The Geos Institute and Climate Access are leading the Louisville Metro Government through a Whole Community planning process to address climate impacts and vulnerabilities. Climate change is a global problem, yet the impacts and opportunities for action are locally based. Communities around the U.S. and the globe are working to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and prevent the most severe, long-term impacts. Many impacts are already being felt, however, and will continue to worsen based on greenhouse gases already released.

Whole Community planning works across all sectors of a community, resulting in highly collaborative, holistic solutions to climate change that address the needs of socioeconomic and natural systems. Our approach is rooted in the best available climate science, so that all strategies are linked to specific climate risks, and uncertainty is addressed.

This approach to hazard identification, risk and vulnerability assessment, and adaptation planning ensures that the community is engaged and local values are incorporated. This project will result in a locally-specific Climate Adaptation Plan with actionable solutions, as well as variables and metrics needed to report to the Global Convenant of Mayors for Climate and Energy (GCoM).

The project consists of four Major Activities:

1. Community-wide Hazards Identification
2. Community-wide Climate Change Risk and Vulnerability Assessment
3. Climate Adaptation Plan
4. Community Framing and Engagement Strategy

Project Timeline (2019):
THE IMPORTANCE OF CROSS-SECTOR, COLLABORATIVE PLANNING

Climate change affects all parts of the community, and the impacts are expected to worsen and accelerate in coming decades. By developing solutions that create co-benefits across diverse sectors, Whole Community planning avoids shifting the impacts from one resource or population to another. Cross-sector strategies build community resilience through increased collaboration and understanding, as well as a focus on shared values. A primary role of the Strategy Team is to ensure that diverse sectors, resources, and populations are well-represented and engaged.

MAJOR ACTIVITY 1: HAZARDS IDENTIFICATION

✓ Based on the most up-to-date climate science and model projections
✓ Expert consultations lead to an integration of climate science and existing hazards expertise

MAJOR ACTIVITY 2: COMMUNITY-WIDE RISK AND VULNERABILITY ASSESSMENT

✓ Stakeholder mapping identifies what community members need to be engaged, and how to bring them into the process
✓ Strategy Team helps set criteria to prioritize risks and vulnerabilities
✓ Assess communication on risk, sustainability, and climate to guide ongoing communication on climate change adaptation
✓ Stakeholder interviews to determine how to engage those most at risk from climate impacts, building on 100 Resilient Cities
✓ Climate change risks to the 5 systems of the community are identified in a stakeholder workshop:
  o Built – transportation, energy, and water infrastructure, buildings, etc.
  o Natural – forests, rivers, wetlands, parks, fish, wildlife, and plants
  o Human – mental and physical health, emergency preparedness and response
  o Cultural – indigenous culture and livelihoods, young people, local cultural influences, immigrant communities
  o Economic – local industry, businesses, economic drivers, and employee
✓ Stakeholder dialog sessions to learn how community members will be most impacted and share local knowledge that feeds into the vulnerability assessment

MAJOR ACTIVITY 3: CLIMATE ADAPTATION PLAN

✓ A menu of adaptation strategies is created based on adaptation Best Practices
✓ Cross-sector groups develop collaborative solutions to high priority vulnerabilities in a stakeholder workshop
✓ Strategy Team helps to prioritize solutions based on locally-specific criteria and values
✓ Attention is given to co-beneficial solutions that have positive impacts to vulnerable populations and/or natural ecosystems

MAJOR ACTIVITY 4: COMMUNITY FRAMING AND ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY

✓ Findings from stakeholder interviews, workshops, and dialogs used to develop a framing and engagement strategy for the community
✓ Development of engagement materials