



OPERATIONALIZING EQUITY

SUMMER 2022 POLICY MEETING AUGUST 4-6, TACOMA, WA

Cities across the country are increasingly making institutional commitments to equity, but what does it look like to operationalize this commitment, and how does it influence the distribution of resources and infrastructure, and do you measure it? In this panel, we will hear about innovative projects that address disparities to both address the immediate needs of their most vulnerable communities, and to build resiliency for the future.

RESOURCES

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Beth Blauer, et al., “What Cities Can Do Now to Advance Racial and Economic Equity,” What Works Cities, March 30, 2021.

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Pages excerpted from: “Racial Equity Toolkit: An Opportunity to Operationalize Equity,” Lisa Brooks & Julie Nelson, Government Alliance on Race & Equity, December 2016.

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“The Intersection of Trees, Equity, and Human Health,” City of Tacoma, Urban Forestry, June 9, 2021.

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“Takoma Park City Profile on Racial Equity,” National League of Cities Takoma Park City Profile, 2018.

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“Racial Equity Project Profile- Bus Stop Improvements,” City of Takoma Park Housing and Community Development Department, February 26, 2021.

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Katey Rusch, “Oakland tries a new way to prioritize city improvement projects: by considering equity,” Oakland North, May 14, 2019.

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Pages excerpted from: “Fiscal Year 2021-23 Adopted Capital Improvement Program,” City of Oakland, CA.

SPEAKERS

CHRISTINA CHELF, GIS SUPERVISOR, CITY OF TACOMA, WA

Christina Chelf currently serves as the GIS supervisor for City of Tacoma where she leads the team that is responsible for providing maps, spatial analysis, and data management for city staff. Christina helped lead the creation and enhancement of the Tacoma Equity Index, a set of tools that help staff visualize and operationalize equity in the prioritization of policies, programs, and resources. She is also very involved in the City’s affordable housing initiative and is growing the use of spatial data for data-driven decision making across city departments.

ALEXANDER FREEDMAN, ACTING PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR, CITY OF TAKOMA PARK, MD

Alex Freedman (he/him) is the Acting Planning and Development Manager for the City of Takoma Park, MD. In this role, he is responsible for developing walkable and bikeable community infrastructure, equitable uses of public space, strong participatory community practices, and more. Prior to joining the team in Takoma Park, Alex worked for the Los Angeles Department of Transportation's Vision Zero Division, led active transportation and food access policy for the City of Lynn, MA, and spent a number of years working in different corners of the food justice field. When the work day is done, he likes to spend time exploring new places to eat around the Washington, DC area with his partner and battling with chipmunks in his vegetable garden. Alex received his Masters degrees in Urban Planning and Public Policy from the Sol Price School of Public Policy at the University of Southern California.

JULIE NELSON, SENIOR VP OF PROGRAMS, RACE FORWARD

Nelson is the Senior Vice President of Programs at Race Forward. She was the Founding Director of the Government Alliance on Race and Equity (GARE), a joint project of Race Forward and the Othering and Belonging Institute at the University of California, Berkeley where she serves as Senior Fellow.

Nelson is the former Director of the Seattle Office for Civil Rights where she served eight years, providing both vision and hands-on support to Seattle's Race and Social Justice Initiative, the first initiative in local government designed to dismantle institutional and structural racism and advance racial justice. She also served in other City of Seattle positions including with the Human Services Department, Administrative Services, Seattle City Light, the Office of Housing and Seattle Public Utilities, as well as other positions, including with Housing and Urban Development in the federal government and with Pima County Community Services in Tucson, Arizona.

Nelson has a master's degree in Economics from the University of Washington and a B.S in Economics and Finance from the University of Arizona and has served on the boards of multiple nonprofits.

MAYOR LIBBY SCHAAF, CITY OF OAKLAND, CA

Mayor Libby Schaaf was born and raised in Oakland, which she proudly describes as, "The most unapologetic Sanctuary City in America." During her tenure, Oakland has undergone an economic revitalization and building boom, as well as cut gun violence in half.

Her "17K/17K Housing Plan" has helped increase Oakland's affordable housing production, stabilize rents, and decrease evictions. Her innovative public-private partnerships Keep Oakland Housed and Cabin Communities are credited with preventing 1,800 families a year from losing their housing, while resolving some of Oakland's most unsafe street encampments. In 2019, Gov. Gavin Newsom appointed Mayor Schaaf to California's first Council of Regional Homeless Advisors. She created Oakland's first Department of Transportation, whose equity-based paving plan is the first of its kind in the nation and will make previously underserved neighborhoods safer, while addressing the city's decades-old infrastructure backlog.

Mayor Schaaf is most proud of launching the Oakland Promise, a bold cradle-to-career initiative to send more low-income Oakland kids to college. The Oakland Promise has sent more than 1,400 Oakland students (and counting) to college with scholarships and mentors, and will give every baby born into poverty a \$500 college savings account at birth.

<https://whatworkscities.medium.com/what-cities-can-do-now-to-advance-racial-and-economic-equity-f23a4a771cf8>

[What Works Cities](#)

Mar 30, 2021



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What Cities Can Do Now to Advance Racial and Economic Equity

It's time to act — and many city governments around the country are.

By [Simone Brody](#), [Beth Blauer](#), [Michael Hallsworth](#), [Michele Jolin](#), and [Jeff Liebman](#)

This month marks the year anniversary of the COVID-19 pandemic — a year where America's deep racial divisions sparked an overdue public reckoning. Cities were inevitably at the center as residents across the country demanded change, with the pandemic highlighting public health disparities and continued incidents of police brutality against Black Americans underscoring the tragic realities of systemic racism.

Over the past year, our organizations have worked through the What Works Cities initiative to continue to support cities as they rise to meet the needs of their residents. Communities across the country are making important progress in addressing the public health crisis that has consumed our lives.

And, even though cities have been [driving](#) equity work prior to the pandemic, many more are now publicly prioritizing their commitment to changing government structures and practices in service of better, more equitable outcomes. Twenty-eight American cities, for example, are

participating in WWC's [City Budgeting for Equity and Recovery program](#), which is helping cities confront their budget challenges while strengthening their commitment to equity in the wake of COVID-19.

The American Rescue Plan, with its forthcoming \$350 billion in funding for state and local governments creates a powerful opportunity for cities to spotlight the question: “How can cities dismantle systems of racism in government and invest in lasting and meaningful change?”

Here are three important ways cities can work to advance equity, drawn from [What Works Cities](#) partners’ work around the country:

1. **Public communication** and commitment to specific equity goals;
2. **Data gathering and analysis** to identify and understand disparities; and
3. **Alignment of spending** and services to stated values and priorities.

1: Communication Is Core

Racial, economic, and health disparities persist because of harmful institutional policies and practices. City leaders should address them publicly, commit to advancing equity, and be held accountable for their commitments. For example, cities can:

- ***Speak openly*** about how current systems perpetuate poverty and discuss strategies for making concrete choices that will create change.
- ***Make public and measurable commitments*** about using data and evidence to drive systems and stakeholders towards representing a more equitable community — and then regularly publish updates on how they are achieving goals.
- ***Develop and pass a City Council resolution*** directing the city to advance a roadmap of actions, policy changes, and funding shifts, to achieve your residents’ needs. This could include a series of community listening sessions and a survey to engage the community on what steps should be taken.

See it in action: The City Council of Long Beach, CA, in June 2020 [passed](#) a resolution adopting a four-step Framework for Reconciliation to end systemic racism. Thirteen listening sessions and four community town halls followed, and the Council unanimously adopted the [Racial Equity and Reconciliation Initiative](#) that emerged.

- ***Integrate racial equity tools into budget decisions***, particularly as cities across the country consider how to [address budget shortfalls](#) and maximize the impact of American Rescue Plan funds to meet residents' pressing needs. Cities can [share publicly](#) how they are prioritizing equity in budget decisions.

2: Data Illuminates Inequities

Any city that is serious about advancing equity needs to be serious about data. Collecting, publicly sharing, and leveraging data about residents and city services, and how the two interact, allows governments to better understand where and how city programs and departments meet the needs — or fail to meet the needs — of low-income communities and communities of color. By linking internal data sets or using external data sources like the Census or geospatial data, a city can get a stronger picture — and a more acute understanding — of where inequities exist and how to surgically combat them.

- ***Collect comprehensive data sets***. Use varied sources to ensure demographic, geographic, and economic data collected to assess resident needs is neither biased nor incomplete. For example, consider integrating 311 data, survey data, evaluations from academics and nonprofits, and live sampling (e.g., how many streetlights are out in each neighborhood). Better, more equitable solutions can emerge when equity-related data variables are in the mix.

See it in action: When planning capital infrastructure projects, the City of Boston looked at the impact of projects on specific populations — black, indigenous and people of color (BIPOC) and low income. Using this data, projects that would not have otherwise been selected were prioritized.

- ***Disaggregate data on your citywide challenges to expose disparate needs***. If, for example, employment is a critical challenge for your city, go beyond overall employment numbers by breaking data down by neighborhood, race, and income levels and look at how unemployment figures map to these

variables. Case in point: some of the most powerful insights from the [Opportunity Atlas](#) — a tool from Opportunity Insights that offers cities economic mobility data down to the neighborhood — come from its comparisons on the long-term income gap between low-income white children and low-income Black children who grow up on the same block.

- ***Measure service quality by neighborhoods and populations.*** This is a key way to hold city staff and vendors accountable for delivering high-quality services to everyone.

See it in action: Boulder, CO [incorporated](#) performance metrics into high-speed internet infrastructure construction contracts to ensure low-income neighborhoods were not disproportionately impacted by construction work. Consistent standards and timely construction in all areas of the city were required.

With revenue sharply down due to the pandemic, a new era of fiscal belt tightening has begun in cities across the country. There's a real danger that budget cuts to programs, services, and staff will worsen existing inequities. With detailed data in hand, city leaders are better prepared to make choices about funding reductions equitably in the coming year.

3: Operational Decisions Are Inherently Value Statements

Budgets are moral documents, and as such, city leaders must ensure that how the city spends tax dollars expresses its stated values. But how a city designs programs and services, and who it hires to implement them, are also statements of values. Taking a close look at day-to-day operations and making necessary changes is central to advancing equity.

Here's where cities can start:

- ***Grow city contracts with minority- and women-owned business enterprises (MWBs).*** Set a public goal to both increase the number of local registered MWBEs and the number of contracts and grants going to these vendors. Conduct outreach to the vendor community to get new businesses bidding on and receiving city contracts. Consider holding a pre-solicitation

conference so smaller and more diverse firms can learn about projects and potential contracts, and providing support to MWBEs to navigate the government contracting process.

See it in action: The City of Boulder [did this](#) prior to releasing its request for bids (RFB) for the fiber optic network project referenced above. In Asheville, NC, the city adopted a first-of-its-kind [business inclusion policy](#), directing all procurement processes to be guided by MWBE participation goals. This, in conjunction with the city's community outreach plan to better engage local minority businesses, is expected to lead to increased MWBE utilization.

- ***Engage diverse community stakeholders when designing services and programs, and deliver them more equitably.*** Stakeholders who will be directly affected should be engaged early in the design process and given a seat at the table. City officials should never assume they understand the lived experience of individuals and communities. Instead, they should go beyond traditional community engagement strategies to empower residents and community leaders. Programs should ideally be co-created with stakeholders to truly meet their needs and advance equity.

See it in action: The City of Charleston, SC [revamped](#) its request for proposals (RFP) process for an affordable housing development project to include deep stakeholder engagement and detailed guidance on key challenges and priorities. Philadelphia, PA's new [participatory budgeting effort](#) will allow the city, for the first time in its history, to directly involve the community in city spending decisions.

