



CLEAN AIR. HEALTHY COMMUNITIES.



Climate change is upon us already and it affects everyone! There has been worsening air quality and more extreme and variable severe weather events such as droughts, heat waves, flooding, etc.

The goal of the Green New Deal for Birmingham campaign is to develop a people-driven, grassroots climate action plan for the city that includes specific, justice-forward legislation and policy recommendations under the following pillars:

Clean Air & Water
Responsible Energy

Transit Justice
Equitable Investment

Sustainable Development
Transparent Government

Why Birmingham:

Birmingham, Alabama is one of the largest cities in the South and we need to establish sustainable infrastructure to make our city healthier and safer for everyone.

We still have a long way to go. Multiple areas of the city still struggle with poor environmental health. North Birmingham has the 35th Avenue Superfund site which has high levels of air and soil contamination. Read about it here: <https://gaspgroup.org/jeff-sessions-corruption-environmental-injustice-in-north-birmingham/>

Values and goals of this campaign:

- We put justice and equity first
- We are committed to indigenous sovereignty
- We invest in transformative solutions
- We seek to both repair and prevent oppression
- We believe healthy air and water are human rights
- We prioritize local/community control

How can you get involved:

We are looking for free-agent activists and partner organizations to help us create the campaign plan, serve on committees, assist outreach through word-of-mouth and short films.

Check out our website (<https://gaspgroup.org>) and instagram pages @gaspgroup and @gnd4bhm to:

- Learn more about the campaign
- Take the GND4B surveys
- Register for the next Community Climate Assembly focusing on Sustainable Development on September 8th

Scan this QR code to read about current policies in Birmingham and comparative policies from around the nation:





CLEAN AIR. HEALTHY COMMUNITIES.

GREEN NEW DEAL FOR BIRMINGHAM




Community Climate Assembly Clean Air, Land, and Water

March 29, 2022

The goal of the campaign is to develop a people-driven, grassroots climate action plan for the city that includes specific, justice-forward legislation and policy recommendations under the following pillars:

- Clean Air & Water*
- Equitable Investment*
- Sustainable Development*
- Transparent Government*
- Responsible Energy*
- Transit Justice*

We talked to residents of Birmingham about a community-driven climate plan and these are some of the ideas they came up with:



Choosing Green Landscaping

- Plant male and female trees to reduce allergens
- Create regenerative agriculture with native plants
- Build more green spaces like Railroad Park



Reducing Waste & Litter

- Put more trash cans and recycling around the city
- Implement K-12 education about trash pollution
- Advocate against AL properties being used as dumping ground



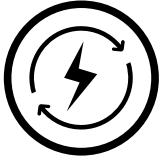
Managing Water Runoff & Flooding

- Make green roofs on buildings to decrease runoff volume and flows
- Address farming runoff
- Build more natural landscapes to absorb stormwater



Involving Elected Officials

- Create a stronger base by connecting existing advocacy groups
- Encourage voting
- Encourage elected officials to follow successful climate plans from other cities



Lowering Greenhouse Emissions

- Encourage use of electric vehicles that do not pollute air or land
- Manage plastic waste and landfills that contribute to greenhouse emissions



Building Supportive Infrastructure

- Make LEED certified buildings that address "address carbon, energy, water, waste, materials, transportation, health and indoor environmental quality"



Accountability in Industry Practices

- In addition to fines, create a more lasting accountability system to encourage industries to follow guidelines
- Advocate for more environmental regulation of businesses

Share your ideas about Sustainable Development at the next **Community Climate Assembly** on **September 8th, 2022**

BACKGROUND

“[GASP](#) is a non-profit that aims to advance healthy air and environmental justice in the Greater-Birmingham area through education, advocacy, and collaboration.

Climate change is upon us already — more frequent extreme weather events, worsening air quality, rising sea levels, more severe droughts more often, more intense heat waves — and it will only get worse unless we reduce our carbon emissions across all sectors of our economy. *Everyone* will be affected by climate change. The question is, who can afford to recover and which communities will be left behind?

The good news is that we can address carbon emissions head-on in a just and equitable way as we transition to a clean energy economy. The [Green New Deal for Birmingham](#) campaign, led by GASP, aims to develop a people-driven, justice-first climate action plan for the City of Birmingham that can be replicated in other municipalities across Alabama and the U.S.”

([GASP 2022](#))

This campaign is inspired by the [People’s Movement Assembly](#) framework for social movements. The vision is to bring together the currently disjointed movements by intersecting issues, frontlines, and regions to make communities the source of power. The campaign will combat long-term systemic social injustice and account for various underserved populations.

This policy platform is inspired by GASP’s work with the [Gulf South for a Green New Deal](#) (#GulfSouth4GND) which is a regional formation of more than 200 organizations advancing long-existing work towards climate, racial, and economic justice in five states and one colonial territory: Texas, Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama, Florida, Puerto Rico.

The goal of the Green New Deal for Birmingham campaign is to address climate change through the following pillars:

- Responsible Energy
- Transit Justice
- Clean Air & Water
- Equitable Investment
- Sustainable Development
- Transparent Government

The values of the campaign are as follows:

- Follow frontline leadership
- Healthy air and water are human rights
- Invest in transformative solutions

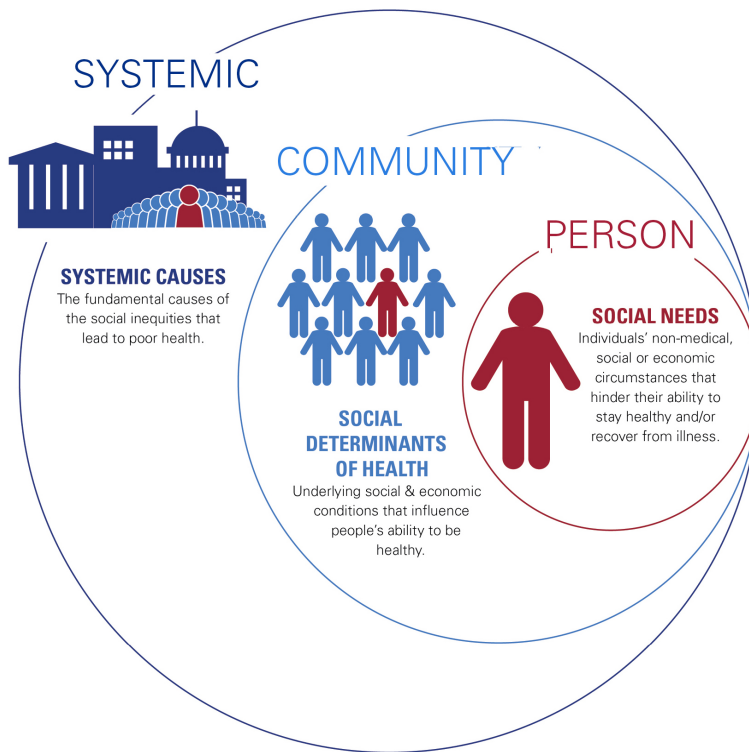
- Prevent future and repair historic oppression
- Prioritize local/community control
- Put justice and equity first

