

Energy Democracy: Racial Equity in an Energy Future

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NEWHAB and EEFA Convening

Boston MA

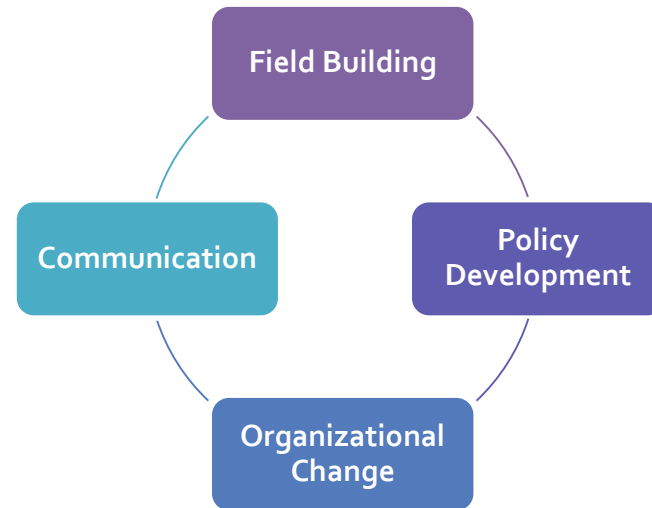
June 27, 2016



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Center for Social Inclusion

The Center for Social Inclusion's mission is to catalyze grassroots community, government, and other institutions to dismantle structural racial inequity.



Goals of the Session

- › Deeper understanding of racial equity in Energy Democracy
- › Learn of Models of successful projects and efforts to address racial equity in energy inequity
- › Identify Processes and Practices of Engagement

Opening Exercise

1. Pick a number: 1 to 10
2. Multiply by 9
3. Add the 2 digits
4. Subtract 5
5. Convert to a letter
6. **COUNTRY** that starts with that letter.
7. **ANIMAL** that starts with last letter of Country.
8. **FRUIT** that starts with last letter of Animal.



Intros

Name

Place and Org

What is something you would want to walk away with today



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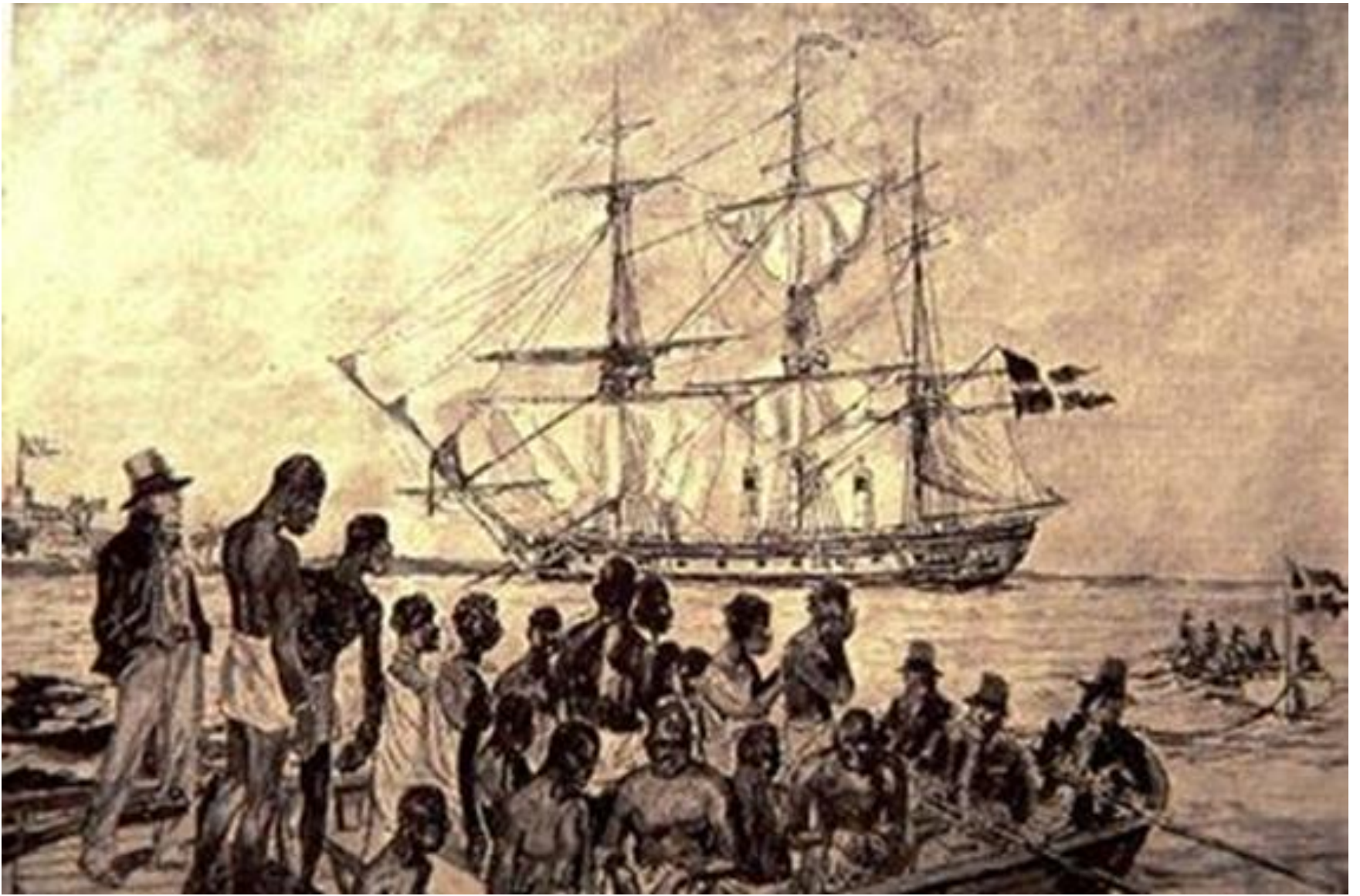
Laying it on the Line

“I believe that we can replicate policies and programs across the nation that truly creates the ability to achieve energy efficiency for all.”

