaborate with Nesin Cultural Arts and Sullivan Renaissance to procure volunteers and offer the training to, especially in regards to creating art on the boards. This training would result in the Strong Building being boarded up in a creative way and Land Bank staff and community volunteers learning the techniques to do this to other buildings.

Potential Budget Items:

- Instructor Stipend
- Boards
- Paint, brushes,Trays
- Installation Tools - Drills, Screws
- Volunteer Gloves and Aprons

Hester Street Comments: The strong Building Decorative Board up & Training project would engage the community and provide an applicable skill for similar buildings. Like the Broadway Marquee, this project has a beautification impact, albeit less permanent. If this project cost comes in lower than the full grant amount, it could potentially be considered as part of a larger network of similar beautification projects with different scales, or repeated on other blighted properties in close proximity to the strong building as Decorative Board Up projects often happen in clusters. Additionally, what relationship exists currently between SCLB and Nesin Cultural Arts, and Chris Toepfer (Neighborhood Foundation)? What resources (funds, materials, labor, engagement, etc.) Might these potential partners bring to the project?

GREEN LEADER PROFILES

RADIX ECOLOGICAL SUSTAINABILITY CENTER

INTRODUCTION

The Radix Ecological Sustainability Center is a non-profit urban environmental education center in Albany's South End neighborhood. The South End is a majority-minority neighborhood with a median household income of \$25,952, considered both an environmental justice area and food desert.

Radix maintains a demonstration site of sustainable tools and technologies designed to teach local residents how to have greater access and control over resources such as food, water, energy, and waste management while promoting social justice and equity.

Radix also runs programs for high school students teaching business skills and urban agriculture through a lens of food and environmental justice advocacy.

SYSTEMS AT RADIX INCLUDE:

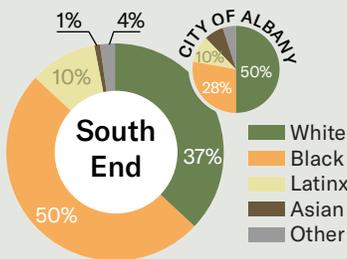
- Organic gardens
- Microlivestock
- A solar greenhouse
- Aquaponics beehives
- Rain collection
- Composting
- Renewable energy

PROJECT TEAM:





RACE + ETHNICITY



MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME



EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT

15% of South End's 25yrs+ population **DO NOT HAVE A HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMA,** **4%** higher than the City of Albany

FOCUS AREAS + GOALS

Radix Center aims to:

- **Design, promote, and implement a green jobs training program:** This initiative will focus on South End residents, being mindful of how to guarantee employment opportunities for graduates.
- **Grow the Center's knowledge + skillset:** Developing expertise on vacant lots remediation, urban agriculture, renewable energy, housing/building rehabilitation, community engagement, and green jobs workforce training programs.

NEIGHBORHOOD CHALLENGES

- High unemployment rate + limited access to living wage jobs.
- Lack of supermarkets + low access to fresh food
- Health + environmental disparities that contribute to health issues.
- Limited amount of facilities and programs for youth, adults, and seniors.
- Large stock of vacant buildings and lots.
- Disproportionate concentration of public housing projects homeless shelters and halfway houses.

PROGRAMS + PARTNERSHIPS

As an educational and hands-on environmental training center, Radix understands that green training and capacity development is central to their mission. Their Sustainable Agriculture Youth Entrepreneurial Training Program is an after-school and summer experiential learning youth employment program for high school students. In addition to overseeing the weekly tasks of the center, participating in the Farm Share sales gives youth job readiness skills and inspiration for green small business possibilities through direct participation.

Radix is part of various partnerships and coalitions of like-minded organizations and individuals living and working in the South End. Most notably, Radix has a partnership with AVillage, with whom they launched "Innovation Blocks" a pilot to solicit community input into the redesign of many of the South End's vacant parcels and measure the impact of neighborhood greening on resident's health. This partnership has also led to the creation of the South End Farmers market that has operated in the summer for six years.