The goal of the campaign is to address the systemic causes of climate change through changing upstream determinants in order to improve individuals' health. Upstream determinants are defined by the parable below:

Upstream Downstream Parable

- **Downstream Determinants:** changing individual treatment
 - Ex. chronic disease treatment, emergency services, surgery, etc.
- **Midstream Determinants:** modifying individual behavior
 - Ex. physical activity, nutrition, tobacco use, maternal health, high school graduation, and violence control.
- **Upstream Determinants:** prevention strategies for the whole community, with a focus on the vulnerable populations.
 - Ex. social, economic, environmental, and cultural conditions

The graphic below shows the connection between systemic causes, social determinants of health, and social needs for individuals.



CURRENT POLICIES IN BIRMINGHAM

The [Comprehensive Plan](#) recommended specific community-level Framework Plans be created in order address the unique issues facing different areas of the City. Eight of nine of those plans have been written, with only the Southern Area (Red Mountain, Crestwood, and Crestline communities) left, which is currently being written.

These plans include [green systems chapters](#) that provide recommendations regarding parks and open spaces, stormwater issues, and other environmental subjects. They also include rezoning plans which can help reduce land uses that produce pollution. In one of the first Framework Plans, the North Birmingham Framework Plan, over 860 acres of land zoned for heavy industry were rezoned to light industry, ensuring landowners used that land for clean, non-polluting uses.

Listed below are some of the proposed plans for the City of Birmingham:

- Development of a Tree Protection Ordinance and Urban Forestry Plan to inventory and protect existing trees.
- Develop a strategy for planting new trees in key locations to limit the Urban Heat Island Effect.
- ["Birmingham Streetlight Upgrade"](#) a part of the larger "Lit Bham" project sponsored by Alabama Power to replace existing light fixtures in City buildings and parking garages.
- [Energy Conservation Measures:](#)
 - water upgrades in 119 buildings
 - lighting upgrades in 117 buildings
 - energy, heating, ventilation, and air conditioning controls for 108 buildings
 - building envelope improvements in 59 buildings
 - HVAC/mechanical upgrades in 45 buildings
 - roof replacements in 31 buildings
 - transformer upgrades for 12 buildings
- Development of an [Eco-District Program](#) that encourages sustainable practices, including greenhouse gas reductions, on an area-wide scale.
- Development of a [white roofs program](#) to encourage businesses to paint their roofs white which reduces the cost of air conditioning in summer months.
- Development of a [Green Infrastructure and Low Impact Development Program](#) that will encourage and incentivize development activities that preserve open space and previous ground cover conditions.

- Develop a [Complete Streets Ordinance](#) in order to have a safe, reliable, efficient, integrated, and connected multimodal transportation network that will provide access, mobility, safety, and connectivity for all users.



- The [Birmingham Post Construction Stormwater Ordinance](#) was adopted in March 2019. All projects are encouraged to use green infrastructure and low impact design practices to help abate pollution, control flooding, and enhance the living experience in the City of Birmingham.
 - New guidelines have been established to reduce construction runoff from entering the stormwater system.
- The City of Birmingham is pursuing a rating system called the LEED for Cities designation. This will allow the City of Birmingham to [track and report progress](#) towards meeting the City’s emissions targets and adopt LEED-based strategies that help to reduce energy, water, waste, pollution, and CO₂ at the City scale, and in turn improve air and water quality.
- [“Greening America's Communities”](#) Birmingham is a part of an EPA 2020 program to bring green infrastructure and sustainable design strategies to North Birmingham. The goal is to create Shuttlesworth Memorial Park located between Maclin Park and Bethel Baptist Church.
- The City’s Planning Staff is creating open space districts as new zoning classifications in the Zoning Ordinance. The purpose of these districts is to create, preserve, and enhance public open space to meet passive and active park and recreational needs.

INTERNATIONAL CONNECTIONS:

Birmingham is pursuing [SolSmart designation](#). This initiative is led by the International City/County Management Association and the Solar Foundation. They help local governments work through red tape and bring solar jobs/business to cities. They will help Birmingham evaluate programs and practices that impact solar markets and identify high-prospect opportunities for improvement.

In addition, the city participated in the [International Urban Cooperation \(IUC\) City-to-City](#) cooperation program in 2019-2020. The program pairs cities in the U.S. with a city in the European Union facing similar challenges to achieving sustainable urban development. Birmingham was paired with Padova, Italy. Staff were able to take part in study tours, staff exchanges, training, and seminars. The idea is to develop a Joint Local Action Plan for sustainable urban development.

STATEWIDE CONNECTIONS:

Birmingham is an active member of [ICLEI Local Governments for Sustainability](#), a leading global network of more than 1,500 cities, towns, and regions committed to building a sustainable future. Staff are working to complete the City's first government-level greenhouse gas emissions inventory, and plan to expand to a community-level inventory soon. Plans for robust monitoring, reporting, evaluation, and emission reduction systems are underway.

LOCAL CONNECTIONS:

Birmingham and UAB signed an agreement to collaborate with the [Sustainable Smart Cities](#) group to educate staff and the public about sustainable initiatives. They will meet quarterly to discuss city-wide sustainability initiatives. One goal is to develop a greenhouse gas inventory.

There has been a [collaborative workforce development program](#) established in which Trane (a leading global provider of indoor comfort solutions and services) will work with Lawson State Community College and the Birmingham Construction Industry Authority on a professional development job training program for Minority Business Enterprise contracting partners. The program focuses on expanding participants' skills and expertise to help achieve the energy savings for this and future projects.