“I believe my organization has the power to create equitable solutions to the energy divide and energy insecurity.”

“I believe that we as a nation can achieve racial equity.”





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The strategy to **decarbonize our economy to get us to climate solutions** is not enough.



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Otherwise, we end up with this....

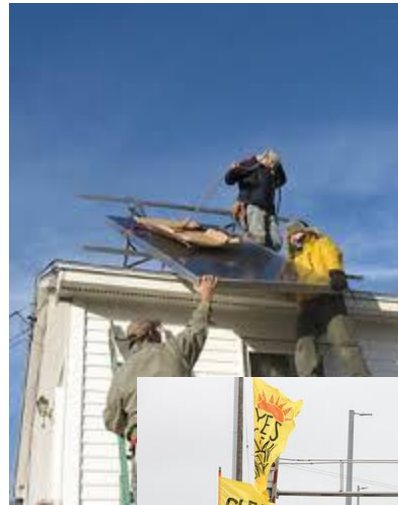


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What is Energy Democracy?

➤ Communities are positioned to be planners, decision-makers and owners in a local and renewable energy economy.

- Not just energy “consumers” and not just “jobs”
- Community Owned
- Decentralized
- Distributed
- Diversified (but not dirty)
- **Demands Equity and Inclusion**



Individual racism:

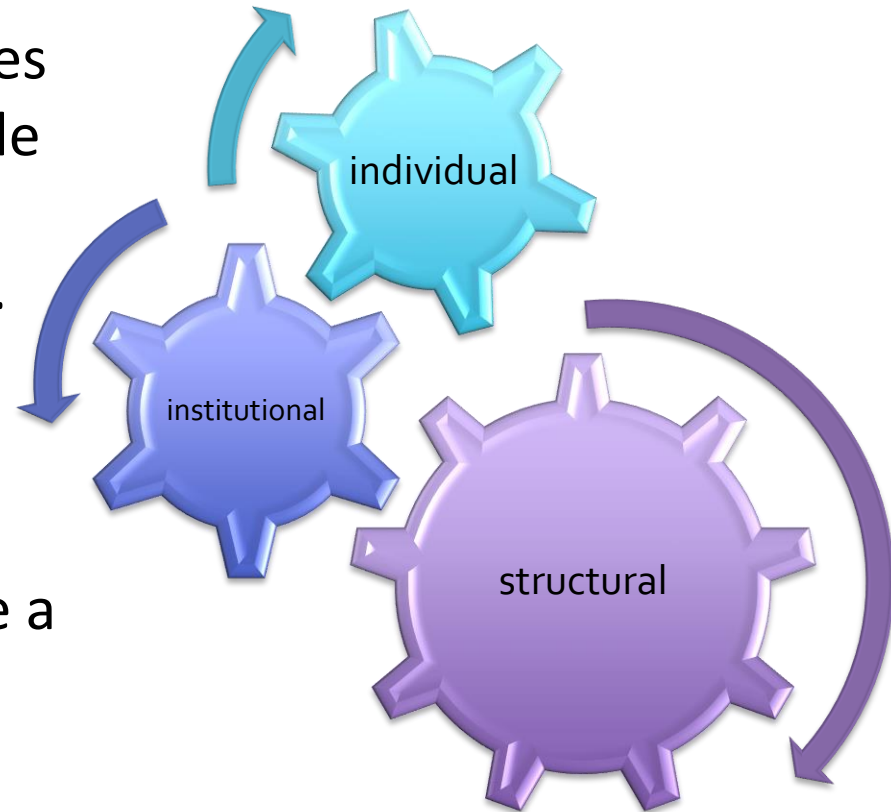
- Pre-judgment, bias, or discrimination by an individual based on race.

Institutional racism:

- Policies, practices and procedures that work better for white people than for people of color, often unintentionally or inadvertently.

Structural racism:

- A history and current reality of institutional racism across all institutions, combining to create a system that negatively impacts communities of color.



