

**By Gordon, Cano, and A. Johnson**

**Promoting racial equity and sustainable community revitalization through the development of a green zones policy and creating the Green Zones Policy Task Force.**

Whereas, low-income communities and people of color in Minnesota are disproportionately impacted by the negative effects of traffic and stationary pollution sources, brownfield sites, blight, housing, lack of access to jobs, and will be disproportionately impacted by the adverse effects of climate change; and

Whereas, low-income communities and people of color in Minnesota suffer health inequities, such as higher rates of asthma emergency department visits and hospitalizations, higher rates of low-birth weight babies and infant mortality, and higher overall mortality rates, as demonstrated in the 2014 “Advancing Health Equity Legislative Report” produced by the Minnesota Department of Health; and

Whereas, a person’s zip code has become a predictor of his or her health outcomes and the importance of place-based interventions are widely acknowledged in the fields of urban planning and public health; and

Whereas, recent evaluations of participation in energy efficiency and renewable energy programs across the U.S. show lower involvement rates and more barriers to participation for lower-income households and renters; and

Whereas, cities across the U.S. are developing Green Zones policies that target resources and regulatory tools to specific areas experiencing high levels of cumulative pollution and related health impacts to address environmental justice and community revitalization, and that are each unique and crafted based on community-identified concerns and solutions; and

Whereas, Green Zones can be designed to be a comprehensive, place-based, targeted approach to combat multiple connected issues to reinvigorate communities and build climate resiliency; and

Whereas, a Green Zone Policy will guide the equitable distribution of environmental resources and burden; and

Whereas, equity is one of the City’s Values, defined as “fair and just opportunities and outcomes for all people;” and

Whereas, the City Council has committed to the development of a Green Zone Policy through the following actions:

- Adoption of the Minneapolis Climate Action Plan on June 28, 2013, which identified developing a Green Zone initiative as a cross-cutting strategy under the Buildings and Energy chapter.
- Adoption of the Minneapolis Energy Pathways Study on March 7, 2014, which listed establishing a Green Zones pilot with key community leadership as a next step on Minneapolis Energy Pathways recommendations.

- Adoption of the Minneapolis Climate Action Plan Two-Year (2014-2015) Priorities on March 7, 2014, which included developing a Green Zone initiative; and

Whereas, the Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) Climate & Health Program facilitated a health impact assessment (HIA) 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; and

Whereas, 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;

Now, Therefore, Be It Resolved by The City Council of The City of Minneapolis:

That the City of Minneapolis creates a Green Zones Policy Task Force to develop recommendations for a Green Zones Policy, which is intended to improve health and support economic development using environmentally conscious efforts in communities that face the cumulative effects of environmental pollution, as well as social, political and economic vulnerability.

Be it Further Resolved that the Green Zones Policy may include but not be limited to the establishment of community environmental goals, enforcement of existing and needed standards, recommendations for future planning efforts, promotion of energy efficiency and renewable energy, support for green amenities including tree canopy, and focused economic development activities such as creating green jobs and incentivizing healthier and more environmentally-friendly business practices.

Be it Further Resolved that the Task Force will implement a community outreach plan to inform their policy recommendations and will work with existing community organizations already involved in these issues in the creation of the outreach plan and policy recommendation goals.

Be It Further Resolved that the Green Zones Policy Task Force will be made up of no more than 19 20 individuals, to include the following:

- Nine ten representatives from the community: the Mayor shall appoint one individual to the Green Zones Policy Task Force and the City Council shall appoint 8 individuals in accordance with the City's Open Appointment process, as set forth in the Minneapolis Code of Ordinances, Section 14.180, with representatives from the following sectors:
  - One representative from an organizations focused on low-income and communities of color environmental and health issues based in racially concentrated areas of poverty in Minneapolis
  - Representative from the Community Environmental Advisory Commission's (CEAC) Overburdened Communities Sub-Committee
  - Representative from the Minneapolis Green Zones Health Impact Assessment Steering Committee that has been established in cooperation with the Minnesota Department of Health
  - Representative from business with expertise in green manufacturing or environmentally-friendly business practices
  - Two representatives from organized labor or groups representing low-wage employees industrial workers

- Two residents of overburdened communities with demonstrated technical and/or community expertise in addressing climate resiliency or cumulative health impact issues
- A bi-lingual and bi-cultural representative with demonstrated technical expertise in environmental justice policy
- **A representative from an industrial-based business located in Minneapolis**
- One representative from the Mayor’s Office
- Two representatives from the City Council offices appointed by the Council President
- One representative from each of the following Minneapolis Departments:
  - Community Planning and Economic Development, Economic Development and Policy Division
  - Community Planning and Economic Development, Development Services Division
  - Health
  - Neighborhood and Community Relations
  - Coordinator’s Office – Equity Division
  - Regulatory Services
  - Public Works

Be It Further Resolved that the Green Zones Policy Task Force members should be residents, businesses, or organizations located within the Minneapolis city limits.

Be It Further Resolved that the Green Zones Policy Task Force will establish procedures and rules necessary for the operation of the Task Force such as date, time, and location of meetings, voting structure (e.g., voting by majority or consensus and email voting), establishing quorum, electing two co-chairs to lead the Task Force meetings, and other items.

Be It Further Resolved that the Green Zones Policy Task Force is to be staffed by the Sustainability Office.

Be It Further Resolved that the Green Zones Policy Task Force is directed to return to the City Council no later than the fourth quarter of 2016 with recommendations on the following items to be included in the Green Zones policy:

- Definition of a Green Zone
- Goals of the Minneapolis Green Zones policy
- Screening criteria for Green Zones designation
- Existing and new city programs, policies, and resources that could be included as a menu of options targeted towards areas receiving Green Zones designation
- Process for the development of an implementation plan following the adoption of the Green Zones policy.