

Town of Erie Equity Analysis

Purpose

This internal document provides a historical and cultural overview of the Town of Erie (Town or Erie), community demographics, and socioeconomic and environmental vulnerabilities. These findings will help the project team refine the stakeholder engagement approach and inform strategy development to ensure the final Sustainability Action Plan (SAP) update is culturally relevant, historically informed, and mitigates potential inequitable outcomes.

Key Findings

- Strategy development must consider the unique discussion around extractive industries like oil and gas, and health and environmental risk.
- Strategy development and stakeholder engagement must consider that Erie is part of two counties, each with different levels of environmental protection.
- Previous engagement and educational attainment levels suggest a population engaged in sustainability. Engagement tactics like surveys and town halls may be successful.
- Strategy development and stakeholder engagement should be mindful that while Erie's census data suggests potential homogeneity, frequently, this data can render communities nearly invisible. Engagement tactics like leveraging cultural brokers, community-based organizations, and meetings-in-a-box may be successful in illuminating sustainability-related opportunities within and for hard-to-reach communities.

Introduction

Erie is situated in the Colorado Front Range and lies within both Boulder and Weld Counties. The Town boasts prairie lands, mountain views, recreation opportunities, and a unique, small-town charm. According to the U.S. Census, the median age of Erie

residents is 37.6, the racial make-up of Erie is majority White, and the median income is \$163,644 (the median income in Colorado is \$92,291).¹

Erie is growing rapidly. Housing in Erie is considered expensive by national standards, and has been for decades. Housing costs are expected to keep rising.² The majority of the housing stock was built recently, resulting in a lack of rental units and limited housing choices, especially for those who plan to buy and have an annual household income under \$150,000.³ As of 2020, a quarter of the households in Erie were estimated to pay 30% or more of their income for housing costs.⁴

Erie is located in a non-attainment area, which means it does not meet federal air quality standards.⁵ As identified by socioeconomic and environmental vulnerability indices (see Community Data Analysis section below), the Town faces significant environmental and health risks, including exposure to air toxics, fine particle pollution, proximity to oil and gas operations, floodplains, and high risk of ozone, wildfires, and drought. Although most sites are located outside of Erie's borders, oil and gas have been prevalent in and around Erie for decades. This means that Erie residents are exposed to the environmental and health implications that come from methane concentrations, well leaks, air pollution, water contamination, noise pollution, and volatile organic compound (VOC) detection.⁶

Both Boulder and Weld County experience the climate-related stressors of extreme heat and wildfire smoke. Weld County has a higher percentage of highly burdened areas compared to Boulder County and state/national levels when looking at Environmental Justice Index's (EJI) Climate Burden Rank. Although none of these environmental burdens fall directly within Erie's town boundary, they are still important to note as environmental burdens transcend jurisdictional borders. None of the census tracts in Erie are designated as "disproportionately impacted;" which is characterized by EnviroScreen as a community where over 40% of households are low-income

¹ [U.S. Census: Erie, CO](#)

² [Town of Erie Affordable Housing Needs Assessment and Strategy](#)

³ [Town of Erie Affordable Housing Needs Assessment and Strategy](#)

⁴ [Town of Erie Affordable Housing Needs Assessment and Strategy](#)

⁵ [Weld County Air Quality webpage](#)

⁶ [2024 Oil and Gas Activity Map](#)

households, over 40% of the community is people of color, over 50% of households experience housing cost burden, and over 20% of community members experience linguistic isolation. However, with these types of thresholds, that does not mean disparity does not exist. The planning process is tasked with illuminating any gaps in this data that it discovers. Perhaps one area that the discussion of disparity can or should start is with the manufactured home communities that exist within Erie. Manufactured homes can be associated with increased vulnerability to extreme weather events, high energy costs, and predatory lending practices.

This equity analysis underscores the importance of considering the context of Erie's history, demographics, and environmental/health risks when developing Erie's Sustainability Action Plan update to ensure fair and equitable outcomes in the community.

Erie's Roots: Community History and Overview

The Arapaho, Cheyenne, Ute, and Sioux tribes occupied what is now known as the Town of Erie before it was settled in the mid-1800s and named in 1867 after Erie,⁷ Pennsylvania, the former home of early settler Richard Van Valkenburg. The first settlers lived along Coal Creek and found their way as farmers or merchants,⁸ until the discovery of coal in the area in the 1860s, which sparked the arrival of the railroad. Erie became an up-and-coming coal mining hub in the Northern Colorado Coal Field, connecting Erie's resources to the wider region and spurring population growth. By the late 1800s, Erie had grown into a livable community, with multiple churches and businesses, and even its own newspaper.⁹

FARMING AND AGRICULTURE

The Town of Erie is situated in a semi-arid prairie and foothill region that initially attracted homesteaders looking for land to farm and ranch. With insufficient rainfall in this region, early settlers began to adopt irrigation. Starting in 1859, farmers began

⁷ [Native Land Digital](#)

⁸ [Town of Erie History](#)

⁹ [Town of Erie History](#)

building canal networks, which led to the rapid growth of ditch companies that supplied water for agriculture.¹⁰

Weld County, one of the two counties Erie straddles, is one of the top agricultural production counties in Colorado. It started with cattle ranching in the 1860s, and by the 1870s, farming became a big player in Weld County's economy and workforce.