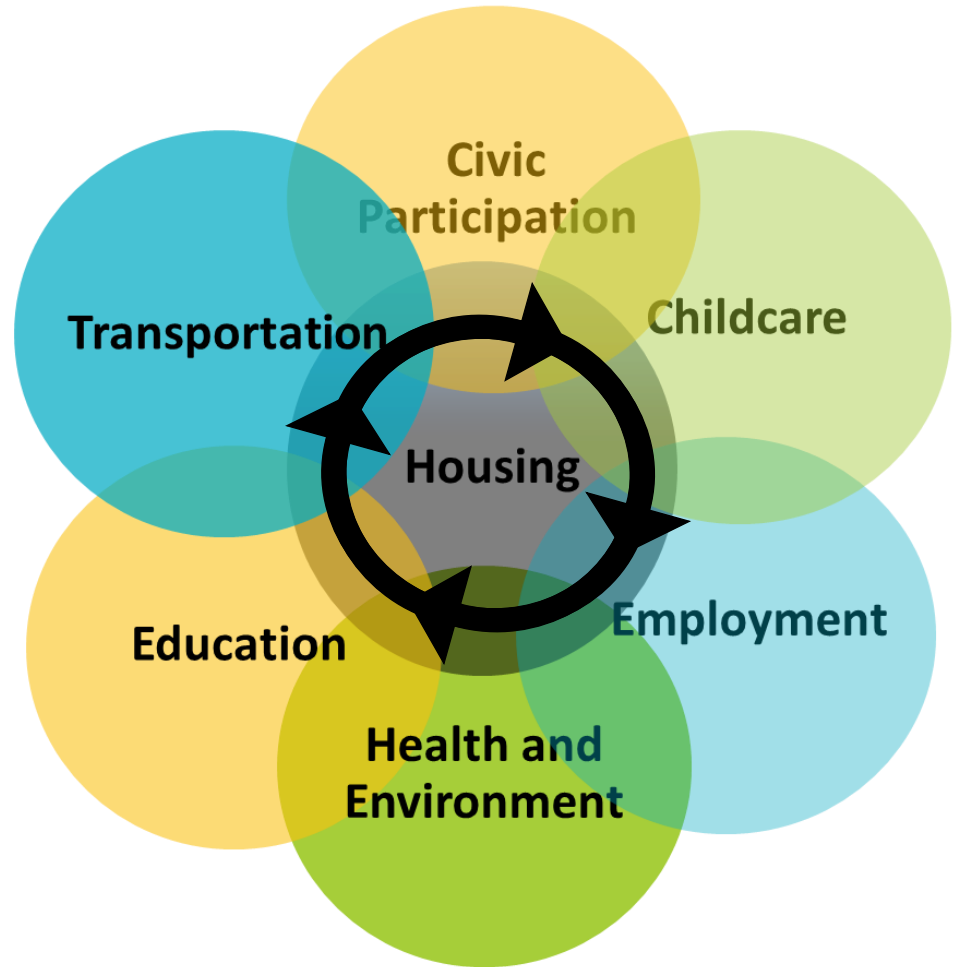
Structural Racism

Structural Racism involves multiple institutions

Public, private institutions and policies interact to produce racial inequities.

Intent to cause harm is irrelevant

With structural racism, systems operate, often inadvertently, to create benefit for White people at the expense of people of color.



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LOCAL AND REGIONAL GOVERNMENT
**ALLIANCE ON
RACE & EQUITY**

CSI's Lens of Racial Equity

Racial equity is when 1) race no longer is a determinant of life outcomes and 2) in addressing racial inequity directly, we improve outcomes for everyone.

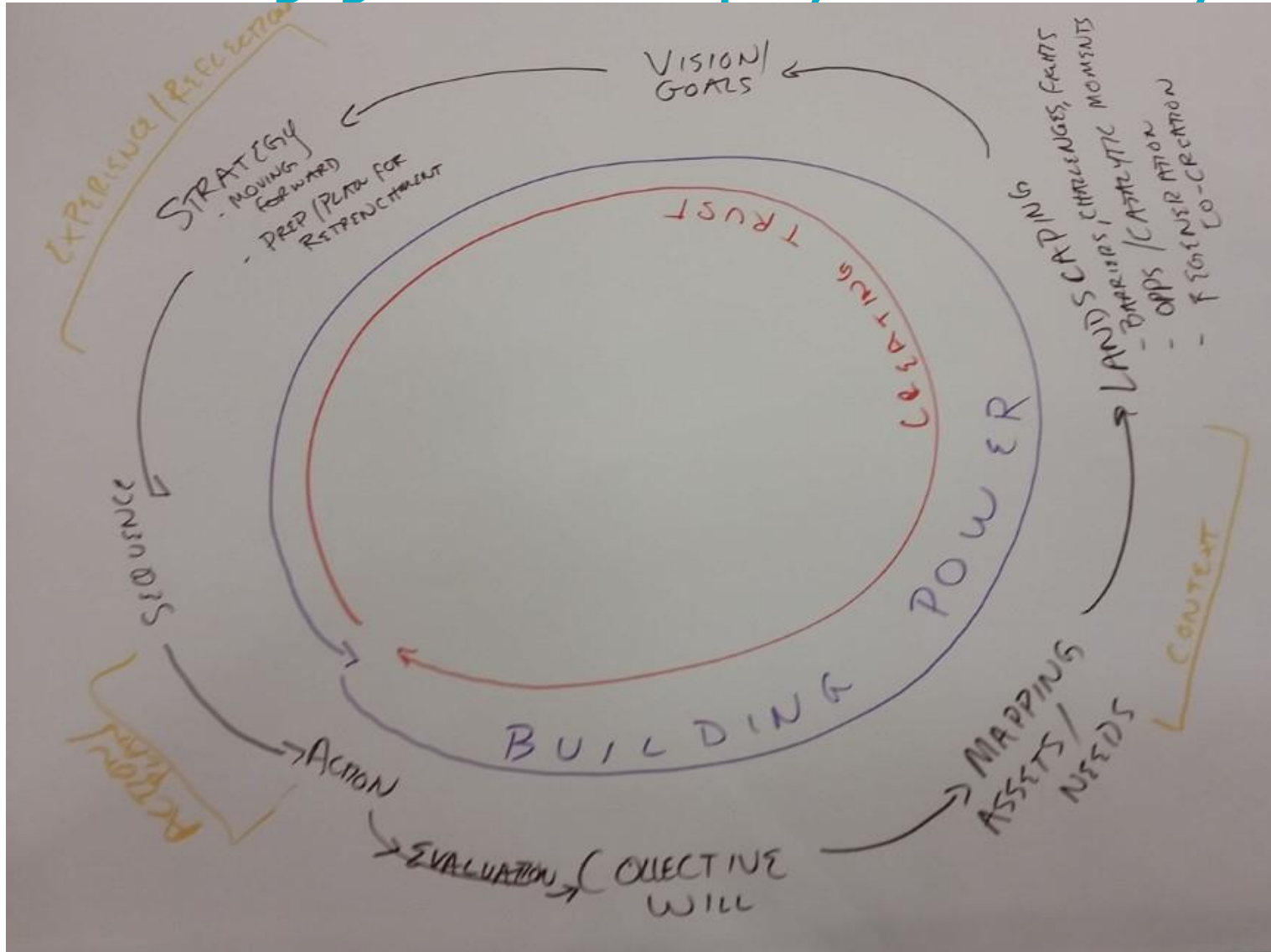
Racial equity is both our lens and the outcome we seek to achieve. It is an *inclusive* approach to transform structures towards access, justice, self-determination, redistribution, and sharing of power and resources.



