



greenlink equity map

# PROCESS GUIDE FOR CITY-COMMUNITY COLLABORATION

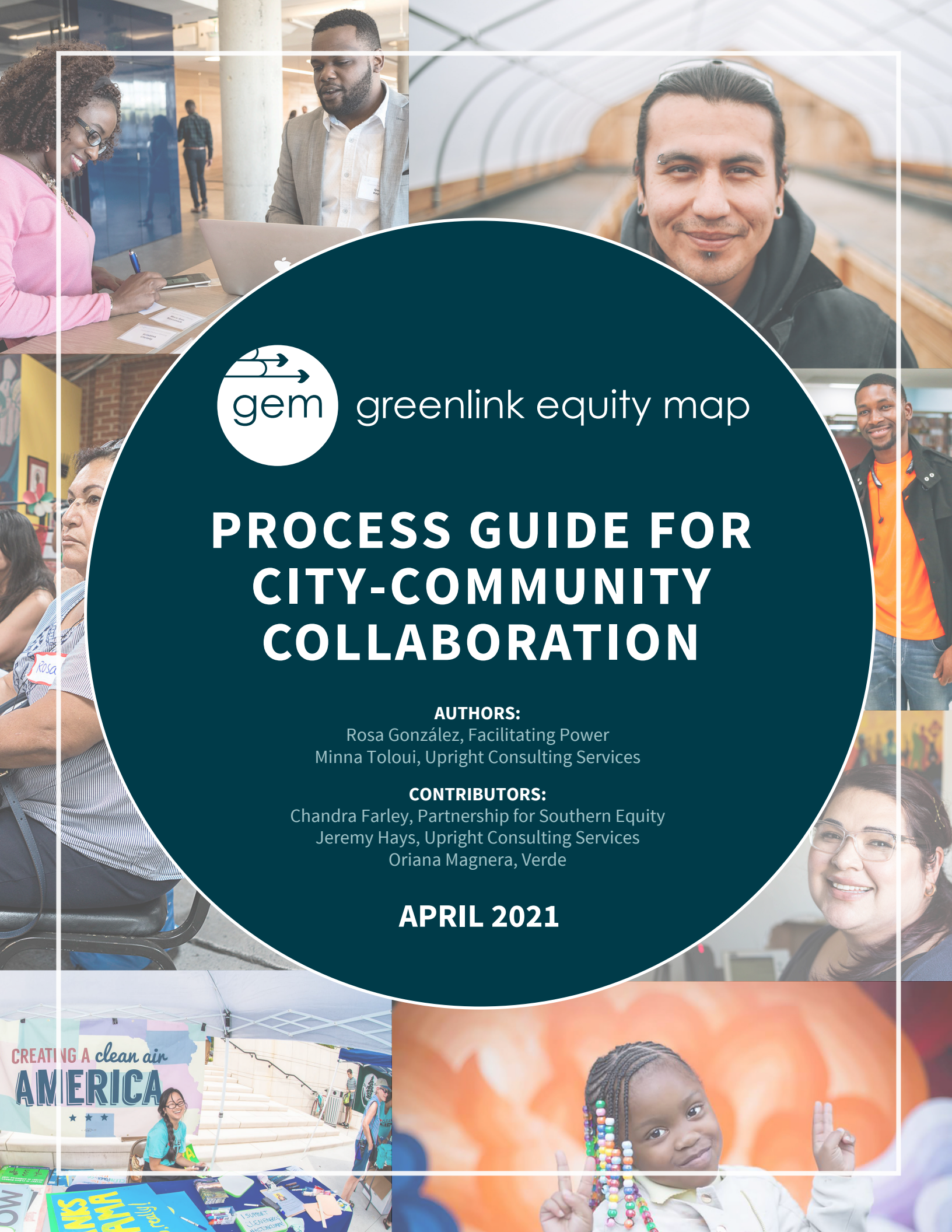
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## ABOUT THE AUTHORS

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## NATIONAL PROJECT TEAM & PROJECT BACKGROUND

The guidance outlined in this document has been developed by a team of practitioners with deep backgrounds in city government, community organizing, participatory action research, energy policy, facilitation, and climate justice action. Project team members are involved in prominent projects in the field, including Zero Cities, 100 Percent Cities, and Bloomberg Philanthropies' American Cities Climate Challenge.

The National Project Team helped develop goals and provide input on terminology, roles, process approaches, evaluation, and data collaboration for this guide. The team participated in a collaborative process of identifying and sharing experiences and lessons learned. They also provided feedback on mapping functions, display, and custom features for the Greenlink Equity Map (GEM), and advised on data accessibility for impacted communities.

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The availability of good data measuring equity, leveraged alongside the talents of skilled practitioners and community leaders working on equity issues around the country, are invaluable resources that can help us improve governance and work towards a more equitable society.

## COPYRIGHT & CREDITS

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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

OVERVIEW	3
The Greenlink Analytics Equity Map (GEM) Platform	5
Purpose of this Guide	6
How to Use this Guide	6
<b>1 FRAMING</b>	<b>7</b>
The Spectrum of Community Engagement to Ownership Tool	7
Ecosystem Approach to Regional Racial Equity	9
Collaborative Data Analysis Planning Guide	15
<b>2 PREPARATION for COLLABORATIVE DATA ANALYSIS</b>	<b>17</b>
Clarify what Equity Means and Why it is Core to Climate Action	17
Build Capacity To Engage In Equity Practice	18
Identify Impacted Communities	18
Identify Community-Based Organizations and Leaders	19
Engage Community Partners	20
Set Goals Together	22
Secure Facilitation Capacity	24
Co-Design a Process for Shared Analysis of the Data	25
<b>3 CONDUCTING COLLABORATIVE DATA ANALYSIS</b>	<b>27</b>
Essential Elements for Translating Learning into Action	27
Connection	27
Learning	29
Integration	31
Action	33
<b>4 FOLLOW-THROUGH FOR SUSTAINED ACTION</b>	<b>34</b>
Evaluation & Reflection	34
Sharing the Data (and Stories!) More Widely	38
Investing in Community Partnerships	39
<b>FINAL THOUGHTS</b>	<b>40</b>
<b>APPENDIX</b>	<b>41</b>



# OVERVIEW

**Over 100 cities across the United States have expressed the need for data-driven equity insights to inform climate and sustainability strategies.** In addition to good data to illuminate the intersection between climate strategy and racial equity, America's climate movement desperately needs better alignment and more effective collaboration between city staff and communities impacted by inequities.