Agriculture has been a consistent economic player in Weld County since World War II,¹¹ boasting 2.5 million acres of agriculture, with 75% dedicated to farming and livestock. Weld County is Colorado's top producer of beef, grain, sugar beets, and dairy; and is often among the top ten counties nationally for agricultural sales, exceeding \$1 billion annually across its over 3,000 farms. Annually, over 875,000 acres are planted, with more than 300,000 acres being irrigated cropland.¹²

EXTRACTIVE INDUSTRIES: MINING, OIL AND GAS

Coal mining was the foundational industry for the Town, and that extractive legacy continues today in the form of oil and gas. The arrival of the Boulder Valley Railroad in 1871 boosted the coal industry in Erie and the surrounding Northern Coalfield and prompted the opening of the first official coal mine in Erie in 1876.¹³ Erie's first commercial coal mine was the Briggs Mine and was the foundation for Erie's most significant industry in the 19th and early 20th century.¹⁴

Erie's mining workers encountered dangerous working conditions, with many facing accidents and fatalities, and low pay. This prompted the creation of worker unions throughout the early 1900s to advocate for better working conditions, but the unions ultimately withdrew without much success.¹⁵

¹⁰ [Erie Historic Preservation Plan](#)

¹¹ [Erie Historic Preservation Plan](#)

¹² [Right to Farm - Agriculture in Weld County](#)

¹³ [Town of Erie History](#)

¹⁴ [Town of Erie History](#)

¹⁵ [Columbine Mine Massacre](#)

The coal mining industry in Erie began to decline after the Great Depression and World War II, with most mines closing by 1960. The Eagle Mine, one of the last operating in the area, closed in 1978, marking the end of Erie's coal mining¹⁶.

As coal mining declined, oil and gas drilling gradually replaced it.¹⁷ Colorado is a top U.S. oil producer, accounting for almost four percent of national output and reserves, with production more than doubling between 2010 and 2023 due to drilling technology.¹⁸ In the words of the Erie Protector, a resident-run website created to keep other residents informed of oil and gas activity in the area, "Erie is on the front lines of the battle between responsible residential development and oil & gas exploration of the Denver-Julesburg basin." Northeastern Colorado's Denver-Julesburg Basin is the main producing area, and Weld County, which is located within the basin, is responsible for 80% of the state's output from the Niobrara Shale, including the Wattenberg field.¹⁹ The Wattenberg oil field was ranked the 4th largest in the nation in 2015 in the U.S. Energy Information Administration's 'Top 100 U.S. Oil and Gas Fields.'²⁰

Erie must negotiate the economic and industrial significance of the Denver-Julesburg Basin and the growing concern of residents around the health and environmental risk due to oil and gas. This negotiation is further complicated by Erie's position straddling two counties. Boulder County enforces a 2,000-foot buffer between wells and homes, while Weld County enforces 500 feet.²¹ Most recently, the Colorado Energy and Carbon Management Commission approved a plan for Civitas Resources, a Colorado oil and gas production company, to drill 26 wells at the Draco site near Erie, despite community concerns and opposition. The drilling site is located near a planned 1,400-home subdivision, a school, and a park. Civitas committed to best practices, air

¹⁶ [Erie Historic Preservation Plan](#)

¹⁷ [Erie Historic Preservation Plan](#)

¹⁸ [U.S. EIA Colorado Profile Analysis](#)

¹⁹ [U.S. EIA Colorado Profile Analysis](#)

²⁰ [Top 100 U.S Oil and Gas Fields](#)

²¹ (<https://www.environmentenergyleader.com/stories/health-concerns-and-public-debate-over-oil-and-gas-development-in-erie-colorado,54392>).

monitoring, and less-polluting equipment, also agreeing to plug old wells and remove tanks.²²

Erie Demographics and Trends

POPULATION GROWTH

The Front Range is projected to continue its population growth trend. Erie's population has grown approximately 9.1% since late 2023, up from the 2022 (6.7%) and 2023 population growth rates (5.8%).²³ By 2040, the state's population is expected to reach 7.8 million, with 83% (6.5 million) living along the Front Range.²⁴

Erie added about 4,980 new homes between 2010 and 2023, averaging roughly 383 units per year, representing an average annual growth rate of 4.2%.²⁵

ECONOMY

Employment opportunities in Erie grew 6.24% from 2022-2023, and as of 2023, there are approximately 17,200 individuals employed in Erie. The largest sectors are Professional, Scientific, & Technical Services (2,747 people), Educational Services (2,281 people), and Manufacturing (2,051 people). The highest paying industries are Mining, Quarrying, & Oil & Gas Extraction (\$191,719), Wholesale Trade (\$160,850), and Utilities (\$141,944).²⁶

DEMOGRAPHIC MAKEUP

The median age in Erie is 37, the median household income is \$160,000, and 80% of the Erie population identifies as white alone, with about 10% of Erie's population identifying as Hispanic or Latino, 37% of which has a household income of less than \$75,000.²⁷

*Table 1. Demographic data from the U.S. Census.*²⁸

²² [Colorado regulators sign off on oil and gas drilling near new Erie housing development](#)

²³ [Town of Erie: Erie Population 2024 Year-End Estimate](#)

²⁴ [Erie Historic Preservation Plan](#)

²⁵ [Economic Market Analysis](#)

²⁶ [Data USA](#)

²⁷ [U.S. Census: Erie, CO](#)

²⁸ [U.S. Census: Erie, CO](#)

Metric	Erie	Colorado
Total population	30,038	5,773,714
Median age	37.6	37.9
Older population (65 years and older)	10%	16.1%
Median household income	\$163,644	\$92,911
Employment rate	73.6%	65.4%
Poverty rate	3%	9.3%
Housing units	Of the 10,332 total housing units, 10,047 are occupied.	2,636,534 ²⁹
Race	80.7% of the Erie population identified as white alone; the second largest group was Hispanic or Latino, comprising 10.2%.	70.7% of the Colorado population identified as white alone; the second largest group was Hispanic or Latino, comprising 21.9%.
Languages (other than English spoken at home)	10.5%	16%

Equity in Erie

One of the key components of the 2019 Sustainability Master Plan is equity. Specifically, providing sustainability resources and services equitably across the community. The Town of Erie also convened a Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) committee task force, which consists of seven community members who work on issues of DEI with support

²⁹ [Colorado Department of Local Affairs](#)

from the Town of Erie.³⁰ This task force should be consulted to review the strategies for the Sustainability Action Plan update to elevate the voices of those who have lived experience in Erie and to help inform the direction and implementation of the plan.