Effective Practices for Engaging with Community on Racial Equity in Energy

- Know your context AND Don't Assume *"technical knowledge gap"*
- Co-creating a Vision
- Building a Strategy Together
- Experience and Action
- Reflection and Evaluation

Process to engage for racial equity in community



Philadelphia: A Snapshot

Trifecta of Climate Inequity and Insecurity



Trifecta (QUAD) of Insecurity: Philly

Research by Drexel found that In Congressional District 1:

- 28% of the families faced some energy insecurity
- 60% had some cumulative hardship in water, energy, food and housing challenges.

According to the Public Utility Commission:

In 2014 over 15,000 households had their water shut-off.

In 2013, 28,000 households had their gas terminated by Philadelphia Gas Works and over 83,000 households had their electricity shut off by Philadelphia Electric (the region's investor-owned utility).

Water Rate Board - increased rates

Racial inequity in the U.S.

From infant mortality to life expectancy, race predicts how well you will do...

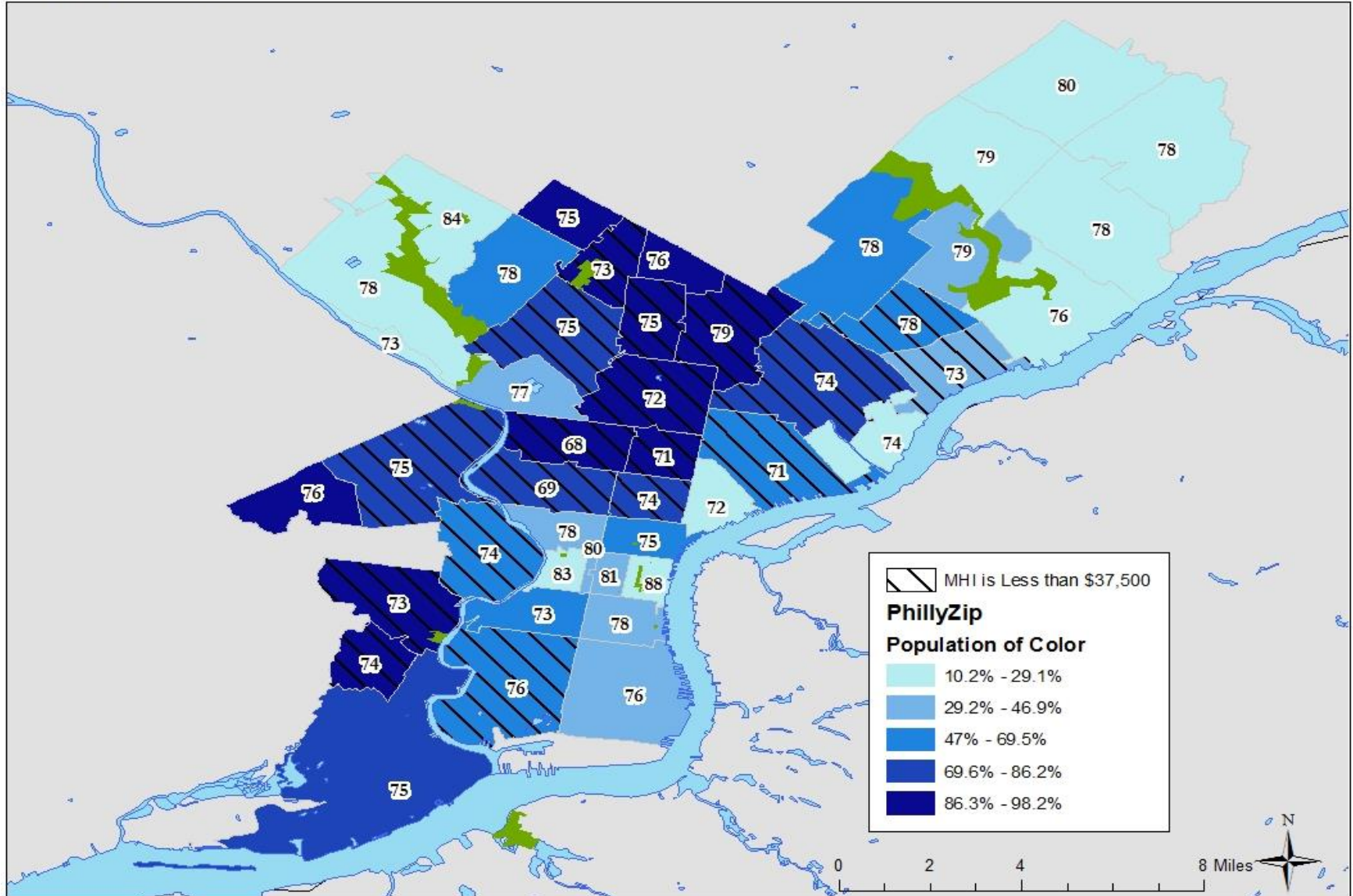


Racial inequity in Philly

Philadelphia, Race, Income
and Life Expectancy By Zip Code

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Data Sources: Virginia Commonwealth University, US Census, ESRI