While climate justice is critical to the health and sustainability of our urban centers, it is important that cities orient their governance approach towards the larger frame of racial equity and justice, which includes the climate crisis as part of a range of core issues affecting community well-being. Climate solutions that do not center racial equity can limit a city's capacity to achieve its climate goals by exacerbating harm in the communities hit first and worst by climate disasters. On the other hand, cities that partner with impacted communities to advance comprehensive racial equity strategies can accelerate climate action by identifying more realistic and effective solutions, avoiding negative impacts to our most vulnerable communities, and increasing collaborative capacity to implement solutions. The COVID-19 pandemic has illuminated the ways in which existing racial inequities complicate the impacts of disaster and require more thoughtful and comprehensive solutions. As an example, quarantine as a solution is not possible in housing-dense neighborhoods where the majority of residents are essential workers with limited access to health care and financial support. Moreover, the current ratio of public spending on law enforcement compared to public health and welfare negatively and disproportionately affects the same racial groups most deeply impacted by the pandemic, resulting in social unrest. The need for cities to prioritize racial equity and justice in all policies and programs is clearer now than ever.



Photo by Miki Jourdan

**Racial Equity** is of persistent importance across the United States, as disparities continue to cause lasting harm in our communities over generations, widening significantly since the Great Recession and recently through the disproportionate impacts of COVID-19 on Black, Indigenous, and Latinx communities. We are seeing a resurgence of righteous uprisings in every state, calling for an end to state violence, police brutality, and mass incarceration. These demands stem from the understanding that racial disparities are not natural or random. From the inception of our country, institutional racism – affecting who could vote, who could be a citizen, who could own property, and where one could live – has worked to predetermine life outcomes along racial lines. Current inequities are rooted in a historical legacy of discriminatory and violent policies and practices, as well as institutions and structures that continue to create and perpetuate these patterns, even when there is not explicit intention to do so. Racial disparities are symptoms of an uneven playing field, created by design out of multiple distinct and interlocking decisions that shape how resources are



developed and deployed. Without intentional intervention, institutions and structures – and the people who work within them – will continue to perpetuate racial inequities and fail to protect communities from ongoing crises. Ultimately, the work of advancing racial equity is about repairing our systems and improving outcomes for all residents of our cities. We have the opportunity now to shift the way that policies are considered and developed, how resources are allocated, and how relationships between communities and local government are built and strengthened over time to advance genuine equity solutions.

**Statistical and geographical data** on current inequities offers cities a sense of the pervasive patterns within and across impacted communities. Indicators such as income, housing, and health outcomes from sources like the United States Census Bureau and the Center for Disease Control (CDC) can begin to identify pain points within communities. When coupled with stories of how communities experience the impacts of these patterns, data can point to strategic solutions that are relevant to real people. In tandem, data and stories can help cities and communities identify shared priorities and develop plans of action to address those priorities. If done thoughtfully, shared data analysis can unlock strategic collaborative capacity to close persistent racial equity gaps (from household wealth and displacement to disproportionate COVID-19 impacts and over-policing) and take effective action for climate preparedness, public health, and other crises.

Data analysis is the process of making meaning out of specific and limited observations (data points). The process of analyzing data is the process of combining perspective, contextual information, and theories about how the world works with data points to tell a story or flesh out a cogent narrative. The meaning derived from a dataset depends on the particular perspectives, background, knowledge, and lived experience of the people analyzing it. In order for data to tell an accurate and useful story on equity, impacted communities must participate in the data analysis – the “meaning-making.”

**Collaboration** between local government and communities impacted by inequities are key to transformative climate and equity outcomes. Given the urgent timeline to address and prepare for the impacts of the climate crisis, city staff and leaders from frontline communities must have effective working relationships. Cities that invest in community partnerships have greater capacity for actual climate solutions than cities where partnerships are nonexistent or fraught. This guide, used alongside the Greenlink Equity Map (GEM) designed by Greenlink Analytics, Inc. (Greenlink), aims to support city staff with process suggestions for engaging community-based

**“Centering equity means communities of color (especially Black, Indigenous communities) are participating at key decision points, where key information is shared and received in a transparent way, and where work priorities are focused on raising up communities of color control and using timelines, goals, and other key aspects of the work to address inequities.**

**Centering equity means intentionally focusing on people of color to physically and mentally pivot from the default habit of raising up and prioritizing whiteness and white supremacist government and organizational culture.”**

- Adapted from fakeequity.com

organizations to partner in developing shared analysis of relevant equity data, which can help to initiate and/or strengthen collaboration. The process of “joint meaning-making,” or collaborative data analysis, is rooted in mutual understanding and respect for the multiple perspectives and lived experiences of community members. This is vital to understanding persistent inequities and developing authentic solutions.

**A note on the current pandemics:** In 2020, we are writing this guide and analyzing this data as we face two interlocking global pandemics: COVID-19, and racism and anti-Blackness. One is contemporary, and one is systemic. While the disease and its spread are unprecedented, we know that communities of color and low-income communities have survived unprecedented crises and disasters for generations; they are also the hardest hit by the current crisis, with death rates trending 3 times higher for Black and Latinx communities than white communities. Understanding systemic racism as a pandemic, and as a cause and intensifier of inequities, is a useful frame as we work on the systemic issues we are attempting to address – related and not related to climate change. It is imperative for cities to form partnerships with impacted communities to build a sustained recovery from COVID-19 and to learn from communities across the nation as they call for justice, through this immediate crisis and beyond. It is useful to revisit the Spectrum regularly to review how practices are changing (or not) and the resulting impacts and messages.

## THE GREENLINK ANALYTICS EQUITY MAP (GEM) PLATFORM

Greenlink Analytics, Inc. (Greenlink) is an Atlanta-based energy research and consulting NGO equipped with sophisticated analytical technologies and deep knowledge of the clean energy industry. The non-profit has created an in-depth Greenlink Equity Map (GEM) platform and methodologies to evaluate dozens of equity indicators at a neighborhood/census tract level to assist cities in understanding the current position of communities within their own jurisdictions and to help improve equity outcomes.

The map, when used in conjunction with this guide, will provide cities with the ability to: employ joint meaning-making, evaluate data on the current equity landscape, and build more aligned, effective relationships with communities that will lead cities to more bold climate equity action faster. They will also inform key decision-makers and policymakers about where program and policy efforts are more likely to provide substantial equity benefits, the scale of the effort required to provide these benefits, and the advocacy and innovation needed to produce equitable improvements, following the direction of community-based organizations and leaders.

Indicators in the GEM platform include cost-of-living indicators like utility burden and housing burden; health indicators like asthma and health insurance rates; demographic indicators like racial composition; housing indicators like eviction rates, housing type, and renter-or-owner data; wealth indicators; and internet access.

**More info on indicators and the platform can be found on Greenlink Equity Map website: [equitymap.org](https://equitymap.org)**



## PURPOSE OF THIS GUIDE

This guide offers a set of guideposts to support city staff in designing and implementing inclusive processes for shared analysis based on the equity data provided in the Greenlink Equity Map (GEM) (and potentially additional data as well) through collaboration with community partners. Engaging with impacted communities is key to 1) understanding the stories behind the data patterns the maps provide, 2) unlocking the insights and capacity needed to identify and implement genuine solutions to equity gaps and effective climate action, and 3) determining effective means by which to share the data with the larger population.