Birmingham partnered with [Thriving Earth Exchange](#) to develop more energy efficient processes in the iron and steel manufacturing industries. They help community leaders use science to tackle community issues related to natural hazards, natural resources, and climate change. The City partnered with a scientist to research and chart air quality trends within iron and steel manufacturing locations and will use the trends to assist policy changes.

COMPARATIVE POLICIES

The following research was compiled by the Green New Deal for Birmingham Planning Team to assess successful climate action plans in other municipalities around the country to model the future policy platform of the Green New Deal for Birmingham campaign.

Florida

[Gainesville Regional Utilities to Reduce Climate Change](#): In Gainesville, Florida [GRU](#) (Gainesville Regional Utilities) has employed various programs to improve energy and water efficiency, efficiency of power generation, and increased usage of renewable and domestic fuels to generate electricity.

- GRU established programs that teach customers, especially low-income families, how to modify their use of electricity to make it more efficient and lower their power bills.
- GRU upgraded turbines in coal fired units to increase generation efficiency.
- GRU encourages customers to use natural gas for heating, space heating and clothes drying.
- GRU and GREC have developed the first forest stewardship incentive program in the nation to encourage suppliers to perform above the minimum standards. This will encourage better forestry practices and protect crucial wildlife habitats.
- GRU has developed biomass plants that have fuel from local wood-waste suppliers that follow strict standards to protect the forest.
 - The plant will provide renewable energy for the community and ensure the future reliability of GRU's electric generation.
 - The biomass facility will create more than 700 permanent jobs and provide a \$31-million boost to the regional economy annually from ongoing operations.
 - It will also add more than \$5.5 million per year to the local property-tax base.
- In addition, Gainesville provides rebates for solar water heating and solar photovoltaic systems.
 - “Solar Feed in Tariff Program” (FIT) offers electric customers a chance to invest in photovoltaic systems and sell the electricity directly to the utility under a contract for 20 years at a fixed price.
 - In contrast, Alabama Power has been imposing a monthly charge on customers who install and use solar panels. The \$5.42 per kilowatt monthly fee is added on top of other charges slashing customers' average savings from solar in half.
- GRU purchases landfill gas to reuse it into useful energy.
 - Landfill gas (mostly methane) is produced by the natural degradation of organic matter in a landfill. The methane emitted is a harmful greenhouse gas with a potential climate change effect greater than carbon dioxide.

- GRU purchases landfill gas energy from G2 Energy LLC, which collects methane at the Marion County baseline Landfill, and uses it as fuel for electric generators
- The figure below shows the improvements made by GRU's fuel diversity program:

GRU FUEL MIX

Planned Improvements in GRU's Fuel Diversity (Percentage of Electric Energy [MWh] by Fuel Type)

Fuel Type	Current (% by MWh)	Future circa 2014 (% by MWh)
Coal	61.6%	63.6%
Natural Gas	17.3%	17.8%
Fuel Oil #2 & #6	0.3%	0.0%
Purchased Power	14.3%	-8.9%
Subtotal Fossil	93.5%	72.5%
Nuclear¹	5.09%	5.9%
Biomass ²	0.0%	19.0%
Solar PV	0.3%	1.5%
Landfill Gas	1.1%	1.1%
Subtotal Renewable	1.4%	21.6%
Total All Fuels	100.0%	100.0%

- In contrast, in Alabama:
 - Natural gas fuels about 40% of the state's electricity generation and coal fuels about 24%
 - The two dozen hydroelectric dams in Alabama supply about 6% of the state's electricity generation. That makes it the largest renewable energy source in Alabama. Biomass is the second-largest, contributing about 2.3% of total electricity production.
- Gainesville also established a traffic management system that allows signal timing modifications to match real time conditions further reducing fuel consumption and greenhouse gas emissions.

Illinois

Chicago, Illinois has established goals to improve clean and renewable energy source usage. It is the largest city in the United States to commit to [100% clean energy](#). Legislation was passed to enable all buildings to be powered by renewable energy by 2035. This will be achieved by:

- Upgrading power plants
- Improving power plant efficiency
- Building renewable electricity
- Increasing distributed generation
- Promoting household renewable power

The [Comprehensive Climate Action Plan](#) was created to combat intense summer temperatures and heavy rain and flooding. The [Resolution R2019-157](#) lays out the plan with 50 “Actionable” items. For example: the Chicago Transit Authority (CTA), which is the country’s second-largest public transportation system, will completely electrify its fleet of over 1,850 buses by 2040.

Chicago developed an [Energy and Equity Agreement](#) visualized below:



Texas

Dallas, Texas created an [Urban Forest Master Plan](#).

- Includes a goal to have 37% of tree canopy cover by 2040. It is currently at 32%.
- According to Gilstad-Hayde, a 10% increase in neighborhood tree canopy has been associated with a 12-15% reduction in violent and property crimes.
- Increase of green spaces to mitigate urban heat, specifically in vulnerable communities.

Dallas also has various other policies:

- [Green Building Ordinance](#): City Council adopted to require all new buildings to meet higher efficiency standards than existing building energy codes

- 100% Renewable Energy: City purchased renewable energy for all facilities
- Emissions Initiative: Dallas Transportation and Infrastructure committee was briefed on air quality and an emissions reduction initiative was passed
- Green Energy Policy: approved by City Council; requires 100% renewable energy, and Energy Management System for City Facilities, and development of on and off-site renewable power generation
- City-Installed Solar Panel initiatives by 2030 and 2040

Other cities in Texas have also established proactive goals:

- Houston will plant 1 million new native trees by 2030
- San Antonio has been conducting consistent heat risk assessments with a focus on low income, public housing, and city-subsidized residences. In addition, the city has funded more research to develop solutions for [carbon capture and storage](#)

Nevada

Las Vegas, Nevada is currently assessing areas in city and county facilities with ornamental turf to convert to natural landscaping or xeriscaping. [Xeriscaping](#) is “the practice of designing landscapes to reduce or eliminate the need for irrigation” in order to maximize plantation with naturally available levels of water. This can be utilized to conserve drinking water during dry periods of drought and has various environmental and financial benefits.

California

In California, various cities have focused on improving their climate action plans.