- ***Assess practices that perpetuate structural racism and economic disparities.*** Review your city's revenue sources and expenditures to identify those that play a role in creating and sustaining disparities, and revamp them to ensure equity and opportunity. One now commonly discussed fiscal area to focus on is [fines](#). While they might generate revenue for cities, they often do so at a disproportionate and inequitable cost. Instead of levying penalties, consider bringing households and businesses into compliance through targeted outreach or other means.

Cities can expand this kind of assessment to operational practices as well, such as enrollment processes for early childhood education or recreation programs. While seemingly innocuous, they can inadvertently place burdens on residents who lack time and resources, acting as hurdles

holding back families who might most benefit from the programs. Cambridge, MA, for example, overhauled its process for enrollment in early-childhood programs to remove such obstacles and dramatically increased the percentage of preschool seats offered to lower-income families.

Reality Checks

Finally, remember that no person and no government has all the answers. Across the country, cities are working to address long-standing racial and economic disparities — and they're turning to outside equity experts for help. The [Government Alliance on Race and Equity](#) (GARE), for example, works with cities to assess operations, programs, decision-making processes and economic mobility strategies. Other partners train leaders on the cultural competencies necessary to remain deeply engaged with advancing equity.

There are plenty of ways to make change and advance equity — what's required first, and most crucially, is the will.



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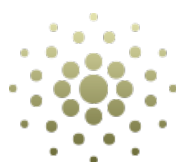
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What Works Cities (WWC) is a national initiative that empowers cities to tackle pressing community challenges and improve residents' lives through data-driven decision making. Operating as a partnership between four national organizations, What Works Cities works directly with city leaders and staff by providing coaching and technical assistance, a range of online and in-person learning opportunities, and a growing nationwide professional network. All WWC support and learning opportunities are provided at no cost to our cities.

Racial Equity Toolkit

An Opportunity to Operationalize Equity



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RACE & EQUITY



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This toolkit is published by the
Government Alliance on Race and Equity,
a national network of government working to
achieve racial equity and advance opportunities for all.

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ABOUT THE GOVERNMENT ALLIANCE ON RACE & EQUITY



The Government Alliance on Race and Equity (GARE) is a national network of government working to achieve racial equity and advance opportunities for all. Across the country, governmental jurisdictions are:

- making a commitment to achieving racial equity;
- focusing on the power and influence of their own institutions; and,
- working in partnership with others.

When this occurs, significant leverage and expansion opportunities emerge, setting the stage for the achievement of racial equity in our communities.

GARE provides a multi-layered approach for maximum impact by:

- supporting jurisdictions that are at the forefront of work to achieve racial equity. A few jurisdictions have already done substantive work and are poised to be a model for others. Supporting and providing best practices, tools and resources is helping to build and sustain current efforts and build a national movement for racial equity;
- developing a “pathway for entry” into racial equity work for new jurisdictions from across the country. Many jurisdictions lack the leadership and/or infrastructure to address issues of racial inequity. Using the learnings and resources from jurisdictions at the forefront will create pathways for the increased engagement of more jurisdictions; and,
- supporting and building local and regional collaborations that are broadly inclusive and focused on achieving racial equity. To eliminate racial inequities in our communities, developing a “collective impact” approach firmly grounded in inclusion and equity is necessary. Government can play a key role in collaborations for achieving racial equity, centering community, and leveraging institutional partnerships.

To find out more about GARE, visit www.racialequityalliance.org.

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Government Alliance on Race and Equity

I. What is a Racial Equity Tool?

Racial equity tools are designed to integrate explicit consideration of racial equity in decisions, including policies, practices, programs, and budgets. It is both a product and a process. Use of a racial equity tool can help to develop strategies and actions that reduce racial inequities and improve success for all groups.

Too often, policies and programs are developed and implemented without thoughtful consideration of racial equity. When racial equity is not explicitly brought into operations and decision-making, racial inequities are likely to be perpetuated. Racial equity tools provide a structure for institutionalizing the consideration of racial equity.

A racial equity tool:

- proactively seeks to eliminate racial inequities and advance equity;
- identifies clear goals, objectives and measurable outcomes;
- engages community in decision-making processes;
- identifies who will benefit or be burdened by a given decision, examines potential unintended consequences of a decision, and develops strategies to advance racial equity and mitigate unintended negative consequences; and,
- develops mechanisms for successful implementation and evaluation of impact.

Use of a racial equity tool is an important step to operationalizing equity. However, it is not sufficient by itself. We must have a much broader vision of the transformation of government in order to advance racial equity. To transform government, we must normalize conversations about race, operationalize new behaviors and policies, and organize to achieve racial equity.

For more information on the work of government to advance racial equity, check out GARE's "Advancing Racial Equity and Transforming Government: A Resource Guide for Putting Ideas into Action" on our website. The Resource Guide provides a comprehensive and holistic approach to advancing racial equity within government. In addition, an overview of key racial equity definitions is contained in Appendix A.

II. Why should government use this Racial Equity Tool?

From the inception of our country, government at the local, regional, state, and federal level has played a role in creating and maintaining racial inequity. A wide range of laws and policies were passed, including everything from who could vote, who could be a citizen, who could own property, who was property, where one could live, whose land was whose and more. With the Civil Rights movement, laws and policies were passed that helped to create positive changes, including making acts of discrimination illegal. However, despite progress in addressing explicit discrimination, racial inequities continue to be deep, pervasive, and persistent across the country. Racial inequities exist across all indicators for success, including in education, criminal justice, jobs, housing, public infrastructure, and health, regardless of region.

Many current inequities are sustained by historical legacies and structures and systems that repeat patterns of exclusion. Institutions and structures have continued to create and perpetuate inequities, despite the lack of explicit intention. Without intentional intervention, institutions and structures will continue to perpetuate racial inequities. Government has the ability to implement policy change at multiple levels and across multiple sectors to drive larger systemic change. Routine use of a racial equity tool explicitly integrates racial equity into governmental operations.

Local and regional governmental jurisdictions that are a part of the GARE are using a racial equity tool. Some, such as the city of Seattle in Washington, Multnomah County in Oregon, and

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the city of Madison in Wisconsin have been doing so for many years:

- The Seattle Race and Social Justice Initiative (RSJI) is a citywide effort to end institutionalized racism and race-based disparities in City government. The Initiative was launched in 2004. RSJI includes training to all City employees, annual work plans, and change teams in every city department. RSJI first started using its Racial Equity Tool during the budget process in 2007. The following year, in recognition of the fact that the budget process was just the “tip of the ice berg,” use of the tool was expanded to be used in policy and program decisions. In 2009, Seattle City Council included the use of the Racial Equity Tool in budget, program and policy decisions, including review of existing programs and policies, in a resolution (Resolution 31164) affirming the City’s Race and Social Justice Initiative. In 2015, newly elected Mayor Ed Murray issued an Executive Order directing expanded use of the Racial Equity Tool, and requiring measurable outcomes and greater accountability.

See Appendix B for examples of how Seattle has used its Racial Equity Tool, including legislation that offers protections for women who are breastfeeding and use of criminal background checks in employment decisions.

Multnomah County’s Equity and Empowerment Lens is used to improve planning, decision-making, and resource allocation leading to more racially equitable policies and programs. At its core, it is a set of principles, reflective questions, and processes that focuses at the individual, institutional, and systemic levels by:

- deconstructing what is not working around racial equity;
- reconstructing and supporting what is working;
- shifting the way we make decisions and think about this work; and,
- healing and transforming our structures, our environments, and ourselves.

Numerous Multnomah County departments have made commitments to utilizing the Lens, including a health department administrative policy and within strategic plans of specific departments. Tools within the Lens are used both to provide analysis and to train employers and partners on how Multnomah County conducts equity analysis.

Madison, Wisconsin is implementing a racial equity tool, including both a short version and a more in-depth analysis. See Appendix D for a list of the types of projects on which the city of Madison has used their racial equity tool.

For jurisdictions that are considering implementation of a racial equity tool, these jurisdictions examples are powerful. Other great examples of racial equity tools are from the Annie E. Casey Foundation and Race Forward.

In recognition of the similar ways in which institutional and structural racism have evolved across the country, GARE has developed this Toolkit that captures the field of practice and commonalities across tools. We encourage jurisdictions to begin using our Racial Equity Tool. Based on experience, customization can take place if needed to ensure that it is most relevant to local conditions. Otherwise, there is too great of a likelihood that there will be a significant investment of time, and potentially money, in a lengthy process of customization without experience. It is through the implementation and the experience of learning that leaders and staff will gain experience with use of a tool. After a pilot project trying out this tool, jurisdictions will have a better understanding of how and why it might make sense to customize a tool.

For examples of completed racial equity analyses, check out Appendix B and Appendix D, which includes two examples from the city of Seattle, as well as a list of the topics on which the city of Madison has used their racial equity tool.

Please note: In this Resource Guide, we include some data from reports that focused on whites and African Americans, but otherwise, provide data for all racial groups analyzed in the research. For consistency, we refer to African Americans and Latinos, although in some of the original research, these groups were referred to as Blacks and Hispanics.

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III. Who should use a racial equity tool?

A racial equity tool can be used at multiple levels, and in fact, doing so, will increase effectiveness.

- **Government staff:** The routine use of a racial equity tool by staff provides the opportunity to integrate racial equity across the breadth, meaning all governmental functions, and depth, meaning across hierarchy. For example, policy analysts integrating racial equity into policy development and implementation, and budget analysts integrating racial equity into budget proposals at the earliest possible phase, increases the likelihood of impact. Employees are the ones who know their jobs best and will be best equipped to integrate racial equity into practice and routine operations.
- **Elected officials:** Elected officials have the opportunity to use a racial equity tool to set broad priorities, bringing consistency between values and practice. When our elected officials are integrating racial equity into their jobs, it will be reflected in the priorities of the jurisdiction, in direction provided to department directors, and in the questions asked of staff. By asking simple racial equity tool questions, such as “How does this decision help or hinder racial equity?” or “Who benefits from or is burdened by this decision?” on a routine basis, elected officials have the ability to put theory into action.
- **Community based organizations:** Community based organizations can ask questions of government about use of racial equity tool to ensure accountability. Elected officials and government staff should be easily able to describe the results of their use of a racial equity tool, and should make that information readily available to community members. In addition, community based organizations can use a similar or aligned racial equity tool within their own organizations to also advance racial equity.



Government staff



Elected officials



Community

IV. When should you use a racial equity tool?

The earlier you use a racial equity tool, the better. When racial equity is left off the table and not addressed until the last minute, the use of a racial equity tool is less likely to be fruitful. Using a racial equity tool early means that individual decisions can be aligned with organizational racial equity goals and desired outcomes. Using a racial equity tool more than once means that equity is incorporated throughout all phases, from development to implementation and evaluation.

V. The Racial Equity Tool

The Racial Equity Tool is a simple set of questions:

1. **Proposal:** What is the policy, program, practice or budget decision under consideration? What are the desired results and outcomes?
2. **Data:** What's the data? What does the data tell us?
3. **Community engagement:** How have communities been engaged? Are there opportunities to expand engagement?
4. **Analysis and strategies:** Who will benefit from or be burdened by your proposal? What are your strategies for advancing racial equity or mitigating unintended consequences?
5. **Implementation:** What is your plan for implementation?

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6. **Accountability and communication:** How will you ensure accountability, communicate, and evaluate results?

The following sections provide a description of the overall questions. Once you are ready to jump into action, please check out the worksheet that can be found in Appendix C.

STEP #1

What is your proposal and the desired results and outcomes?