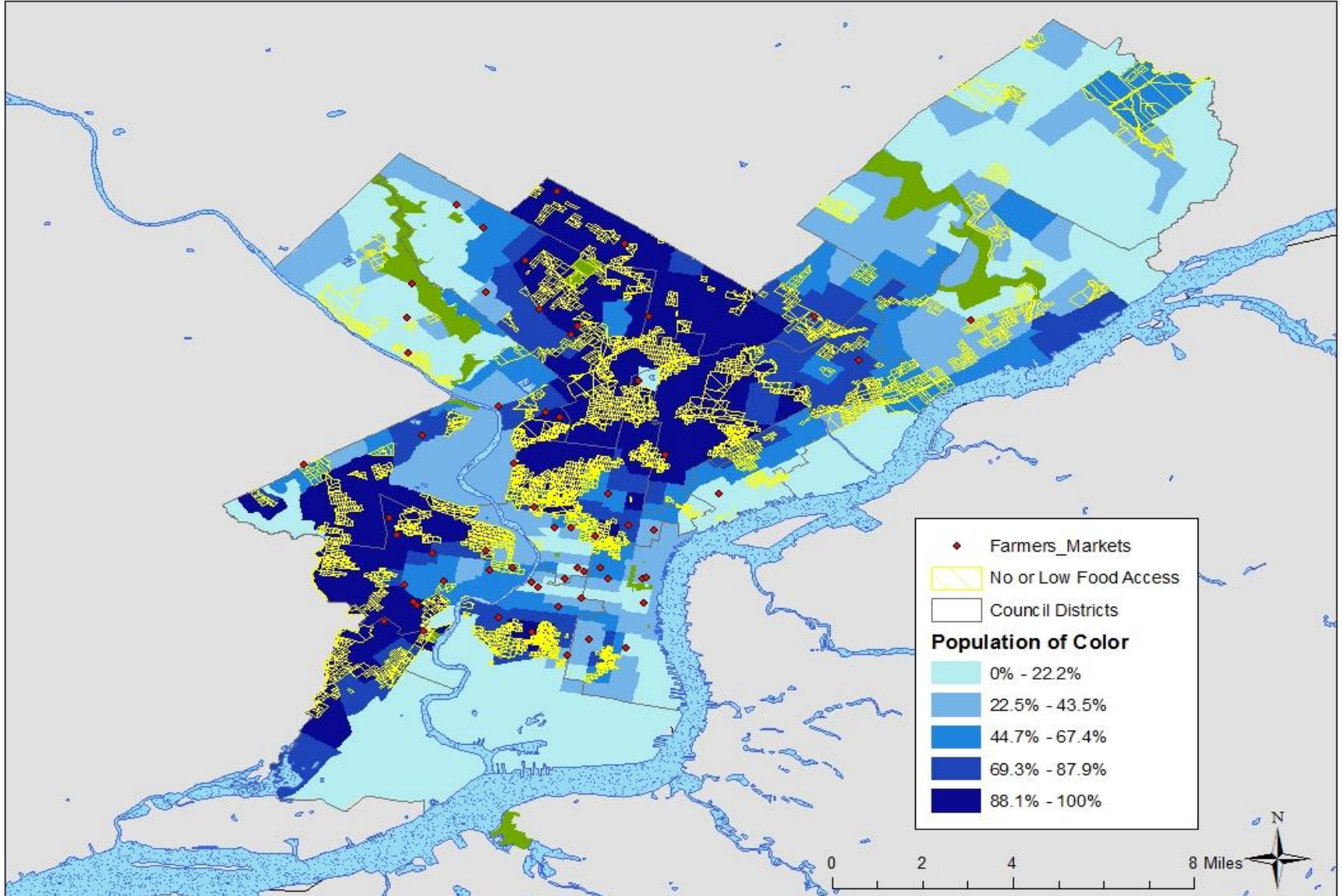


Trifecta of Insecurity: Philly

Philadelphia: Race, Income, and Food Insecurity by Census Tract

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Data Sources: US Census, ESRI, Open Philly Data

