

Greensboro Gender Analysis

UNC Cedaw Team

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Methodology

A gender analysis framework was leveraged to guide a mixed-method research approach. As defined by the European Institute for Gender Equality, a gender analysis aims to provide foundational information and data essential to incorporating a gender equity perspective in policy, intervention, and programs (Gender Analysis, 2019). This framework acknowledges the multidisciplinary factors that generate differences between genders in their capacity to access resources, opportunities, and support (Gender Analysis, 2019). This research analyzes tangible and intangible gender-based differences within the communities, policies, and organizations of Guilford County by combining a literature review and qualitative interview analysis.

The literature review was completed to ascertain the context and background of current and historical gender disparities in Greensboro and Guilford County, including previous efforts to advance gender equity, socially, economically, and politically, by examining prior reports, legislation, research, and other scholarly works. This review identifies barriers and patterns of structural gender inequity and discrimination in the county.

To further uncover the priorities, needs, assets, and beliefs regarding the conditions and experiences of women in the community, qualitative interviews were conducted with community leaders across four sectors: healthcare, employment, education, and community organizations. Interviewees were identified through research as well as referred by other interview participants. Participants held a variety of roles within their respective organizations, offering a wealth of knowledge as residents of Guilford County and often, identifying as community members who had received services in the past.

Literature Review

Social Determinants of Health

The social determinants of health (SDOH) play a critical role in shaping the health outcomes of women in Guilford County, North Carolina. Social determinants include economic stability, educational access, healthcare availability, and neighborhood conditions, all of which intersect with key issues such as income inequity and employment opportunities. Research indicates that social and economic factors contribute at least as much, if not more, to quality of life and life expectancy than personal health behaviors (Douglas et al., 2022). For women, especially those from marginalized groups, SDOH may significantly influence their ability to access essential health services and maintain overall well-being. This research provides a comprehensive view of the barriers and challenges women face in achieving health equity in the region. This section will explore how these SDOH impact women in Greensboro, North Carolina, and Guilford County as

a whole, drawing on data from the Cone Health Community Health Assessment, the Guilford County Community Health Assessment from 2019 and the 2022 Women of Greensboro Report.

I. Education and Economic Stability

Economic inequities profoundly affect the health of women in Guilford County. Education, income, and community characteristics significantly influence life expectancy and quality of life, often outweighing the impact of individual behaviors such as tobacco use or diet (Douglas et al., 2022). Communities with lower educational attainment and higher poverty rates are associated with lower life expectancy and often have higher concentrations of racial and ethnic minorities (Smith et al., 2019). These communities experience concentrated disadvantages that severely limit access to essential resources (Smith et al., 2019). Women in these areas face additional economic barriers, such as inadequate wages and limited job opportunities, that can lead to financial hardship (Smith et al., 2019). The 2022 Women of Greensboro Report highlights that women across all income levels feel underpaid, contributing to financial stress and mental health struggles (Colonna & Mearing, 2023). These hardships may contribute to restrictive access to healthcare leading to issues such as food insecurity or lack of affordable health care coverage.

II. Healthcare Access and Quality

Access to healthcare services and the quality of care significantly impact the overall health of residents in Guilford County, particularly women. In Greensboro, obtaining medical care—including primary, specialty, dental, and mental health services—remains a major challenge, with Districts 1 and 2 facing particularly severe issues related to healthcare access, safety, and food security (Colonna & Mearing, 2023). About 11.3% of the civilian non-institutionalized population in Guilford County lacks health insurance, a rate higher than many peer counties and the state average (Smith et al., 2019). In Greensboro, 10.3% of people under 65 years old are without health insurance, compounding barriers to healthcare access (*U.S. Census Bureau QuickFacts*, n.d.). For women, these barriers translate into substantial health disparities; nearly one-third (37%) struggle with accessing affordable healthcare (Colonna & Mearing, 2023). In addition, 39% of women or their families require mental health services, highlighting a critical need for accessible care, and 21% of women indicated they would have sought counseling if it were more affordable or accessible (Colonna & Mearing, 2023). Younger women, particularly those aged 18-29, face the highest need for healthcare and mental health services, with 49% and 57%, respectively, experiencing significant challenges (Colonna & Mearing, 2023). Stress is also a prevalent factor in health outcomes for women, with almost two-thirds (63%) feeling stressed or very stressed most of the time, and over half (53%) spending fewer than five hours on personal care (Colonna & Mearing, 2023). The limited availability of services, including issues with insurance, Medicaid approvals, and program capacity, exacerbates these challenges and underscores the urgent need for improved access to comprehensive healthcare and support services in the region.

III. Neighborhood, Built Environment, and Social Context

The neighborhood and built environment, along with social and community contexts, significantly impact women's health outcomes in Guilford County. Housing affordability and safety are major concerns, with challenges in securing affordable and safe housing directly affecting women's well-being (Smith et al., 2019). Families facing a lack of affordable housing are more likely to experience barriers accessing healthcare, which increases their use of emergency services and leads to more hospitalizations due to delayed treatment (NCSCHS, n.d.). In 2023, the average sale price for townhouse and condo properties in Greensboro rose nearly 20%, with single property sales exceeding \$346,000 in the fourth quarter (Ford, 2024). Additionally, safe public spaces and reliable transportation influence women's health by affecting their ability to engage in physical activity and access necessary services (Douglas et al., 2022). A Health Housing Key Informant Workshop revealed that resources are insufficient to address safe, affordable housing issues, with participants describing the current state of housing as “inadequate,” “poor,” “disparate,” “expensive,” and “unaffordable” (Smith et al., 2019). Women in Greensboro also feel that income-based discrimination is not adequately addressed by city leaders, adding to systemic barriers that impede access to resources and opportunities (Colonna & Mearing, 2023). Addressing these interconnected factors, including financial insecurity, poverty, and unreliable public transportation, is essential for improving health outcomes and ensuring equitable access to resources for women in Greensboro. In addition, strengthening social support networks is crucial; strong support systems not only buffer the effects of stress but also improve mental and physical health outcomes, while the absence of such networks can exacerbate these challenges (Colonna & Mearing, 2023).

Economic Status of Women

The equitable inclusion of women in the labor force can impact both individual-level and macro-level economic conditions. Globally, the gender gap in labor force participation is creating economic loss (Holland & Ell, 2023). If the skills and time of women in the labor force were optimized, decreasing this gender gap, economic activity would increase by 7%, corresponding to roughly \$7 trillion USD (Holland & Ell, 2023). In North Carolina, if all women who participated in the labor force earned the same as men of the same age, level of education, number of work hours, and urban/rural status, \$15 billion USD would be added to the state's economy (Shaw & Mariano, 2021). This equates to approximately 2.6% of North Carolina's gross domestic product in 2019 (Shaw & Mariano, 2021). At the individual level, economic status may significantly impact a woman's access to social protection (such as health insurance, assistance programs, and public housing), resource control, and decision-making power. To better understand the condition of women in Guilford County, it is necessary to analyze the economic status of residents who are women.

I. Labor Force Participation and Employment

Labor force participation is defined as individuals who are either employed or actively looking for work (Anderson & Williams-Baron, 2018). Despite women consisting of over half of the population, women over the age of 16 years in Guilford County have lower labor force participation (Anderson & Williams-Baron, 2018). In the Greensboro-High Point metropolitan area, 57.4% of women participate in the labor force compared to 67.9% of men (Anderson & Williams-Baron, 2018).

In addition to gender disparities in labor force participation, there are disparities regarding where women are participating. The top employing industries in Guilford County differ for men and women (*ACS 2022 5-Year Estimates*, 2024). The Health Care & Social Assistance industry employed the largest percentage (23.1%) of the labor force of women in Guilford County at a median annual earning of \$39,484 (*ACS 2022 5-Year Estimates*, 2024). The highest percentage of men in Guilford County were employed in the Manufacturing sector (17.6%) and had a median annual earning of \$58,292 (*ACS 2022 5-Year Estimates*, 2024). The variations in employment between men and women indicate structural inequities negatively impacting the economic status of women in Guilford County.