Radix is also an active member of the South End Community Collaborative (SECC). Formed last year, the SECC engages stakeholders and significantly increases the neighborhood's capacity to plan its own future and seek resources to meet its needs.

PROJECT OUTCOME:

- Teaching youth about their environment and enhancing their appreciation of the natural world
- Inventorying both the environmental hazards and community assets in the South End
- Increasing awareness of environmental hazards throughout the neighborhood,
- Increase access to healthy, locally grown food,
- Creating new opportunities to learn about healthy eating, exercise and wellness programs, and promote those programs throughout the neighborhood.
- Creating new opportunities for residents to develop previously abandoned vacant lots and enjoy green spaces and homegrown food.

COLLABORATER: AVILLAGE INC.

Established in 2010, AVillage works to create sustainable solutions that empower the neighborhood of the South End as a whole. AVillage's mission is to identify inequities and confront their root causes by galvanizing the community and leveraging resources to create transformational change.



RUPCO

COMMUNITY PROFILE

INTRODUCTION

In collaboration with the City of Kingston, RUPCO a Kingston-based not-for-profit organization will lead a team of community-based and advocacy organizations with aligned missions and a shared commitment to improve the quality of life and economic health of Kingston communities. The team includes: RUPCO, Kingston Land Trust, The Real Kingston Tenants Union, Citizens for Local Power and Kingston Citizen. This team is dynamic in its multifaceted representation of energy-efficiency, advocacy, civic engagement, stewardship, community ownership, and affordable housing knowledge found in the Kingston community.

PROJECT LEADERSHIP:

GUY KEMPE,
RUPCO VP Community Development

SUSAN H. GILLESPIE,
President of the Board, Citizens for Local Power

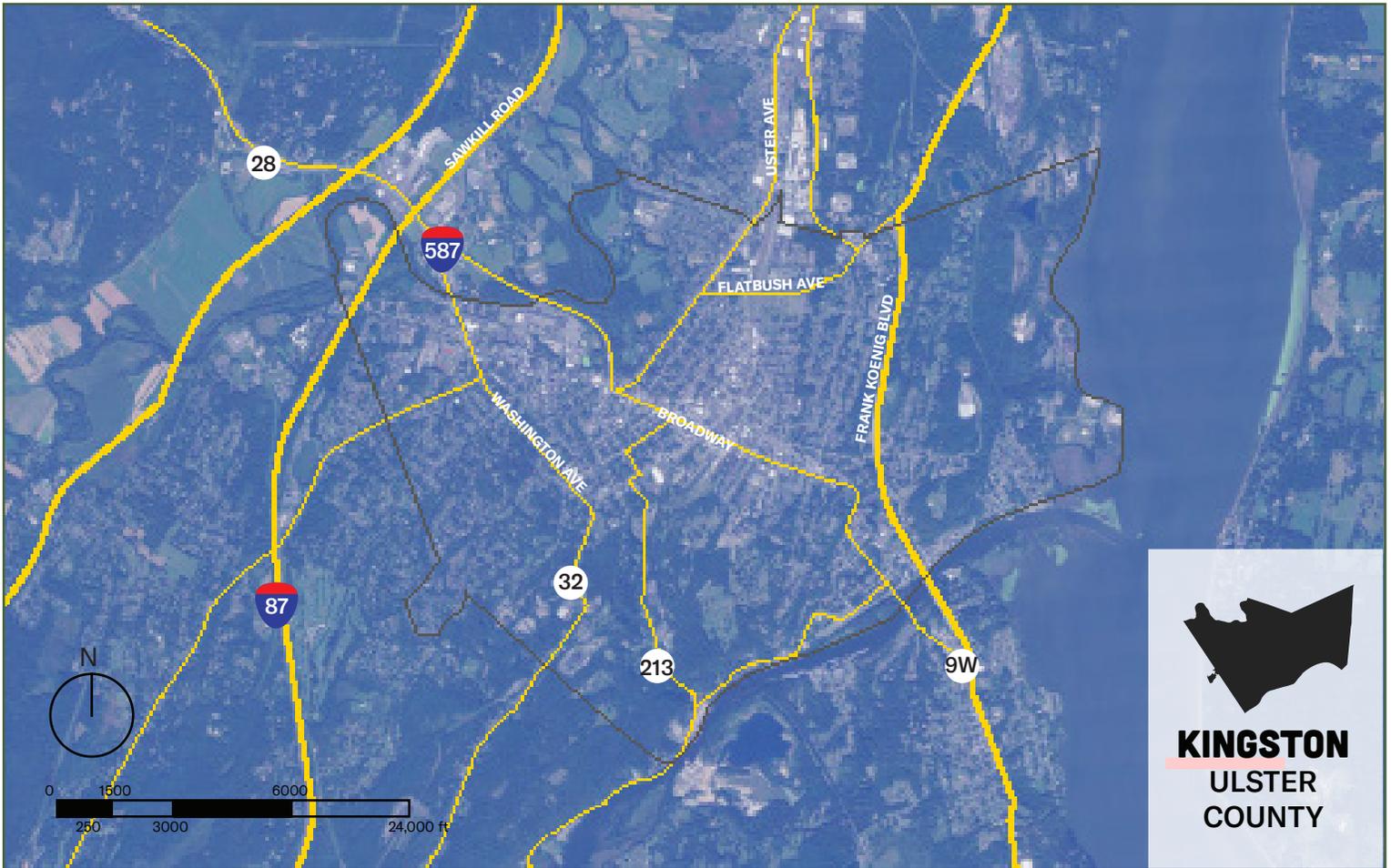
REBECCA MARTIN
Director + Lead Organizer, Kingston Citizens

