Energy Insecurity Webinar Series

Wednesday, September 14, 2022
Stakeholder Recommendations for Reducing Energy Insecurity in the Southeast United States

• In early 2022, SEEA assumed leadership of the Southeast Energy Insecurity Project, formerly known as the Southeast Energy Insecurity Stakeholder Initiative, led by the Nicholas Institute for Environmental Policy Solutions at Duke University.

• The initiative produced a report, Stakeholder Recommendations for Reducing Energy Insecurity in the Southeast United States, which includes 24 recommendations to address energy insecurity in the region.
Webinar Series Intentions and Format

• The intention of the webinar series is to provide a forum for organizations to profile outstanding projects that align with the working groups presented within the stakeholder recommendations.

• Ideally, each webinar will have at least one person presenting on a project that aligns with one of the six working groups
  – 30 min presentation
  – 30 min questions

• We are pleased to announce that we have selected the Southeast Energy Insecurity Leadership Forum.
  – As members, you have the opportunity to present on work and ongoing projects.
Expected Timelines

Systemic Change
Data Access and Improvement
Housing
Programs and Access to Financing
Awareness and Community Engagement
Utility Solutions

Please contact jward@seealliance.org for further involvement and information
State Representative in Georgia House District 99 Marvin Lim

marvin.lim@house.ga.gov
Advancing Efficient and Healthy Housing in Georgia State House District 98

Will Bryan
Director of Research
wbryan@seealliance.org
Unaffordable and unstable housing
Rising rent/mortgage costs have outpaced Gwinnett

- Home prices in HD98 increased by 198% and rents increased by 103% between 2014 and 2022 – the largest increases of any zip code in Gwinnett County.
Energy burdens fall heavily on low- and moderate-income households

- The highest energy burdens for low- and moderate-income households in HD98 is in census tract 504.21, where energy costs average almost **11% of annual income**, followed by tract 504.22 at 8.4%.
- There are more than **5,000 households in HD98** that face either extreme (>10%) or high (6-10%) energy burdens.
Unaffordable housing frequently results in evictions

- Between 2019 and the July 2022 there were **9,244 formal eviction filings** for residents of HD98 in Gwinnett County Superior Court, even accounting for the CDC’s COVID-19 eviction moratorium.

- This is **15% of all eviction filings** in Gwinnett County despite HD98 having 12% of all renter households in Gwinnett.
It is difficult for residents of HD98 to access capital for home purchase and/or improvements

- Of the 1,541 applications in HD98 for financing for a home purchase, home improvement, or refinancing in 2017, **nearly 42% were unsuccessful** – either because the application was denied, approved but not accepted, withdrawn, or closed for being incomplete. This is a **higher rate** than in Norcross or Gwinnett.

- 65% of unsuccessful applicants are **people of color**. (23% of those identify as Hispanic and/or Latino, 20% identify as Asian, and 22% identify as Black)
The prevalence of renters makes it difficult to access energy and housing assistance

- The proportion of renters in HD98 is the inverse of the proportion of renters across Gwinnett County.

![Tenure in HD98](image1)

Tenure in HD98: 67% Owners, 33% Renters

![Tenure in Gwinnett County](image2)

Tenure in Gwinnett County: 66% Owners, 34% Renters
Lack of resilience to disasters
Developed land and impervious surface are expanding

- High intensity developed land uses dominate in HD98.
- The amount of high intensity developed land grew by 31% in Gwinnett County between 2001 and 2019.
Low levels of greenspace/tree canopy contribute to affordability and health challenges

- Overall, HD98 has 5% less tree canopy than Gwinnett and 10% less than Atlanta.
- However, canopy ranges from 22% in commercial areas to 57% in several residential neighborhoods.
Community health risks
Residents of HD98 face poor air quality that exacerbates chronic health conditions

- Residents of HD98 are vulnerable to diesel particulate matter in the air, caused by the operation of diesel vehicles, particularly freight.