II. Income Inequity

As of 2022, the median annual earning of women in Guilford County (\$35,061) is only 76.1% of the median wages of men (\$46,065) (*ACS 2022 5-Year Estimates*, 2024). Of the women participating in the labor force, those employed in Public Administration and Professional, Scientific & Technical Services had the highest median annual earnings in 2022, at \$51,629 and \$51,761 respectively. (*ACS 2022 5-Year Estimates*, 2024). Comparatively, both of these sectors had higher earnings for men (\$62,747 and \$75,284, respectively) (*ACS 2022 5-Year Estimates*, 2024). Income disparities have enormous impacts on the economic empowerment of women, as the NC Council for Women and Youth Involvement identified that the equal pay of men and women workers would “cut the poverty rate among working women in North Carolina by more than half” (Anderson & Williams-Baron, 2018).

The gender wage gap in Guilford County is larger than both the state and national average (*The Wage Gap, State by State*, 2024). Women in the Greensboro-High Point metropolitan area experience a smaller gender wage gap than women county-wide, with median wages for women closer to 83.3% of men’s wages in the area (Anderson & Williams-Baron, 2018). The gender wage gap is a pervasive issue, affecting women across Guilford County regardless of their educational background (Anderson & Williams-Baron, 2018). At all levels of educational attainment, men in Guilford County earn higher median annual earnings than women (Anderson & Williams-Baron, 2018). In the Greensboro-High Point metropolitan area, women with a Bachelor’s degree have a median annual earnings of \$37,468 compared to the \$56,060 median

annual earnings of men with a Bachelor's degree (Anderson & Williams-Baron, 2018). Income inequity is a widespread issue, impacting women in the labor force in Greensboro and throughout Guilford County.

III. Self-Sufficiency Standards and Minimum Wage

The self-sufficiency standard is a measure of income required to meet the basic needs of residents in a given area (Brooks & Pearce, 2000). Examples of expenses factored into the self-sufficiency standard include food, housing, transportation, medical care, and taxes (Brooks & Pearce, 2000). Self-sufficiency standards vary depending on family type, adapting to reflect the number of adults, the number of children, and the ages of children within a family unit (Brooks & Pearce, 2000). These standards provide additional contextualization of the economic conditions in Guilford County, where the cost of basic needs has increased by 114% since 1996 (Outtz et al., 1997; Pearce, 2020). In 2020, a family residing in Greensboro with one parent, one preschooler, and one school-age child must have an hourly rate of \$25.43 per hour for 40 hours a week to meet the family's basic needs (Pearce, 2020). However, the minimum wage in North Carolina as of 2020 was \$7.25 (*State Minimum Wage Rate for North Carolina*, 2024). The income of a parent of one preschooler and one school-aged child earning the hourly minimum wage and living in Greensboro in 2020 would only be able to pay for 29% of the basic needs of the family (Pearce, 2020). As of 2023, the self-sufficiency standard wage for Guilford County for the same family unit (one parent, one preschooler, and one school-age child) has continued to increase, currently requiring a minimum of \$32.44 per hour to meet the self-sufficiency standard, while the state minimum wage remains unchanged (*2023 North Carolina Dataset*, 2023). A widening gap between the minimum wage and the self-sufficiency standard contributes to economic disparities for women in Guilford County.

Violence Against Women

Intimate partner violence (IPV) is a significant public health issue that affects millions of Americans every year (*Intimate Partner Violence*, 2024). The term "intimate partner violence" refers to any physical or sexual violence, stalking, or psychological aggression by a current or former dating partner or spouse (*Intimate Partner Violence*, 2024). Data from the CDC's National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey (NISVS) indicates that over 61 million women and 53 million men have experienced psychological aggression by an intimate partner in their lifetime (*Intimate Partner Violence*, 2024). While IPV impacts people of all identities, the risk of violence that some individuals and communities experience can be traced to social and structural conditions in the areas where they live, work, and play (*Violence against Women*, 2024).

I. Prevalence and Impact of Intimate Partner Violence

The prevalence of intimate partner violence (IPV) in North Carolina reflects national and regional trends, but stands out due to the state's geographic and socioeconomic diversity (NCDHHS Injury and Violence Prevention Branch, 2022). Nationally, roughly 1 in 3 women (31.5%) experience physical or sexual violence from an intimate partner (Basile et al., 2022). North Carolina's IPV rate is above the national average, with 35.2% of women affected (NCDHHS Injury and Violence Prevention Branch, 2022). Risk factors for IPV include gender, limited community resources, childhood exposure to violence, and societal marginalization, particularly impacting LGBTQ+ individuals, people with disabilities, and communities of color (CDC, 2025). Gender inequality and societal norms that condone violence against women are fundamental drivers of violence against women. (*Violence against Women*, 2024). Domestic violence (DV) can have fatal outcomes, ranging from injury to femicide—the murder of women and girls due to their gender (Femicide, 2012).

In 2023, North Carolina reported 135 DV-related homicides, marking a significant increase from previous years, with 57.8% of victims being women (The North Carolina State Bureau of Investigation, 2024). Guilford County led the state in domestic violence-related homicides, reporting 15 homicides, up from six in the previous year, reflecting a troubling spike in violence (The North Carolina State Bureau of Investigation, 2024). The risk of IPV is associated with financial instability, including economic hardship, employment instability, and lack of access to essential resources, highlighting the need for regionally tailored support strategies (Lin et al., 2023). A comparison with neighboring states or nationwide trends over recent years could show if this rise in violence is caused by broader economic patterns or unique state-specific challenges.

II. Addressing Systemic Violence Against Women

North Carolina continues to grapple with systemic issues that perpetuate violence against women, including domestic violence and inadequate support systems for victims, despite a statewide network of programs dedicated to supporting IPV victims. The NC Department of Administration's Council for Women and Youth Involvement (CFWYI) funds 104 domestic violence programs across the state, each providing essential services such as counseling, 24-hour crisis hotlines, transportation, and court advocacy (*Domestic Violence & Sexual Assault*, n.d.). CFWYI's role extends to monitoring service delivery and gathering county-level data to inform and optimize targeted responses (*Domestic Violence & Sexual Assault*, n.d.).

In Guilford County, Family Service of the Piedmont, Inc. serves as a vital resource for victims of domestic violence, sexual assault, human trafficking, and other violent crimes in Greensboro and High Point. From 2022-2023, the organization supported 6,680 clients through hotline calls—the highest client count among DV support organizations across all North Carolina counties—demonstrating Greensboro's crucial role in providing survivor assistance (*Domestic*

Violence & Sexual Assault, n.d.). Reported IPV cases likely reflect only a fraction of actual incidents. Studies indicate that between 41-60% of IPV cases remain unreported in the U.S., highlighting a critical gap between reported statistics and actual victimization rates (*Domestic Violence & Sexual Assault*, n.d.). This calls attention to the urgency of these services and the ongoing need for expanded outreach, preventative measures, and sustained support to protect vulnerable populations.

III. Challenges in Offender Accountability

“Offender accountability is a willingness or accepted obligation to acknowledge and admit to causing devastating trauma and loss, and to account for those choices to cause such harm” (“What Accountability MEANS,” n.d.). A lack of offender accountability further exacerbates North Carolina’s femicide rates. Ellen Rummel, chairperson of Mecklenburg County’s domestic violence fatality review team, has spotlighted the leniency of the criminal justice system in North Carolina, where convicted offenders are often released from jail within a day, face low bonds, or receive inadequate punishment (Baglioni, 2024). Many cases are dismissed before they reach the courts (Baglioni, 2024). “That is what contributes to continued abuse of women, and then continued homicide of women — we aren't taking it seriously before it becomes fatal,” Rummel said (Baglioni, 2024). N.C. Rep. Sarah Crawford has also highlighted the wage gap between men and women as a factor that increases the risk for women to remain in unhealthy relationships due to financial dependency (Baglioni, 2024).