JORDAN SCRUGGS
Board Chair, Midtown Rising

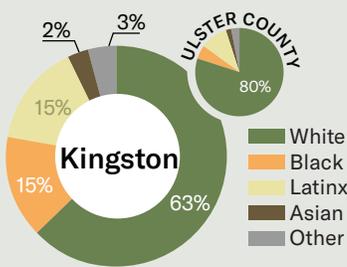
JULIE L. NOBLE,
Environmental Education and Sustainability
Coordinator, City of Kingston

PROJECT TEAM:

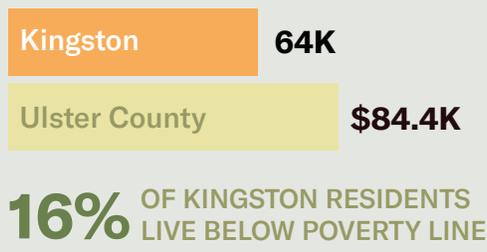




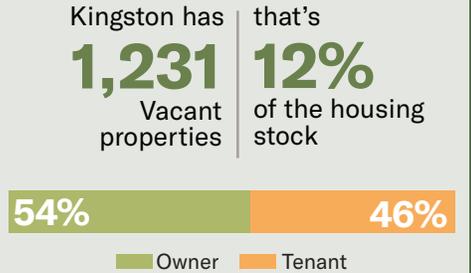
RACE + ETHNICITY



INCOME



HOUSING



FOCUS AREAS + GOALS:

- Empower neighborhood leaders in low-income communities to have influence in the development process and play a key role in future neighborhood planning.
- Revitalize underutilized areas such as vacant lots, abandoned homes and/or underused properties by providing green solutions such as community gardens, green infrastructure, energy efficient technology, etc.
- Empower a low-income local workforce development program to equip workers with the training necessary to secure employment in the green technology/construction sector.
- Address potential environmental justice concerns (indoor air quality, lead, asbestos, other discrete hazards such as underground oil tanks) and promote equity in areas that may be disproportionately burdened by negative environmental impacts

COMMUNITY INITIATIVES

A series of community initiatives will help realize the vision of a 'Model City' of environmental and economic sustainability.