The Town of Erie Comprehensive Plan elevated the principles of “celebrating difference [...] recognizing the power of open dialogue [...] and making informed decisions that create an equitable community.”³¹ The core values listed in the Comprehensive Plan are as follows:

- Erie is resilient and adaptable.
- Erie is tailored to the community’s needs.
- Erie is connected physically and socially.

The Town of Erie has demonstrated commitment to advancing equity in the community through its work on the 2019 Sustainability Master Plan and the Comprehensive Plan. This Sustainability Action Plan update presents an opportunity to advance equity even further as the Town combats the impacts of a changing climate and strives towards a more sustainable future.

Community Data Analysis

Lotus compiled data from recognized socioeconomic and environmental vulnerability indices to further determine community concerns and vulnerabilities in the Town of Erie. The databases include Colorado EnviroScreen, Climate and Economic Justice Screening Tool (CEJST), Environmental Justice Index (EJI), and EJ (Environmental Justice) Screen.

COLORADO ENVIROSCREEN

The Colorado EnviroScreen tool was developed by the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment and provides data at multiple geographic levels to help identify environmental and health burdens across different communities.³² The data is available at the census block group, census tract, and county levels. The tool

³⁰ [Town of Erie Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion Task Force](#)

³¹ [Town of Erie Comprehensive Plan](#)

³² [Colorado EnviroScreen](#)

includes 35 indicators to calculate a score that provides a quantifiable measurement of combined environmental stressors. The tool gathers data from different state and federal sources and uses five categories of data: environmental exposures, environmental effects, climate vulnerability, sensitive populations, and demographics. The tool uses a percentile ranking score to compare data. If Erie gets a 90th percentile score, this means that Erie ranks higher than 90% of other Colorado jurisdictions. Figure 1 shows the different colors based on percentile ranges. Table 2 below outlines each census block in Erie's environmental burdens and its percentile ranking.

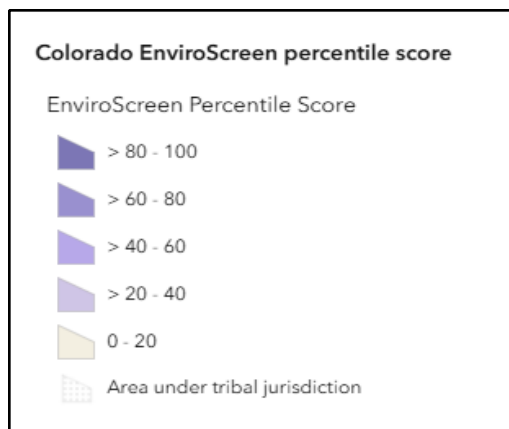


Figure 1. Colorado EnviroScreen percentile score legend.

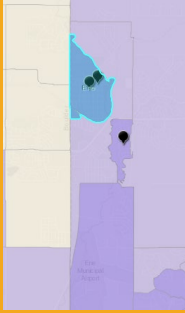
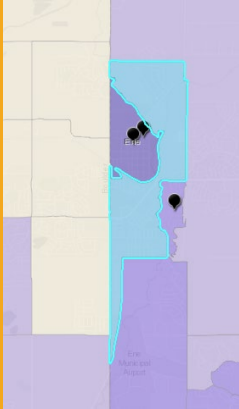
According to this tool, Erie is burdened with several environmental indicators, namely air toxic emissions, fine particle pollution, environmental exposures, and floodplain in certain areas, all of which rank in the 90th percentile or above.

- **Air toxic emissions:** measures of toxic air pollutants contributing to health risks.
- **Fine particle pollution:** measures of fine particulate matter linked to respiratory and cardiovascular problems.
- **Environmental exposures:** includes factors like air pollution, drinking water quality, and noise. Direct exposure to these pollutants can harm human health.
- **Floodplain:** identifies areas at risk for flooding.

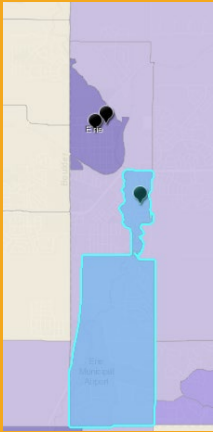
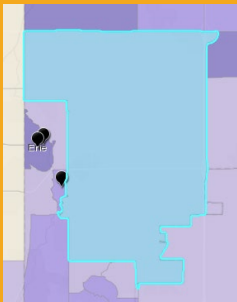
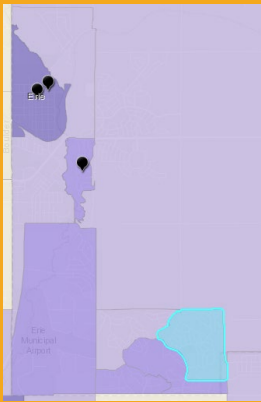
Only results that are in the 80th percentile or above are shown. The results also include a picture in the left column that showcases the area evaluated. The colors help understand how data varies from location to location.

Table 2. Colorado EnviroScreen results for Erie.

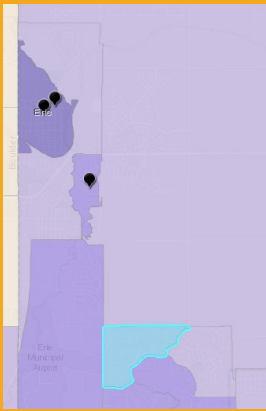
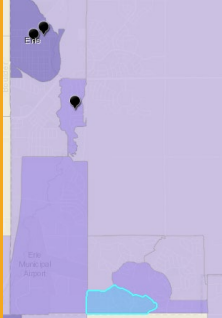
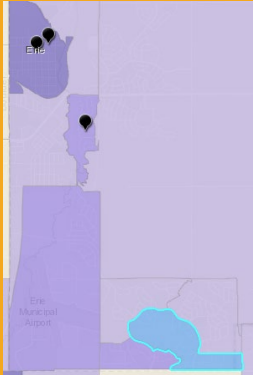
Census Block Group	Indicator	Percentile Ranking Score
081230020071	Environmental Exposures	88th percentile