This guide provides an outline of a process. It does not include every detail, nor every possibility for action. We recommend seeking additional guidance, when needed, in carrying out the process, and have provided a list of resources in the appendix. This guide is intended to be used collaboratively by city and community leaders in order to develop mutual understanding of relevant disparities and data reflected in your city's equity maps. If the data received from GEM is not being shared using the principles described in this guide and the resources compiled below, in partnership with community leaders, it is not being used as intended.

## HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

This guide is intended to be used by city staff in tandem with the GEM map for each city, and to be of use to staff working on policies connected to and influenced by the data shown in the maps. The guide is broken down into four main phases of the data sharing and analysis process:

- 1 FRAMING**
- 2 PREPARATION FOR COLLABORATIVE DATA ANALYSIS**
- 3 CONDUCTING COLLABORATIVE DATA ANALYSIS**
- 4 FOLLOW-THROUGH FOR SUSTAINED ACTION**

We recommend reading or scanning the guide in its entirety before embarking on the steps outlined, and coming back to consult the outlined steps throughout your process. Key questions to consider as you read and implement the steps in this guide:

- ➔ **How can this data tell a story about the lived experience of people in our city? Where might it fall short in telling a whole story?**
- ➔ **How can different perspectives on equity data help to identify genuine solutions to inequities?**
- ➔ **What opportunities arise when diverse stakeholders are brought together to improve climate resilience outcomes? How does this put equity at the center of the conversation?**
- ➔ **How can collaborative data analysis help test current assumptions?**



# 1. FRAMING

## THE SPECTRUM OF COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT TO OWNERSHIP TOOL

**If done thoughtfully, collaborating with community partners to develop a shared analysis of local equity data can serve to repair or strengthen existing relationships, and build trust.** It is important for public agencies to be explicit about racial equity goals and the role of communities in the policies, plans, and programs designed to achieve racial equity goals. The Spectrum of Community Engagement to Ownership is a scale and self-assessment tool to gauge a government's interaction with its stakeholders. Each number on the scale is associated with a stance toward community: ignore, inform, consult, involve, collaborate, and defer to. Each stance corresponds with resource allocation ratios, activities, messaging to community, community engagement goals, and impacts. It also offers guidance for setting goals and developing engagement practices. On the next page, Table 1 provides an abbreviated version of the Spectrum.

**Acknowledge marginalization:** Barriers to public participation often persist because they haven't been officially acknowledged or adequately addressed. Acknowledging the harm caused to communities of color and low-income communities by generations of exclusion is fundamental to regaining trust with impacted communities. It conveys genuineness to those stakeholders, when coupled with concrete steps towards addressing the persistent barriers that prevent their community from having a voice in the decision-making that impacts them.

**Assert a vision for engagement:** The Spectrum is an aspirational and goal-setting tool. Cities with a mission of including stakeholders can refer to the columns "Community Engagement Goals" and "Message to Community" to see the activities required to meet that goal.

**Articulate a developmental process:** The Spectrum is a series of building blocks. Strengthening our local democracies is an iterative and developmental process that moves agencies from one point on the scale to the next, steadily advancing along the spectrum and not getting stuck in stages 0-2.

**Assess participation efforts:** The Spectrum can help identify the corresponding impact (marginalization or otherwise) of previous and current activities. Readers find activities (or the lack thereof in the case of Row 1) in the "Activities" column and identify the associated result in the "Impact" column. The activities associated with each position on the Spectrum provide a step-by-step guide for improvement over time. Agencies can use the examples listed in the "Activities" column to identify how their current practices are projected to the community.

**Note in the table below** that stages 1 and 2 (information sharing and consultation) are important practices that can increase transparency and strengthen relationships, but if engagement stays at that level and does not include mechanisms by which community members can influence decision-making, marginalized communities can experience placation and tokenization. It is useful to revisit the Spectrum regularly to review how practices are changing (or not) and the resulting impacts and messages.

**TABLE 1. SPECTRUM OF COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT TO OWNERSHIP**

STANCE TOWARDS COMMUNITY	#	IMPACT ON COMMUNITY	COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT GOALS	MESSAGE TO COMMUNITY	EXAMPLE ACTIVITIES	ACTIVITIES SPECIFIC TO A COLLABORATIVE DATA PROCESS
<b>IGNORE</b>	0	<i>Marginalization</i>	Deny access to decision-making process.	Your voice, needs, and interests do not matter.	- Closed door meetings - Misinformation	Fail to share the data or engage community partners in the analysis of the equity maps.
<b>INFORM</b>	1	<i>Transparency/Placation</i>	Provide the community with relevant information.	We will keep you informed.	- Fact sheets - Open houses - Presentations - Billboards - Videos	Ensure the public has access to the data in the GEM platform. Share data widely through accessible channels.
<b>CONSULT</b>	2	<i>Limited Voice/Tokenization</i>	Gather input from the community.	We care what you think.	- Public comment - Focus groups - Surveys	Consult community-based orgs on methods for analysis as well as uses for the data.
<b>INVOLVE</b>	3	<i>Voice</i>	Ensure community needs and assets are integrated into process and inform planning.	You are making us think, and therefore act, differently about the issue.	- Community organizing and advocacy - House meetings - Interactive workshops - Polling - Community forums	Host public meetings relevant to the data with accessible space for community groups and impacted residents to raise their voices around equity data.
<b>COLLABORATE</b>	4	<i>Delegated Power</i>	Ensure community capacity to play a leadership role in decision-making and the implementation of decisions.	Your leadership and expertise are critical to how we address the issue.	-MOUs with community-based organizations -Community organizing and advocacy -Citizen advisory communities -Open planning forums with citizen polling	Work collaboratively with community partners to design a data analysis process that meets city and community needs and supports ongoing collaboration to address inequities.
<b>DEFER TO</b>	5	<i>Community Ownership</i>	Foster democratic participation and equity through community driven decision-making. Bridge divide between community and governance.	It is time to unlock collective power and capacity for transformative solutions.	-Community-driven planning -Consensus building -Participatory action research -Participatory budgeting -Cooperative models	Resource community groups rooted in impacted communities to design and implement their own data sharing and analysis process and to advance community-driven solutions.