- Sacramento has done [research for parking lot shading requirements](#) to improve the health and vigor of the trees by allowing additional trees and landscaping to be installed in existing parking lots.
- Sacramento required new development and reuse and reinvestment projects to create walkable, pedestrian-scaled blocks, publicly accessible mid-block and alley pedestrian routes where appropriate, and sidewalks appropriately scaled for the anticipated pedestrian use.
 - The [goal](#) is to “Deploy 20,000 feet of new/repared pedestrian infrastructure by 2030”.
- San Diego
 - “[California Air Resources Board Heavy Duty Vehicle Regulation](#)” to reduce 1 million metric tons of greenhouse gases and save 5 billion dollars by reducing diesel fuel consumption.
 - [Assembly Bill 758](#) requires Energy Commission to develop energy efficiency plan in state’s existing buildings

- Executive Order S-1-07, [Low Carbon Fuel Standards](#) (LCFS) calls for 10% reduction in carbon intensity for California's transportation fuels
- Improved Transportation Options
 - Invest more in transit
 - Expand transit incentives
 - Promote transit oriented development
 - Make walking and biking easier
 - Car share and carpool
 - Improve fleet efficiency
 - Achieve higher fuel efficiency standards
 - Switch to cleaner fuels
 - Support intercity rail
 - Improve freight movement

Tennessee

Chattanooga, Tennessee has focused on biodiversity and native vegetation in their [Integrated Community Sustainability Plan](#) by:

- Establishing a baseline biodiversity report and a native vegetation certificate so that contractors, landscapers, and the interested general public can identify native species versus invasive and non native species, proper planting and establishment techniques, long term care, and weeding
- Increasing the amount of fresh and locally sourced food and encouraging plant based diets which are better at preventing chronic illnesses.
- Increasing the amount of native species approved for general landscaping
- Establishing more policies for expansion of community gardens

Arizona

Innovative policies have emerged in Arizona:

- In Phoenix, new developments focus on improving infrastructure such as the development of:
 - [heat resistant](#) pavement for roads
 - heat tolerant landscaping
 - upgraded [road drainage](#) systems
 - consistent risk assessments for new roads
 - [sensors](#) to monitor water flow
- Tucson:
 - Purchased only [Energy Star](#) equipment for City use
 - Adhered to sustainable building practices in the U.S. Green Building Council's LEED program

- Increased fuel efficiency of municipal vehicles
- Launched employee education program with anti-idling messages
- Converted diesel vehicles to [biodiesel](#)

PROPOSED POLICIES FOR BIRMINGHAM

The following policy proposals were developed by Health Policy Ambassadors from the UAB Lister Hill Center for Health Policy. More information can be found [here](#).

[Policy Proposal: Establishment of an Urban Climate Corps in the City of Birmingham](#)

“Heavy industry in North Birmingham has “caused significant environmental pollution over time,” according to a recent report from Allen et al. (2019), including additional impact on environmental injustice and economic disparities among residents. As cities across the United States are transitioning their operations to mitigate climate change, it is imperative that Birmingham adapts its procedures as well. Despite the Supreme Court’s *Buchanan v. Warley* decision, decades of land use and zoning ordinances have kept North Birmingham racially segregated, with disproportionately less access to healthcare, food, and transportation in majority-Black areas. Additionally, heavy industry around the 35th Avenue Superfund Site has created environmental pollution that continues to affect the health and well-being of individuals in the area (Allen et al., 2019). The federal government and the Jefferson County Department of Health have historically worked with these communities regarding health concerns. Because of this history, we believe now is the time for the City of Birmingham to play a more active role in reducing disparities while also improving the city’s overall economic development. The City should implement innovative programs in green infrastructure that not only mitigate environmental pollution and climate change, but also empower communities to stay and work in Birmingham. Such programs would provide the city with the much-needed capacity to enable smart growth strategies. We define green infrastructure as work relating to clean air, clean water, clean soil, urban tree canopy, stormwater infrastructure, lead remediation, sustainable housing construction, and similar capacities that the federal government has outlined as “environmental resilience” in previous grants.

In order to expand Birmingham’s workforce, retain talent within the city, and make progress on sustainability initiatives, it is necessary to build capacity for the city to launch more green infrastructure projects and smart growth principles. The Biden-Harris Administration has consistently committed to delivering environmental justice and economic opportunities for those who have historically been neglected and disenfranchised. Specifically, the EPA has already selected 19 organizations to receive over \$3.7 million in grants for job training programs. The Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act offers a monumental opportunity to fund projects.

Mayor Woodfin’s Vision 2025 agenda asserts that the City will renew its commitment to all 99 Birmingham neighborhoods including “creating an Office of Sustainability to spearhead the City’s environmental justice, housing remediation and retrofitting, food

access and food policy, and green infrastructure planning and green workforce development initiatives” (Vision 2025: Continuing our progress, 2021). The City of Birmingham Mayor’s Office also aims to reap its full economic potential by investing in Black residents, particularly youth. These initiatives are essential strides towards addressing the gap in environmental justice and health, and supporting an inclusive economy. We call on the City of Birmingham to honor these promises by:

- Establishing an Urban Climate Corps as an environmental health and justice workforce development program that prioritizes BIPOC youth and fosters a student-to-workforce pipeline within green careers in the City of Birmingham. The concept of an Urban Climate Corps pays respect to the creation of the Civilian Conservation Corps from President Franklin D. Roosevelt’s New Deal. As our world endures a climate crisis, it is time that municipalities begin to shift into a new era of public administration that prioritizes climate adaptation and mitigation for its residents through a green workforce.
- Adopting green initiatives that involve expanding carbon storage capacity, reducing urban heat island effects, assessing hazardous waste, installing green infrastructure, and aiding the development of affordable housing and transit within the City of Birmingham.”

[Policy Proposal: Call for Formation of Equity & Environmental Justice Committee](#)

“Birmingham has been through many changes over its history--from industrial success following the Civil War, to its central role in the Civil Rights Movement. Today, Birmingham is a leader in medicine, public health, and economic development; however, racial disparity still persists in the city. The legacy of segregation and heavy industry can be found in the soil of North Birmingham, where elevated levels of lead and carcinogens such as arsenic and benzo[a]pyrene have left residents with chronic negative health effects. These effects include developmental delay in children, increased risk of cancer, and cardiovascular disease. Neighborhoods affected by this environmental injustice are predominately Black. As Birmingham continues to build its future, mistakes of the past must be corrected with equity and public health in mind. This involves consulting with affected communities and learning from other city and state initiatives that address environmental injustice. The City should create an advisory group for equity and environmental justice to assist policy makers in addressing the disproportionate health hazards in North Birmingham and other communities.”