(Old Town area) 	Pollution and Climate Burden	81st percentile
	Drought	87th percentile
	Air Toxics Emissions	94th percentile
	Fine Particle Pollution	95th percentile
	Proximity to Oil and Gas	85th percentile
	Floodplains	85th percentile
Census Block Group	Indicator	Percentile Ranking Score
081230020072 	Air Toxics Emissions	96th percentile
	Fine Particle Pollution	95th percentile
	Proximity to Oil and Gas	85th percentile
	Drought	87th percentile
	Floodplains	84th percentile
Census Block Group	Indicator	Percentile Ranking Score
081230020073	Environmental Exposures	94th percentile
	Pollution and Climate Burden	84th percentile
	Fine Particle Pollution	95th percentile
	Proximity to Oil and Gas	82nd percentile
	Drought	87th percentile



	Floodplains	98th percentile
Census Block Group	Indicator	Percentile Ranking Score
081230020091 	Air Toxics Emissions	96th percentile
	Fine Particle Pollution	90th percentile
	Proximity to Oil and Gas	90th percentile
	Drought	87th percentile
Census Block Group	Indicator	Percentile Ranking Score
081230020084 	Environmental Exposures	80th percentile
	Air Toxics Emissions	98th percentile
	Fine Particle Pollution	96th percentile
	Drought	87th percentile
Census Block Group	Indicator	Percentile Ranking Score



081230020082 	Pollution and Climate Burden	80th percentile
	Environmental Exposures	92nd percentile
	Air Toxics Emissions	99th percentile
	Fine Particle Pollution	96th percentile
	Proximity to Oil and Gas	82nd percentile
	Drought	87th percentile
Census Block Group	Indicator	Percentile Ranking Score
081230020083 	Air Toxics Emissions	96th percentile
	Fine Particle Pollution	96th percentile
	Drought	87th percentile
Census Block Group	Indicator	Percentile Ranking Score
081230020081 	Pollution and Climate Burden	83rd percentile
	Environmental Exposures	94th percentile
	Air Toxics Emissions	97th percentile
	Fine Particle Pollution	96th percentile
	Drought	87th percentile



DISPROPORTIONATELY IMPACTED COMMUNITIES MAP

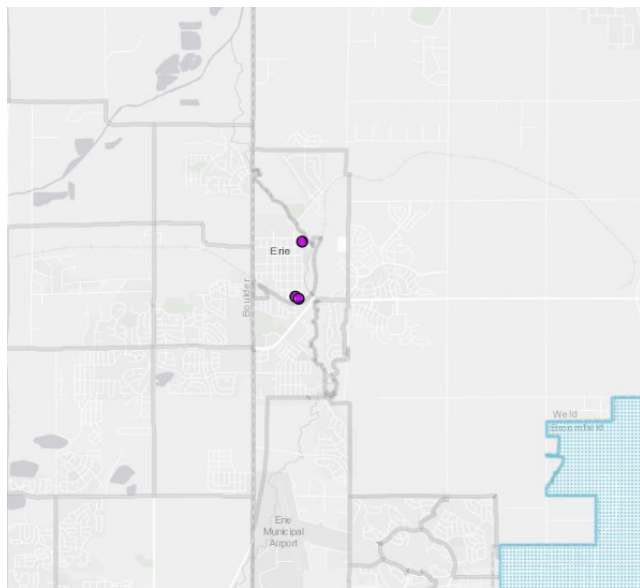


Figure 2. None of the Erie census tracts are disproportionately impacted. The purple circles indicate manufactured home parks.

EnviroScreen's Disproportionately Impacted Community Map examines and identifies areas where low-income households make up over 40% of the population, people of color make up over 40% of the population, housing cost burdened households make up over 50% of the population, and people who are linguistically isolated make up over 20% of the population. It also looks at the overall EnviroScreen percentile score above 80, if an area is within a [Justice 40](#) census tract, and if an area is under tribal jurisdiction. Figure 2 shows that no census tract in Erie is considered

disproportionately impacted. However, the purple dots on the figure show where manufactured home communities are located in Erie. The manufactured home parks identified include Erie Meadows and Erie Mobile Home Park. Identification of manufactured home communities is important when considering equity implications of Erie's Sustainability Action Plan update, as they are generally a large source of unsubsidized affordable housing across the U.S., typically housing low-income and disadvantaged communities.³³ They can also be vulnerable to limited financing opportunities,³⁴ impacts of natural hazards like flooding or extreme heat, and displacement.³⁵ Limited data has been found on Erie's manufactured home parks, and there is an opportunity for further research.

CLIMATE AND ECONOMIC JUSTICE SCREENING TOOL (CEJST)

³³ [Business Insider Article](#)

³⁴ [U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development \(HUD\)](#)

³⁵ [Mobile Home Parks and Disasters: Understanding Risk to the Third Housing Type in the United States \(Free Article\)](#)



The Climate and Economic Justice Screening Tool (CEJST) is a tool created by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) that evaluates a community's social, environmental, and health burdens to identify communities that are considered disadvantaged.³⁶ A community is considered disadvantaged if it meets more than one burden threshold or at least one associated socioeconomic threshold.³⁷ The tool uses percentiles, which show how much burden each tract experiences compared to other tracts nationally. According to the CEJST tool, none of the census tracts in Erie are identified as disadvantaged.