To view full version of Spectrum of Community Engagement to Ownership, visit: [movementstrategy.org/directory/spectrum/](https://movementstrategy.org/directory/spectrum/)

# ECOSYSTEM APPROACH TO REGIONAL RACIAL EQUITY

Inequities do not exist in a vacuum, and impacted communities do not experience inequities as discrete realities. Inequities are the result of institutionalized racism and other forms of harm across multiple overlapping systems (e.g. education, housing, health care, the fossil fuel industry, food systems, transportation, financial systems, etc.), with compounding impacts over time. For this reason, a systems view of the problem and an ecosystem approach to solutions is crucial to progress. A systems view looks at issues and phenomena as interconnected and dynamic, and helps identify strategic points of intervention considering their relationships. An ecosystem approach to solutions requires some mapping of the local ecosystem of stakeholders and/or players relevant to the issues, then clarifying the unique roles different sectors or actors play in developing and implementing solutions. This approach can accelerate the scaling of solutions to our current economic and ecological crises by tapping into diverse perspectives, skillsets, and much-needed capacity.



Photo by Catalyst Miami

While this guide does not provide a full description of ecosystem approaches, below is an overview of the potential roles different actors or sectors can play within an ecosystem approach.

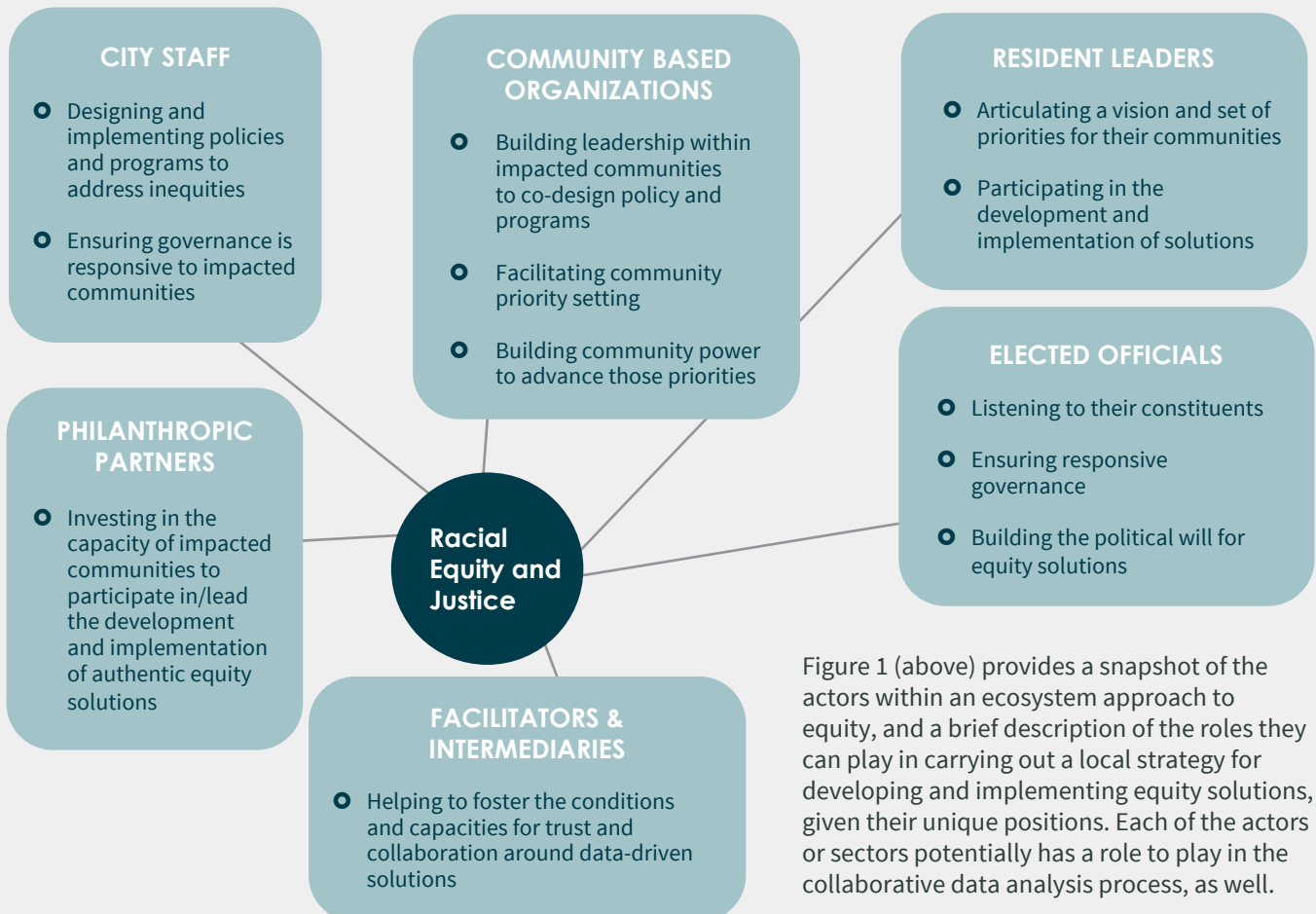


Figure 1 (above) provides a snapshot of the actors within an ecosystem approach to equity, and a brief description of the roles they can play in carrying out a local strategy for developing and implementing equity solutions, given their unique positions. Each of the actors or sectors potentially has a role to play in the collaborative data analysis process, as well.



Table 2 (below) outlines the potential activities of each actor before, during, and beyond the collaborative equity data analysis.

## CITY STAFF

**Role in Addressing Inequities:** *Designing and implementing policies and programs to address inequities, and ensuring governance is responsive to impacted communities*

### Preparing for Collaborative Analysis

- Identify community partners and resources to support collaboration.
- Work together to clarify purpose & goals of data analysis process.
- Practice transparency around how data will be used to inform policy & practice.
- Prepare relevant departments to listen to community voices.
- Cultivate channels for community voices to impact policy, programs, and internal practices.
- Seek to understand and meet the accessibility needs of community partners and resident leaders who will participate in the collaborative data analysis effort.

### Conducting Collaborative Analysis

- Put attention on strengthening relationships with community partners through listening and sharing information.
- Seek to understand the data via the stories of residents who are directly impacted by the inequities represented.
- Work with community partners to harvest lessons from the data and community stories useful to the development and implementation of potential solutions.
- Collaborate to cull indicators from the data that can guide program and policy development to address climate crises and racial inequities, while avoiding unintended negative consequences for impacted communities.

### Advancing Equity Solutions

- Assess local resourcing priorities (budget allocations, staff time, training, etc.).
- Advocate internally for shifts in budget allocations to address equity gaps and shared goals for climate resilience.
- Maintain consistent communication with community partners, with transparency around opportunities and challenges in advancing shared equity goals.
- Work with community partners to develop a roadmap of coordinated actions to advance shared equity goals and navigate systemic barriers.
- Work internally to break down unnecessary silos between different agencies, which limits capacity to address inequities.