While it might sound obvious, having a clear description of the policy, program, practice, or budget decision (for the sake of brevity, we refer to this as a “proposal” in the remainder of these steps) at hand is critical.

We should also be vigilant in our focus on impact.

The terminology for results and outcomes is informed by our relationship with Results Based Accountability™. This approach to measurement clearly delineates between community conditions / population accountability and performance accountability / outcomes. These levels share a common systematic approach to measurement. This approach emphasizes the importance of beginning with a focus on the desired “end” condition.

- Results are at the community level are the end conditions we are aiming to impact. Community indicators are the means by which we can measure impact in the community. Community indicators should be disaggregated by race.
- Outcomes are at the jurisdiction, department, or program level. Appropriate performance measures allow monitoring of the success of implementation of actions that have a reasonable chance of influencing indicators and contributing to results. Performance measures respond to three different levels:
 - a. Quantity—how much did we do?
 - b. Quality—how well did we do it?
 - c. Is anyone better off?

We encourage you to be clear about the desired end conditions in the community and to emphasize those areas where you have the most direct influence. When you align community indicators, government strategies, and performance measures, you maximize the likelihood for impact. To ultimately impact community conditions, government must partner with other institutions and the community.

You should be able to answer the following questions:

1. Describe the policy, program, practice, or budget decision under consideration?
2. What are the intended results (in the community) and outcomes (within your organization)?
3. What does this proposal have an ability to impact?
 - Children and youth
 - Community engagement
 - Contracting equity
 - Criminal justice
 - Economic development
 - Education
 - Environment
 - Food access and affordability
 - Government practices
 - Health
 - Housing
 - Human services
 - Jobs
 - Planning and development
 - Transportation
 - Utilities
 - Workforce equity

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STEP #2

What's the data? What does the data tell us?

Measurement matters. When organizations are committed to racial equity, it is not just an aspiration, but there is a clear understanding of racial inequities, and strategies and actions are developed and implemented that align between community conditions, strategies, and actions. Using data appropriately will allow you to assess whether you are achieving desired impacts.

Too often data might be available, but is not actually used to inform strategies and track results. The enormity of racial inequities can sometimes feel overwhelming. For us to have impact in the community, we must partner with others for cumulative impact. The work of government to advance racial equity is necessary, but not sufficient. Nevertheless, alignment and clarity will increase potential impact. We must use data at both levels; that is data that clearly states 1) community indicators and desired results, and 2) our specific program or policy outcomes and performance measures.

Performance measures allow monitoring of the success of implementation of actions that have a reasonable chance of influencing indicators and contributing to results. As indicated in Step 1, performance measures respond to three different levels:

Quantity—how much did we do?

Quality—how well did we do it?

Is anyone better off?

Although measuring whether anyone is actually better off as a result of a decision is highly desired, we also know there are inherent measurement challenges. You should assess and collect the best types of performance measures so that you are able to track your progress.

In analyzing data, you should think not only about quantitative data, but also qualitative data. Remember that sometimes missing data can speak to the fact that certain communities, issues or inequities have historically been overlooked. Sometimes data sets treat communities as a monolithic group without respect to subpopulations with differing socioeconomic and cultural experience. Using this data could perpetuate historic inequities. Using the knowledge and expertise of a diverse set of voices, along with quantitative data is necessary (see Step #3).

You should be able to answer the following questions about data:

1. Will the proposal have impacts in specific geographic areas (neighborhoods, areas, or regions)? What are the racial demographics of those living in the area?
2. What does population level data tell you about existing racial inequities? What does it tell you about root causes or factors influencing racial inequities?
3. What performance level data do you have available for your proposal? This should include data associated with existing programs or policies.
4. Are there data gaps? What additional data would be helpful in analyzing the proposal? If so, how can you obtain better data?

Data Resources

Federal

- **American FactFinder:** The US Census Bureau's main site for online access to population, housing, economic and geographic data. <http://factfinder.census.gov>
- **US Census Quick Facts:** <http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/index.html>
- **Center for Disease Control (CDC)** <http://wonder.cdc.gov>

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State

- **American FactFinder** and the **US Census** website also have state data.
<http://factfinder.census.gov>
- Other sources of data vary by state. Many states offer data through the Office of Financial Management. Other places to find data include specific departments and divisions.

Local

- **American FactFinder** and the **US Census** website also have local data.
<http://factfinder.census.gov>
- Many jurisdictions have lots of city and county data available. Other places to find data include specific departments and divisions, service providers, community partners, and research literature.

STEP #3

How have communities been engaged?

Are there opportunities to expand engagement?

It is not enough to consult data or literature to assume how a proposal might impact a community. Involving communities impacted by a topic, engaging community throughout all phases of a project, and maintaining clear and transparent communication as the policy or program is implemented will help produce more racially equitable results.

It is especially critical to engage communities of color. Due to the historical reality of the role of government in creating and maintaining racial inequities, it is not surprising that communities of color do not always have much trust in government. In addition, there is a likelihood that other barriers exist, such as language, perception of being welcome, and lack of public transportation, or childcare. For communities with limited English language skills, appropriate language materials and translation must be provided.

Government sometimes has legal requirements on the holding of public meetings. These are often structured as public hearings, with a limited time for each person to speak and little opportunity for interaction. It is important to go beyond these minimum requirements by using community meetings, focus groups, and consultations with commissions, advisory boards, and community-based organizations. A few suggestions that are helpful:

- When you use smaller groups to feed into a larger process, be transparent about the recommendations and/or thoughts that come out of the small groups (e.g. Have a list of all the groups you met with and a summary of the recommendations from each. That way you have documentation of what came up in each one, and it is easier to demonstrate the process).
- When you use large group meetings, provide a mix of different ways for people to engage, such as the hand-held voting devices, written comments that you collect, small groups, etc. It is typical, both because of structure and process, for large group discussions to lead to the participation of fewer voices. Another approach is to use dyads where people “interview” each other, and then report on what their partner shared. Sometimes people are more comfortable sharing other people’s information.
- Use trusted advocates/outreach and engagement liaisons to collect information from communities that you know are typically underrepresented in public processes. Again, sharing and reporting that information in a transparent way allows you to share it with

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others. For communities that have concerns about documentation status and interaction with government in general, this can be a particularly useful strategy.

Here are a few examples of good resources for community engagement:

- The City of Seattle Inclusive Outreach and Public Engagement Guide
- The City of Portland's Public Engagement Guide

You should be able to answer the following questions about community engagement and involving stakeholders:

1. Who are the most affected community members who are concerned with or have experience related to this proposal? How have you involved these community members in the development of this proposal?
2. What has your engagement process told you about the burdens or benefits for different groups?
3. What has your engagement process told you about the factors that produce or perpetuate racial inequity related to this proposal?

STEP #4

Who benefits from or will be burdened by your proposal? What are your strategies for advancing racial equity or mitigating unintended consequences?

Based on your data and stakeholder input, you should step back and assess your proposal and think about complementary strategies that will help to advance racial equity.

Governmental decisions are often complex and nuanced with both intended and unintended impacts. For example, when cities and counties face the necessity of making budget cuts due to revenue shortfalls, the goal is to balance the budget and the unintended consequence is that people and communities suffer the consequences of cut programs. In a situation like this, it is important to explicitly consider the unintended consequences so that impacts can be mitigated to the maximum extent possible.

We often tend to view policies, programs, or practices in isolation. Because racial inequities are perpetuated through systems and structures, it is important to also think about complementary approaches that will provide additional leverage to maximize the impact on racial inequity in the community. Expanding your proposal to integrate policy and program strategies and broad partnerships will help to increase the likelihood of community impact. Here are some examples:

- Many excellent programs have been developed or are being supported through health programs and social services. Good programs and services should continue to be supported, however, programs will never be sufficient to ultimately achieve racial equity in the community. If you are working on a program, think about policy and practice changes that can decrease the need for programs.
- Many jurisdictions have passed “Ban-the-Box” legislation, putting limitations on the use of criminal background checks in employment and/or housing decisions. While this is a policy that is designed to increase the likelihood of success for people coming out of incarceration, it is not a singular solution to racial inequities in the criminal justice system. To advance racial equity in the criminal justice system, we need comprehensive strategies that build upon good programs, policies, and partnerships.

You should be able to answer the following questions about strategies to advance racial equity:

1. Given what you have learned from the data and stakeholder involvement, how will the

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proposal increase or decrease racial equity? Who would benefit from or be burdened by your proposal?

2. What are potential unintended consequences? What are the ways in which your proposal could be modified to enhance positive impacts or reduce negative impacts?
3. Are there complementary strategies that you can implement? What are ways in which existing partnerships could be strengthened to maximize impact in the community? How will you partner with stakeholders for long-term positive change?
4. Are the impacts aligned with the your community outcomes defined in Step #1?

STEP #5

What is your plan for implementation?

Now that you know what the unintended consequences, benefits, and impacts of the proposal and have developed strategies to mitigate unintended consequences or expand impact, it is important to focus on thoughtful implementation.

You should be able to answer the following about implementation:

1. Describe your plan for implementation.
2. Is your plan:
 - realistic?
 - adequately funded?
 - adequately resourced with personnel?;
 - adequately resourced with mechanisms to ensure successful implementation and enforcement?
 - adequately resourced to ensure on-going data collection, public reporting, and community engagement?

If the answer to any of these questions is no, what resources or actions are needed?

STEP #6

How will you ensure accountability, communicate, and evaluate results?

Just as data was critical in analyzing potential impacts of the program or policy, data will be important in seeing whether the program or policy has worked. Developing mechanisms for collecting data and evaluating progress will help measure whether racial equity is being advanced.

Accountability entails putting processes, policies, and leadership in place to ensure that program plans, evaluation recommendations, and actions leading to the identification and elimination of root causes of inequities are actually implemented.

How you communicate about your racial equity proposal is also important for your success. Poor communication about race can trigger implicit bias or perpetuate stereotypes, often times unintentionally. Use a communications tool, such as the Center for Social Inclusion's [Talking About Race Right Toolkit](#) to develop messages and a communications strategy.

Racial equity tools should be used on an ongoing basis. Using a racial equity tool at different phases of a project will allow new opportunities for advancing racial equity to be identified and implemented. Evaluating results means that you will be able to make any adjustments to maximize impact.

You should be able to answer the following questions about accountability and implementation:

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1. How will impacts be documented and evaluated? Are you achieving the anticipated outcomes? Are you having impact in the community?
2. What are your messages and communication strategies that will help advance racial equity?
3. How will you continue to partner and deepen relationships with communities to make sure your work to advance racial equity is working and sustainable for the long haul?

VI. What if you don't have enough time?

The reality of working in government is that there are often unanticipated priorities that are sometimes inserted on a fast track. While it is often tempting to say that there is insufficient time to do a full and complete application of a racial equity tool, it is important to acknowledge that even with a short time frame, asking a few questions relating to racial equity can have a meaningful impact. We suggest that the following questions should be answered for “quick turn around” decisions:

- What are the racial equity impacts of this particular decision?
- Who will benefit from or be burdened by the particular decision?
- Are there strategies to mitigate the unintended consequences?

VII. How can you address barriers to successful implementation?

You may have heard the phrase, “the system is perfectly designed to get the outcomes it does.” For us to get to racially equitable outcomes, we need to work at the institutional and structural levels. As a part of institutions and systems, it is often a challenge to re-design systems, let alone our own individual jobs. One of the biggest challenges is often a skills gap. Use of a racial equity tool requires skill and competency, so it will be important for jurisdictions to provide training, mentoring, and support for managers and staff who are using the tool. GARE has a training curriculum that supports this Toolkit, as well as a “train-the-trainer” program to increase the capacity of racial equity advocates using the Toolkit.