- 15 census block groups are in the 90th percentile for diesel particulate matter in the air compared to all block groups in Georgia, with the remaining census block groups in HD98 in the 80th percentile for airborne diesel particulate matter.
Poor quality housing contributes to health risks like asthma
Residents lack access to insurance for medical care

- 40% of HD98 residents (22,304 people) lack health insurance.
- Though a larger proportion HD98 participates in the work force than in Gwinnett County, a much lower proportion of Gwinnett residents live without health insurance.

Health Insurance in HD98
- 40% With health insurance coverage
- 60% No health insurance coverage

Health Insurance in Gwinnett County
- 16% With health insurance coverage
- 84% No health insurance coverage
Contributing to climate change
Investing in LMI housing is a key pathway to address greenhouse gas emissions (GHG)

- Low- and moderate-income households in HD98 generate 167,392,717 pounds of CO2e per year, or 11% of Gwinnett County’s total GHG emissions.
- Reducing this demand by 7% - the typical electric use savings from the Weatherization Assistance Program (WAP) - would result in an emissions savings of 1,147,490 pounds of CO2e every year, the equivalent of burning 575,878 pounds of coal.
Addressing these Issues through Housing
Housing is infrastructure

Rooftop solar decreases energy expenditures and emissions: improve resilience, affordability, climate, and health

Expanding greenspace and decreasing impervious surfaces reduce air temperature and flooding: improve resilience, affordability, climate, and health outcomes

Weatherization improves energy performance and reduces health hazards: improve resilience, affordability, climate, and health outcomes

EV access and charging provides backup power and reduces auto emissions: improve resilience, climate, and health outcomes
Who is at risk? Where should funds be focused?
Low- and moderate-income households

- Households with lower incomes struggle with high energy costs, which exacerbate housing unaffordability and instability. Households in the lowest income bracket face energy costs that make up nearly 15% of income.

- Nearly 60% of all households in HD98 are low- or moderate-income (~12,000 households).
Renters

• Renters in HD98 tend to pay less overall than homeowners, but they have energy burdens nearly 30% higher than owners, and there are significantly more renters in HD98 than owners.

• On top of the disproportionate burdens that they face, renters also have barriers to accessing energy efficiency programs that do not exist for homeowners.
Single-family households

- Residents of other building types (mobile homes, RVs, etc.) face the highest energy costs and energy burdens in HD98 by a significant margin. Yet there are only around 200 of these units in the district.
- Given this, residents of single-family households – the most common housing type in the district – are also at risk given their comparatively high energy costs and cost burdens.

![Energy Costs and Burdens by Building Type, HD98](chart)

- **Single-Family and Duplex**
  - Annual Energy Costs: $3,000
  - Average Energy Burden: 6.8%
- **Multifamily**
  - Annual Energy Costs: $2,500
  - Average Energy Burden: 6.6%
- **Other**
  - Annual Energy Costs: $2,000
  - Average Energy Burden: 6.4%

### Energy Costs and Burdens by Building Type, HD98

- **Single-Family and Duplex**
- **Multifamily**
- **Other**

- **Annual Energy Costs**
- **Average Energy Burden**
People who live in old buildings

- Low- and moderate-income residents of buildings built before 1980 are especially at risk for high energy costs and cost burdens. Older housing stock is typically less efficient, and **units built before 1980 were built before any meaningful building energy codes existed**, the only minimum standards for efficiency and safety in new housing.

- There are more than 3,000 housing units built before 1980 with LMI residents. These residents face average energy costs that are **9% higher** and energy burdens that are **24% higher than newer housing units**.
Utility gas customers

- Households that use utility gas for heating equipment have both higher annual energy costs and energy burdens when compared to customers who rely on electric heating (and are more likely to be all-electric households). Utility gas customers pay 45% more each year on energy compared to all-electric households.

- Utility gas customers face 31% higher energy burdens compared to electric customers.
Thank You

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Southeast Energy Summit
October 2-5, 2022 | Atlanta, GA

After a two-year hiatus, the Southeast Energy Summit is returning to Atlanta for three days to reconnect with friends and colleagues, explore innovative efficient energy solutions, and plan for a brighter, more prosperous future in the Southeast.

Tickets and sponsor opportunities are available now! Learn more at southeastenergysummit.com