Political Landscape in Greensboro

Local politics have a large impact and can make positive changes in the livelihood of communities. Local politicians must represent the demographics of their community proportionally in order to make changes that benefit their constituents. 33.3% of elected seats in statewide executive offices in North Carolina are held by women, which exemplifies the underrepresentation of women in state politics; this is a pattern that can trickle down to local politics as well (Shaw & Tesfaselassie, 2020). When the demographic composition of local politicians accurately represents the communities they serve, they can better develop policies that meet the needs of community members.

I. Political Representation

The term, “campaigning while female,” encompasses the harassment female candidates face through “sexist and inappropriate comments and behaviors” that further exacerbate the difficulties of campaigning for an elected office as a woman (Shaw & Tesfaselassie, 2020). Women who run for office face gender discrimination throughout their campaigns, and women of color are confronted with many forms of racial bias as well (Shaw & Tesfaselassie, 2020).

There are many barriers women in politics must combat to gain an elected seat, and even after the election, discrimination may persist.

While these gender barriers are pervasive in every level of politics, political representation in local and state governing bodies allows the opportunity for community members to have advocates in leadership. Locally, women need to be better represented in Guilford County and the city of Greensboro. Guilford County currently has two women out of six members in the House of Representatives and only one woman out of three Senate members in the North Carolina General Assembly (*Guilford County Representation - North Carolina General Assembly*, n.d.). Additionally, women make up four out of the nine members of the Guilford County Board of Commissioners (*Board of Commissioners | Guilford County, NC*, n.d.). Representation of women on the Greensboro City Council is much higher, with seven out of the nine city council members identifying as women (*City Council | Greensboro, NC*, n.d.). While representation for women on the Greensboro City Council is notable compared to many other cities in North Carolina, there is still progress to be made. Overall, the proportion of women in political office in North Carolina decreased from 2015 to 2020 (Shaw & Tesfaselassie, 2020). With the recent election, this proportion has increased in the NC General Assembly, however, the proportion of women in political office is not yet matched with the proportion of women in the overall population (Meadows, 2025). Political representation is essential to improving the status of women in North Carolina and specifically, Guilford County.

Additionally, the number of women who are registered to vote and vote in each election can have a large impact on the outcome of the election and the policies and actions that elected officials take to address the status of women. While the percentage of women registered to vote in North Carolina actually decreased between 2012 and 2016, the percentage of women who voted increased slightly (Shaw & Tesfaselassie, 2020). Overall, between 2015 and 2020, women's political participation decreased in North Carolina (Shaw & Tesfaselassie, 2020). Even with some progress, political representation is nowhere near representing the demographics of the communities they serve. Increased voter registration and turnout is imperative in improving political representation.

II. Laws and Policies

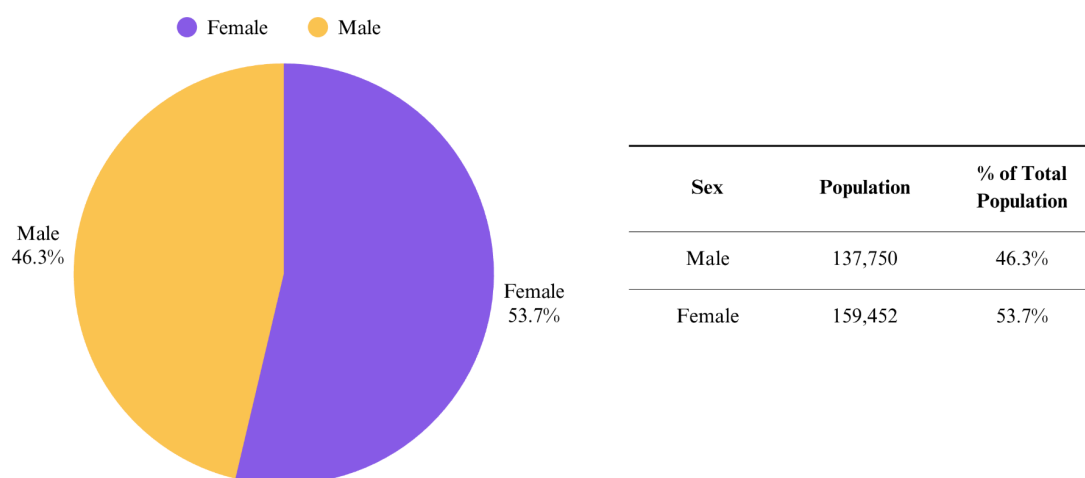
In connection with local politicians, local policies have a major impact on communities. In 2019, Governor Roy Cooper passed an executive order limiting the use of salary history on job applications for agencies under the North Carolina Administration (Burns, 2019). Ideally, this executive order discourages one's previous salary from determining their salary for a new position, which can be used to combat the gender pay gap (Burns, 2019). In contrast, there has been a recent regression in reproductive rights, such as abortion rights, after the overturning of *Roe v. Wade*, which has affected birthing people across North Carolina and the nation (Center For Reproductive Rights, 2023). While some policies exist to protect women in North Carolina,

they are often inadequate, leaving the responsibility to local governments to address gender equity issues. In 2018, the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) was passed by the Durham City Council, which is a great example of how local change can be implemented (*Durham Adopts Resolution to Protect Women against Discrimination*, n.d.). Many organizations are working to advocate for women’s rights in North Carolina, such as the ACLU of North Carolina, the Institute for Women’s Policy Research, and many more. Representation of women in politics, as well as policies that protect women, can work together to better address gender inequities in Greensboro and Guilford County.

Demographic Report

Sex

Population by Sex (Greensboro, NC)

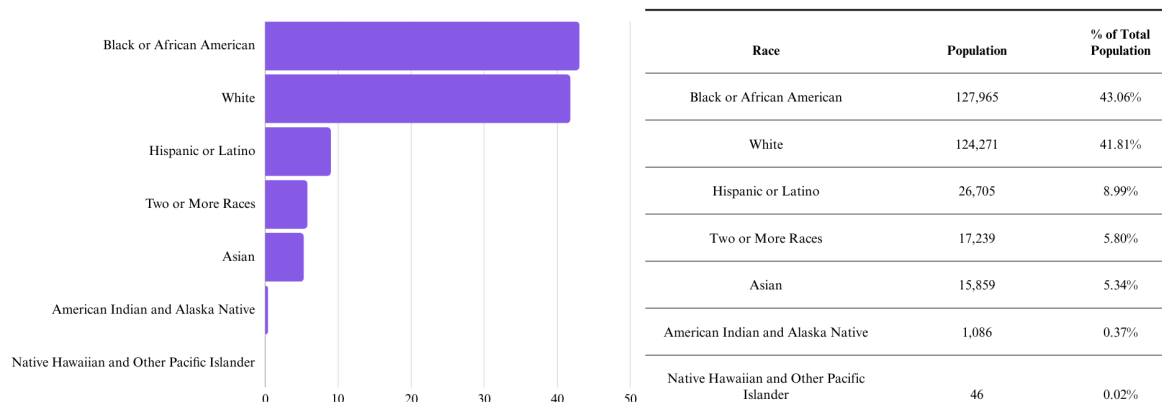


Source: U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey (ACS) 2018 - 2022 5-Year Estimates.