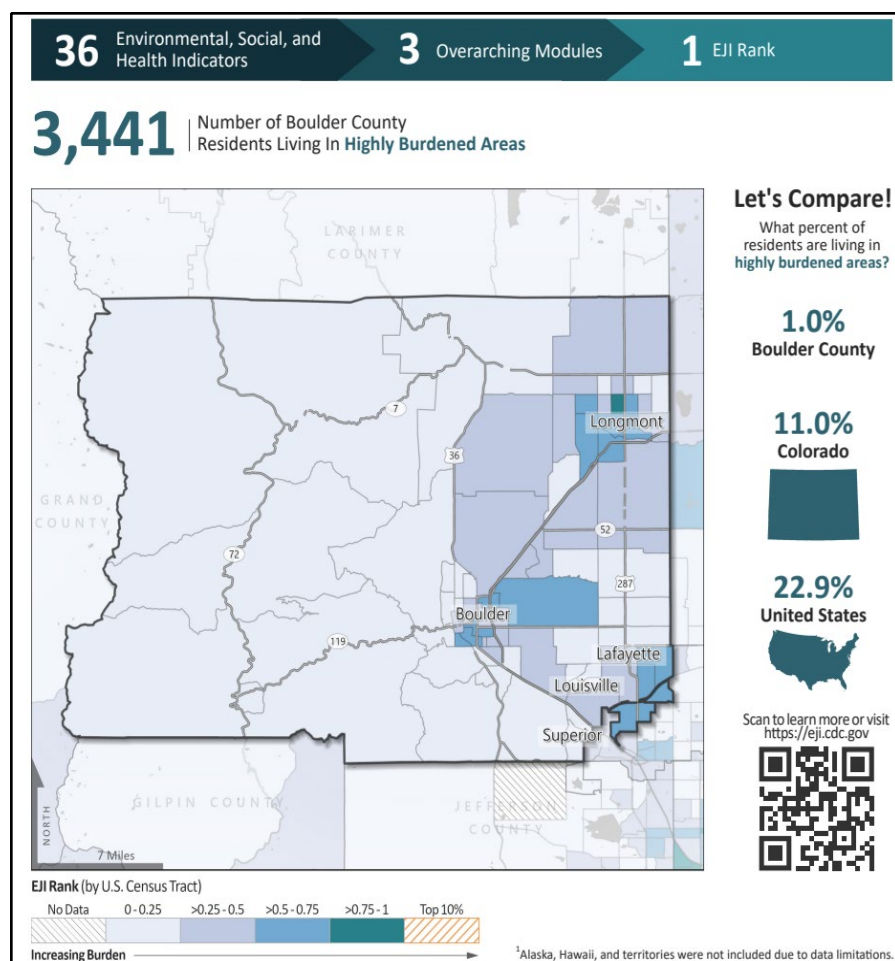


Figure 3. Boulder County EJI score, which shows comparisons to the state and national levels.

ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE INDEX (EJI)

The Environmental Justice Index (EJI) is a tool created by the Center for Disease Control (CDC) and provides County Maps that “offer summary information and visualizations that can provide insights into patterns and drivers of environmental injustice for the most burdened communities in each county.”³⁸ The EJI ranks are based on percentile rankings of all tracts in the contiguous United States. The EJI data

³⁶ [CEJST](#)

³⁷ [CEJST](#)

³⁸ [EJI County Maps](#)



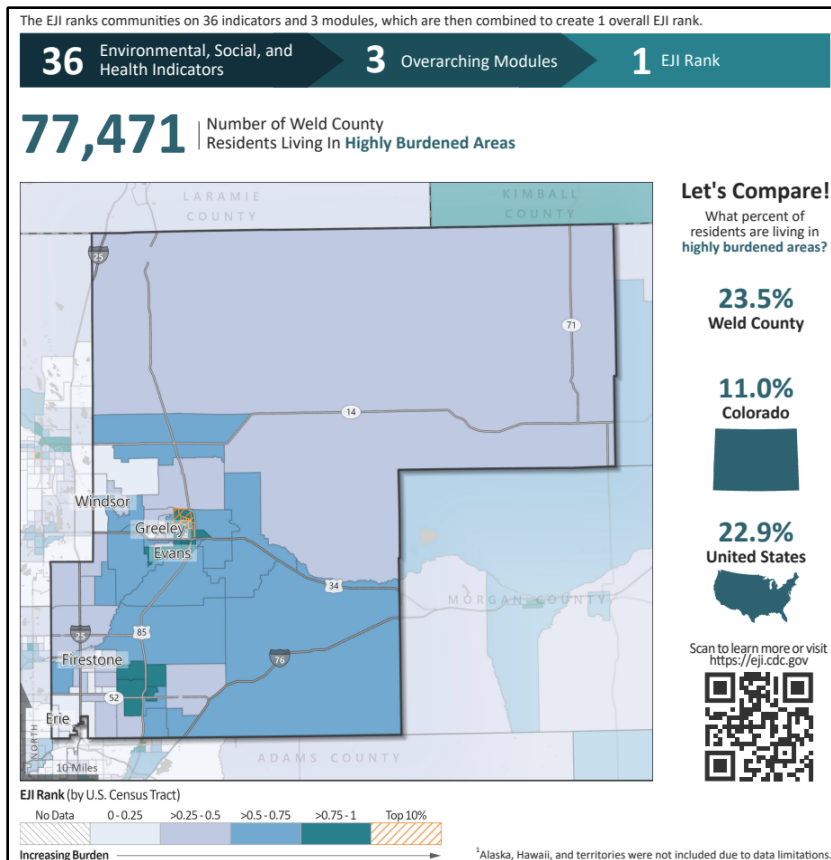


Figure 4. Weld County EJI score, which shows comparisons to the state and national levels.

reveals that Erie is not considered a highly burdened area. When looking at broader statistics, Erie's situation presents a mixed picture when it comes to comparing the two counties it straddles. On the one hand, 1% of Boulder County residents live in highly burdened areas; Boulder County is also well below state (11%) and national levels (22.9%). On the other hand, 23.5% of residents in Weld County live in highly burdened areas, which means the county's percentage of highly burdened population

surpasses both state (11%) and national levels (22.9%). This creates a unique landscape for Erie as it falls within both counties. However, while these highly burdened areas fall within Boulder and Weld Counties, they are not located within Erie's town boundary. Figures 3 and 4 show the results for Boulder County and Weld County.