- **Complete Streets Policy** – envisions a healthy vibrant city alive with pedestrians and bicyclists along with easy access to healthy, affordable, local food.
- **Healthy Kingston for Kids Initiative** – The City hired two environmental educators that are working on greening the community through initiatives to reduce waste and improve recycling.
- **Community Gardens + Trails** - The Kingston Land Trust has created community gardens and is promoting rail trails for the City.
- **Green Infrastructure** – The Hudson River Sloop Clearwater is working in Kingston to advance 'green infrastructure' and climate justice. Local waterfront groups focused around two of Kingston's major water bodies, the Hudson River and the Rondout Creek, are addressing inter-municipal water issues including waterfront development, the economy and the environment.
- **Land Use + Zoning** - The City of Kingston is also currently updating its Comprehensive Master Plan and Zoning Code

STAKEHOLDERS

- City of Kingston Common Council
- RUPCO, Inc
- Kingston Community Land bank
- Kingston Land Trust
- Kingston Citizens.org
- The REAL Kingston Tenants Union
- My Kingston Kids
- Kingston YMCA
- Citizens for Local Power



SULLIVAN COUNTY LAND BANK

COMMUNITY PROFILE

INTRODUCTION

The mission of the Sullivan County Land Bank Corporation (SCLBC) is to strengthen neighborhoods by mitigating blight through strategic property acquisition that will, create vibrant neighborhood, increase homeownership and stimulate economic growth

By returning properties to productive use and improve quality of life, Sullivan Land Bank supports community development. The Land Bank acquires select tax delinquent, foreclosed, vacant and abandoned properties; eliminates barriers to their redevelopment; and sells the rehabilitated properties to new, responsible owners in a transparent manner. This in turn, results in increased homeownership opportunities for lower and middle income residents of Sullivan County.

APPROACH

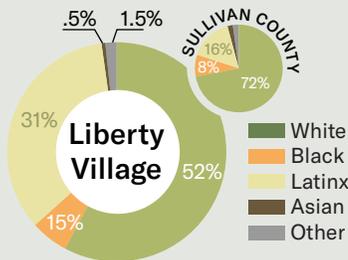
Sullivan Land Bank, in partnership with the Center for Workforce Development and Sullivan Renaissance will pilot a green building workforce development program. This initiative, along with relevant community engagement activities to enhance civic participation, will train Latinx community members on implementing green construction practices for SCLBC's 32 properties. The program will highlight green new construction, renovation and demolition methods.

PROJECT TEAM:





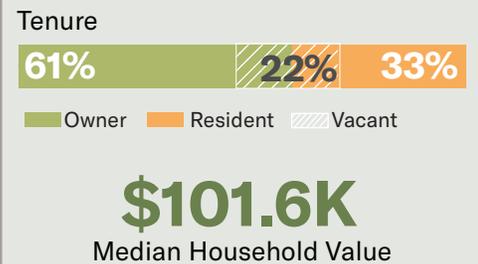
RACE + ETHNICITY



MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME



HOUSING STOCK



FOCUS AREAS + GOALS:

- Increase affordable home ownership to promote neighborhood stability and wealth building
- Take the lead in advocating for and implementing sustainable construction and land use practices
- Empower communities to participate in economic and housing development

IDENTIFIED CHALLENGES

- An abundance of unsafe, deteriorated, and abandoned structures, as well as the need for economic development and community-based wealth building.
- An aging housing stock creates a visible need for maintenance and upgrades in a great deal of properties throughout the community.

PRESSING ISSUES:

- Active open space ecological management
- Poverty + Unemployment
- Poor housing conditions

OPPORTUNITIES

- The Land Bank is proactive in reaching out to the diverse neighborhoods in the Village of Liberty.
- They frequently hold public events with local and regional partners that provide information and training for prospective homeowners.
- The Land Bank has strong planning experience and access to all of the community resources and connections, including close ties with the Village and Town governing boards.

PREVIOUS ENGAGEMENT

In June of 2019, Sullivan Renaissance piloted "Rock the Block," a two-day event that engaged neighbors and volunteers to help clean, landscape, paint, and repair houses on a single block. One of the homes on the block was transferred from the Land Bank to Alexis Vera and his family, who moved to Sullivan County after their home in Puerto Rico was destroyed by Hurricane Maria.