In 2022, Greensboro, NC, had a population of 297,202 residents (*ACS 2022 5-Year Estimates*, 2024). Between 2021 and 2022 the population of Greensboro had a 0.582% increase, growing from 295,483 to 297,202 (*ACS 2021 5-Year Estimates*, 2023; *ACS 2022 5-Year Estimates*, 2024). The city’s population shows more females than males in Greensboro, with 53.7% female residents versus 46.3% identifying as male, compared to 50.4% females and 49.6% in the United States (*ACS 2022 5-Year Estimates*, 2024).

Race & Ethnicity

Population by Race & Ethnicity (Greensboro, NC)

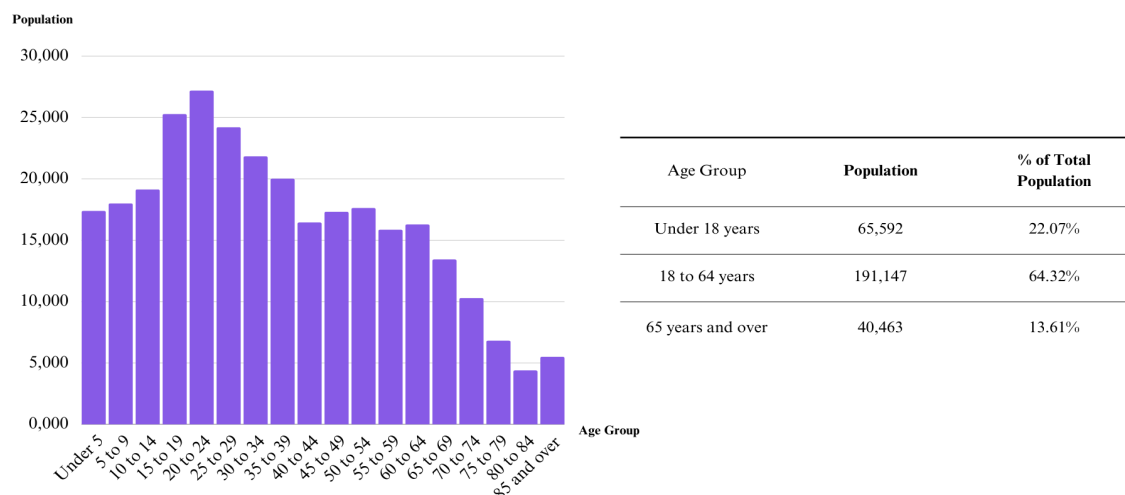


Source: U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey (ACS) 2018 - 2022 5-Year Estimates

Greensboro's population is increasingly diverse, with Black or African American residents forming the largest racial group at 43.06%. White residents account for 41.81% of the population, followed by Hispanic residents at 9.0% (*ACS 2022 5-Year Estimates*, 2024). Other racial groups include Asian (5.34%), multiracial (5.80%), American Indian and Alaska Native (0.37%), Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander (0.02%), and individuals identifying as some other race (3.61%) (*ACS 2022 5-Year Estimates*, 2024). This demographic distribution highlights the city's diversity.

Age

Population by Age (Greensboro, NC)



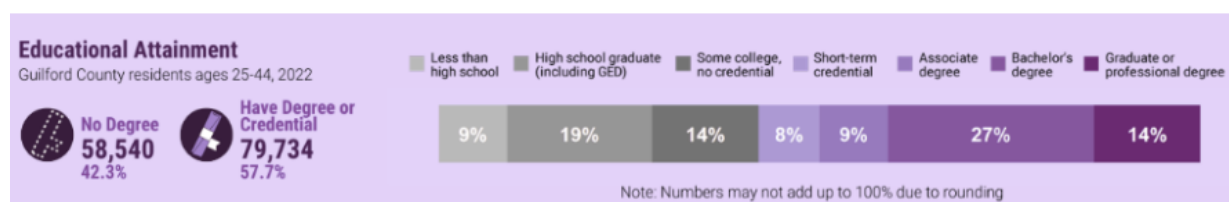
Source: U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey (ACS) 2018 - 2022 5-Year Estimates

Greensboro, NC, has a median age of 34.0 (*ACS 2022 5-Year Estimates*, 2024). The largest age group in the city as of 2022 is 20 to 24, representing 9.16% of the total population (*ACS 2022 5-Year Estimates*, 2024). The smallest age group is 80 to 84, comprising only 1.48% of total residents (*ACS 2022 5-Year Estimates*, 2024).

LGBTQ+ Inclusivity

Greensboro has demonstrated its commitment to inclusivity and equity, receiving a perfect score of 100 points in the Human Rights Campaign's 2023 Municipal Equality Index (MEI) (Municipal Equality Index Scorecard, 2024). This marks the third consecutive year the city has achieved this ranking, which evaluates municipal laws, policies, and services based on the inclusivity of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer (LGBTQ+) residents (Municipal Equality Index Scorecard, 2024). Among the categories where Greensboro excelled were non-discrimination laws, municipal services, law enforcement, municipality as an employer, and leadership on LGBTQ+ equality (Municipal Equality Index Scorecard, 2024).

Education



In 2022, educational attainment among Guilford County residents aged 25-44 showed that 57.7% of the population held a degree or credential, while 42.3% did not (Guilford County Attainment Profile, 2024). A breakdown revealed that 9% had less than a high school diploma, 19% were high school graduates (including GED), and 14% had some college experience without a credential (Guilford County Attainment Profile, 2024). Furthermore, 8% held a short-term credential, 9% had an associate degree, 27% earned a bachelor's degree, and 14% achieved a graduate or professional degree (Guilford County Attainment Profile, 2024). This data highlights both the diversity in educational backgrounds and opportunities for advancing educational attainment in the community.

Disability

Disability Status, Civilian Noninstitutionalized Population, 2013-2017 (Piedmont Health Counts, 2019)

Residence	Total		Under 18		18-64		65+	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
North Carolina	1,344,677	13.7	100,939	4.4	704,954	11.6	538,7864	36.3
Durham	30,452	10.3	2,190	3.4	16,967	8.6	11,295	33.6
Forsyth	38,317	10.5	2,573	2.0	19,131	8.5	12,613	31.1
Guilford	55,399	11.0	4,002	3.4	28,703	8.8	23,694	33.3
Mecklenburg	89,143	8.7	6,825	2.7	49,035	7.3	33,283	31.7
Wake	85,684	8.4	8,965	3.6	44,021	6.7	32,698	31.1

Guilford County has the highest percentage (11%) of the civilian non-institutionalized population with disability status among peer counties such as Durham, Forsyth, Mecklenburg, and Wake. However, this figure still falls below the overall state average for North Carolina at 13.7%. While there is not a definitive association between the availability of health services and higher disability rates, the distribution of healthcare resources could play a role in how disabilities are diagnosed and managed in different areas (Piedmont Health Counts, 2019).

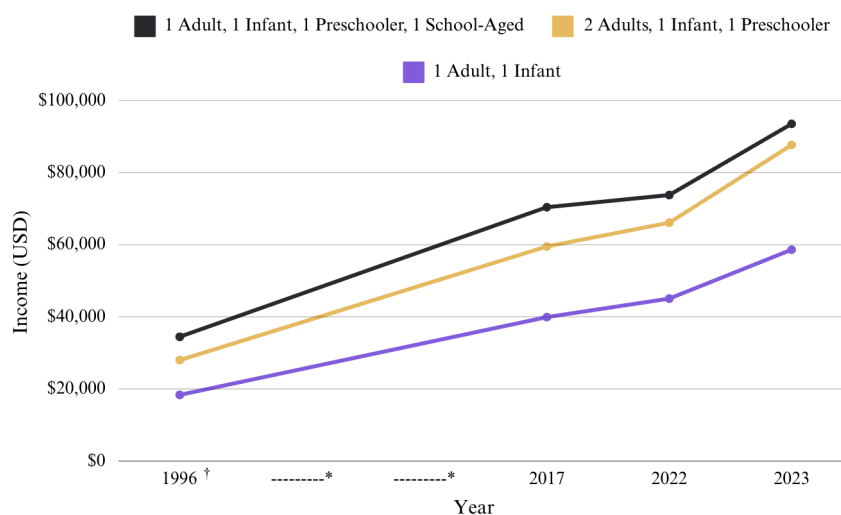
Economic dis

Self-Sufficiency Standard

The Self-Sufficiency Standard, defined as the income required to meet the basic needs of residents in a given area, has increased for various family types in Guilford County between 1996 and 2023 (Brooks & Pearce, 2000; Pearce, 2017, 2020; 2023 *North Carolina Dataset*, 2023). For a family unit consisting of 1 adult, 1 infant, 1 preschooler, and 1 school-aged child, the income required to meet the basic family needs increased from \$34,466 USD in 1996 to

\$93,520 USD in 2023 (Brooks & Pearce, 2000; Pearce, 2017, 2020; *2023 North Carolina Dataset*, 2023).

