

Advancing Racial Equity and Economic Development in Asheville, NC

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The Case for Equity

“Equitable Economic Development unlocks the **full potential of the local economy** by dismantling barriers and expanding opportunities for low-income people and communities of color. Through accountable public action and investment, it grows quality jobs and increases entrepreneurship, ownership, and wealth. The result is a **stronger, more competitive** city.”

-- [PolicyLink](#)

In July 2020, Asheville City Council passed a resolution supporting community reparations for Black residents of Asheville.

Rep·a·ra·tion / ,repə'rāSH(ə)n/

“The action of repairing something”

“The making of amends for wrong or injury done”

“The making of amends for a wrong one has done, by paying money to or otherwise helping those who have been wronged”

Key Takeaways

- Repair the harm done by decades of discrimination
- Create opportunities for community input and dialogue (truth telling and healing)
- Strategic focus to define disparities and actions needed to address disparity and begin the process of creating generational wealth

Resolution 20-128: Supporting Community Reparations for Black Asheville

ACKNOWLEDGE

CALL ON PARTNERS

TAKE ACTION



Resolution 20-128:

Supporting Community Reparations for Black Asheville

WHEREAS, Black People have been:

- denied housing through racist practices
- impoverished by discriminatory wages paid in every sector of the local economy
- experienced the denial of education through admission, retention and graduation rates
- receive inadequate, if not detrimental, health care
- unjustly targeted by law enforcement and criminal justice procedures, incarcerated at disproportionate rates

Resolution 20-128: Supporting Community Reparations for Black Asheville

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF
THE CITY OF ASHEVILLE THAT:**

The City Council of the City of Asheville:

- (1) apologizes and makes amends for its participation in and sanctioning of the Enslavement of Black People;
- (2) apologizes and makes amends for its enforcement of segregation and its accompanying discriminatory practices;
- (3) apologizes and makes amends for carrying out an urban renewal program that destroyed multiple, successful black communities;

Resolution 20-128: Supporting Community Reparations for Black Asheville

- (4) calls on other organizations and institutions in Asheville join the city to **address racism within their own structures and programs** and to work together to **comprehensively address systemic racism**;
- (5) calls on the State of North Carolina and the federal government to **initiate policymaking** and **provide funding** for reparations at the **state and national levels**;
- (6) directs the City Manager to establish a process within the next year to develop **short, medium and long term recommendations** to specifically address the creation of generational wealth and to boost economic mobility and opportunity in the black community;

Resolution 20-128: Supporting Community Reparations for Black Asheville

Seeks to establish within the next year, a **new commission** empowered to make short, medium and long term recommendations

- Increasing **minority homeownership** and access to other **affordable housing**
- Increasing **minority business ownership** and **career opportunities**, strategies to grow equity and generational wealth
- Closing the gaps in health care, **education, employment and pay**, neighborhood safety and fairness within criminal justice

Resolution 20-128: Supporting Community Reparations for Black Asheville

ACKNOWLEDGE

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EQUITY & INCLUSION SKILLSET

ACKNOWLEDGE

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TAKE ACTION



Mapping Racial Equity



<https://www.arcgis.com/apps/Cascade/index.html?appid=10d222eb75854cba994b9a0083a40740>

Mapping Urban Renewal and Red-lining



Equity in Action - Case Study of Asheville, NC

City Office of Equity & Inclusion. In 2017, the City of Asheville established the Office of Equity & Inclusion to lead organizational change to address racial disparities, and advance equitable policies, practices and procedures.

GARE. Government Alliance on Race and Equity (GARE), a national network of government jurisdictions working to achieve racial equity and advance opportunities for all.

Southern Cities for Economic Inclusion. The City of Asheville participates in this learning cohort, convened by the Annie E. Casey Foundation for the past five years.



City of Asheville **BUSINESS INCLUSION OFFICE**

The Asheville Business Inclusion Office seeks to enhance competition in City contracting and promote economic growth and development in the City of Asheville by:

- Increasing Minority, Women, and Small Business Enterprises (MWSBEs) utilization in City contracting
- Promoting existing and start-up development of small business growth and profitability in the Asheville Regional Area
- By implementing race- and gender-conscious policies, to address documented disparities.

Asheville Business Inclusion Policy

Adopted in October 2020, this policy seeks to remediate the ongoing effects of marketplace discrimination demonstrated by the City's Disparity Study by:

- Establishing annual aspirational and contract-by-contract goals for MWSBEs participation in City contracts;
- Establishing standards for good faith efforts;
- Directing the City to maintain a database of available & certified MWSBEs;
- Providing guidance on other measures the City may take to promote Business Inclusion



CITY OF ASHEVILLE

YOUTH LEADERSHIP ACADEMY



Mountain Community Capital Fund



This loan fund is intended for borrowers whose **main barrier is a lack of collateral**. The fund supports loans in the range of \$5,000 to \$70,000, although larger loan amounts may be considered.

Mountain Community Capital Fund

- The Mountain Community Capital Fund is a **loan guarantee fund** for small business loans that is available to entrepreneurs in Asheville and Buncombe County.
- It is available to all entrepreneurs, especially **entrepreneurs of color and borrowers with low incomes.**
- It is a **collaboration** between the Carolina Small Business Development Fund, Mountain BizWorks, Self-Help Credit Union, City of Asheville, and Buncombe County.

The Case for Equity

“As America quickly becomes a majority people-of-color nation, our **economic fate hinges** on ensuring that **communities of color can participate and contribute** as workers, entrepreneurs, innovators, consumers, and leaders.”

-- [PolicyLink](#)

Questions?

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