- Main Street Development
- Code Enforcement - Improving Housing Stock & Condition
- Education
- Health and wellness
- Addressing high tax burden



KEY FINDINGS + RECOMMENDATIONS

KEY FINDINGS + RECOMMENDATIONS

LESSONS LEARNED FROM THE PROCESS

BUILDING A COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE / PRACTITIONERS AND SUSTAINING MOMENTUM AND SUPPORT

When the NY Greenworks initiative was first conceived, PUSH Buffalo and Hester Street set out to develop immersive, in-person and peer-to-peer learning and technical assistance exchanges in and out of Buffalo for organizations representing environmental justice and disadvantaged communities across the state. The launch of the initiative coincided with the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic in March 2020, seriously compromising the ability of the NY Greenworks training team to realize that original vision. The initiative was then re-conceived as a mostly virtual experience that would run over a four month period beginning in June 2021. In light of these constraints, key takeaways from the initiative can be summarized as follows:

LIMITATIONS OF A ONE-SIZE-FITS-ALL-MODEL FOR TRAINING AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

URBAN VS. RURAL COMMUNITIES

There is no one size fits all model for pursuing and achieving a Just Transition. Histories of disinvestment, extractivism, environmental racism, and uneven community development vary widely across large and small, urban and rural communities.

SMALL VS. MEDIUM-SIZED CITIES

A community of practice model, in which grassroots community leaders, planners, public officials, and other stakeholders meet as co-equals to exchange best practices and insights about overcoming deeply rooted, historical inequities and transforming relationships of power that enables new sustainable community development patterns to emerge, is potentially more effective approach than a training and technical assistance model that centers the expertise and knowledge of one or two organizations that have found some success implementing a Just Transition in their community.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FIRST MOVER PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION

Flexibility in approach, modes of delivering training and technical assistance, timing, depth and breadth of content, and requirements around participation are critical to meeting communities where they're at and respecting the challenges that smaller organizations face in pulling critical, field-level staff away from their day-to-day work providing direct services, developing and administering projects, or building community power through deep relationship building.

Quote from Green Leader team member following the Week 1 Training Institute: "I appreciate the work that has gone into organizing this training and the expertise of your organization, you are all an inspiration to many organizations. I realize that your work is contractual through the NYSDOS and that you are not creating the rules, however, the requirement of attending a training session feels rather paternalistic (on part of NYSDOS) and an additional requirement on top of the already onerous responsibilities of grant reporting and management. It is challenging to have to attend an on-line training in the midst of a particularly busy season. The information is all very good, well delivered, and is likely of great benefit to many of the attendees, it is just fairly basic for me personally. As a student of pedagogy, though, I do appreciate observing popular education methods."

Training, technical assistance, First Mover project planning that included robust community engagement,

and project implementation needed to be better aligned and coordinated between the training team and NY DOS. Project implementation requirements for funding, which Green Leader teams held up as critical to project planning, became dislodged from the pace and delivery of the overall NY Greenworks initiative as it was scoped out by the training team with the pivot to a virtual format brought on by COVID-19. Green Leader teams were hesitant to press forward into the technical assistance phase of the initiative without assurances from NY DOS as to how, to what degree, and with what conditions First Mover project ideas would be supported financially into the implementation phase of the initiative.

ALIGNING THE GOALS OF THE CLPA WITH SUPPORT FOR ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE AND DISADVANTAGED COMMUNITIES

The equitable investment mandate in Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act (CLCPA) is a powerful new tool to target climate, clean energy, and sustainable development resources to environmental justice and disadvantaged communities. As the CLCPA scoping plan process is completed and yields actionable recommendations for direct emission reductions in these communities, it will be critical for the state to also invest in enabling strategies that build and refine the capacity of community-based organizations to effectively draw-down resources and implement projects that provide meaningful and lasting economic and environmental benefits to low and moderate income individuals, energy burdened households, and communities that have historically suffered disproportionately from environmental and climate pollution. The NY Greenworks initiative in many ways served to demonstrate the kind of community-government collaboration and capacity building investments that will be required to achieve the Just Transition that the legislation imagines.



HESTER ST