Self-Sufficiency Standard for Various Family Types in Guilford County, NC, 1996-2023



Source: Self-Sufficiency Standard at the Center for Women's Welfare, University of Washington

*Self-Sufficiency Standard was not calculated between 1996 and 2017 for Guilford County, NC.

†In 1996, the North Carolina Self-Sufficiency Standard was calculated by metropolitan area, as opposed to by county. The 1996 Self-Sufficiency Standard corresponds to the Greensboro-High Point, NC U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development Metropolitan Fair Market Rent (FMR) Area.

The five largest industries by labor force participation for women in Guilford County are: 1) Health Care & Social Assistance, 2) Educational Services, 3) Retail Trade, 4) Accommodation & Food Services, and 5) Manufacturing (*ACS 2022 5-Year Estimates*, 2024). In all five industries, the median earnings for men were higher than for women (*ACS 2022 5-Year Estimates*, 2024).

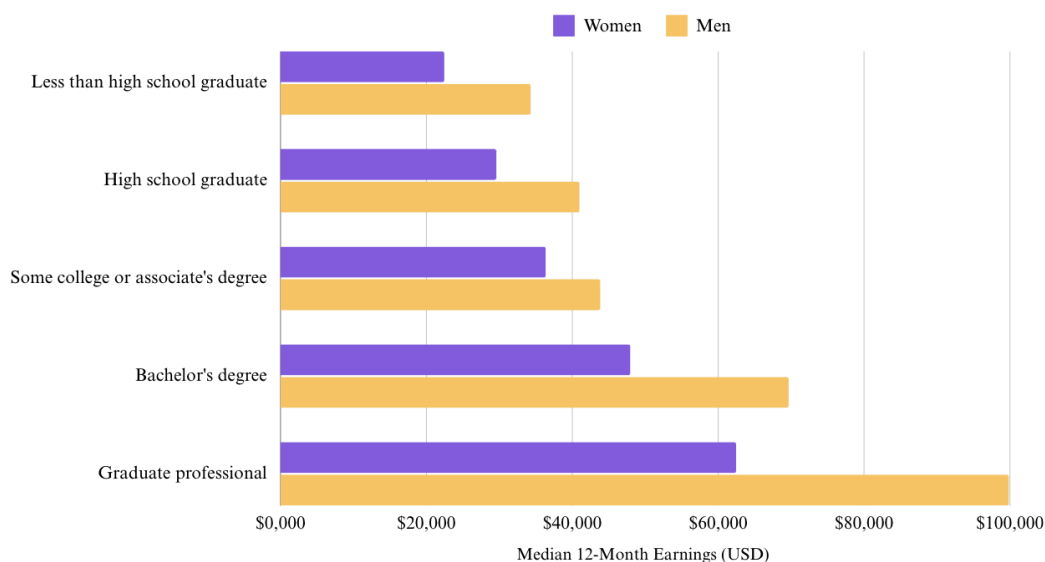
Median Earnings of the Five Largest Industries by Labor Force Participation in Guilford County, NC, 2022

Industry	Number of Workers			Median Earnings	
	Women	Men	Total	Women	Men
Health Care & Social Assistance	30,303	7,669	37,972	\$39,484	\$54,169
Educational Services	18,644	7,957	26,601	\$41,092	\$49,614
Retail Trade	14,621	15,841	30,462	\$20,490	\$33,267
Accommodation & Food Services	10,096	9,119	19,215	\$13,965	\$17,761
Manufacturing	10,042	23,342	33,384	\$41,033	\$58,292

Source: U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey (ACS) 2023 5-Year Estimates

Additionally, across all educational attainment levels for residents in Guilford County, aged 25 years or older in 2023, men had a higher median earning than women (*2023 American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates*, 2025).

Median Earnings by Educational Attainment and Gender Among Residents Age 25 Years or Older in Guilford County, NC, 2023



Housing

Guilford County Data

Housing Metric

Median property value	\$215,700
Monthly Fair Market Rent	\$1,170
Homeownership rate	59.5%
Average commute time	22 minutes
Cost-burdened Household	32% (65,211 households)
Sheltered and Unsheltered (Point-in-time count)	665

Note: The median property value, homeownership rate, and average commute time figures are from (Data USA, 2022). The Fair Market Rent data is from *Guilford County, NC 2025 Fair Market Rents* (USHousingData, n.d.). The average income and cost-burdened household data is from North Carolina Housing Coalition (North Carolina Housing Coalition, n.d.). Sheltered and Unsheltered data is from Partners Ending Homelessness (Partners Ending Homelessness, 2024)

City of Greensboro Data

Greensboro Housing data is less explicitly listed compared to Guilford County data. However, some reports determine current housing status, such as availability of public housing and percent of cost-burdened households. The City of Greensboro acknowledges that historic unfair housing practices, such as segregation and redlining, contribute to continued racial disparities and patterns of poverty that are present in Greensboro (City of Greensboro, 2019). In 2017, 36.4% of Greensboro households were cost-burdened, which is defined as, “gross housing costs that exceed 50% of gross household income” (*Housing GSO*, n.d.). This number is generally even higher in rented households, with 48% experiencing cost-burden in 2017. (*Housing GSO*, n.d.). The Greensboro Housing Authority is the main provider of affordable housing through their public housing and housing voucher programs (*Greensboro Housing Authority*, n.d.) Their website currently lists 21 public housing options, however, five strict eligibility requirements must be met in order to obtain a residence through one of these programs, creating further barriers to safe and affordable housing for those most at risk (*Greensboro Housing Authority*, n.d.). In 2020, the implementation of the 10-Year Affordable Housing Plan began which aims to address some of these system issues and was approved in 2020 with a goal to accomplish these tasks by 2030 (*Housing GSO*, n.d.). The main goals of this plan are to increase affordable rental homes, neighborhood reinvestment, access to homeownership and supportive housing, such as short-term rentals and rental assistance (*Housing GSO*, n.d.).

Urban Sprawl

Urban sprawl is defined as, “the construction of low-density urban landscapes, with commercial buildings surrounded by parking lots located on large parcels,” which limits the walkability and overall accessibility of a city (Sultana, 2006). Urban sprawl has been a large issue in cities like Greensboro and can contribute to the negative effects of the built environment, such as a lack of safe, accessible green spaces (Muschick, 2001). Urban sprawl encourages the use of cars to commute everywhere, such as driving to school or work, and make such things common practice, especially with a growing population (Resnik, 2010). The characteristics of urban sprawl have many negative impacts such as increased air pollution, less walkability, reduced water quality, and detrimental environmental impacts (Resnik, 2010). While there are some conflicting opinions to this idea, one solution to slow the progress of urban sprawl is to increase green spaces and mixed-use developments to reduce negative impacts of sprawl and improve the wellness of the public good (Resnik, 2010).