Other barriers to implementation that some jurisdictions have experienced include:

- a lack of support from leadership;
- a tool being used in isolation;
- a lack of support for implementing changes; and,
- perfection (which can be the enemy of good).

Strategies for addressing these barriers include:

- building the capacity of racial equity teams. Training is not just to cultivate skills for individual employees, but is also to build the skill of teams to create support for group implementation and to create a learning culture;
- systematizing the use of the Racial Equity Tool. If the Racial Equity Tool is integrated into routine operations, such as budget proposal forms or policy briefing forms, then management and staff will know that it is an important priority;
- recognizing complexity. In most cases, public policy decisions are complex, and there are numerous pros, cons and trade-offs to be considered. When the Racial Equity Tool is used on an iterative basis, complex nuances can be addressed over time; and,

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- maintaining accountability. Build the expectation that managers and directors routinely use the Racial Equity Tool into job descriptions or performance agreements.

Institutionalizing use of a racial equity tool provides the opportunity to develop thoughtful, realistic strategies and timelines that advance racial equity and help to build long-term commitment and momentum.

VIII. How does use of a racial equity tool fit with other racial equity strategies?

Using a racial equity tool is an important step to operationalizing equity. However, it is not sufficient by itself. We must have a much broader vision of the transformation of government in order to advance racial equity. To transform government, we must normalize conversations about race, operationalize new behaviors and policies, and organize to achieve racial equity.

GARE is seeing more and more jurisdictions that are making a commitment to achieving racial equity, by focusing on the power and influence of their own institutions, and working in partnership across sectors and with the community to maximize impact. We urge you to join with others on this work. If you are interested in using a racial equity tool and/or joining local and regional government from across the country to advance racial equity, please let us know.

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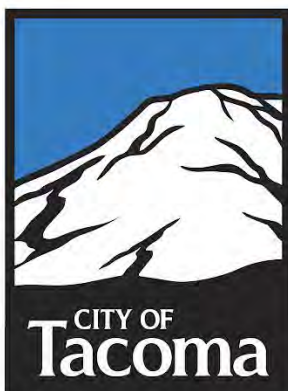
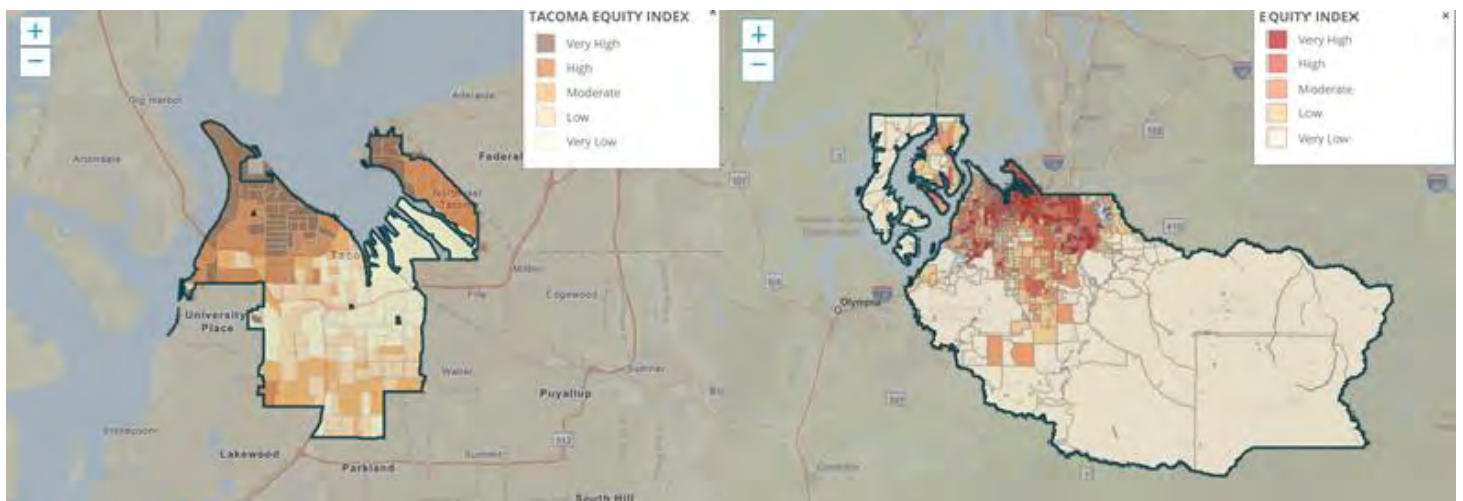
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Tacoma and Pierce County Equity Index

User Guide and FAQs

Updated: November 4, 2021



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Tacoma's Equity Index

The Equity Index is an interactive tool that visually highlights disparities in Tacoma. It uses 29 data points sorted into five determinant categories to determine where community members are not able to access services or where services do not meet community needs. It is one of the primary tools that City staff, partners, and other decision makers use to help ensure they are making data-informed decisions to improve access to opportunity for all community members. Below you can access the open version of the Equity Index and jump into the data yourself.

Equity and Tacoma 2025

Tacoma 2025 represents our community's vision for Tacoma's future. With defined indicators and other ways to measure progress, it is a plan that guides where the City of Tacoma – as both a local government organization and a community – is going over the next 10 years. The Equity Index is part of our strategy to connect the City's strategic goals, council priorities, department initiatives, and other assessments to implement the community's vision.

Determinant Categories

The 29 indicators for each of the five determinant categories of the index (Accessibility, Economy, Education, Livability, and Environmental Health) were meticulously and collaboratively chosen. To create the calculations behind Tacoma Equity Index, we collaborated with the Kirwan Institute to select an array of community indicators of well-being, each of which has been shown in the social sciences literature to influence one's ability to succeed in life. The data for these indicators were collected at or aggregated to the Census Block Group level, and roll up to the overall Equity Index into a single measure based on several factors that can be compared across the city.

Data Limitations and Diving Deeper

Part of the value of building an opportunity index is identifying the most accurate sources of data available. This can be a tedious process, but creating an opportunity index with the most accurate information at the most detailed geographic level will ensure confidence in the mapping products. However, another essential part of this process is recognizing the available dataset's limitations and moving forward. Perfect data rarely exists; though we care about understanding margins of error, confidence intervals, and collection methodologies, recognizing and accepting data shortcomings is part of the process.

Once the maps reveal high and low opportunity areas, we caution against a shallow analysis on the data and what the maps show when thinking through policy, investment, or program implications. For example, areas that show up as high opportunities should not be regarded as not needing any investment, as a deeper dive for example may show they have great natural amenities, but lack employment opportunities. Relying solely on the quantitative-based data used in the maps is not enough to make investment decisions. It is dependent on us to dive deeper into this data and tell a compelling story as to why a policy and/or program is the right one to address inequities in that area of Tacoma.



Appendix 1: Frequently Asked Questions

What is the Equity Index?

The Equity Index is a mapping tool that shows us where there are areas of higher opportunity and where there are areas of lower opportunity. This mapping tool allows us to see where we should focus effort and resources to improve outcomes and support equitable outcomes in our city. The index is built off of 29 social, economic, and environmental indicators (or data points) across the goal areas of Tacoma 2025, the City's strategic plan. This methodology is mirrored in the Pierce County Index, with some variations to the method of data collection and data used.

Why did the City create an Equity Index?

Achieving equity in our community is essential to our mission, both as a City government and as a city at large. The Tacoma community has consistently made it clear that equity and racial justice need to be prioritized, including through doing equity analyses of programs and policies at the City of Tacoma. This guidance helped establish the goals and analysis to create the Equity Index.

Working to achieve equity requires tools and skills that allow us to better understand the outcomes and conditions across our community, identify where focused effort and resources are needed, and taking action. Using data such as the Equity Index is an essential tool in taking those steps and making equity real.

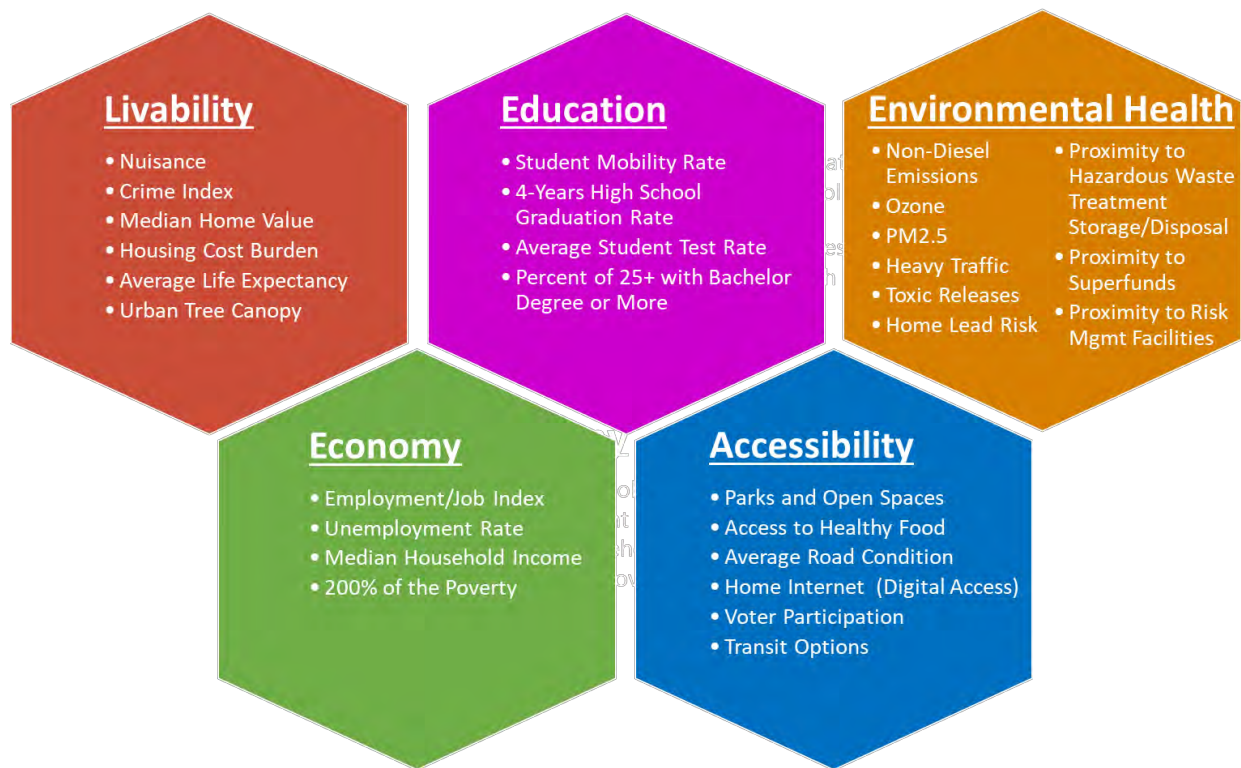
How did the City create the Equity Index?

Working with Ohio State University's Kirwan Institute of Race and Social Justice, the City compiled the Equity Index to help facilitate data-driven decision-making processes to better focus resources and plan funding of programs and services to minimize inequities and maximize opportunities.

Data based decision making is an important part of Tacoma's framework, and being able to overlay data with the color-coded geographic equity index helps us to direct more resources to areas of the city that need it most.

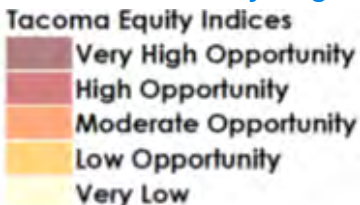
The indicators displayed in the Equity Index have been shown to have a direct correlation to equity based on research by the Kirwan Institute. Below you can see the five categories of data, and the current indicators under each one.