SPECIFIC POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS TO ADDRESS THE PILLARS:

These are the current proposed policies from the GASP Community Climate Assembly and the GND4B surveys linked below:

[General GND4BHM Hard Copy Survey](#)

[GND4BHM Survey: Clean Air, Land, and Water](#)

[GND4BHM Survey: Responsible Energy](#)

[GND4BHM Survey: Transit Justice](#)

[GND4BHM Survey: Equitable Investment](#)

[GND4BHM Survey: Sustainable Development](#)

[GND4BHM Survey: Transparent Government](#)

Responsible Energy

- Encouraging the usage of electric vehicles and research into proper sourcing and disposal of lithium batteries
- Increasing the usage of solar, nuclear, hydroelectric, and biomass energy

Transit Justice

- Minimize the time trains are stopped at residential street crossings
- Create optimized traffic management systems that allows signal timing modifications to match real time conditions further reducing fuel consumption and greenhouse gas emissions

Clean Air & Water

- Discontinue citywide herbicide application program or make it an "opt-in" program
- Plant new native trees
- Develop a city ordinance to protect and grow the city's tree canopy
- Complete a Tree Master Plan or Greenspace Plan for the Birmingham region
- Improve shade in parking lots to allow for more trees and natural landscaping
- Water Protection Policy for the Cahaba River, Lake Purdy, Inland Lake, and Black Warrior River
- Monitor the city's surface water for heavy metals and other contaminants
- Promote public education on watersheds
- Create a database to track all brownfields (currently unused contaminated land)
- Get rid of waste piles and dump sites in the city
Install water bottle filling locations around the city

Equitable Investment

- City pays for people to relocate from contaminated properties (e.g. in N Birmingham)
- Fast tracking permitting and/or tax breaks for green + LEED developers
- A city-wide weatherization program to make buildings more protected from the elements

- Expand city recycling program
- Reduce blighted properties in the city

Sustainable Development

- Install heat resistant pavement and white roofs to reduce urban heat
- Install green infrastructure such as rooftop gardens to reduce the urban heat
- [Encourage good urban forestry practices to increase biodiversity](#)
- Create a comprehensive community garden program
- Better maintenance of city parks
- More resilient stormwater infrastructure
- Waste landfill diversion initiative to encourage businesses to use reusable products
- Include green infrastructure as part of the city's water catchment (collecting water) plan
- Green infrastructure to address Birmingham's flooding issues

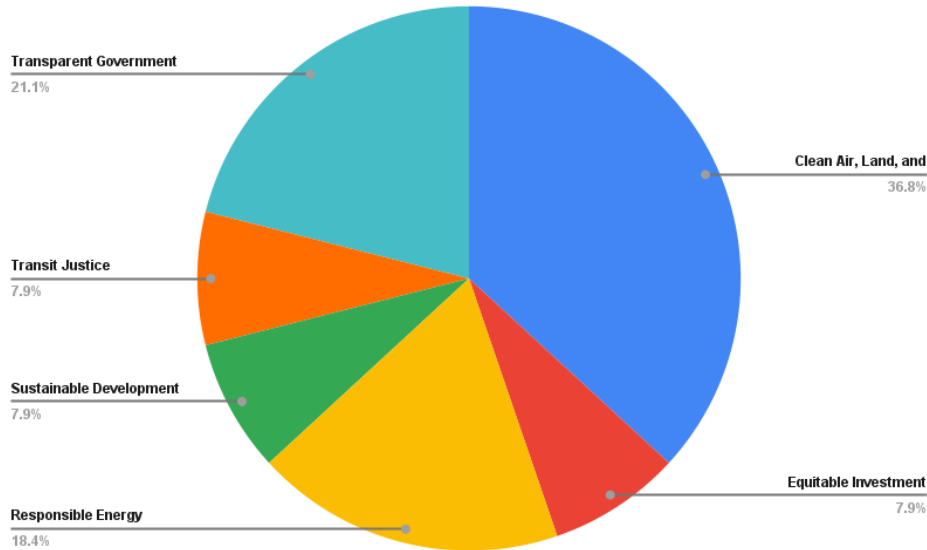
Transparent Government

- Tax on polluting industries that are in the city limits, earmarked for mitigation or reparations
- A stronger, more transparent permitting process for industrial polluters
- Audit Public Works Department to see where money is spent
- Create a new zoning classification for open space in the city's Zoning Ordinance
- A dedicated staff person or taskforce in city hall to advocate for environmental and climate justice

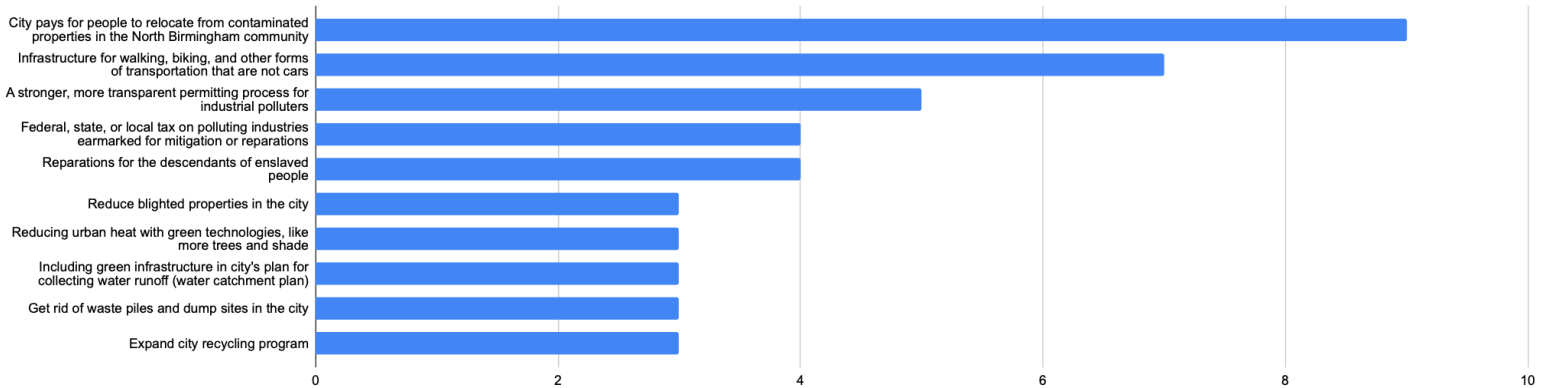
FUTURE DIRECTIONS:

Increasing the current data from surveys:

From the data so far, these are the issues that respondents (n=30) ranked as either their first or second pillar they would like to see addressed in Birmingham:



In addition, when asked what policies are most important to them, the ones listed below were the highest ranked:



REFERENCES

[Gasp Group Campaigns](#)
[A Green New Deal for Birmingham](#)
[Gulf South for a Green New Deal](#)
[People's Movement Assembly](#)
[Birmingham City Sustainability Program: Sustainability and Green Practices](#)
[Birmingham City Sustainability Program: Natural Resources and Environmental Constraints](#)
[Chattanooga, TN: Carbon Emissions Drop](#)
[Chattanooga, TN: Climate Action Plan](#)
[Gainesville, FL: GRU Air Quality and Climate Change](#)
[Dallas, TX: Comprehensive Environment and Climate Action Plan \(CECAP\)](#)
[Houston, TX: Resilient Houston, 100 Resilient Cities \(100RC\)](#)
[San Antonio, TX: Climate Action and Adaptation Plan – SA Climate Ready](#)
[San Antonio, Tx: Texas Sustainability Plan](#)
[Austin, TX: Climate Resilience Action Plan](#)
[Austin, TX: Preparing for Water Scarcity and Drought](#)
[Austin, TX: Imagine Austin Comprehensive Plan](#)
[Chicago, IL: Climate Action Plan](#)
[Phoenix, AR: Arizona Tree and Shade Master Plan](#)
[Tucson, AR: Framework for Advancing Sustainability](#)
[Fort Collins, CO: Water Efficiency Plan](#)
[Albuquerque, NM: 2021 Climate Action Plan](#)
[Las Cruces, NM: Climate Action Plan](#)
[San Diego, CA: Climate Action Plan](#)
[San Diego, CA: Climate Action Plan](#)
[Seattle, WA: Green Factor](#)
[Seattle, WA: Green Factor - Accomplishments](#)

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Process of a Grassroots Campaign:

GREEN NEW DEAL

FOR BIRMINGHAM



Anantha Korrapati

Introduction: **gasp**

CLEAN AIR. HEALTHY COMMUNITIES.

- Mission: to advance healthy air and environmental justice in the Greater-Birmingham area through education, advocacy, and collaboration
- Health Policy Intern



GASP is a local non-profit with the mission to advance healthy air and environmental justice in birmingham.

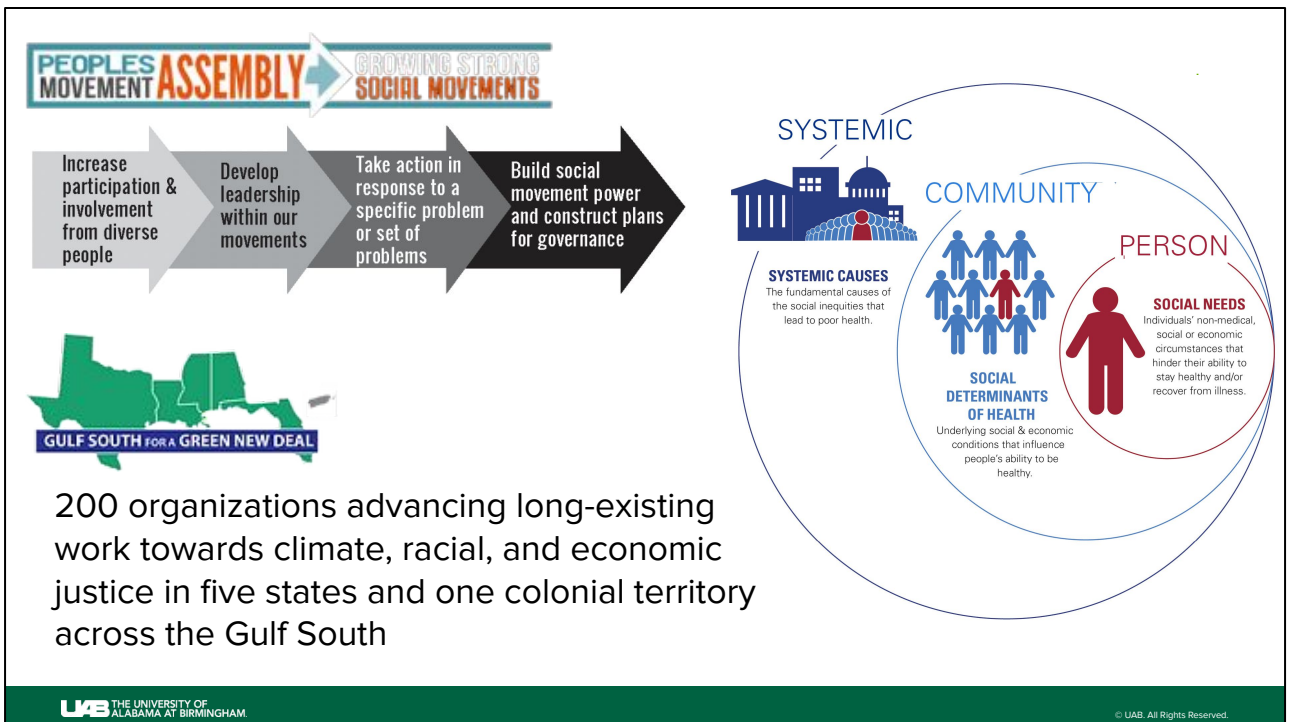
Following the leadership of Dr. Branscomb, a pioneer of pulmonology at UAB, an advocate for the Clean Air Act of 1970, GASP conducted research of links between emphysema and COPD and air pollution from heavy industries.

In 2009, Bham was ranked as the most polluted city for particle pollution in the south.

In 2010, GASP was formed.

According to the Environmental Protection Agency, if air quality is improved, there would be a reduction of:

- 2500 premature deaths, 5000 heart attacks, and 51000 cases of asthma annually



People's Movement Assembly:

- Vision: bring together currently disjointed movements to make communities the source of power
- need to intersect across issues, frontlines, and regions.
- We need autonomous, independent social movements with their own social and economic agendas.
- Multiple strategies and a diversity of tactics are more effective.
- Reforms are not enough. We need long-term vision and strategies for liberation and **long-term systemic social justice**.
- Leadership and power must be held by people who live and experience injustice.