Interview Analysis

Historical and Existing Supports, Resources, and Services

The resource landscape in Greensboro and Guilford County offers a wide range of services and programs that support the health, safety, and success of women. Interview participants shared valuable insights about existing support systems, drawing on their own active roles in providing and coordinating support for women. All participants identified additional organizations and resources that support women, both within and outside of their specific sector. Guilford County offers a wealth of social services, including the [Family Justice Center](#), [Every Baby Guilford](#), the [Women's Resource Center](#), the [YWCA](#), the [Forge Makerspace](#), [Guilford Works](#), and the [Family Success Center](#).

Figure 1. Logos of some of the community organizations, key resources, and support systems referenced by interview participants.



Community organizations and their staff have dedicated years to improving community resources in Greensboro and Guilford County. Community leaders understand the needs not being met and are motivated to serve their fellow community members, fill gaps in services and pay forward the support they have experienced. However, achieving gender equity will also require broad policy changes, societal transformation, and sustained support.

“I’m so passionate about ensuring that we are able to have equitable access because that’s really the key. People can make informed decisions for themselves when you empower them and give them options.”

Community Leader
Employment Sector

Despite the extensive number of services available to women, and the ongoing efforts of community leaders, gaps still remain. Limited operating hours, insufficient staffing, and funding challenges create and perpetuate these gaps. Participants emphasized the need to expand mental health services, affordable childcare, and temporary housing shelters in Guilford County. Agencies struggle to meet community demand, and the complex dynamics between resource capacity, public interest, and community diversity exacerbates this challenge. Current services fail to meet the diverse needs of the community, and a lack of public support further limits the capacity to expand services. Despite these obstacles, some organizations have adapted their services, within their current capacity, to meet some of the evolving needs of Greensboro and Guilford County residents. Organizations that have been successful encourage other community leaders to do the same.

“I think if you're a good leader, you're always evolving. You never stand still. You have to constantly be ever evolving... We need to do more of that.”

Community Leader
Government Sector

While these adaptations reflect a response to challenges in the community, they also emphasize the need for support beyond individual organizations. Local organizations can assist with individual challenges; however, fully addressing the resource deficits and gaps in services will require support that exceeds organizations' current capacity.

Systemic and Individual Barriers to Resources

Barriers to resources exist at both the individual and systemic levels, blocking direct access to opportunities, services, and community support. Women in Guilford County face a range of barriers that affect their daily lives and contribute to experiences of gender inequity. Education level, income, lack of transportation, household responsibilities, and parental/household stress can limit a woman's access to resources in Greensboro. These barriers compound and reinforce gender disparities. For instance, stress and lack of safety at home can impede employment and financial stability, leading to further adverse consequences.

“It blows my mind that there's a waiting list for childcare. If I have to go to work, I'll get a job. Now, if I'm on a waiting list for one year, I've exhausted my resources trying to pay child care, and I've lost my job. So by the time I'm next in line, I no longer have a job, so I don't qualify. And it's a vicious cycle.”

Community Leader
Employment Sector

Multi-level, cyclical barriers in Guilford County require comprehensive solutions. Addressing barriers individually will not be sufficient to disrupt the cycles that undermine the social and physical well-being of women.

Though experienced individually, these barriers stem from systemic issues within the community. Interview participants identified several social, historical, and institutional practices that act as barriers for women in Guilford County. Prominent challenges include the cost and availability of childcare, difficulties with public transportation, and the presence of cyclical poverty. Participants connected these barriers to the systems that provide these services, such as income qualifications for social services and waiting lists for subsidized child care. Individual barriers are magnified by structural limitations within the services meant to address them. Though women may encounter these barriers differently, ignoring their root causes hinders effective solutions.

Additionally, six of the ten interview participants highlighted a widespread difficulty in knowing what services exist, where to find them, and how to access and use them. Lack of awareness of available social support is a significant barrier to women. In Greensboro, women's familiarity with local services varies.

“[W]hen [women] don’t follow through in the way that we expect, we criticize them for not following through, not doing what they should have done or [that] they don’t care. [W]e’ve not created a pathway where they can be successful and then we blame them for their lack of success.”

Community Leader
Government Sector

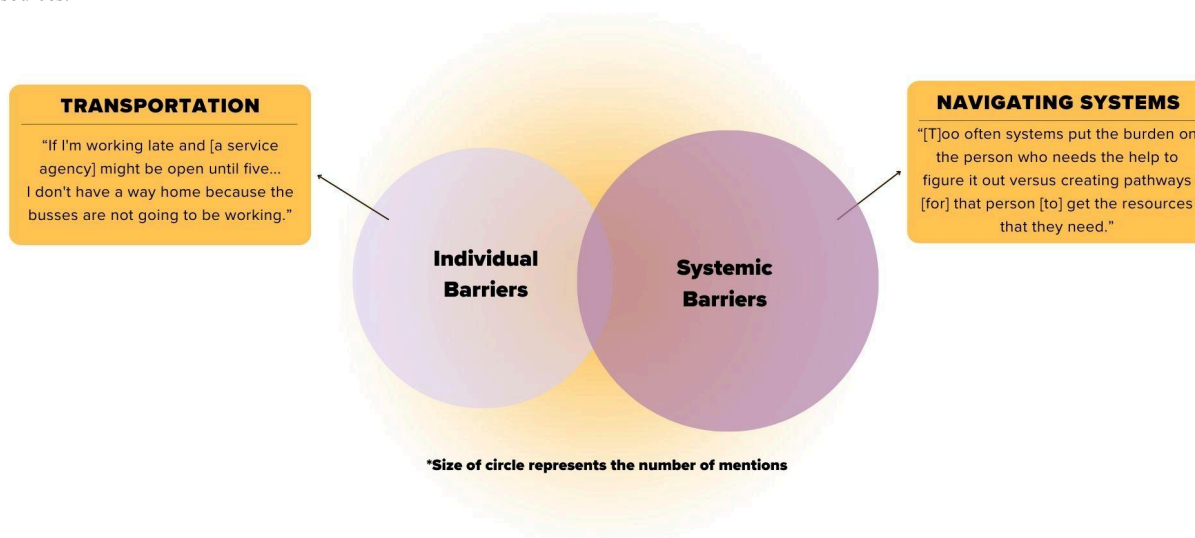
Additional barriers, such as racism, stigma, and mistreatment exacerbate challenges in accessing both information and the services themselves. Women often navigate complex social service systems alone, bearing the responsibility for their own advocacy. Mistreatment and devaluation while trying to access services also impedes access to support. When visiting social service agencies, self advocacy can be difficult if faced with stigma and judgement, especially when in a vulnerable state. Racism further challenges self-advocacy and exacerbates gender disparities.

“We’re not always listened to... [W]omen with darkened skin hues tend to be less listened to than others in our society.”

Community Leader
Nonprofit Sector

These intersecting barriers impact women in Guilford County, affecting both their daily lives and broader societal experiences. Addressing these challenges requires systemic change.

Figure 2. This figure portrays the intersection between individual and systemic barriers that reinforce gender inequality and limited access to resources.



Gaps in Gender Equity

Interview participants shared insights into the barriers women face, which both reflect and contribute to broader gender disparities in the community. Interviewees highlighted three key areas: gaps in self-efficacy (defined as a person’s belief in their capabilities to achieve a goal or complete a task), compensation, and opportunities, demonstrating how gender disparities shape the lived experiences of women in Greensboro. Challenges in emotional well-being, confidence, self-esteem, and self-trust undermine women's self-efficacy. Institutional and familial pressures, as well as larger societal and structural contributors, exacerbate individual struggles. Participants noted that gender norms, relationship dynamics, and financial stress diminish women's confidence, limiting their access to resources and self-advocacy.

Gender-based disparities in pay and job benefits also persist. Systemic barriers block women from earning competitive wages and equitable compensation. For instance, participants noted that sectors that predominantly employ men are often sectors with higher pay. Some career pathways are more constrained for women compared to men, requiring women to make significant personal and professional changes.