TACOMA EQUITY INDEX INDICATORS

What does Very High or Very Low Opportunity mean?



Very High Opportunity represents locations that have better outcomes because of access to better opportunities to succeed and excel in life. These better outcomes include things like high performing schools, access to adequate transportation, safe neighborhoods, livable wage employment, good health outcomes such as higher life

expectancies, and safe and healthy environmental conditions. In contrast, Low Opportunity areas have worse outcomes because they have more obstacles and barriers to opportunity within the area. These communities have limited access to institutional and societal investments that limit their quality of life.





Tacoma Community Forestry

The Intersection of Trees, Equity, and Human Health

City of Tacoma, Urban Forestry

June 9, 2021

Trees Matter

Across a city, trees along streets and alleyways, in parks, open spaces, backyards, and business districts make up an "urban forest". Tacoma's urban forest is a valuable asset that, if maintained and expanded, will continue to add to the health of our community for generations to come. We are all under One Canopy and benefit from the proper care and enhancement of the trees in Tacoma. Together, we can improve the wellbeing of our community and environment by finding ways to increase access to the benefits of trees for all community members. In short, Tacoma's Urban Forestry program aims to facilitate the connection between people, trees, and the natural environment, while building community.

Planting and caring for trees makes a difference, and there are many ways to get involved with our community forest. From participating in tree planting incentive programs, to simply having a conversation with your family or neighbors about the benefits of trees - it all cultivates a healthier future.



Research has proven that people living closest to trees receive the most benefits of having them around. These benefits include everything from cleaning the air we breathe, reducing the temperature during the hot summer, reducing flooding, improving water quality, and even making our community safer. To put it simply, having trees directly affects the quality of life for people living in a city.



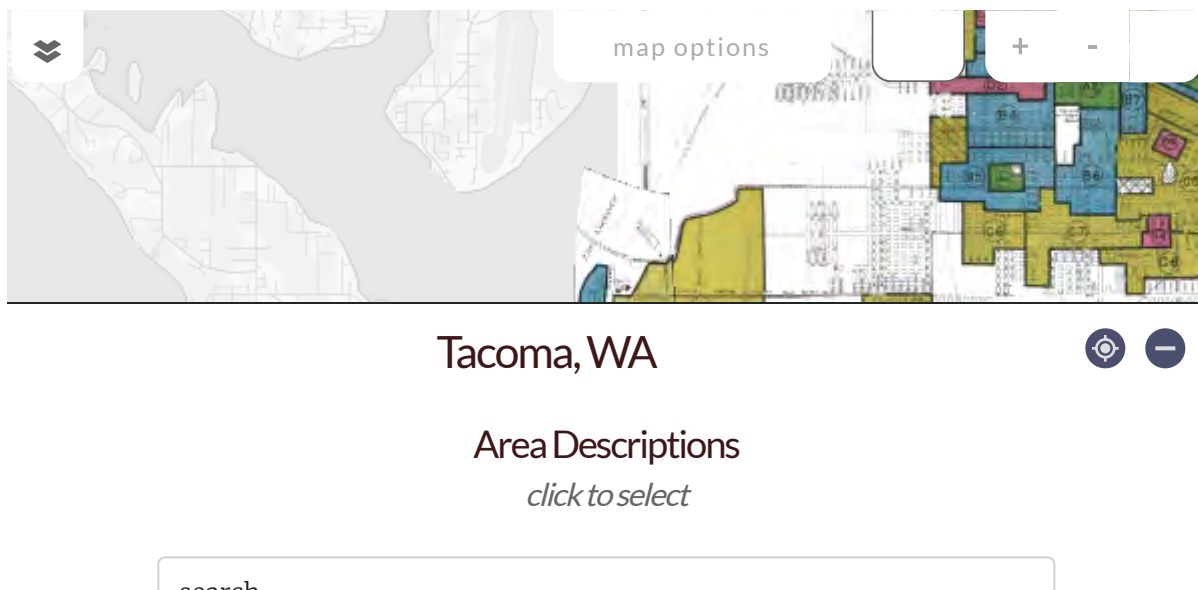
Tree planting and care provides jobs, builds community, and improves quality of life in Tacoma. Washington Conservation Corps members (left) and community volunteers (right) planted trees in public spaces on Green Tacoma Day 2020.

Equity Matters

Tacoma, like many American cities, struggles with a history of inequitable policy and investment which to this day impacts quality of life - including access to green space. Today's challenges stem from a long history of racism, including the housing policies put in place during the 1940s' New Deal America. Below, you can explore Tacoma's history of "redlining". The Redlining maps

justified, to those in power at the time, unequal treatment of Black, Indigenous, People of Color (BIPOC), and immigrant communities. Redlining especially affected where BIPOC community members were allowed to live, what schools they could attend, and what services their neighborhood would receive - all of which have a continued legacy today. Through the use of Geographic Information Systems (GIS), overlaying built infrastructure and natural environmental maps, we can see that trees and supporting infrastructure (like planting strips) were not often provided in redlined neighborhoods.

Mapping Inequality



This Mapping Inequality map was created through a collaboration of three teams at four universities, including the University of Richmond, Virginia Tech, the University of Maryland, and Johns Hopkins University. To find out more information about this project, visit the [Mapping Inequality website](#).

Today, there are a myriad of factors affecting the opportunity for people to thrive in Tacoma, many of which stem from the original redlining of Tacoma. The City of Tacoma has developed the [Equity/ Opportunity Index](#) as a tool to help policy makers, local organizations, and community members alike make informed decisions about how to best serve Tacoma's overburdened and underserved communities. This Equity/ opportunity Index builds off of Tacoma's redlined history with many new data points

(determinants), and assesses the continued impacts to services and community needs today



Proctor business district (left) – rated “still desirable” by the redlining map looks and feels very different than South Tacoma Way (right) – which was rated “definitely declining” at the same time on the redlining map.

Redlining affected the livability of neighborhoods and the opportunity for communities to thrive in Tacoma. Access to green space is a big part of the livability of a city like Tacoma. While the change from green space to hard surfaces (buildings, parking lots, roadways) often accompanies development, drastic change to pavement is not impossible. It is possible to maintain or regain access to green space in Tacoma's neighborhoods while supporting density and development. Explore the following maps to see how Tacoma's measured opportunity (Equity/ Opportunity Index) is related to access to green space and paved/ impervious surface.

Takoma Park, Maryland



Takoma Park City Profile on Racial Equity

Takoma Park, Maryland, a Washington, DC suburb of 17,600 people, recognizes that racial inequities have become institutionalized in the policy and practices of many agencies. To ensure their city works for all its residents, Mayor Kate Stewart and the city council committed to address racial equity proactively and deliberately as part of its decision-making process. This city is working toward dismantling institutionalized racism to ensure a vibrant, inclusive, equitable and healthy community for all city residents.

Beginning in 2016, the mayor and council began hearing from several sources in Maryland about efforts to advance racial equity in municipalities. After hearing a presentation from the National League of Cities and its Race, Equity And Leadership (REAL) director at the Maryland Municipal League conference, Mayor Stewart worked with a few other council members to explore ways the city could proactively adopt a racial equity framework to apply to the city's decision-making process. Following that, Mayor Stewart made a commitment to address the impacts of institutional racism that have created disparities in outcomes for people of color in the city.

Creating a Racial Equity Impact Statement

Based on a growing understanding of how inequities have become embedded throughout government institutions, the city council began efforts to embed an intentional focus on racial equity into the day to day business and decision making of the council and city departments. "Diversity is about numbers but to make sure we are truly inclusive takes ongoing work, including recognizing the history of racism in our country and how racial inequities have become institutionalized in the policies and practices of many agencies,



Downtown Takoma Park where residents gather for their farmer's market and other festivals.

governmental and others," Mayor Stewart said.

Working closely with REAL, Mayor Stewart made racial equity a priority at the annual planning retreat for city council members and department heads in January 2017. REAL facilitated workshops on racial equity and encouraged participants to identify tools to help the council address the city's issues. This move helped the council think strategically about incorporating racial equity into the city's guiding priorities and to discuss the adoption of a racial equity framework.

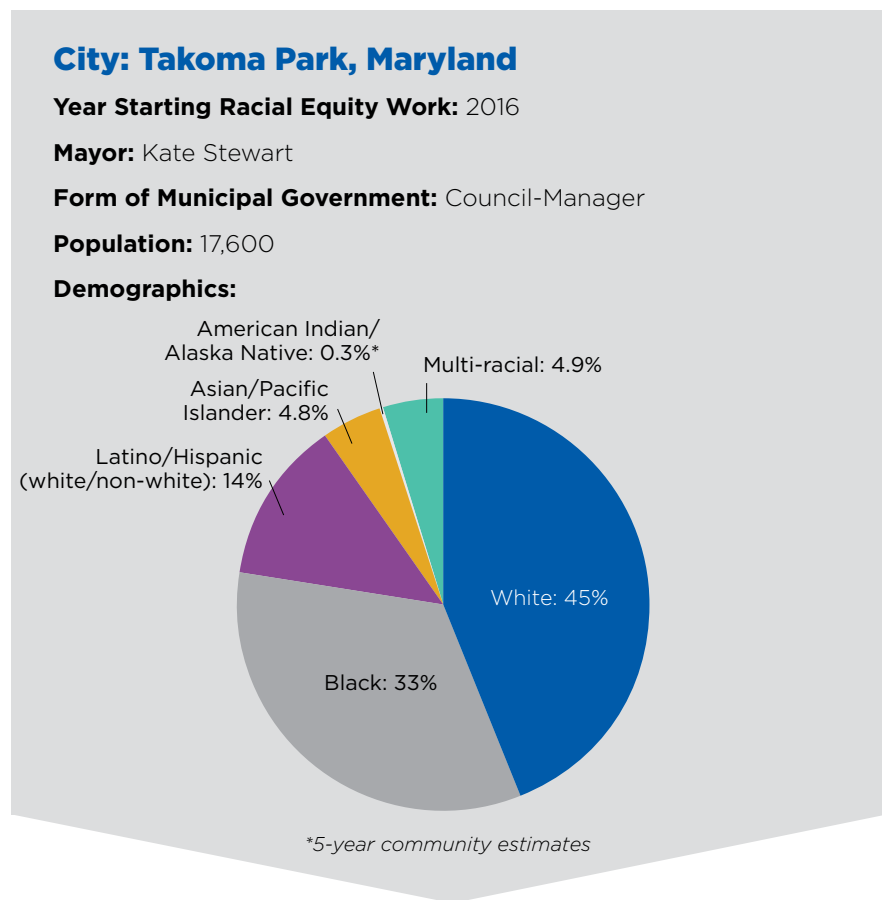
The council committed to applying a racial equity lens to government decisions by creating

a permanent spot on their council meeting agenda for a "Racial Equity Impact Statement." This statement, like the council's Fiscal Impact Statement, will prompt councilmembers to discuss how an agenda item will have an adverse impact on Takoma Park residents. The statement serves to push the council to consider the disparate consequences of all policies, even those that are seemingly neutral, and determine whether they are contributing to racial inequities. The city council adopted the Racial Equity Impact Statement through a resolution in April of 2017. As a result of the racial equity impact statement, the council has had more opportunities to think

about the way in which routine city functions are performed. For instance, at a council meeting, an examination of the way city officials and staff work with the state highway administration to address road maintenance yielded a new plan to meet regularly and review information from a number of sources, rather than waiting for residents to complain. This strategy will address racial inequities as communities of color, for many reasons, are less likely to issue complaints.