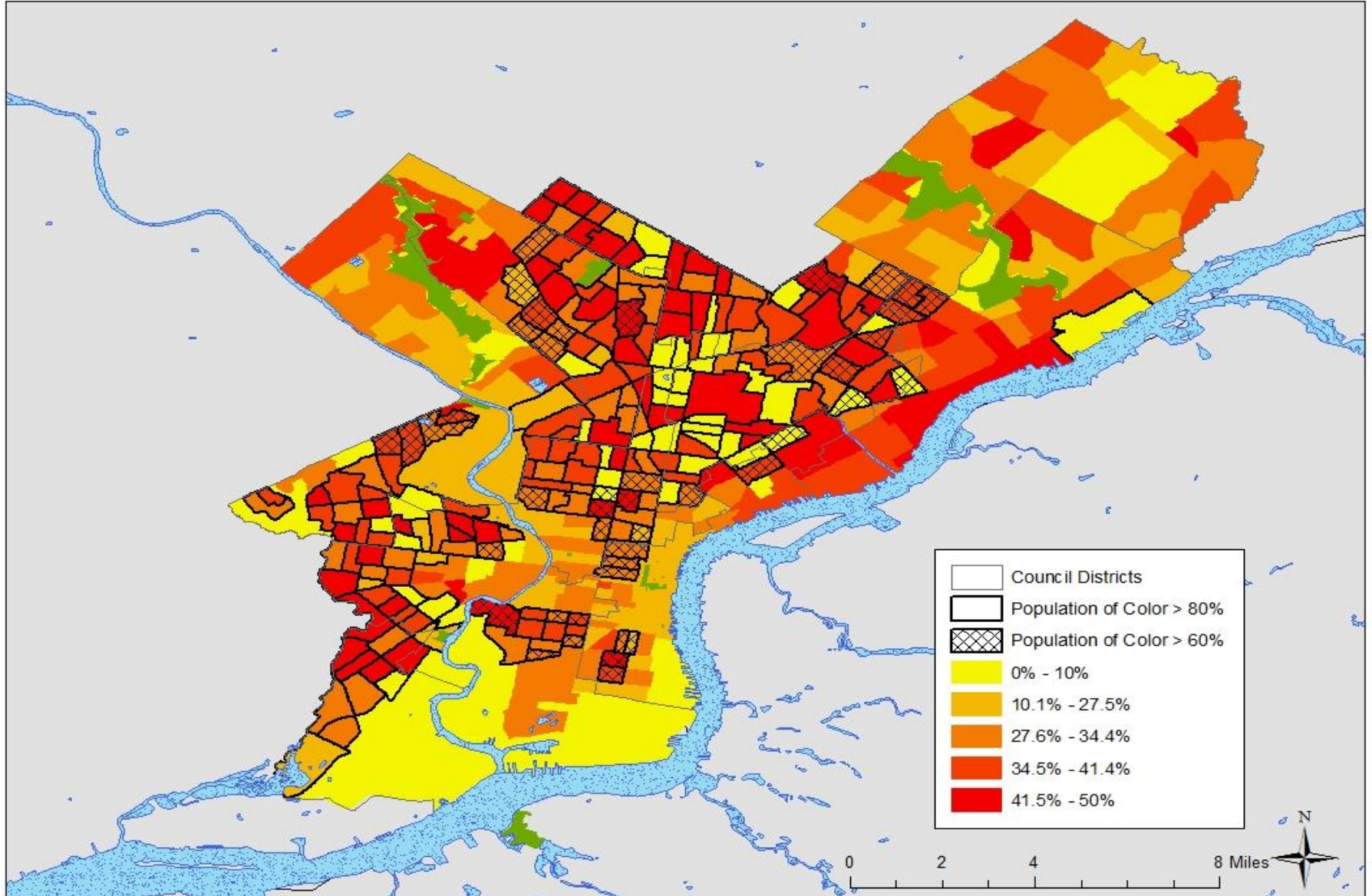


Trifecta of Insecurity: Philly

Philadelphia: Race and Rent Burden by Census Tract

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Data Sources: US Census, ESRI, Open Philly Data