“[W]omen are going into nontraditional career fields... truck drivers, traditionally it's a male-dominated field. [They] are making the decision to leave their children at home with someone they trust while they go over the road, because the income increase is exponential.”

Community Leader
Employment Sector

Ultimately, opportunity and compensation gaps are not individual struggles, but products of the social and economic systems that disadvantage women, including the job market. Closing these gender equity gaps in Greensboro requires transforming the structures that create and sustain these disparities.

Perceived Impacts to Addressing Gender Disparities

Women face many barriers to resources, but several facilitators also promote access and opportunities to improve gender equity. These facilitators advance gender equity and improve women's status in Greensboro and Guilford County. For example, safe community spaces, consistent volunteer teams, advocacy organizations, and increased self-efficacy encourage women to seek out resources and opportunities they deserve. Facilitators such as safe community spaces allow women the opportunity to achieve their personal and career goals in a supportive environment.

"I'm a part of a true community. I'm needed. I'm wanted. I'm accepted... When you give someone a foundation within a certain area, it gives them agency, and it gives them the ability to tackle issues in other areas."

Community Leader
Employment Sector

These facilitators to gender equity allow women in the community to survive, and even thrive, through adversity when they are supported and valued. Safe spaces and a positive community environment facilitate change and progress that address current gender disparities.

Although these facilitators exist, far more challenges continue to limit progress in gender equity. Eight interviewees discussed societal challenges that are barriers to progress such as social beliefs about women. Specifically, 4 participants mentioned women not being believed or listened to. The devaluation of women and issues that primarily impact women limit the social support needed to make change in these spaces. Without community support, issues such as violence against women are not perceived as collective issues and therefore, remain unaddressed.

"Family violence crimes [are] not considered a threat to public safety. So even if it is just a threat to one person... that's not threatening enough."

Community Leader
Nonprofit Sector

Ignoring violence against women reflects a broader pattern of undervaluing women's existence, labor, and contributions across all aspects of society. The harmful social belief that male-dominated fields deserve higher compensation worsens gender disparities by undervaluing work traditionally done by women. Additionally, misogyny undermines women's self-efficacy, limiting confidence in their abilities and achievements. People often disregard issues that do not directly affect them, but greater community knowledge and support can accelerate gender equity progress.

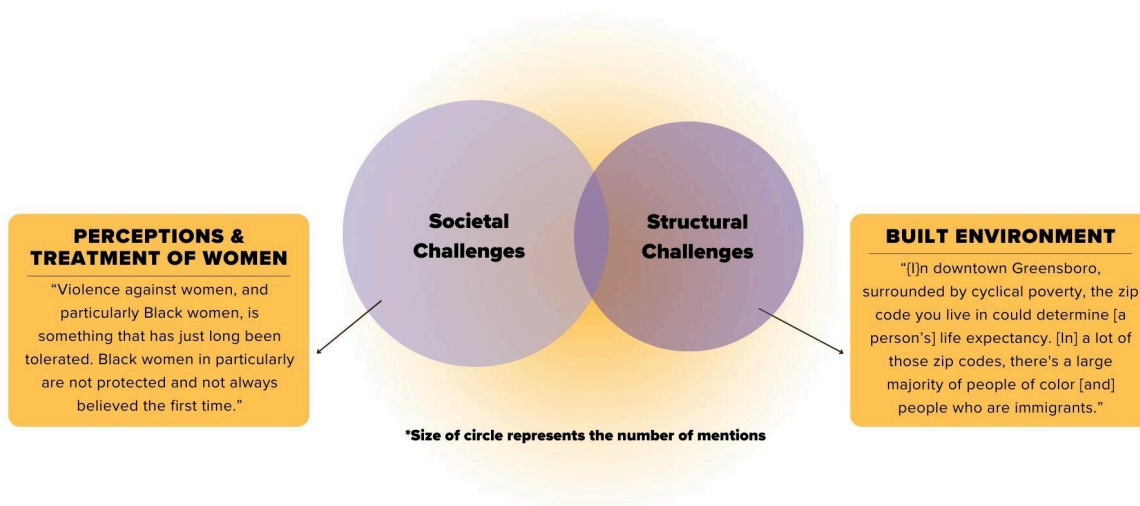
In addition to societal challenges, other structural challenges also contribute to gender disparities. Political, economic, and institutional systems create and perpetuate gender inequity. Four interview participants highlighted that systems often prioritize companies or organizations needs over community needs. This pattern contributes to structural inequities that disproportionately affect individuals with intersectional identities.

“Some large healthcare companies are just throwing a few dollars at the problem. [They] think that they can— one mobile clinic at a time—buy their way out of how they systemically create a health care crisis for minority and low income folks.”

Community Leader
Employment Sector

Addressing the individual level barriers while ignoring systemic issues that create and perpetuate these problems fails to create long-term change. Upstream changes in societal and structural systems are necessary to advance gender equity in the community.

Figure 3. This figure portrays the intersection between societal and structural challenges that limit progress towards gender equity.



Policy Impact

State and local policies significantly shape the experiences of women in Greensboro and Guilford County. Half of the participants identified several local policies that are harmful to the populations their organizations support. These policies reinforce systemic barriers and disproportionately impact vulnerable populations.

“I see women who are unhoused who wander around all day. They have nowhere to go, and they can’t just stop. They’re tired, but they have to keep moving because of the policies and ordinances that have been put in place.”

Community Leader
Employment Sector

Because persistent community needs remain unmet, interview participants emphasized the urgent need for policy changes to support their work. Participants, specifically from the nonprofit sector, were dissatisfied with current policies addressing violence against women.

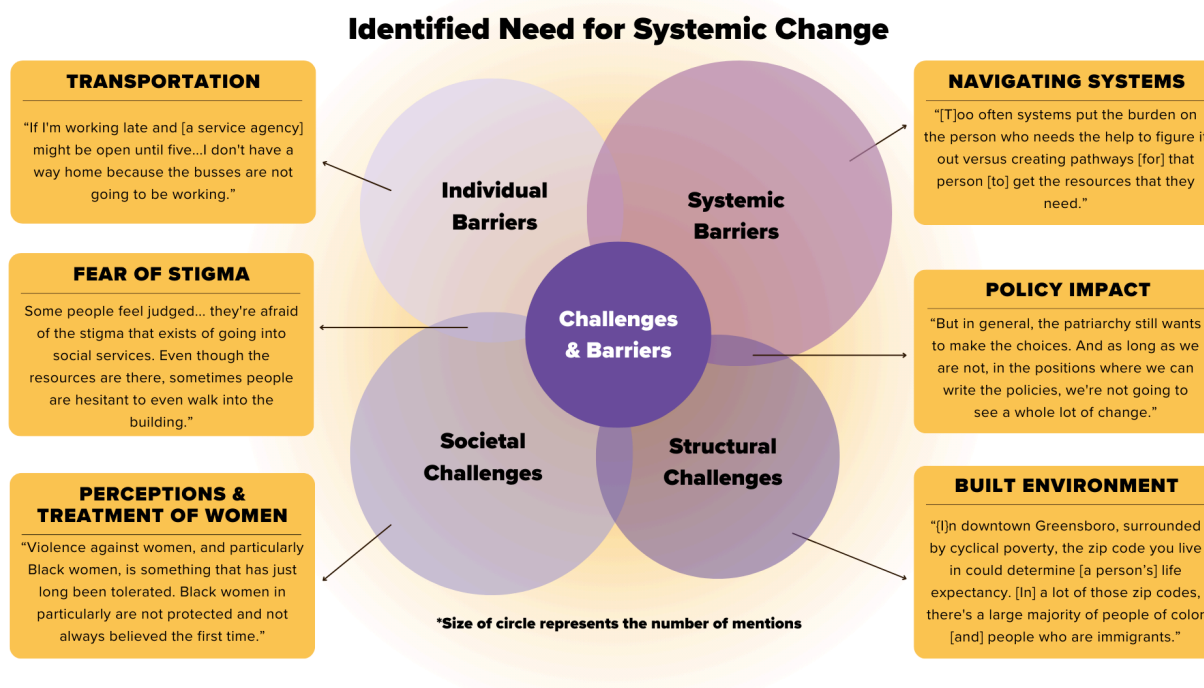
“Safety is a basic need that doesn't often get addressed from a policy or crime perspective until way too late. And then we're shocked that this person would grow up to be a crime impactor. Well, they've been impacted by crime their whole life.”

