

ARUP and City of Mount Vernon

Natural Carbon Solutions Innovation Challenge Collaboration

This partnership will prepare and allow the City to accomplish the following:

Establishing Urban Heat Vulnerability Zones (UHVZs) in Mount Vernon, NY would provide a data-driven framework to identify and prioritize neighborhoods most at risk from extreme heat due to environmental and social factors. These zones would enable the City to efficiently allocate resources—such as tree planting, cooling infrastructure, and community outreach—while protecting vulnerable populations like seniors, children, and low-income residents from heat-related illnesses. By highlighting systemic disparities, UHVZs promote environmental equity and support inclusive, climate-resilient planning that centers historically underserved communities. Additionally, the designation of UHVZs would strengthen Mount Vernon’s eligibility for state and federal climate resilience and environmental equity grants, enhance cross-departmental coordination, and attract partnerships with nonprofits, schools, and other stakeholders. UHVZs would also serve as a critical guide for future development, helping to shape zoning decisions, green infrastructure investments, and land use policies that reduce heat exposure and enhance community resilience. Most importantly, these zones would provide a measurable structure for tracking progress, increase public awareness, build community trust, and reinforce Mount Vernon’s long-term commitment to health, equity, and sustainability.

Link to NYSERDA Natural Carbon Solutions Innovation Challenge:

<https://portal.nyserda.ny.gov/servlet/servlet.FileDownload?file=00P8z000004P8TJEA0>