## COMMUNITY-BASED ORGANIZATIONS ROOTED IN IMPACTED COMMUNITIES

**Role in Addressing Inequities:** *Building leadership within impacted communities to co-design and implement equity solutions, facilitating community priority setting, and building community power to advance those priorities*

### Preparing for Collaborative Analysis

- Gather data and stories through engagement with their constituents based on authentic relationships built over time.
- Translate and synthesize data maps to make them useful and accessible to constituents.
- Conduct outreach to constituents to participate in shared data analysis activities.
- Prepare residents to participate in shared data analysis activities.
- Make meaning of the data with resident leaders.
- Clarify accessibility needs of constituents to participate in shared data analysis activities.

### Conducting Collaborative Analysis

- Help to ensure accessibility needs are met (eg. language, physical ability, technology needs, etc.) to enable wide participation.
- Potentially facilitate the meeting or co-facilitate with third party facilitator.
- Harvest lessons from the data and community stories useful to the development and implementation of potential equity solutions.
- Collaborate to cull indicators from the data that can guide program and policy development to address climate crises and racial inequities, while avoiding unintended negative consequences for impacted communities.

### Advancing Equity Solutions

- Work with city staff to develop equity impact assessment(s) relevant to climate preparedness plans and equity goals.
- Cultivate leadership pathways for residents to move from advocacy to decision-making power. Build capacity of residents to implement and manage their own solutions.
- Engage residents in assessing equity outcomes and publicly sharing their assessments.
- Carry out campaigns to push for policy and systems changes needed to ensure all can thrive.

## RESIDENTS OF IMPACTED COMMUNITIES

**Role in Addressing Inequities:** *Articulating a vision and set of priorities for their communities, and participating in the development and implementation of solutions*

### Preparing for Collaborative Analysis

- Attend pre-meetings to:
- Make shared meaning of the data.
  - Identify the ways in which it reflects lived experience, and ways in which it might not.
  - Articulate critical questions about the data.
  - Match relevant data to existing equity goals and potential solutions.
  - Identify points of unity with neighbors and other neighborhoods.
  - Identify shared priorities to advance during collaborative analysis sessions.
  - Identify expectations around accountability to residents.
  - Engage neighbors through two-way information sharing.

### Conducting Collaborative Analysis

- Share the human stories behind the numbers.
- Build relationships with city staff.
- Articulate community priorities and equity goals.
- Express expectations regarding city accountability to residents.

### Advancing Equity Solutions

- Organize with neighbors and across communities to advance a shared vision and genuine solutions to disproportionate climate impacts and other inequities.
- Hold local systems accountable to making progress on equity goals, celebrating successes and protesting set-backs.
- Participate in and lead the implementation of solutions.

## ELECTED OFFICIALS COMMITTED TO EQUITABLE THRIVING COMMUNITIES

**Role in Addressing Inequities:** *Listening to their constituents, ensuring responsive governance, and building the political will for equity solutions*

### Preparing for Collaborative Analysis

- Set the expectation for shared data analysis and city-community collaboration to address disproportionate impacts of economic and climate crises on communities of color and low-income communities.
- Get briefed on annual equity data.
- Work to ensure all residents have access to annual equity data.

### Conducting Collaborative Analysis

- Participate as appropriate in collaborative data analysis activities.
- Seek to learn from constituents and community-based organizations working to address inequities.

### Advancing Equity Solutions

- Help to establish and maintain a mandate for equity practice and outcomes.
- Support the development of a community-driven equity task force with decision-making power and a platform for widely communicating progress towards closing equity gaps and identifying barriers to equity that must be broken down.

## FACILITATORS AND INTERMEDIARIES

**Role in Addressing Inequities:** *Helping to foster the conditions and capacities for trust and collaboration around data-driven solutions*

### Preparing for Collaborative Analysis

- Support the formation of city-community collaboration as needed.
- Create the opportunity for city staff and community partners to articulate shared goals, values, and practices for guiding the process.
- Develop agendas for shared data analysis activities with input from city staff and community partners.
- Help to ensure activities meet accessibility needs.
- Engage creative partners, as needed, to ensure collaborative analysis activities are culturally relevant and life-affirming.

### Conducting Collaborative Analysis

- (Co)facilitate collaborative analysis activities, ensuring that all voices can be heard.
- Help to balance uneven power dynamics within the group.
- Track goals and ensure activities are designed to advance short, mid, and long-term goals relevant to closing local equity gaps.

### Advancing Equity Solutions

- Help to draft findings from collaborative analysis activities and apply findings to equity goals.
- Conduct evaluation of the process, engaging all stakeholders in assessing the extent to which shared goals were achieved.
- Debrief collaborative analysis activities with city staff and community partners, helping to uncover how the findings are informing plans of action to address inequities.
- Draft next steps and help establish accountability measures to ensure all parties' movement on next steps.

## PHILANTHROPIC PARTNERS

**Role in Addressing Inequities:** *Investing in the capacity of impacted communities to participate in/lead the development and implementation of authentic equity solutions*

### Preparing for Collaborative Analysis

- Prioritize funding to ensure participation and leadership of impacted communities in the analysis and application of equity data.
- Clarify the value of city-community collaboration to understand and address local inequities.

Photo by Camille Seaman, The Solutions Project





## A NOTE ABOUT UTILITIES IN THE ECOSYSTEM APPROACH

When it comes to addressing energy-related shifts needed to address current climate crises impacting communities, energy utilities (as well as other service providers) often have a role to play. Shifts in pricing structures or changes to physical energy infrastructure, such as investments in renewable energy and energy efficiency, may be required to meet city-community goals. City-community collaboration to advance racial equity goals can help address institutionalized racism that may be unacknowledged within the policies and practices of a given utility. Community organizing groups have found it beneficial to include resident leaders from communities impacted by high energy burdens (communities in which households on average spend more than 6% percent of their yearly income paying for utility bills) in analysis of their local utilities. This helps to engage key stakeholders in building the political will to make necessary changes in utility policies and practices that may perpetuate inequities.

Working with utilities to make needed shifts can be complicated and depends greatly on the structure of the given utility. There are notable differences between a public utility, a cooperative utility, and an investor-owned utility. It may be difficult, for example, for city staff and community stakeholders to engage investor-owned utilities as partners, or wield significant influence over the utility's decision-making processes. On the other hand, more opportunities exist for city-community partnerships to work directly with publicly owned or municipal utilities as a core partner. Cooperative utilities can be much more responsive to equity initiatives as they are structured to be directly accountable to the communities they serve.



Photo by Catalyst Miami

**The following questions can provide city-community partnerships with the information needed to make shared decisions on how they might approach engaging the utility that serves communities most impacted by energy burdens:**

- ➔ What is the structure of the utility: public, cooperative, or investor-owned?
- ➔ What is the leadership structure of the utility and who occupies decision-making authority?
- ➔ To whom are the utilities' decision-makers accountable?
- ➔ Does the utility have stated racial equity goals?
- ➔ What entity regulates the utility?
- ➔ What influence does the city have over the utility?
- ➔ What influence do its customers have over the utility?

