Turning the Soil: DC Greens’ 3-Year Strategic Plan
2021-2023

To read the full strategic plan, including definitions for terms used throughout this document, and detailed activities for the next 3 years, go here.
INTRODUCTION

Our society and our organization are at an inflection point. The pandemic has exposed and exacerbated long-standing systemic inequities and given fresh energy and opportunity for large-scale change. Over the past year, DC Greens has honed our strategic priorities in order to meet this historic moment.

With this strategic plan, we are naming the concept of “Health Equity” as our orienting framework. Over the past 12 years, we have been known as a “food organization”—and we still are. But it is past time that we collectively recognize that food access, health disparities, and racial oppression do not stand alone—especially when viewed from the perspective of those who live at the intersection of them all.

DC Greens has a history of creating programs with an eye toward systemic uptake. Some have referred to us as a bridge, and at times we have played that role. However, we are not a bridge. Our purpose is to build bridges. We are here to germinate and support creative solutions and then step aside so that they can thrive without us. Moving forward, it is incumbent on us to articulate how any program we tackle either will exist independently or will be integrated into the fabric of our city policies.

Our plan is organized into three core clusters of work that span both our internal and external goals: Advance Just Food Policy; Build Community Resources for Health Equity; and Build a Transparent, Sustainable, and Accountable Organization. Within the framework of these three areas, we focus on goals in which DC Greens is best positioned to advance both health equity and systemic change, including:

- **The Produce Prescription Program** and advancing “Food as Medicine” policy on the local and national levels;
- **The Well** and its community-led, place-based approach to advancing community wellness;
- **Improving the quality of school food** through community-based feedback channels and city-wide policy change; and
- **Advocacy**—undertaken in coalition with those most impacted by food injustice and health disparities—that shifts city systems and investments towards health equity as it relates to food.

In further commitment to our overarching values, we are building on four years of intentional internal work to make DC Greens a more equitable workplace. This strategic plan offers our roadmap to deepen our racial equity work across all functions of the organization. We know our work is stronger when we invest in the leadership of all staff, build internal processes that dismantle systemic racism, and recognize that operationalizing equity requires continuing work and investment.

We are ready to meet the moment and play our part in building a just and resilient food system.
MISSION
Advancing health equity by building a just and resilient food system.

VISION
A city in which health equity is a central value, healthy food is a human right, and all residents have the resources to shape and control policies and programs for their own communities.

THEORY OF CHANGE
Achieving health equity requires resilient, just, and equitable food systems.

DC Greens advances health equity by creating cross-sector collaborations and advancing equitable, city-wide policy solutions to build a just and resilient food system. We do this work in solidarity with marginalized communities experiencing poverty and food insecurity.

We believe that building resilient, just, and equitable food systems requires:

- **Advancing equitable food policy that shifts the scale, scope, and nature of government investment and responsibility**
  - Making existing power structures accessible to people currently outside those structures
  - Transforming institutions towards equitable practices

- **Cross-sector collaboration**
  - Implementing programs that provide evidence to support policy change
  - Coordinating resources, people, spaces, and coalitions

- **Solidarity with directly-impacted communities**
  - Supporting the leadership of marginalized residents to advance community-led solutions while creating structures and mechanisms for accountability
  - Transferring resources by catalyzing and supporting new funding relationships for BIPOC-led organizations

1 BIPOC is a widely-used acronym for Black, Indigenous and People of Color
ASSUMPTIONS
Our food system is built on legacies of structural racism that are rooted in slavery and native genocide. The current food system actively undermines individual and community health of BIPOC and people experiencing poverty, particularly Black communities living east of the Anacostia River. Racial discrimination—including red-lining, mass incarceration, labor exploitation, and the displacement of Black communities—has created conditions of poverty, disinvestment, and disenfranchisement that must be uprooted to advance food justice and health equity.

STRATEGIC GOALS AND ACTIVITIES
The following overarching strategic goals emphasize DC Greens’ strengths and the unique role that the organization performs in the food system. We will use the next three years to further strengthen and solidify the areas of work where we add the most value. To read the goals in more detail, and see the full list of activities for each, go here.

Advancing Just Food Policies
This strategy is focused on creating a just and resilient food system that moves policy change by building a body of evidence, working in coalition, and centering those who are most impacted by the issues.

Build Community Resources for Health Equity
This strategy is focused on advancing health equity, with a place-based approach that embraces the full scope of community wellness and explores new partnerships and community-directed programming that promotes health.

Build a Transparent, Sustainable, and Accountable Organization
This strategy is focused on developing strong organizational processes that support racial equity, staff wellness and retention, talent recruitment, and thoughtful decision-making. We believe that continuing to deepen this area of work both aligns with our values and is a crucial component of organizational sustainability and leadership.