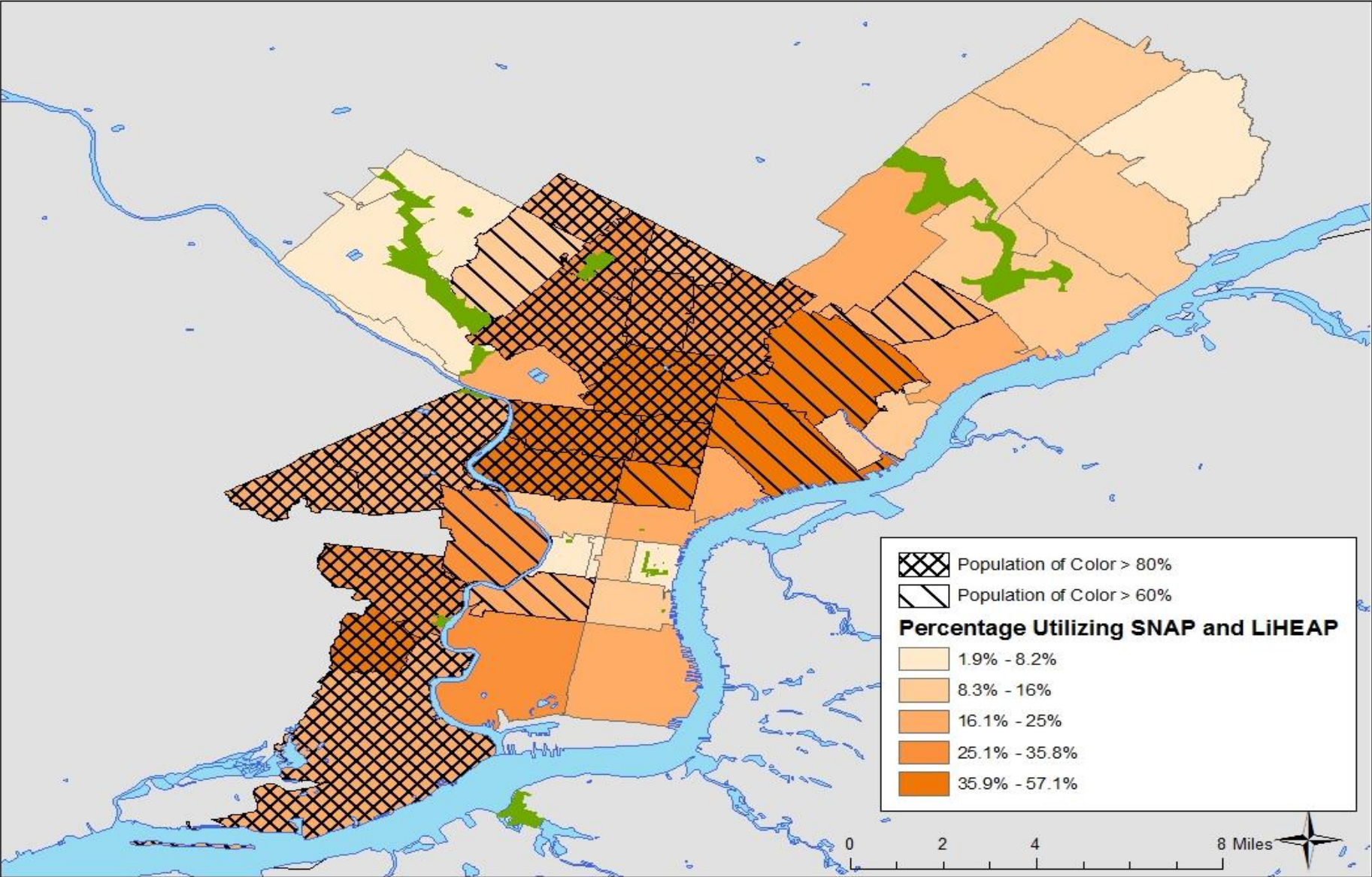


Trifecta of Insecurity: Philly

Philadelphia: Race and SNAP and LIHEAP participants



Data Sources: US Census, ESRI



Trifecta of Insecurity: Philly

EJSCREEN

Home |

Report on Selected Place

Erase

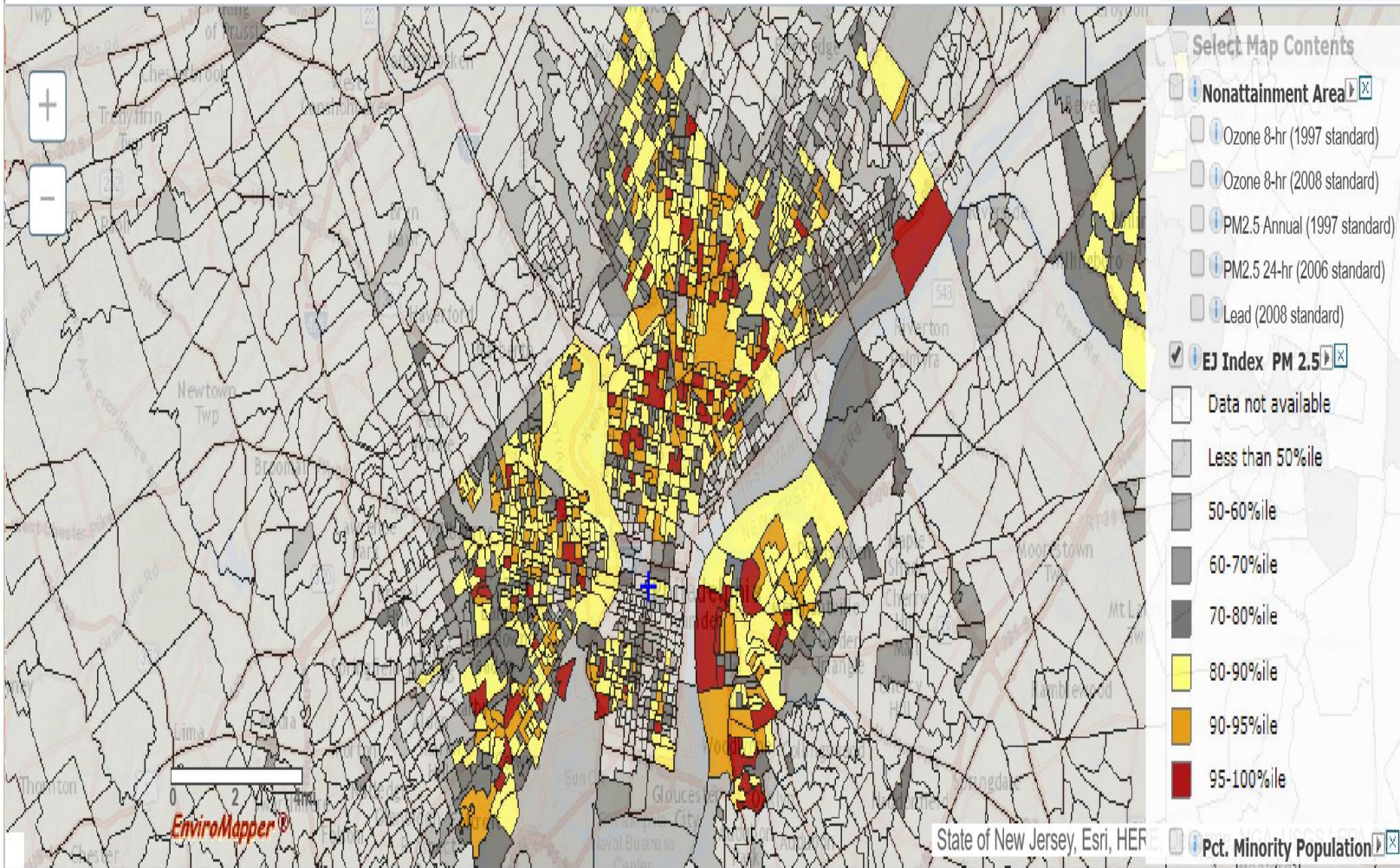
Map Data

Measure

Bookmarks

Basemap

philadelphia



Parkside: The Challenge

- 90% Black, 4.6% White, and 3.6% Latino.
- MHI: \$18,000
- 1 in 5 residents experience unemployment.
- 1 in 2 households face food and heating insecurity
- The average rent burden for homeowners is 45%
- And among both owners and renters, nearly 53% of homes were built prior to 1939, with nearly 70% of all homes built before 1960