Gulf South for a Green New Deal:

- Texas, Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama, Florida, Puerto Rico
- 2019 launch
- even well-intentioned federal policy often excludes Southern perspectives, communities, and realities, thereby missing opportunities for systemic change in this nation's most influential region

Aims

GND4BHM

Green New Deal for Birmingham

The goal of the campaign is to develop a **people-driven, grassroots climate action plan** for the city that includes specific, justice-forward legislation and policy recommendations under the following pillars:

Clean Air & Water *Sustainable Development* *Responsible Energy*
Equitable Investment *Transparent Government* *Transit Justice*

VALUES

- Follow frontline leadership
- Healthy air and water are human rights
- Invest in transformative solutions
- Prevent future and repair historic oppression
- Prioritize local/community control
- Put justice and equity first

Methods:

PHASE ONE

- Focus Groups
- Internal PEST Analysis (Political/Economic/Social/Tech Factors, Opportunities & Threats)
- Planning Team Establishment
- **Synthesis of community feedback & existing local policies**

PHASE TWO

- Increased community outreach, interest meetings
- Final Synthesis transformed into Bham GND People's Agenda & Policy Platform to be shared with the public

PHASE THREE

- Launch of the Bham GND People's Agenda & Policy Platform!



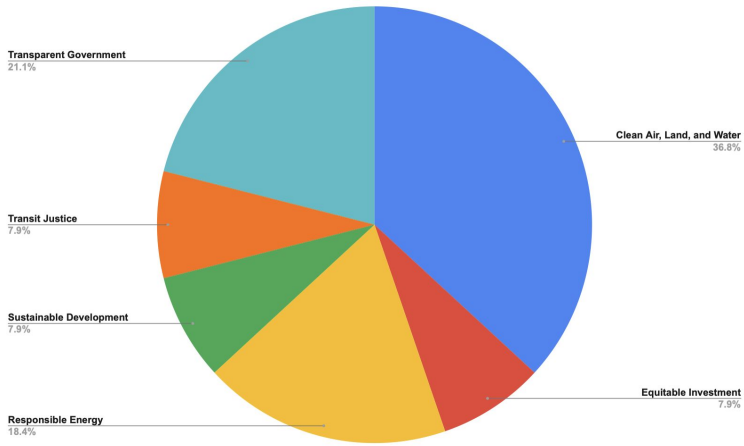
Outreach through:

- video project with various community members
- a “Community Climate Assembly” about Clean Air, Land, and Water
- high school art contest
- film screenings
- tabling at local markets in Pepper Place and Woodlawn
- collaborating with Arm in Arm at the World Games
- sew-op with Bib & Tucker

Future directions: contacting potential collaborators for the fall



Data: Surveys



n = 30

Many survey responses focused on outreach through education:

“so that younger generations will understand the severity and importance”

“contacting local schools [yoga instructor, is a school counselor at RC Hemphill Elementary and had people come for Earth Day]”

“Proper, effective communication as well as teaching in schools”

“Get involved with academic institutions”

As well as transportation:

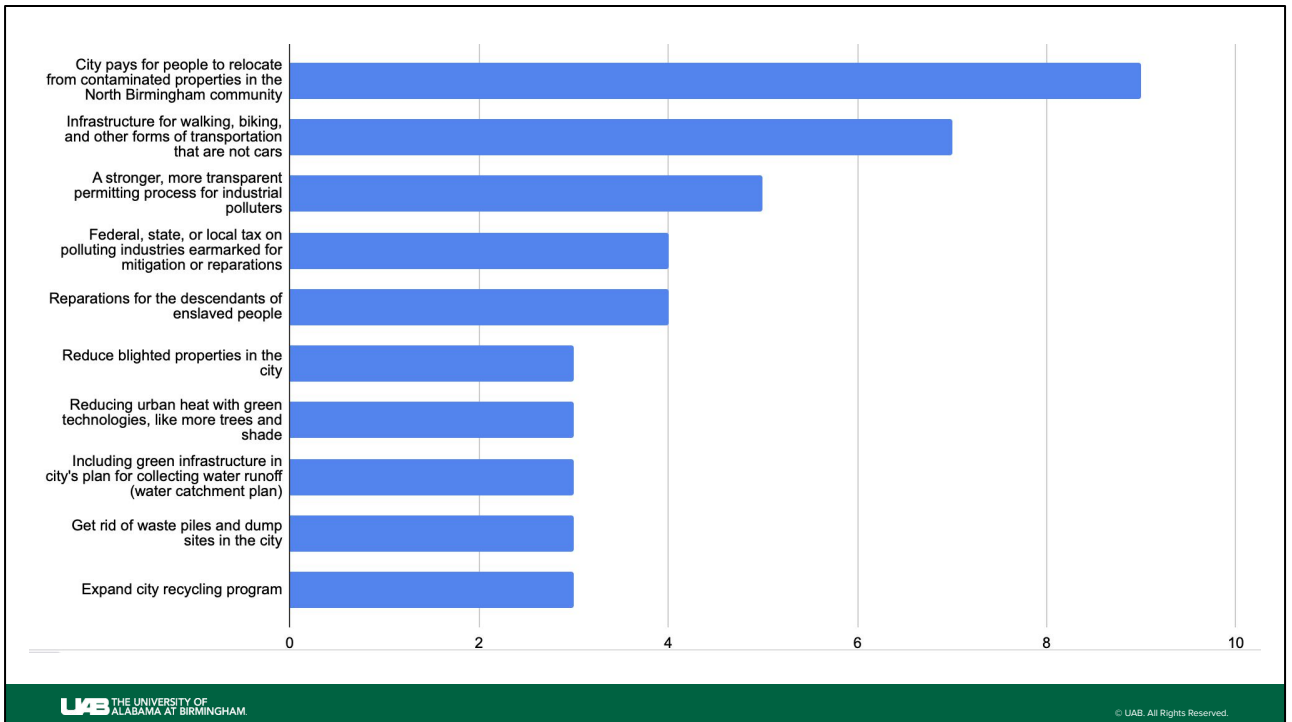
“Expanded transport”

“Investment in public transit and equitable distribution of transportation infrastructure”

“Better public transportation Less public responsibility, more state responsibility”

The pie chart shows what people ranked as the most important and second important pillars that they want to see improvements in over this campaign.