EJI supplements its findings with a Climate Burden Rank, which measures cumulative climate-related impacts on community health. The EJI data identified 28 Weld County tracts and one Boulder County tract with significant environmental burdens. Of the climate-related stressors, extreme heat and wildfire smoke emerged as the biggest contributors and ranked highest in terms of burden impact for both counties. Although none of these environmental burdens fall directly within Erie's town boundary, they are still important to note as environmental burdens transcend jurisdictional borders. Figures 5 and 6 show the results of the climate burden rank for Boulder County and Weld County.

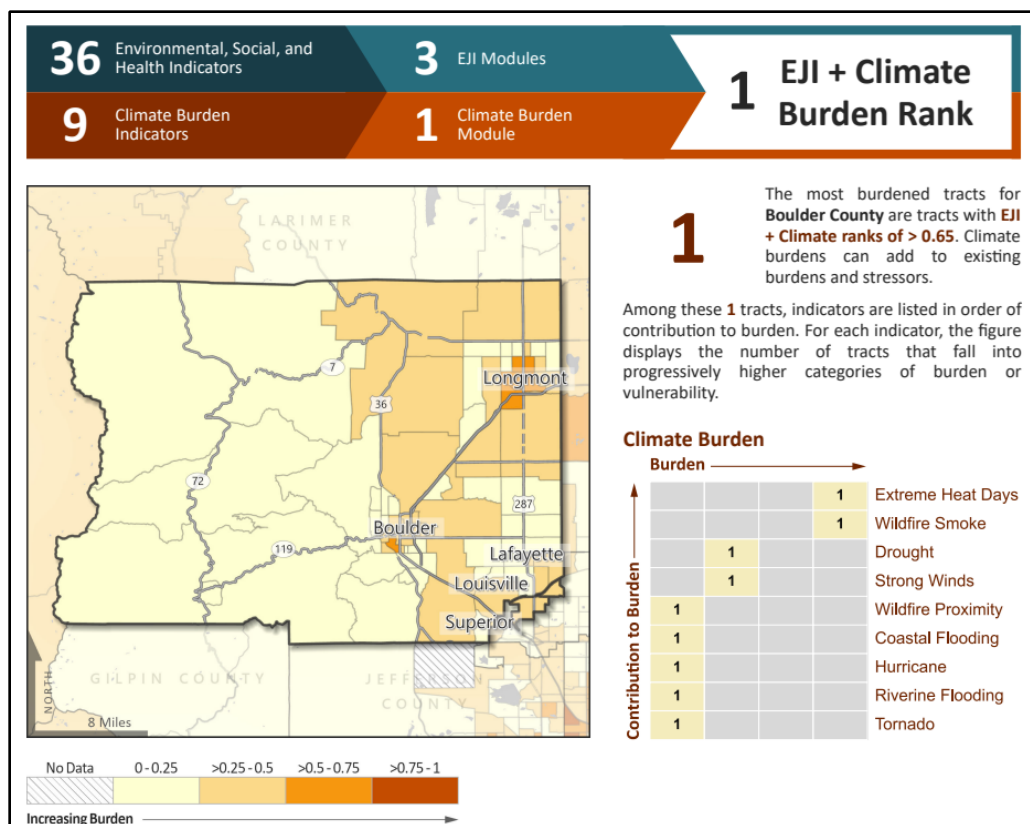


Figure 5. EJI Climate Burden Rank for Boulder County



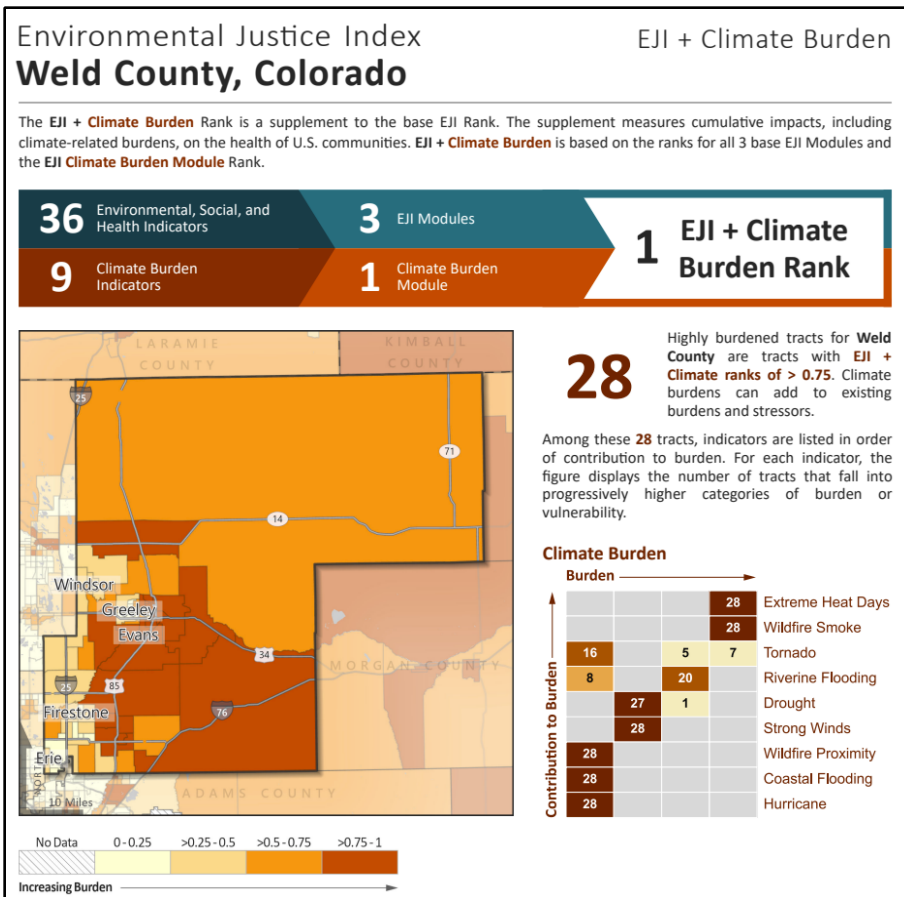


Figure 6. EJI Climate Burden Rank for Weld County

The EJI tool can also be used at the census tract level. The results from that data can be found below in Table 3. Figure 7 below provides the geographic location of Erie's census tracts.