Parkside: A Solution



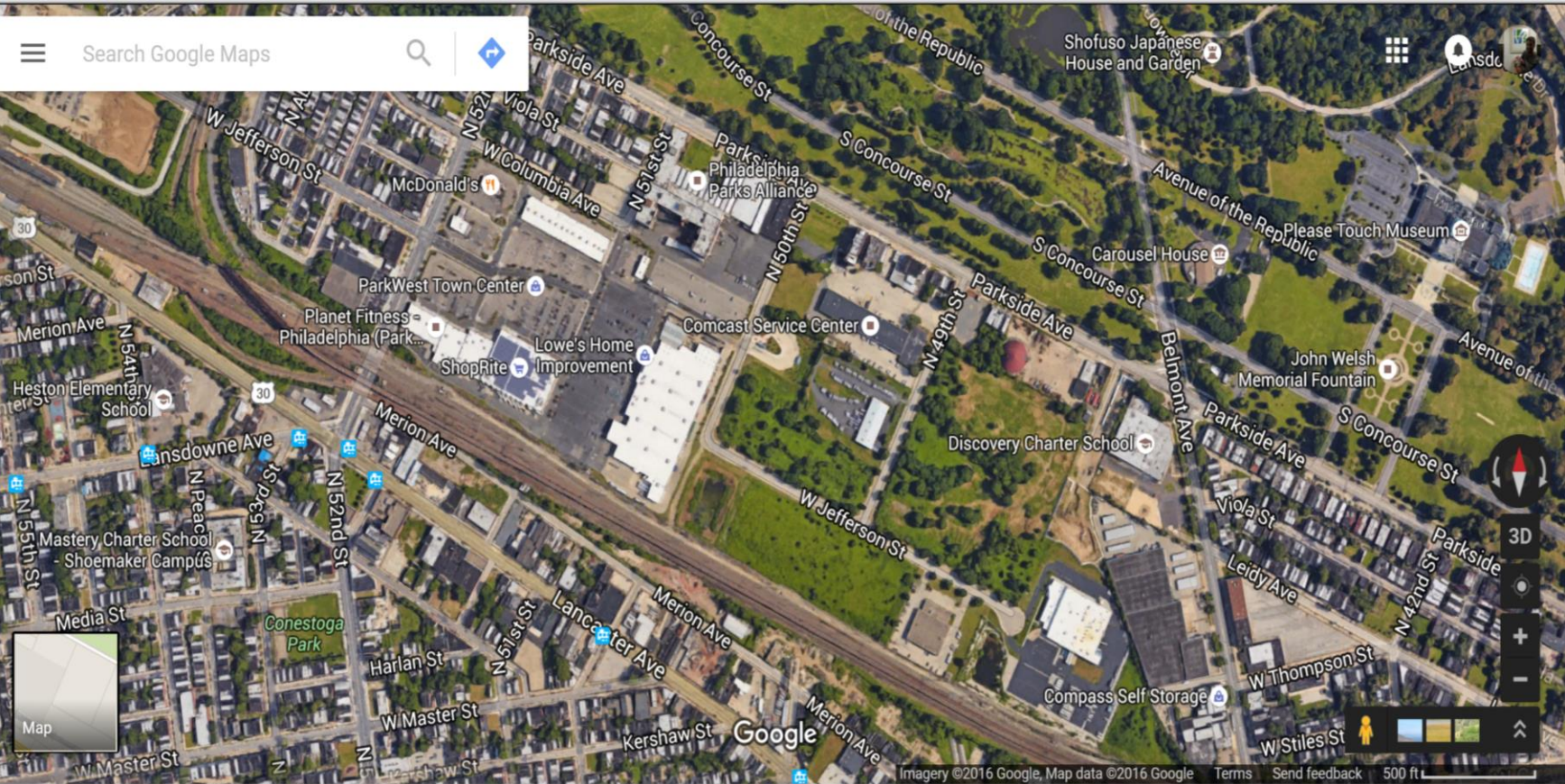
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Parkside: A Solution



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Renewable Energy Investment Districts: Reimagining our Commons

- Renewables are a strategy to facilitate true "equity" ownership (monetary, psychological, emotional, culturally, and socially) into the civic commons implementation.
- Not just physical interventions, nor just interventions on access and benefits, but changes our ability to think of who is at the table as owners, planners, and decision-makers.

How Renewable Energy Investment District Works

- Owned by community residents and CDC to operate solar systems on strategically selected vacant land within the district's boundaries.
- Long term contracts to sell the solar energy to the institutions and businesses within the district.
- Revenues go back to community to take on energy improvements to address energy insecurity. Build up place and civic commons in tandem with wealth generation and structural solutions without displacement.

How Renewable Energy Investment District Works

- Pilot a 300kW solar system, creating three full time jobs and generate \$40,000 of gross revenue annually.
- Scale out to develop 5 MW of solar, producing annual gross revenues of \$700,000.
- Revenues flow back to community-owners for use on community investment and improvements

Benefits

- **Civic Engagement:** Community-driven processes that go beyond access and benefit.
- **Job Creation:** temporary construction jobs, permanent operations/maintenance jobs
- **Land Value:** Return vacant land to revenue generating land that remains community owned and directed
- **Wealth creation** for low-income residents

Guiding Points



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Climbing the Mountain... What is the goal?

Sovereignty
Ownership
Control
Opportunity
Benefits
Access

Getting to Energy Democracy we need to ask?

HOW are the issues of climate change and energy impacting communities of color a part of larger, structural issues harming all communities?

WILL communities of color benefit, or not benefit, or be in position to lead and own decision-making processes in energy plans and policies?

WHAT physical, financial, and social infrastructure do communities need to benefit?

WHERE are the entry points for creating transformation? (institutions, communities, government, etc...)

WHO else including “unlikely” allies do we need to work with to push for critical reforms?



Interrogate our Assumptions when Engaging

HOW are we defining community?

WILL we be creating more barriers or challenges, despite good intentions?

WHAT unintended consequences are created because of the work we do?

WHERE are the gaps that we won't meet given our work and efforts?

WHO do we still forget?





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[#energydemocracy](#)

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