One challenge the city has encountered in preparing its racial equity impact statement is access to sufficient data that is broken down by race and ethnicity. As a smaller city, the information available from the US Census Bureau's American Community Survey can be less useful. The city looks to address this as it gears up to conduct its first community-wide survey in almost five years. City leaders are looking at adding questions that capture some of the data on how residents experience city services, which will help them to be able to assess the equity impacts. The city was initially concerned that asking questions about residents' race and ethnicity would be off-putting, due to an assumed "race-blind" orientation, but believe differently now of the value and need for accurate information that does not obscure disparate impacts by race.

To begin applying a racial equity lens to the city's policy analysis, the council and city manager are examining disparities in use of city services and corresponding budget allocations. The council decided to restructure the recreation department and library programs based on its extensive use by residents of color. In the next fiscal year, these departments



will see an increase in staff positions and budget allocations, to improve the quality of services.

Making Racial Equity a Priority Across the Entire City

The city has made it a priority to equip city staff with tools to examine the disparate racial impacts of their work. Five councilmembers, three police captains, two community development managers and all city department heads participated in a joint racial equity training. The training is a starting point which will help the city build a shared understanding and shared language, allowing them to better align their work.

"It is essential that issues of racial equity be addressed proactively and deliberately to ensure the

decision-making benefits our whole community. If policies and programs do not work for some groups in our city that means they do not work for our city overall," said Mayor Stewart.

Takoma Park is demographically diverse with most of the population being people of color, but many city leaders have expressed concerns that civic engagement opportunities have often excluded residents of color. The city has prioritized engaging their constituents of color more intentionally and gaining buy-in from residents of all backgrounds. The mayor and community members have participated in Seeking Educational Equity and Diversity (SEED) trainings facilitated by local residents to challenge them to acknowledge systems of power and privilege



and use their capability to push for change.

Sustaining Awareness and Community Buy-In for Racial Equity

The city council and the mayor's blogs are one-way local leaders are raising awareness to residents about the history of inequity. Mayor Stewart and the city council are also taking advantage of their monthly coffee hours to reframe community issues through a racial equity lens. The usual dialogue with community members is supplemented with the opportunity to provide residents

with a thorough understanding of how structural racism has impacted Takoma Park.

Boards and commissions are important opportunities for community members to influence government decisions in Takoma Park. The council is looking to use these structures to build a larger base of residents of color who can serve as leaders. To support this, they are exploring opportunities to secure funding for community members from marginalized populations to participate in future trainings and adopt a racial equity framework for their work with communities.

Summary: Takoma Park

1 Tackling Racial Inequities in a Small City: As a city of 17,600, Takoma Park is one of the few small cities to tackle racial inequities through leadership from the mayor and city council.

2 Prioritizing Racial Equity on City Council: Implementing the use of a racial equity impact statement for each item on the council agenda has helped the council prioritize racial equity in each of its meetings.

3 Building a Racial Equity Data Resource: A small city without extensive resources, Takoma Park has recognized the challenge of assessing disparate racial impact without sufficient data and is addressing this issue by disseminating its own community survey.



City of Takoma Park
Housing and Community Development Department:

Racial Equity Project Profile- Bus Stop Improvements.

Date: February 26, 2021

Staff Contact: Jamee Ernst

City Website Link: <https://takomaparkmd.gov/government/housing-and-community-development/planning-and-community-development/bus-stop-improvements/>

Project Goal

- Prioritize the installation of bus shelters at stops based on ridership, racial equity, climate impact, cost, and safety criteria and funding availability.

Project Description

- The City of Takoma Park initiated a comprehensive effort to update, inventory, and improve all bus stops in the City in order to encourage bus ridership and use of public transportation.

City Council Priorities

- A Livable Community for All

Racial Equity Considerations Submitted to City Council

- Demographic surveys conducted by Metrobus indicate that bus riders in the region are disproportionately people of color, particularly in comparison to Metrorail riders. Improving access to and amenities at bus stops could improve the transportation experience for all users of the City's public transportation network.

Racial Equity Toolkit Questions

What does data tell us about who is likely be impacted by the project? What data sources are you using and are there any data gaps?

A: The Planning Division used American Community Survey census block tracts data and WMATA RideOn ridership data to create proxy measures for ridership by race and ethnicity and provide context for highest ridership areas.

It would be nice to have demographic information by individual bus line, but WMATA does not track that information. It would also be great to know ridership data by individual line and complete trip data with boarding and disembarkments, as well as the dates the bus shelters were installed.

Previously, there was no representation of the quality of bus shelters or data visualization of ridership; this project filled in that data gap.

What is your community engagement strategy for this project? How will you use community feedback to avoid unintended consequences?

A: Before this project, bus shelter improvements were largely complaint-based – rather than deciding where to invest proactively based on data, improvements were made where the interested parties were most vocal. Complaint-based, reactive systems don't necessarily reflect the whole community, particularly when communities of color are not always able to articulate their needs or community engagement is an undue burden due to work and family commitments.

This data-driven project helps Council decide where to invest; it replaces complaint-based community feedback with community feedback derived from data patterns. This makes bus improvements more systematic and based on areas of high ridership rather than public outcry.

How are you evaluating the success of this project?

A: The success of this bus shelter inventory was measured by the goal of having all of the relevant data in one place and publicly available, for any resident to access. The mapped data shows where improvements will be made and why they are necessary so that City Council can make informed decisions.

Another measure of success is how many bus shelters are installed, but that depends on funding availability. One bus shelter has already been installed at Ethan Allen and New Hampshire Avenues, Thanks to this project, Council has focus ADA funding around high ridership bus stops so that shelters can be installed (the stop needs to be

ADA accessible before new bus shelters can be installed. This budget allocation shows Council follow-through on the January resolution on bus shelter improvements that was informed by this project. Moving Council priorities forward was another measure of success for this project.

How might a successful project advance racial equity in Takoma Park, in a sustainable way?

A: This project helped define Council's criteria for where to install bus shelters: ridership, racial equity, climate impact, cost, and safety. Those criteria are incorporated into a Council resolution that sets policy on bus shelter improvements for the foreseeable future. It has helped shift the policy conversation away from small, vocal groups to an comprehensive look at where the most need is City-wide. You may have one vocal household asking their Councilperson for a bus shelter in one area, but 89 people standing out in the rain in another area who have not reached out to City government. The set of criteria helps eliminate that problem in deciding where to invest and how to prioritize when

Report Back!

Project Outcome & Racial Equity Impact

TBD, this project is still ongoing.

Next Steps:

What were the challenges of this project? What further action and resources are needed?

A: The Planning Division is working on ADA improvements in high priority locations. The bus shelter vendor (who installs them for free in exchange for advertising) will not install until the area is ADA accessible.

Introduced by: Councilmember Kostiuk

CITY OF TAKOMA PARK, MARYLAND

RESOLUTION 2020-2

BUS SHELTER PLAN AND PRIORITIZATION

WHEREAS, in Resolution 2019-15, Council resolved to “consider opportunities for reducing Green House Gas (GHG) emissions in the transportation sector through local initiatives and collaboration region-wide,” and transportation contributes 46% of GHG emissions in Takoma Park, according to the City’s Green House Gas Inventory (2017); and

WHEREAS, research shows that improving public transit amenities by installing bus shelters results in increased ridership due to factors of comfort, convenience and safety; and

WHEREAS, increased use of public transit would reduce the number of single-occupancy vehicles on the road, thereby reducing GHG in the City; and

WHEREAS, Council is committed to considering their work through a racial equity lens, and bus riders in the region are disproportionately people of color; and

WHEREAS, the City staff has identified the need to make improvements to bus stops as a means of enhancing alternative transportation options, and highlighting bus shelters as an infrastructure improvement to help address broader Council goals.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF TAKOMA PARK, MARYLAND THAT the Council seeks to install more bus shelters throughout the City. Council directs staff to move forward on installation of bus shelters throughout the City as funds and staff time permit, with the following criteria: ridership (30 or more boarding per day), racial equity, climate impact, cost and safety.

Adopted this 22nd day of January, 2020.

ATTEST:

Jessie Carpenter, CMC
City Clerk



Oakland tries a new way to prioritize city improvement projects: by considering equity

[Katey Rusch](#) on May 14, 2019

Rows of people sway together during a lunchtime Tai Chi session at Lincoln Square Recreation Center. Not a space is left in the full-size gym. “In and out,” the instructor chants, reminding the practitioners to breathe as they try to avoid colliding with each other and the walls.

“It’s like this every day,” says Gilbert Gong, the center’s longtime director, referring to the size of Friday’s crowd as he surveys the attendees. In the corner of the gym, he stops to look at something else. He pulls back a piece of red paper held in place by masking tape. Behind it is a dark hole full of dry-rotted wood. “This is the problem,” says Gong, pointing to the wet interior.

Gong says he’s been asking the City of Oakland for funding for improvements to this municipal facility ever since he transferred here 20 years ago. For decades, Gong says, the center has been “layering Band-aids”—fixing small issues but not addressing the larger issue, which is that they need a new building. “If we fix the roof, we still have the electrical issues. We still have the plumbing issues,” says Gong. “We can’t meet the demands of the community.”

Every year, he says, he’s been told it’s not the center’s turn. But this year is different: Now his center is at the front of the line, thanks in part to a new method the city is using to determine which facilities get money for major repairs.

The ceiling in the lobby of Lincoln Square Recreation Center is tearing in places. For the first time ever, Oakland city officials are considering a new question when deciding which capital improvement projects (CIP) to fund: Is the project equitable? In other words, will the proposed renovation to a city facility serve an underserved community? To answer that question, city staff spent the last year and a half developing a new scorecard to rank proposed projects. The scorecard incorporates

traditional criteria like whether the project is state-mandated and how soon construction can begin, but the criteria that carries the most weight is equity.

The idea originated with Oakland's Department of Race and Equity, a two-person team whose sole focus is to reduce race-based disparities in Oakland. The department started with just Director Darlene Flynn in 2016. Analyst Jacque Larrainzar joined in 2017, and this February the department hired another assistant. Since its inception, the group has been working with every city department to try to infuse the principle of equity into government through hosting trainings, attending other departments' meetings, serving on advisory boards and just talking with decision makers one-on-one about what equity looks like.

"When we don't center equity, inequity happens," says Larrainzar. In other words, when city officials don't make a conscious effort to address resource disparities among racial groups, those with more continue to get more. Those with less never catch up.

One of their primary contributions was the [Equity Indicators Report](#). Released last July, the report compiled existing data to show disparities between white people and people of color in Oakland. The 160-page report was done by the Department of Race and Equity staff along with data scientists at City University of New York (CUNY). The data highlighted a number of disparities: black students are most likely to be suspended and black residents are more likely to be homeless. It also showed that the quality of parks in minority communities—specifically City Council District 7 in East Oakland—is worse than parks in other areas of the city. Bathrooms are either locked or not working, gang graffiti covers structures and fences and, in some cases, parents note they are afraid to bring their children to the park.

Motivated by the report and inspired by the department's work, in 2017 Elliot Karl—an Oakland Department of Transportation staffer—worked to develop the methods to make equity a priority in the 2019 budget cycle. He offered a method the city could use to assess funding equity in a tangible way: a scorecard. (Karl is adamant that he cannot take credit for the entire idea, emphasizing that the final scorecard was the product of a team of Oakland city staffers. What he did was explicitly call out equity considerations within multiple elements of the scorecard.)

"The big change wasn't whether or not they cared about equity. It was whether there was a systemic way to track how projects ranked," says Karl, speaking by phone from Chicago. (Karl no longer works for the city; he left the transportation department last summer to attend graduate school.)