## TABLE 3. COLLABORATIVE DATA ANALYSIS PLANNING GUIDE

Table 3 (below) can be used by city staff to quickly reference each of the process points that are laid out in more detail in the three sections that follow. It can also be cut and pasted into a separate document and used by the city-community collaborative design team to map out the collaborative data analysis process. The content that follows in this guide is designed to support city teams to complete the following plan in collaboration with community partners.

PREPARATION FOR COLLABORATIVE ANALYSIS		PAGE 17
<p><b>Clarify what racial equity means and why it is core to the well-being of our city.</b></p>	<p><i>Identify internal champions for racial equity who can have a forthright discussion about the role of racial equity in achieving the goals of the city.</i></p> <p><i>Create opportunities to share and discuss the definitions provided below and what the implications might be for specific areas of work.</i></p> <p><i>Use the Spectrum of Community Engagement to Ownership tool to clarify the importance of community voice and leadership in planning and decision-making.</i></p>	
<p><b>Build capacity to engage in racial equity practice.</b></p>	<p><i>Use equity maps (and other sources) to identify impacted communities.</i></p> <p><i>Identify leaders and organizations rooted within impacted communities.</i></p> <p><i>Review best practices for engaging community partners rooted within impacted communities.</i></p>	
<p><b>Engage community partners from impacted communities.</b></p>		
<p><b>Clarify purpose and roles of the collaborative analysis process and the larger effort to close racial equity gaps.</b></p>	<p><i>What city department is leading this work and what is its specific purpose for doing so? How does collaborative analysis of racial equity data help to advance the goals of that department?</i></p> <p><i>Taking a look at the roles across the racial equity ecosystem, what role do city staff play in the collaborative data analysis process?</i></p> <p><i>Which community-based organizations are participating in the process and how do they describe their purpose for participating? How does collaborative data analysis with city staff help to advance community-driven racial equity goals and vision?</i></p> <p><i>What role do community-based organizations play in the collaborative data analysis process?</i></p>	
<p><b>Set goals together: What are our shared racial equity goals?</b></p>	<p><i>Where is there overlap or synergy between city racial equity goals and community racial equity goals?</i></p>	
<p><b>Ensure city staff and community partners have the resources they need to collaborate.</b></p>	<p><i>What capacities and resources are needed to ensure city staff can dedicate time to the collaborative data analysis process and the racial equity work that follows?</i></p> <p><i>What capacities and resources are needed to ensure community-based organizations from impacted communities can dedicate time to the collaborative data analysis process and the racial equity work that follows?</i></p>	

**Secure facilitators.**

*To what extent does facilitative leadership capacity already exist among the city staff and community-based organizations involved?*

*How might the project benefit from a third party facilitator?*

*Are partners familiar with one or more facilitators who meet the criteria provided in this guide?*

**CO-DESIGN A COLLABORATIVE DATA ANALYSIS PROCESS**

**Clarify purpose.**

*Why engage in collaborative data analysis? What role does this process play in advancing our shared racial equity goals?*

**Articulate objectives.**

*What are the desired objectives of the collaborative data analysis process?*

**Develop a participant list.**

*Who needs to be engaged to achieve this purpose and these objectives?*

**Identify and translate data points relevant to goals.**

*What data points from the maps (and/or other sources) are important to include in the collaborative data analysis, given your purpose and objectives?*

*Do the maps present the data in ways that participants can access and understand? Are any other formats needed to communicate the data effectively?*

**Identify actions to address uneven power dynamics.**

*What actions can be taken to help balance uneven power dynamics (with attention to accessibility, leadership, and positionality)?*

**Choose collaborative data analysis activities to draft an agenda that includes the following essential elements.**

**Connection**

*What activities will be included to foster relationship-building?*

*What activities will be included to give participants the chance to connect to background knowledge?*

**Learning**

*What activities will be included to ensure shared understanding of the data?*

*What activities will be included to connect the data with the stories of people who have lived experience of the respective inequities, to support greater understanding of the impacts?*

**Integration**

*What activities will be included to collaboratively identify key lessons from data and stories to inform racial equity priorities, principles, and practices in your work moving forward?*

**Action**

*How will concrete next steps be collaboratively articulated – with opportunities for people to play their respective roles within the racial equity ecosystem?*

**Evaluate and reflect.**

*How will participants be able to provide feedback on the process and share their perspectives on the extent to which shared goals were achieved?*

*How will the people involved in the city-community collaboration identify indicators of success for the collaborative data analysis process?*

*What are the indicators of success?*

**Share the data more widely.**

*What audiences must have access to the racial equity data, to advance the shared racial equity goals of the city-community collaboration?*

*What channels for sharing the data will ensure greatest accessibility, particularly within impacted communities?*

*How can the city-community collaboration be leveraged to facilitate effective sharing of the data with a wider audience and for connecting the data to concrete calls to action?*

**Invest in on-going city community collaborations.**

*What opportunities are there for on-going collaboration between city staff and community-based organizations engaged in the collaborative data analysis effort?*

*How will the city-community collaboration continue to advance overlapping racial equity goals?*

*How will the city-community collaboration continue to use data to inform strategy and action to close racial equity gaps?*

*What opportunities are there to co-design a racial equity impact assessment that can be applied to key policies and programs?*





## 2. PREPARATION for COLLABORATIVE DATA ANALYSIS

### CLARIFY WHAT EQUITY MEANS AND WHY IT IS CORE TO CITY WELLBEING

**The success of climate change efforts depends on supporting and working in alliance with those on the front lines of economic, social, and racial injustice** who are also, therefore, on the front lines of climate change. In preparation for collaborative equity data analysis, city staff benefit from taking time to clarify what equity means, not only as an outcome represented by a reduction in disproportionate impacts on historically marginalized communities, but as a process to democratize city planning and policy development. Deeply involving the leadership of impacted communities will help cities avoid false climate solutions that may exacerbate harm. The following definitions, compiled from thought leaders at the national and local levels working in local government and/or in nonprofit organizations, can help city staff to clarify what equity means and why it is core to climate action.

**Racial Equity** is both an outcome and a process, focused on repairing the harm caused by generations of institutionalized racism that has resulted in significantly worse life outcomes for communities of color than for their white counterparts. At the outcome level, racial equity is achieved when race is no longer a predictor of life outcomes. In terms of process, equity is achieved through the leadership of impacted communities. Because current systems effectively limit the power of communities of color and low-income communities to change existing conditions, achieving racial equity requires attention to “those practices, cultural norms, and institutional arrangements that...help to create and maintain racialized outcomes in society.”<sup>1</sup> Thus, racial equity requires a comprehensive approach to social transformation by increasing access and equitable sharing of power and resources.