Table 3. EJI Indicator Data for the seven census tracts in Erie.

Weld County						
Census tracts are within the following area: East of County Line Rd, North of E Baseline Rd, South of County Rd 16 ½, and West of I-25.						
Census Tract	Overall EJI Percentile Rank	Social Environmental Percentile	Air Pollution Percentile	Environmental Burden Percentile	Extreme Heat Days Percentile	Wildfire Smoke Percentile
20.10	60th	82nd	95th	83rd	83rd	82nd
20.09	15th	26th	95th	66th	83rd	81st

20.08	17th	30th	95th	64th	78th	80th
20.07	21st	36th	85th	55th	80th	81st
Boulder County <i>Census tracts are within the following area: East of N 95th St, West of County Line Rd, North of E Baseline Rd, South of Kenosha Rd/ Lookout Rd, and West of County Line Rd.</i>						
Census Tract	Overall EJ Percentile Rank	Social Environmental Percentile	Air Pollution Percentile	Environmental Burden Percentile	Extreme Heat Days Percentile	Wildfire Smoke Percentile
129.07	18th	31st	84th	70th	78th	80th
128.01	9th	17th	82nd	53rd	78th	80th
128.02	4th	9th	82nd	33rd	80th	81st

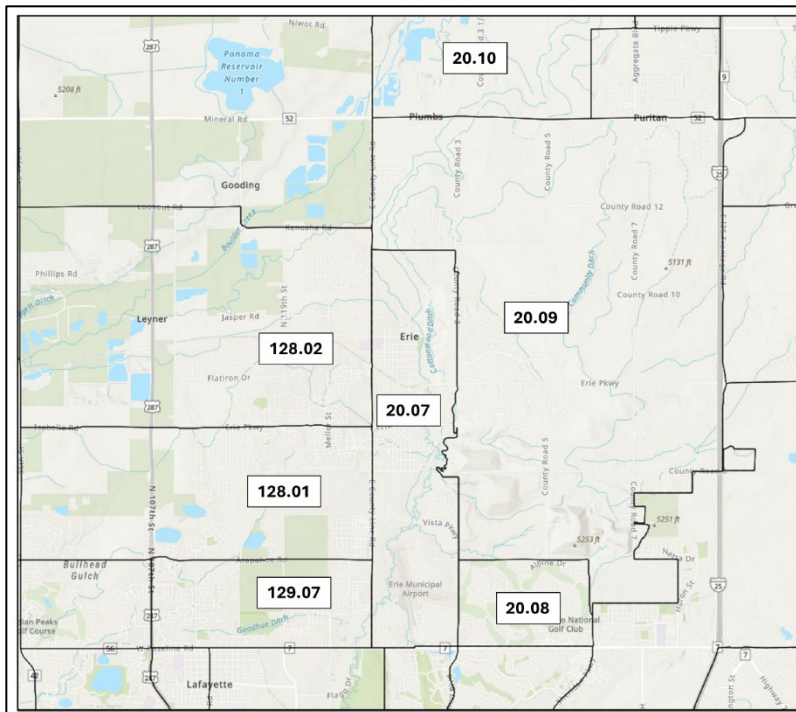


Figure 7. Census tracts in Erie

Within these census tracts, all have a high prevalence of air pollution, extreme heat days, and wildfire smoke. Overall score, social environment rank, and environmental burden vary based on census tract. These results corroborate findings from looking at the county level data and indicators.

ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE SCREEN (EJ SCREEN)

EJScreen is a mapping tool from the EPA that visualizes environmental and socioeconomic indicators for a given area, providing data at both

the state and national levels.³⁹ The two biggest indicators that came up for Erie were

³⁹ [EJScreen](#)

ozone and wildfire risk. Ozone is an environmental burden indicator that “measures how much ground-level ozone people might be exposed to by looking at the highest levels of ozone recorded at the ground-level and averaging the top ten days of the year.” Figure 8 shows the results for exposure to ozone, which ranks in the 93rd percentile, and Figure 9 shows the results for exposure to wildfire risk in Erie, which ranks in the 90th percentile. This means that Erie residents are at high risk, due to the high percentile scores, of ozone and wildfires.

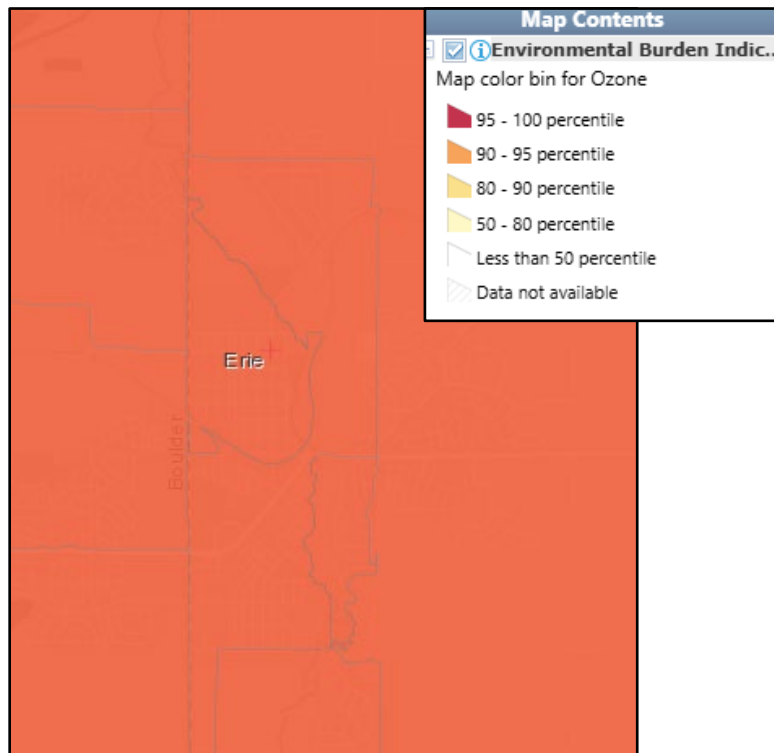


Figure 8. Ozone exposure in Erie.

