



TISHMAN CENTER · MAY 10, 2021

Justice40 Recommendations

Tishman Environment and Design Center is proud to announce, with our partners, The [Equitable and Just National Climate Forum](#), and the [Center for American Progress](#), the release of a set of [recommendations](#) to the Biden-Harris administration for how they can effectively implement their commitment to environmental justice and the successful implementation of the Justice40 Initiative. The set of recommendations was developed with environmental justice (EJ) advocates, academic experts and national environmental groups.

The Biden-Harris administration entered the White House with a proclaimed commitment to Environmental Justice. [Their January](#)

[27 executive order 14008 on climate change](#) promised 40% of climate investments to disadvantaged communities, known as the Justice40 Initiative. Environmental justice communities across the country are bearing the brunt of pollution, the covid-19 pandemic, and the climate crisis. It is time the federal government heavily invests in these communities. “The Justice40 Initiative has the potential to deliver positive benefits to environmental justice communities. However, we must all work very hard to ensure that these benefits are tangible and that they go to the communities that need them the most,” said [Dr. Nicky Sheats](#), chair of the New Jersey Environmental Justice Alliance.

The participants recommended that the administration achieve this vital goal with actions in six areas:

1. Identifying and mapping EJ and other disadvantaged communities by improving the Environmental Protection Agency’s (EPA) [EJSCREEN](#) tool to include [CalEnviroScreen](#)’s pollution burden and exposure, health, and socioeconomic indicators, and establishing a tiered approach to prioritizing investment benefits to the communities that need them most. This would allow the administration to immediately target investment benefits to EJ communities as it works to develop a

new Climate and Economic Justice Screening Tool, as directed by President Biden.

2. Establishing an effective, accessible, and inclusive stakeholder engagement process with clear goals and frequent consultation that allows EJ advocates to speak for themselves.

3. Identifying and addressing critical service gaps in energy, transportation, housing, economic and workforce development, water, and healthy communities and climate-resilient infrastructure through an inclusive process.

4. Providing clear program criteria that maximize federal investment benefits and avoid harm in EJ communities. All federal agency programs should have criteria that address pollution, climate change, and the potential for new development to price people out of their communities. These safeguards are critical to ensuring that federal investments measurably improve the lives of people in communities historically overburdened by pollution and economic and racial injustice.

5. Improving existing federal programs and creating new ones to expand access to renewable energy and energy efficiency improvements for low-income communities and

communities of color; increase the size of EPA EJ grants; establish a National Environmental Justice and Climate Justice Fund; and invest in climate education, leadership development, and job training.

6. Ensuring accountability by charging White House and Cabinet-level leaders with implementing the Justice40 Initiative, hiring EJ experts in the White House and federal agencies, and publicly tracking federal investments and benefits delivered. Justice40 implementation should be embedded within federal agencies.

These recommendations were developed at two convenings with EJ advocates and national environmental groups who participate in the Equitable and Just National Climate Forum, along with EJ academic experts.

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