**Environmental Justice** calls for addressing the vast inequities in our society, where people of color – particularly Black, Brown, and Indigenous – are disproportionately burdened by pollution and other forms of environmental degradation, including the impacts of climate change. For decades, people of color, people earning low or no income, and other marginalized communities have been impacted by environmental harms that disrupt their health, education, economic opportunities, and community resiliency. The concept of environmental justice also includes the equitable distribution of environmental benefits, such as access to green space and healthy food.

**Climate Justice** focuses on addressing the root causes of climate change, based on the understanding that change to unjust political and economic systems is required to address the disproportionate burdens to specific communities. Climate justice understands that climate change has an unequal impact on communities of color because it is a threat multiplier, meaning it will layer upon existing public health, economic, and racial injustices in the United States and around the world. Without a focus on addressing injustice, work on climate change addresses only symptoms of inequities, therefore allowing them to persist and deepen.<sup>2</sup>

1 Elsheikh, E. (2016). Race and Corporate Power in the US Food System: Examining the Farm Bill (Dismantling Racism In the Food System, Number 2: Summer 2016). Food First. [foodfirst.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/DRnumber2\\_VF.pdf](http://foodfirst.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/DRnumber2_VF.pdf)

2 Adapted from definitions by [WEACT for Environmental Justice](#), [Bronx Climate Justice North](#), and [Alternatives for Community and Environment](#)

## BUILD CAPACITY TO ENGAGE IN EQUITY PRACTICE

Assess the internal capacity within the city department or agency to undertake the equity practices outlined below. Kapwa Consulting and the Urban Sustainability Directors Network (USDN) created a useful, in-depth assessment tool for city staff as part of the *Equity Foundations Program*<sup>3</sup>. To gain membership access and ensure proper use of the assessment tool, connect with USDN.

If capacity is limited, city staff may discuss reprioritization of activities and/or identify staff in other departments or agencies who are engaged in equity practice, with whom they can collaborate to identify impacted communities, identify community partners rooted within impacted communities, and engage in adherence to the principles and practices listed below.

## IDENTIFY IMPACTED COMMUNITIES

This is a necessary first step to properly prioritize, resource, and implement effective climate equity solutions. In addition to the Greenlink Equity Map, city staff may use sources such as the “State of the City” reports, Equity Indicator Reports, community organization publications, or other documentation on the state of equity in your city. Areas are often identified by neighborhoods, zip codes, and/or census tracts that experience disproportionate, overlapping burdens, compounded over time. Examples of burdens include:

- High rates of incarceration and policing
- Disproportionately low rates of health care coverage
- Limited access to financial services
- Less than 10 acres of green space per 1000 people
- Paying more than 30% of income to rent and/or disproportionately high percentage of income towards energy costs, water, or transportation costs
- Living in close proximity to industrial zones, brown fields, Superfund sites, waste management centers, incinerators, or other significant polluters
- Disproportionately low public investment in essential services, such as education or health care, relevant to needs (e.g. a neighborhood with a large youth population and yet low investment in youth programming)

<sup>3</sup> Desiree Williams-Rajee (Kapwa Consulting) and USDN. (2015-2020). Equity Foundations Training. [www.usdn.org/equity-foundations-training.html](http://www.usdn.org/equity-foundations-training.html)

**Given the deep and pervasive nature of racial inequities and the importance of specificity in our strategies, it is important to lead with race, while acknowledging the ways that race intersects with other forms of oppression.**

**By targeting our strategies toward those the system is failing the most—which in many cases is communities of color—we can improve outcomes for everyone.**

## IDENTIFY COMMUNITY-BASED ORGANIZATIONS AND LEADERS

Identifying and then engaging with community-based organizations and institutions genuinely rooted within impacted communities early on in a city’s process produces better results in planning and policy making.<sup>4</sup> The following characteristics are useful in helping city staff to recognize potential community partners and the strengths and assets they bring to city-community collaboration.

<b>ROOTED</b>	<p>The organization or institution is located within a neighborhood, census tract, and/or zip code that is disproportionately impacted by 3 or more of the burdens listed in the section above.</p> <p>Members of the organization’s leadership live in the same or a similar area, are people of color, and/or have experienced similar burdens.</p>
<b>ACCOUNTABLE</b>	<p>The organization is accountable to a base of resident leaders living in a neighborhood, census tract, and/or zip code that is disproportionately impacted by 3 or more of the burdens listed above, who help to set, or inform, the strategic direction of the organization.</p> <p>Their mission and track record indicate a commitment to understanding and addressing the inequities impacting the communities to whom the organization is accountable.</p>
<b>TRUSTED</b>	<p>The organization has a track record of meeting community needs.</p> <p>When residents have concerns, this is a group to whom they can turn for a range of supports and actions to address community concerns.</p>
<b>CONNECTED</b>	<p>The organization actively participates in coalitions and alliances, and/or coordinates with relevant networks with access to key resources and capacities (e.g. faith-based, land, technical assistance, housing, buildings, community land trusts).</p>
<b>COLLABORATIVE</b>	<p>In order to achieve its mission, the organization builds bridges across differences and actively communicates and coordinates actions with key partners to advance community-driven goals.</p>
<b>RIGOROUS</b>	<p>The organization conducts its own research or partners with research organizations to inform its campaigns and strategy development.</p> <p>The organization engages resident leaders in participatory action research to understand inequities and to design or assess solutions.</p>
<b>TRANSFORMATIVE</b>	<p>The organization is known by its partners for leading with bold vision and demonstrating commitment to embodying the values of that vision.</p> <p>The organization is dedicated to improving the quality of life in impacted communities through a dynamic combination of community-driven solutions and complementary policy wins.</p>

Because the GEM platform includes indicators that cut across issues such as energy burden, housing instability, and community health, collaborative data analysis can serve as an opportunity to bring together a range of partners working across health, climate, and equity solutions. Still, it is recommended to identify 1-3 anchor partners who can help bring additional groups to the table.

4 Race Forward for the Zero Cities Project. (2018). Equity Assessment Tool: Zero Cities Project. Race Forward. [www.usdn.org/projects/zero-cities-project](http://www.usdn.org/projects/zero-cities-project)

## ENGAGE COMMUNITY PARTNERS

**WHEN** you engage community partners is vital. Early engagement leads to better relationships, more diverse contributions, and outcomes that incorporate the priorities and expertise of impacted communities. Early engagement sends a message to community partners that they are important to the work, not an afterthought. Community partners from impacted communities have perspectives and expertise to lend the data analysis and dissemination process that should inform the work from the beginning, to avoid missteps.