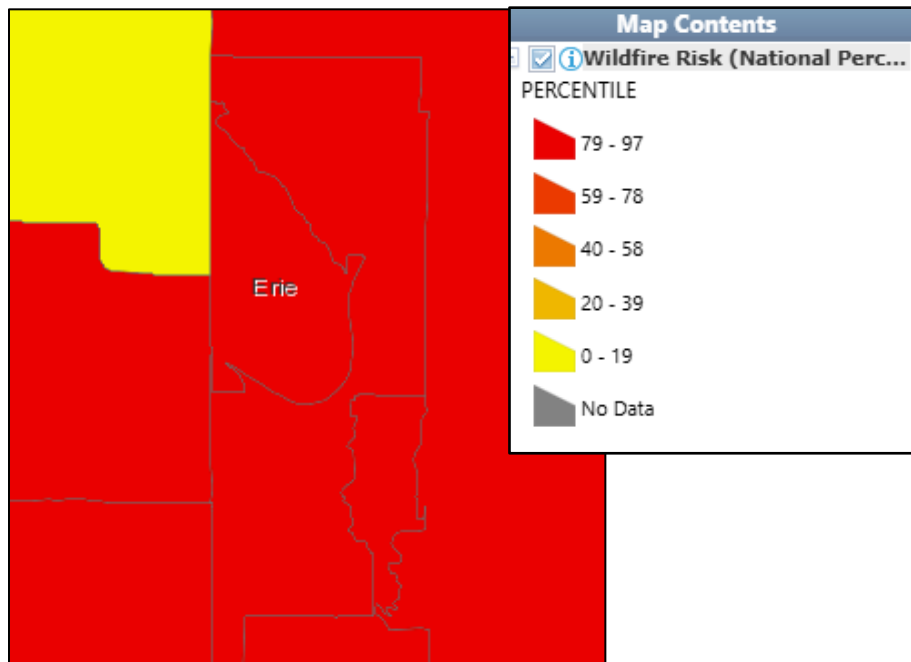


Figure 9. Wildfire risk exposure in Erie.

Key Considerations for Sustainability Action Plan Update Development

HISTORICAL CONTEXT

Oil and gas has a strong presence in and around Erie. The work done through this plan will need to consider its presence and potential implications on public and environmental health, and recommend strategies to mitigate any negative impacts associated with this industry. Additionally, understanding Erie's extractive history will be important in identifying key strategies that could help restore any impacted lands and protect the health and well-being of the workers involved in this industry.

DEMOGRAPHIC MAKEUP

Erie is a relatively young, white, and affluent community, but there are areas in the Town with lower incomes. Reaching these populations and developing targeted strategies will be paramount in ensuring implementation of this plan will not create more burdens or unintended consequences for these lower income communities.

ENVIRONMENTAL RISKS AND HAZARDS

Based on data findings, strategies should address or account for risks the Erie community faces, such as air toxics, fine particle pollution, proximity to oil and gas operations, floodplains, and high risk of ozone, wildfires, and drought. Although no census tracts in Erie are designated as “disproportionately impacted,” this does not mean no one is disproportionately impacted. Careful consideration of environmental impacts to each sector of the community should be a priority in the SAP update.

SOCIOECONOMIC VULNERABILITIES

Based on data findings, Erie’s socioeconomic vulnerabilities are minimal. However, disparities may still exist. Exploration of Erie’s manufactured home parks, consideration of lower income communities, and expansion of types of housing stock should be priorities as the SAP’s strategies are developed, ensuring they support the households most in need, level the playing field, and create more housing options for Erie residents.

Equity Tool Questions for Strategy Development & Implementation

As Erie’s Sustainability Action Plan update is developed, the below questions should be asked throughout the different phases of strategy and plan development to ensure strategy implementation yields fair and equitable outcomes for all residents.

Strategy Development

These questions should be asked as specific strategies are being developed for the plan.

- What do we know about historic and current community issues related to this focus area and strategy topic? What don’t we know?
 - What resources and stakeholders have more information?
 - How do we reach these stakeholders to ensure their voices are heard?
- How can we use this strategy to address those issues? Or, in other words, what might a fair outcome for all look like for this potential strategy?
 - What are the barriers to a fair outcome for all involved?
 - What actions can we add to the strategy to ensure fair outcomes?

Strategy Prioritization

If strategies are going to be prioritized to identify a set of top strategies for implementation, the prioritization methodology should address the below questions, and they should be considered during the prioritization process.

- How well does each strategy help Erie meet community goals or address priority issues?
 - Does this policy, program, practice, or decision address existing community concerns?
- What data do we have on the community's priorities? What does the data indicate we should prioritize concerning these strategies?

Strategy Implementation

The Strategy Prioritization phase may identify top priority strategies to implement, but as strategies are developed, the details of implementation of each strategy should be considered to ensure feasibility of the strategy and equitable outcomes.

- Are all current and historical community identities currently consulted and/or represented in making changes, policies, or decisions?
- How are each of these identities affected by a policy/procedure?
 - More specifically, is there potential for negative impacts on the group?
 - Are there groups that are disproportionately, consistently, or habitually bearing negative impacts?
- How will the implementation of this policy, program, practice, or decision strive to reduce the previously identified barriers?
- Does this policy, program, practice, or decision seek to restore confidence in safety or contribute to the economic vibrancy of all communities?
- Does this policy, program, practice, or decision serve to enhance the community character inclusively?