Community Leader
Government Sector

Interviewees expressed a critical need for policy changes that address systemic barriers and structural challenges upstream, ensuring long-term, sustainable impacts for future generations.

Harmful policies significantly impact the status of women in Greensboro and Guilford County. To create policies that reflect the needs of women, it is necessary to have equal political representation. Encouraging and promoting political representation that reflects the community will advance gender equity in employment and shape policies that better meet community needs. Community advocates understand the pressing needs of women in Greensboro and Guilford County. Improving political representation would amplify community voices and inform more responsive policies.

Figure 4. Key themes emphasizing the need for systemic change identified by interview participants with supporting quotes.



Identified Need for Systemic Change

Systemic change is essential to improving the status of women in Greensboro and Guilford County. Although support and facilitators to gender equity exist, persistent gaps and unmet needs remain, as recognized by all interviewees.

"For the strides that have been made to empower women, there are things, too, that also prevent people from thriving."

Community Leader
Employment Sector

Despite some progress, significant challenges still hinder full gender equity. Local organizations play an essential role in supporting women in Greensboro and Guilford County, but most operate at full capacity, unable to meet the full scope of demand. Participants noted that their organizations fill gaps in services and contribute to gender equity work. However, these efforts alone are not enough. Progress towards gender equity in Greensboro and Guilford County requires change that addresses root causes of disparities and creates long-term solutions. Moving forward requires the continued work of local organizations and community leaders, and a dedicated effort to transform systems that perpetuate inequity. Systemic change is necessary to ensure all women in Greensboro and Guilford County have the opportunity and support to thrive.

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Appendix A: Interview Guide

Research Questions

- 1) What are the differences in roles, responsibilities, opportunities, and needs between men and women in Greensboro? (RQ1)
- 2) What structural barriers impact women's access to economic, health, and social opportunities in Greensboro? (RQ2)
- 3) How have organizations and the local governance of Greensboro historically supported women in the community? (RQ3)
- 4) What are the perceived challenges, successes, and gaps in gender equity in Greensboro, and how do these perceptions differ throughout the population? (RQ4)
- 5) How could CEDAW implementation, including economic and policy changes strengthen opportunities and resources for women in Greensboro? (RQ5)

Introduction Script

Hello, thank you for making the time to meet with us today. My name is [first capstone team member] and this is my colleague [second capstone team member]. Our collaborative work with WomenNC aims to partner in Greensboro with people/groups/organizations, such as yourself, to explore the role of local governance in fostering gender equity. To do so, we are conducting interviews to better understand the experiences of women [with certain job, characteristics, politically, etc.] in Greensboro. We would like your opinion on some issues because we value your opinions and experience as [role/sector/organization].

[second capstone member] will be taking notes and we are also recording the discussion to ensure we accurately capture your insight. While we would like to include your thoughts and perspectives in our reports, your name or identified information will not be attached to any of the information you share today.

Interview Questions

Background (What do you do?)

1. Please share a little about your background and training.
2. What is your current role in your organization?
 - a. *Probe:* Title, tenure in role, roles/responsibilities
 - b. *Follow-up:* What does a workday look like for you?
3. What is the mission of your organization?

Main Questions

1. In your opinion, what are the primary barriers that women face when accessing healthcare services in Greensboro?
 - a. *Probe:* How do factors like income, race, immigration status, or disability influence this access?

2. How do social support services impact the health and well-being of women in Greensboro such as food security, housing assistance, etc.?
 - a. *Probe:* How accessible are these services to women from different backgrounds?
 - b. *Probe:* What gaps exist in these services that particularly affect single mothers or elderly women?
 - c. *Probe:* How do women perceive the quality and responsiveness of social support programs?
3. What are the prevalent mental health challenges among women in Greensboro?
 - a. *Probe:* What are some barriers that exist in accessing mental health services?
 - b. *Probe:* How accessible are mental health services for low-income women or mothers?
4. How do you think local policies have affected women in Greensboro and Guilford County?
 - a. *Follow-up:* What are some policies you want to see implemented at the local level?
5. From your perspective, what are the key factors contributing to violence against women in Greensboro?
 - a. *Probe:* Where do you think interventions should focus to reduce this issue?
6. How has your organization worked to address violence against women in Greensboro?
 - a. *Probe:* Are additional efforts or resources needed to strengthen this response?
7. How would you describe the representation of women within your organization?
 - a. *Follow-up:* How does your organization recruit women?
8. How are gender and race proportionately represented within the staff of your organization?
 - a. *Follow-up:* Are there any areas where women are over- or under-represented?

Conclusion

1. Are there any other interested parties you believe would have helpful insight on this topic?
2. Is there anything that you would like to add, or feel that we may have missed?

Appendix B: Interview Analysis Codebook

Code	Description
GAPS IN GENDER EQUITY	Differences in living experiences within the community on the basis of gender
Self-Efficacy Gap	Difference in the level of confidence, self-esteem, self trust, stress or introspective emotional wellbeing on the basis of gender
Skills/Opportunity Gap	Difference in the skills, knowledge, or opportunities on the basis of gender
Compensation Gap	Differences in compensation, including payment or job benefits, on the basis of gender
BARRIERS FOR WOMEN	Barriers that limit women's access to necessary supports and resources and contribute to inequity
Individual Level Barriers	Barriers that affect or impact individuals in their daily life and contribute to experiences of gender inequity
Systemic Barriers	Social, historical, and cultural structures and practices that limit women's (as a collective) direct/immediate access to opportunities, services, and resources
HISTORICAL & EXISTING SUPPORTS	Status of current resources, or lack thereof, in Greensboro/Guilford County that exist for the purpose of serving women or advancing gender equity
Current Deficits or Need for Adaptation	Areas where there is a lack of support through current community organizations and agencies or gaps where community members cannot receive adequate resources
Existing Supports	Participant identifies supports (service availability, structure of supports, or specific named support) currently available to women in Guilford County
Example of Adapted Resources	Speaks to the need for resources to be adapted, specific to adaptations that have happened and what need was met
PERCEIVED IMPACTS TO ADDRESSING GENDER DISPARITIES	Present factors that affect advancing whole system gender equity currently in Greensboro, beyond individual factors
Facilitators	Factors that may promote efforts to advance gender equity for women in Greensboro
Societal Challenges	Challenges within social norms, attitudes, and community perspectives that prevent change and advancing social support
Other Structural Challenges	Challenges embedded in political, economic or institutional frameworks that create and perpetuate gender inequity *excluding societal challenges*
POLICY IMPACT	The role of local/state governmental policy in influencing the

	experience of women in Greensboro/Guilford County
Political representation	Comments about political representation and its impacts
Need for policy change	Need for change in current policy to support community members in areas that are currently not supported
Current Policies	Identification of current policies that are structured to contribute to, ignore, or address gender equity issues
IDENTIFIED NEED FOR SYSTEMIC CHANGE	Acknowledgment of a need to implement change at a higher social or systemic level. The idea that in order to advance gender equity, changes need to happen that are beyond the capacity of organizations/supports in Greensboro.
MOTIVATION FOR WORK	Interviewee identifies a reason or motivation for why they began their work with relation to women or gender.