The surveys also had open ended questions and many respondents mentioned wanting improvements in education and transportation.



These are the policies that survey takers highlighted as important to them.

The open ended fields of the Clean Air, Land, and Water

Biggest concerns in open ended fields:

- air quality
- infrastructure for flooding
- recycling
- public transport

Calls to action in open ended fields:

- increasing communications with officials
- building partnerships
- BIPOC-centered efforts

Creative ideas:

- productive urban rooftop gardens
- trash collection nets in drainage systems
- air-purifying billboards
- paint on roofs and pavement to redirect heat

Data:

Community Climate Assembly Clean Air, Land, and Water

March 29, 2022

We talked to residents of Birmingham about a community-driven climate plan and these are some of the ideas they came up with:



Involving Elected Officials

Create a stronger base by connecting existing advocacy groups

Encourage voting

Encourage elected officials to follow successful climate plans from other cities



Lowering Greenhouse Emissions

Encourage use of electric vehicles that do not pollute air or land

Manage plastic waste and landfills that contribute to greenhouse emissions



Building Supportive Infrastructure

Make LEED certified buildings that address "address carbon, energy, water, waste, materials, transportation, health and indoor environmental quality"



Accountability in Industry Practices

In addition to fines, create a more lasting accountability system to encourage industries to follow guidelines

Advocate for more environmental regulation of businesses



Choosing Green Landscaping

Plant male and female trees to reduce allergens

Create regenerative agriculture with native plants

Build more green spaces like Railroad Park



Reducing Waste & Litter

Put more trash cans and recycling around the city

Implement K-12 education about trash pollution

Advocate against AL properties being used as dumping ground



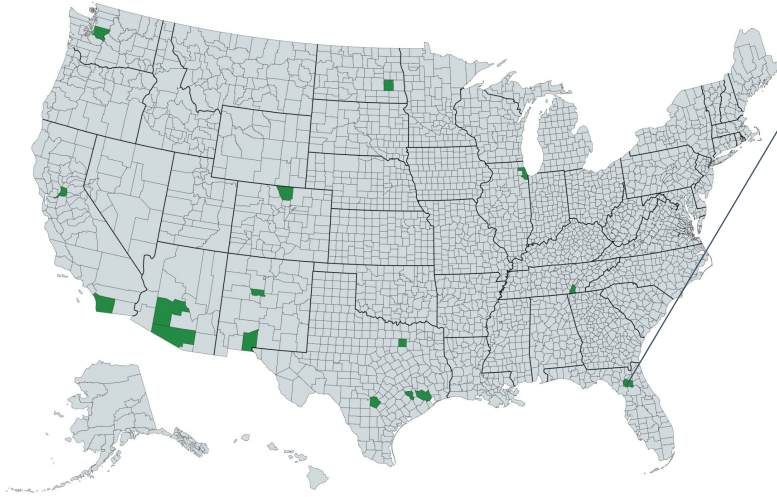
Managing Water Runoff & Flooding

Make green roofs on buildings to decrease runoff volume and flows

Address farming runoff

Build more natural landscapes to absorb stormwater

Data: Other Cities



For example:

Gainesville, FL:

Gainesville Regional Utilities (GRU) created a “Solar feed in tariff program” offering electric customers a chance to **invest in photovoltaic systems and sell the electricity** directly to the utility under a contract for 20 years at a fixed price.

In contrast, Alabama Power has been imposing a monthly charge on customers who install and use solar panels. The \$5.42 per kilowatt monthly fee is added on top of other charges **slashing customers' average savings from solar in half.**

ALABAMA'S STATE RANKING IN THE UNITED STATES



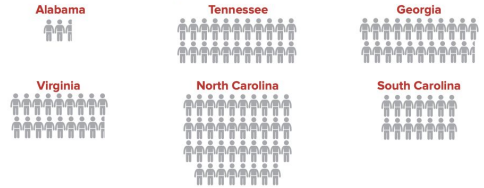
NUMBER OF HOMES & BUSINESSES WITH SOLAR

One house icon represents 200 rooftop solar systems



SOLAR JOBS

One person icon represents 200 workers



SOLAR INVESTMENTS BY STATE

One solar panel icon represents 200 MW



Sources: [Solar Energy Industries Association](#), [U.S. Energy Information Administration](#), [National Renewable Energy Laboratory](#), [Arizona State University](#), [CNN Money](#), [Forbes](#), [The Solar Foundation](#), [Retail Industry Leaders Association](#)

Conclusions:

Become involved in the campaign by signing up here:



Social Media:

gaspgroup.org



@gaspgroup

@gnd4bhm

Join the next
Community
Climate
Assembly on
September 8th
to discuss
Sustainable
Development

Share your story!

Volunteer!

References and Acknowledgements

[Gasp Group Campaigns](#)

[A Green New Deal for Birmingham](#)

[Gulf South for a Green New Deal](#)

[People's Movement Assembly](#)

[Chattanooga, TN: Carbon Emissions Drop](#)

[Chattanooga, TN: Climate Action Plan](#)

[Gainesville, FL: GRU Air Quality and Climate Change](#)

[Dallas, TX: Comprehensive Environment and Climate Action Plan \(CECAP\)](#)

[Houston, TX: Resilient Houston, 100 Resilient Cities \(100RC\)](#)

[San Antonio, TX: Climate Action and Adaptation Plan – SA Climate Ready](#)

[San Antonio, TX: Texas Sustainability Plan](#)

[Austin, TX: Climate Resilience Action Plan](#)

[Austin, TX: Preparing for Water Scarcity and Drought](#)

[Austin, TX: Imagine Austin Comprehensive Plan](#)

[Chicago, IL: Climate Action Plan](#)

[Phoenix, AR: Arizona Tree and Shade Master Plan](#)

[Tucson, AR: Framework for Advancing Sustainability](#)

[Fort Collins, CO: Water Efficiency Plan](#)

[Albuquerque, NM: 2021 Climate Action Plan](#)

[Las Cruces, NM: Climate Action Plan](#)

[San Diego, CA: Climate Action Plan](#)

[Sacramento, CA: Climate Action Plan](#)

[Seattle, WA: Green Factor](#)

[Seattle, WA: Green Factor - Accomplishments](#)

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