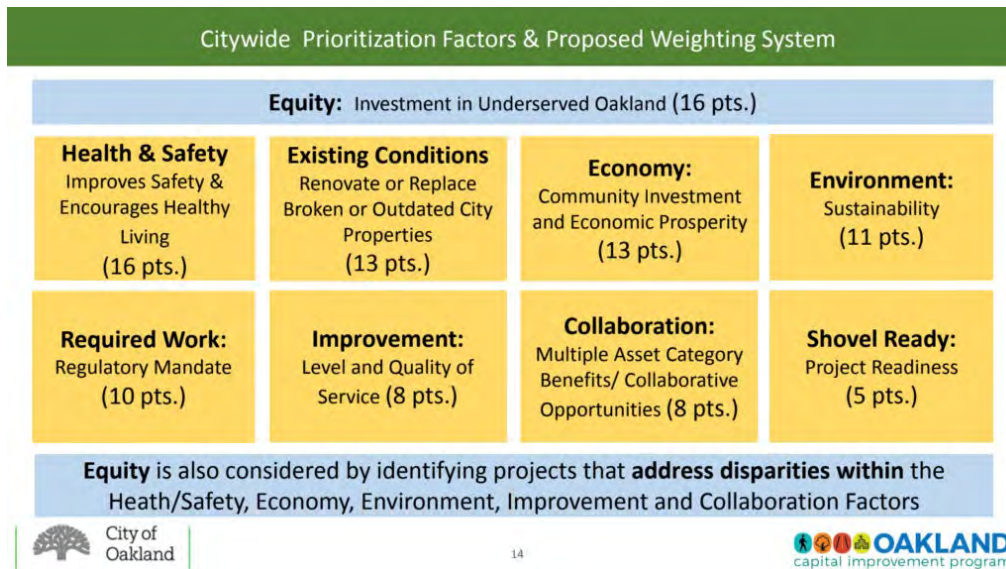
Larrainzar loved the idea. “This was an opportunity to not only show how equity could work within the city, but also in the community,” she says. She felt it was an opportunity to help Oaklanders understand the nuances of the city’s budget process, something she believes is “kind of obscure to people.”

Oakland’s budget is split into two parts: the general fund and capital improvements. Staffers like to think of the general fund as the city’s checking account. This is the pot of funding that pays for regular expenses like city workers’ salaries, and electricity and maintenance for city buildings. On the other hand, capital improvements are funded by something that’s more like a city’s savings account. These are irregular, one-time expenses that cover things like making major improvements to the roads, sewer systems or city-owned facilities like the Lincoln Square Recreation Center. These expenses are part of a biennial budget approved by the city council every other June.

In the past, the city prioritized projects based on what Karl calls “standard criteria” that included answering questions like: Is the city required by state law to do this project? Will the city be sued if officials don’t fix it? Has the city already been sued? Is the project “shovel-ready”—that is, can the city begin construction immediately, or are there other planning steps that need to happen before any work can start?

While city staff, including Karl and Larrainzar, agree that these criteria are important, they do not address inequities. “That’s why those disparities just keep widening and widening and widening,” says Larrainzar.

But under the new process, staff are taking additional criteria into consideration. They added five new items: health and safety (does the project encourage a better lifestyle?); existing conditions (how out-of-date is the current infrastructure?); economy (will this project bring jobs and money into the community?); environment (does this project contribute to climate change?); and equity. Equity is the biggest factor on its own, and the concept is baked into the other five factors, but it can be boiled down to this: Does this project aid an underserved community, such as immigrants, single parents or minority groups?



This is the scorecard the City of Oakland used to rank each proposed capital improvement project in this year’s budget cycle. Graphic courtesy City of Oakland.

Along with a few older sets of criteria, all of this adds up to one big 100-point scorecard. Each item is given a different point value, with equity and health and safety ranking the highest—16 points each. Existing conditions and economy are worth 13 points each. Environment and required work (an older criteria) are worth 10 points. Improvement (what’s the quality of service now?) and collaboration (will this serve multiple groups?) are worth eight points. Being shovel-ready is worth five points.

Karl did not come up with the scorecard on his own. The final formula was developed by the Capital Improvement Program Working Group (CIPWG) along with members of the community. The working group included city staff primarily from the Department of Transportation and the Department of Public Works, but also a variety of city staffers including Larrainzar. Last summer, the group asked for help from residents. According to staff, the group held four large-scale meetings and 24 community-specific meetings. The group also conducted a survey, asking 1,350 residents to rank their top criteria. The current scorecard is a direct result of that survey.

In addition to using the new scorecard, the city also is changing the way the requests for funding are made. In the past, CIP staffers from two city departments—Transportation and Public Works—requested and compiled proposed projects from every other city department. Staffers from departments like Human Services, Parks and Recreation, and Fire would turn in their proposals. Residents could not suggest a project proposal of their own; they could only

<https://oaklandnorth.net/2019/05/14/oakland-tries-a-new-way-to-prioritize-city-improvement-projects-by-considering-equity/>

advocate for or against one of these suggested projects during the public comment portions of city council meetings. According to Flynn, the only way people could get a neighborhood project funded was if they convinced a city department or councilmember to recommend that project for funding.

“We don’t want a system that relies solely on political connection. We want a system that everybody can put their stuff in,” said Flynn.

The new process allows community members to submit proposals directly to the Department of Public Works. In October, residents had a 30-day window to file a request. According to Sean Maher—the spokesperson for both the Oakland Department of Public Works and Department of Transportation—community members submitted 285 proposals.

Through a separate process, that fall city department staffers also submitted 287 requests to staff in both the Department of Public Works and the Department of Transportation, as they had in the past. In November, the Department of Public Works and Transportation started considering each proposal. This time, they put the new scorecard to the test.

Oakland officials have released scores for 175 of the proposed projects. The proposal to build a new \$238 million main library in Oakland scored the highest: 81 out of 100. Fixing recreation centers also ranked high. Arroyo Viejo Recreation Center in deep East Oakland—which needs a \$14.5 million overhaul—scored 67.2. Brookdale Recreation Center—where staffers are hoping for a \$10 million expansion project—scored 63.00. Lincoln Square Recreation Center scored the highest of any recreation center and fifth overall: 73.50.

The two lowest-scoring projects recommended focused on the Oakland Museum of California. A \$567,010 proposal for museum improvements scored 0, and seismic improvements to the museum’s collection center scored 21.5.

Lincoln Square Recreation Center Director Gilbert Gong said the center’s leaky roof caused this water damage in his office.

Now it’s up to Oakland’s elected officials to decide which projects will get funded. That process will play out over the next several weeks. The Oakland City Council began its budget process last Tuesday when staff from the Department Public Works presented their recommendations to the council. The department recommended the council fund 47 projects, totalling \$192 million. The department

<https://oaklandnorth.net/2019/05/14/oakland-tries-a-new-way-to-prioritize-city-improvement-projects-by-considering-equity/>

did not just recommend the top-scoring projects, but a variety of high-scoring projects, most of which received more than 50 points.

When asked via email, Maher said the recommendations are based on “funding constraints.” He said that certain funding sources can only be used in certain ways. For example, the museum project is funded by money that can only be used for seismic improvements.

The council is set to discuss whether to fund these recommended projects at a city council meeting on June 10.

So far, the scorecard is garnering praise from several community groups. Francis Calpotura, the executive director for In-a(d)vance—a non-profit group that helps community organizations expand their outreach—says the scorecard is “the first example from the city that shows and reflects that commitment to equity.”

However, he says the rollout of the process “leaves much to be desired.” His organization has been working closely with the Sobrante Park Resident Action Council, a neighborhood group in East Oakland.

Sylvia Brooks, a member of the council, says she had no idea the city was soliciting residents for proposals. “It’s been neglected for so long by the city,” said Brooks of the neighborhood she’s lived in since 1995. “We’re almost the lost child of the city.”

Calpotura said city officials need to reach people like Brooks to consider their outreach “robust.” He suggests instead of reaching out through Neighborhood Crime Prevention Council (NCPC) groups, they should broaden their scope to include the most active community groups in neighborhoods—NCPCs or not. “Oakland is full of organizations that actually have deep roots in communities, and their residents and those organization have to be tapped,” said Calpotura.

Maher agrees that outreach needs to improve next time, especially in East Oakland. Of the four large-scale community meetings in June, only seven people attended the meeting in East Oakland, compared to the roughly 40 people who attended each of the three other meetings in West Oakland, downtown and in the Dimond neighborhood.

“There’s a lot of reason for East Oaklanders to not believe the government. They’ve been disappointed at pretty much every turn,” said Maher. “My top priority is getting better at talking to East Oakland, getting better at listening to East Oakland.”

Larrainzar believes when the city goes through the process of approving the budget in 2021, engagement will be better. Her concern right now is whether using the new scorecard will actually start to address disparities among Oakland neighborhoods. “There’s always that possibility—especially because no one has really done it this way,” says Larrainzar.

She and others in the city believe this is the first time a municipal government is using equity as a criteria in the budget process. Since the rollout, she and other department members have been asked to speak about it at professional conferences, like the American Planning Association’s Conference, which was held in Oakland last month.

While she is not aware of whether any other cities are actively working to implement their own equity scorecard, she is confident the idea is making “waves.” According to Flynn, that’s the goal: “To bring about serious systematic change.” But first, staff need to know if the method is effective in Oakland.

“There’s a lot of eyes on it and a lot of pressure. But even if it doesn’t work, it’s better than what we had,” says Larrainzar.

Lincoln Square Recreation Center director Gilbert Gong explains that nearly every event at his center is full, including the daily, two-hour Tai Chi session. For the staff and participants at Lincoln Recreation Center, the new scorecard offers a chance that their facility will finally get funding. “Lincoln has been up there bidding its time,” says Gong.

At 11:30 a.m. on a Friday, the center is still buzzing. Seniors are finishing Chinese orchestra practice, lunch is being prepared in the kitchen and kids from the nearby elementary school play outside on the basketball courts. Inside, Gong points out one last feature: his office. It’s packed with papers—flyers and summer camp sign-up sheets—but in the corner he’s saved space for one bright green plant. Above it is a baseball-sized hole in the ceiling.

“The plant waters itself,” says Gong with a chuckle. When it rains, the hole turns into a built-in watering can—a feature Gong will be more than happy to give up for a new center.

This story was updated on May 20, 2019, to add requested comments from Sean Maher about why city staffers had selected their recommendations.

FY 2021-23 ADOPTED CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM

Mayor
Libby Schaaf

Members of the City Council

Nikki Fortunato Bas (District 2)
Council President

Rebecca Kaplan (At Large)
Vice-Mayor

Dan Kalb (District 1)
Carroll Fife (District 3)
Sheng Thao (District 4)

Noel Gallo (District 5)
Loren Taylor (District 6)
Treva Reid (District 7)

City Administrator
Edward D. Reiskin



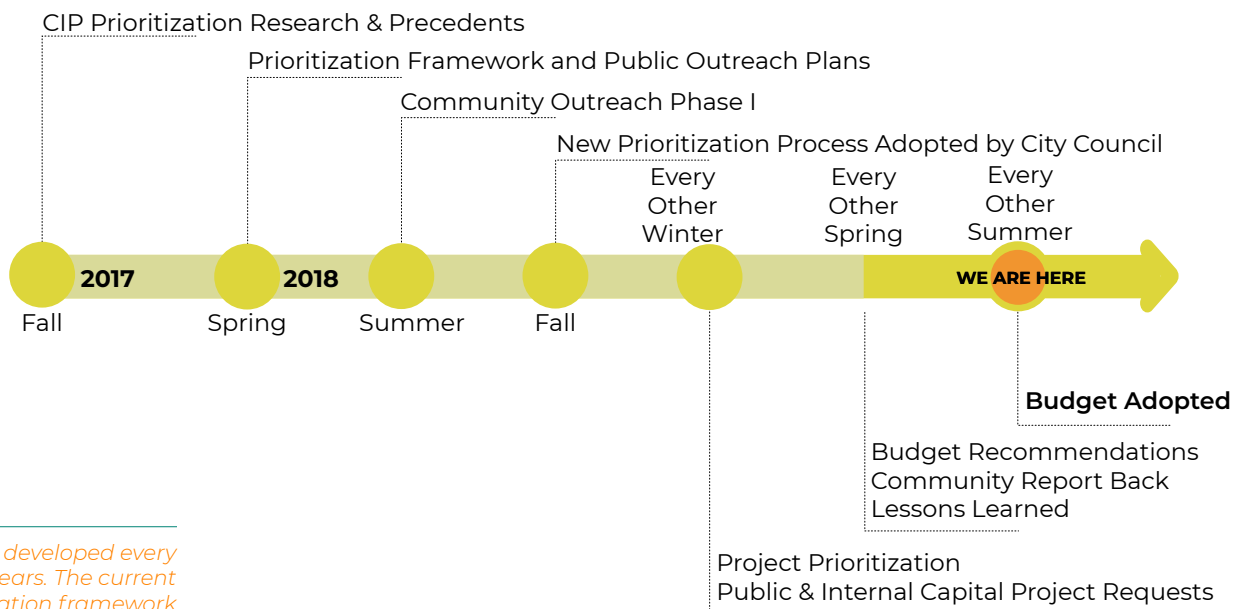


INTRODUCTION

The City of Oakland's Capital Improvement Program (CIP) guides the City's decisions regarding the construction, repair and replacement of the City's assets including libraries, public safety facilities, sewers, recreation centers and parks. Transportation and street improvements are also part of the City's CIP. The City develops a new CIP Budget every two years for inclusion in the overall City Budget, and the assets identified for repair, replacement or purchase in a budget cycle become CIP Projects.

The FY 2021-23 CIP Budget, which includes \$282.6M in investments, seeks to balance the need to repair and replace existing assets with delivering new assets where they are most needed. It represents a major investment in infrastructure and assets that reflects the overall priorities of the City and has an enormous impact on the health and vibrancy of our community. The CIP links long-range strategic plans and goals with current resources and needs. Capital projects included in a CIP are defined as any long-term investment that builds, replaces or improves an asset, such as buildings, roads, parks, traffic signals, sewers and drainage lines. CIP projects typically have a useful design life of at least ten years and a minimum cost of approximately \$100,000.

2
YEARS
\$276.5M



The CIP is developed every two years. The current prioritization framework was adopted in 2018.



POLICIES

Several policy documents guided the overall preparation of the City's CIP. These include:

- ♦ 2019 Infrastructure Bond, Approved CIP Projects (Resolution 87981 C.M.S., 2019)
- ♦ Capital Improvement Program Prioritization Process (Resolution 87376 C.M.S., 2018)
- ♦ 2017 Infrastructure Bond, Approved CIP Projects (Resolution 86773 C.M.S., 2017)
- ♦ 2016 Infrastructure Bond, Measure KK (Resolution 86335 C.M.S., 2016)
- ♦ Park Project Prioritization List (Resolution 86003 C.M.S., 2016)
- ♦ Five Year Pavement Program (Resolution 85227 C.M.S., 2014)

CIP PRIORITIZATION PROCESS

Like many older cities, Oakland has aging infrastructure and a significant backlog of deferred maintenance. Key facilities such as police and fire stations, recreation facilities, libraries and parks need to be rehabilitated or replaced. With each budget cycle, more projects are requested than the City has resources available.

The passage of Measure KK, a \$600 million infrastructure bond funding transportation, infrastructure and affordable housing, elevated public engagement and advocacy around capital investment in the City. In the recent past, a relatively small set of factors were typically considered when determining which projects moved forward and received funding. The City Council, City Administrator and Department Directors considered several determinants, such as legal and regulatory requirements and asset conditions, along with limited funding availability to determine which CIP projects would be included in a budget cycle. Moreover, the CIP process only allowed for public input during City Council meetings and hearings.

During the FY 2017-19 CIP budget process, the need for a more accessible and comprehensive approach to public input that also incorporated the mandates of the Measure KK Infrastructure Bond became apparent. The updated CIP Development Process provided a means to receive public requests for capital projects ideas. This update was facilitated by the formation of Capital Improvement Program Working Group (CIPWG) comprised of OPW, OakDOT and Department of Race & Equity (DRE) staff. The goals of this group were as follows:

- ♦ Improve the quality and consistency of Departmental and Public input on capital projects;
- ♦ Improve the transparency of the CIP prioritization/decision-making process;
- ♦ Ensure that the process is data-driven by identifying, applying and adhering to clear, well- defined and consistent factors;

- ♦ Streamline the process to improve efficiency and expenditure of staff time and resources;
- ♦ Filter physical and programmatic needs through the lens of community values and City goals

Prioritization Factors

The CIPWG reviewed available existing City documents including the Mayor and Council priority documents, General Plans and Specific Plans, Other Council adopted plans, Departmental Strategic Plans and Measure KK Guiding Principles, along with public input to formulate nine Citywide Capital Prioritization Factors. Additionally, staff researched existing CIP processes from various cities and organizations to review best practices, challenges, lessons learned, and tools/software used to manage capital improvement programs.

Based upon this review, staff proposed the use of nine factors for capital prioritization:

1) Equity, 2) Health and Safety, 3) Economy, 4) Environment, 5) Improvement, 6) Existing Conditions, 7) Shovel Ready, 8) Collaboration and 9) Required Work.

The CIPWG also categorized the City's assets into eight asset categories: Streets and Sidewalks, Mobility and Fixed Transportation Assets, Signals and Streetlighting, Building and Facilities, Parks and Open Space, Sanitary Sewer System, Storm Drainage and Watershed, and Technology.

CIP projects - both internal to City departments and those requested by the public - are scored according to the nine factors listed below. Equity is infused throughout.

Citywide Prioritization Factors and Weighting System



EQUITY Investment in underserved Oakland (16 pts.)



HEALTH & SAFETY

Improve safety and encourage healthy living
16 pts.



EXISTING CONDITIONS

Renovate or replace broken, hazardous, outdated city properties
13 pts.



ECONOMY

Benefit small businesses & create job opportunities for Oaklanders
13 pts.



ENVIRONMENT

Preserve the environment and address climate change
11 pts.



REQUIRED WORK

Address areas where city may be held financially & legally responsible
10 pts.



IMPROVEMENT

Build new and upgrade city facilities, streets, sidewalks, and public spaces
8 pts.



COLLABORATION

Combine projects to save time & money and partner with community
8 pts.



PROJECT READINESS

Ensure projects are ready to go without delay
5 pts.

EQUITY is also considered by identifying projects that **address disparities within** the Health/Safety, Existing Conditions, Economy, Environment, Improvement and Collaboration factors. These subfactors vary within Capital Assets as appropriate.

Department of Race & Equity (DRE) Guidance

Throughout 2017-2018, the Department of Race and Equity, a City department formed in 2015 to evaluate the equity implications of city programs, provided technical assistance on various elements of the prioritization process. DRE's involvement ensured the updated CIP incorporated equity in a manner that was meaningful and in alignment with City objectives, as well as including subsequent performance measures to assess equitable outcomes. The DRE was consulted at significant milestones throughout the CIP Development Process and participated on the Capital Improvement Program Advisory Committee (CIPAC) and the Outreach subcommittee. Consultations with DRE aligns the CIPWG mission and resulting Equitable CIP Prioritization Process to support racial equity goals of:

- ✦ Eliminating systemic causes of racial disparities in City Government by supporting staff to use analytical tools to identify systemic racism and create solutions to address it.
- ✦ Promote inclusion and full participation for all residents of the City through inclusive engagement strategies that give voice to communities which are underserved as the result of Structural Racism.
- ✦ Reduce race-based disparities in our communities by using data to make racial disparities visible and community input to inform and shape the prioritization factors and project recommendations for funding.

Over time, the goal of these measures is to improve conditions in areas of Oakland impacted by racial disparities.

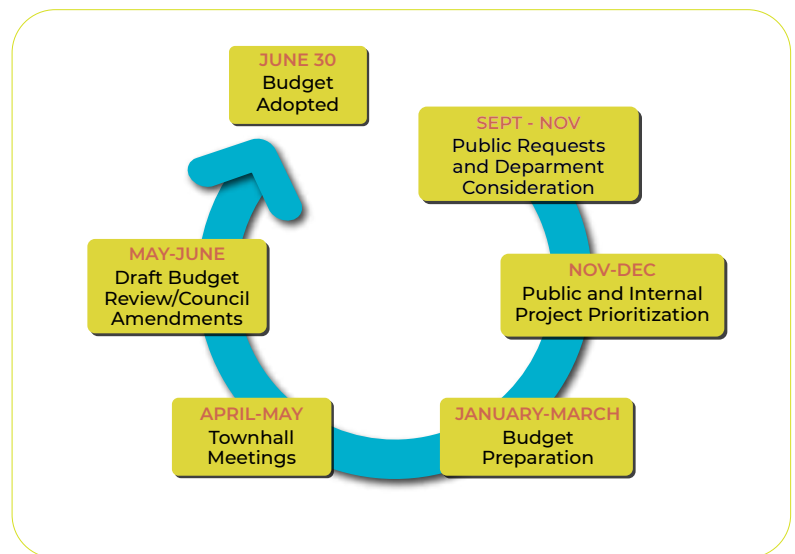


Diagram displaying the CIP development process timeline

Community Outreach

Recognizing the City's commitment to inclusive public engagement, the City dedicated a Community Outreach Coordinator to work closely with the CIPWG to foster and encourage public outreach and involvement. The CIPWG implemented public outreach in two phases. In Phase 1, through a series of community meetings and on-line and paper surveys, the City gathered community input on the CIP process, determining shared City and community values and priorities. The information collected in Phase 1 was used to weight the nine factors, resulting in a score card that is applied to proposed and existing capital projects. Phase 2 utilized the adopted factors and weighting system to develop the CIP Budget, while continuing community engagement. Public intake forms were distributed and received through the City's website, email, standard mail, and in community meetings. The public form included five simplified questions about CIP Project requests, and was translated into Vietnamese, Chinese and Spanish.

The CIP nine prioritization factors provide the framework for a robust project ranking system that is heavily weighted toward equity and results in recommendations for

funding allocations. The equity factor accounts for 16 points out of 100, one of the highest along with the health and safety factor. Not only equity is considered as a standalone factor, it is also a subfactor under six out of the nine factors, as revised in this current CIP cycle. Equity is now a subfactor under the collaboration, existing conditions, environment, health and safety, improvement and economy factors.

Collaboration with City Departments

As part of this CIP Prioritization Development Process, the CIPWG recognized the need to include other departments in the process and thus established the Capital Improvement Program Advisory Committee (CIPAC). The CIPAC consists of a representative of each City department involved with capital projects, acting as advisors, a sounding board for priority factor development and reviewing milestones from the CIPWG. The CIPAC builds internal consensus and ensures consistency with Citywide and Department values, priorities, and goals. The CIPAC also serves as the consistent point of contact regarding CIP planning and disseminates information to department management/staff. The CIPAC convenes periodically to review the CIPWG development process, schedule, factors, performance measures, asset categories, public outreach process, public outreach outcomes/summary, factor weighting, and evaluation testing.

The CIP Prioritization Process introduced during the FY 2017-19 CIP and updated for the FY 2021-23 CIP incorporates community and City values and offers additional social factors such as equity, economic opportunity and public health. This process aligns CIP investments with City values and priorities emphasizing equitable and transparent decision making.



Community engagement during Oakland's Slow Streets effort