**HOW** you engage community partners is crucial. Here are several core values and tips for effective engagement of community partners:

**Humility:** Take time to clarify, with support from this guide, why community partners from impacted communities are vital to your data analysis process. What is the unique value they bring to the process? Understanding that local government cannot effectively carry out its responsibility to address inequities without the leadership of impacted communities allows you to approach community partners with appropriate humility, which can help to begin balancing uneven power dynamics that exist between government agencies and community-based organizations. Limit any tendency to take things personally.

**Clarity of Purpose:** Clarify what city plans, programs, and/or policy development the GEM maps will help to inform. Clarify how connecting with community-based organizations is a unique part of that purpose. Understand and be able to articulate why collaboration leads to better outcomes. Reaching out to community partners with this clarity helps city staff to practice transparency, which is vital to building trust.

**Genuine Listening:** Be conscious of the tendency to fall into one-directional communication patterns. If you are focused on simply informing community-based organizations of what you need them to know, and not listening to what they need you to know, you can miss out on the chance to strengthen relationships and to improve your approach to data analysis and equity goals. Listening is a practice that must be cultivated, particularly by representatives of local government. The strategies below can help.

### STRATEGIES FOR GENUINE LISTENING:

- Before meeting, look for documents or materials written by potential community collaborators, that specify key issues and opportunities they are seeing to address existing inequities.
- When reaching out to community collaborators, factor in enough time for an actual conversation. Work around their schedule and their location/mobility capacity.
- Ask honest questions (e.g. What has your experience of working with the city been like in the past? What do you feel could be the benefit of doing some collaborative analysis of the map? What role could you see your organization playing in that? What would your organization need to be able to collaborate with us on this?)
- Be ready and open to start with the community organizations' priorities, needs, purpose, and desires – both in the initial conversation and in the longer-term collaboration.
- Understand and communicate that you want to be helpful. How does what you have to offer match up with the priorities of the community/community-based organization?
- As the conversation closes, be sure to reflect what was learned in the conversation, what that means for your next steps, and how you will be following up and/or using the information you've gathered in the conversation. Ask for and be open to feedback about what happens next.



**Equitable Resourcing:** It is important to consider the resourcing needs of community partners. They must be compensated for their time and expertise in these engagement processes. A common point of tension between community-based organizations and local government is the tendency for public agencies to contract with outside consultants to design and carry out community engagement and equity planning, when local community-based organizations are often much better equipped. When working to address systemic inequities, those who experience them and live or work in impacted communities have vital expertise on the topic. Community-based organizations can also bring trust and cultural relevance, which is key to effective engagement of impacted community members. Allocating resources to city-community partners is key to sustaining them. In addition to establishing budgetary line items for resourcing community partnerships, consider approaching philanthropic partners together to resource collaborative efforts to address inequities. Increasingly, philanthropic foundations recognize the value of such partnerships to address inequities.



Photo by Minette Layne

**Transparency:** A significant challenge raised by community groups seeking to work with their local governments to improve conditions for residents is the lack of transparency regarding city processes and plans. When communities are kept in the dark – whether intentionally or unintentionally – about how the system works and how they can have a voice in the decision-making that impacts them, they are left on the margins, which is one of the root causes of current inequities. City staff who are internal champions for equity can play an important role in demystifying public processes so they can truly be public. In working with community partners, be as open and honest as you can about policy development and planning processes, what you know and don't know, what you are still figuring out, the opportunities and challenges you are seeing, etc.

**Acknowledgment of Past Harms:** Impacted communities have experienced harm over decades – sometimes longer – that can result in distrust for city government, as well as disenfranchisement. Acknowledging marginalization involves identifying the status quo practice of current systems that have been historically designed to exclude certain populations, namely communities of color, low-income communities, women, youth, previously incarcerated people, elders, people with disabilities, and queer or gender non-conforming people. How harms are acknowledged can range in scale. A simple verbal acknowledgment during initial conversations with community partners can go a long way, such as, “I know our processes in the past have not been as inclusive as they need to be.”



**Building Trust Over Time:** For many reasons, some of which are named above, impacted communities may carry a distrust of government. It's important to accept that fact and focus on building trust over time by following through with efforts to collaboratively close equity gaps and repair the harm of civic disenfranchisement. Recognizing the value that community-based organizations and impacted residents bring to increasing the efficiency and effectiveness of local government through racial equity practice, and then forging authentic partnerships based on that value, is the foundation for long-term trust and collaboration.

**Commitment to Communication:** Trust is often built when stakeholders are able to effectively grapple with challenges together. Communication is both the key to minimizing challenges and being able to work through them together, and come out the other side with more trust. Be aware of the tendency to avoid communicating when challenges arise, and instead lean in. Commit to clear communication before, during, and after the collaborative data analysis process:

- **Before:** At the start of a collaborative effort, clarify together the end goal of the process, how community input will be used, and what the process is for implementing feedback on a routine basis.
- **During:** Build in opportunities during the process to reflect on what's working and what isn't. When and if collaborative efforts hit stumbling blocks, discuss the issue and work together to address it.
- **After:** Come back to community partners with updates on progress made to integrate community voice into policy, programs, and city practices to advance equity goals. Be clear as to where and how progress is being tracked. How will the city staff communicate updates to residents and those that have been engaged throughout the process?

## SET GOALS TOGETHER

Collaborative data analysis activities can meet the unique goals of everyone involved and can help city staff and community leaders identify shared goals. Attempting to move a collaborative data analysis process driven only by city goals can strain city-community collaborations. Take time, therefore, to establish goals together, using the following **collaborative goal-setting practices**:

1. Clarify early on the intention to set goals for the process together.
2. Allow time for community partners and city staff to explore the maps on their own and identify potential goals for collaborative analysis. Relevant city staff look at the maps together and identify potential policy areas, planning efforts, and/or programs that the data and the collaborative data analysis process can help to inform. Meanwhile, community partners get together – ideally with resident leaders with whom they work closely – and identify campaign issues, projects, policy advocacy agendas, etc. that the data and the collaborative data analysis process can help to inform. Multiple community partners may decide to do this pre-work together and make sure they are aligned.
3. Hold a collaborative meeting with a core group of city staff and community partners to discuss goals for the collaborative data analysis process.
  - a. Practice genuine listening to understand the unique goals of each partner and to identify overlap.
  - b. To support the design and facilitation of this collaborative goal-setting meeting, consider inviting a third-party facilitator, who is experienced in facilitating collaborative efforts.
  - c. Reflect back to one another what you are hearing as unique goals and as potential shared goals.
  - d. Build consensus on what shared goals will guide the process to design the collaborative data analysis activities.

4. Come back to community partners with updates on what progress has been made to integrate community voice into policy, programs, and city practices to advance equity goals. Be clear as to where and how progress is being tracked. How will the city staff communicate updates to residents and those who have been engaged throughout the process?

**Examples of goals for collaborative analysis of the equity maps:** There is a wide range of goals that could be met by collaborative analysis of the maps. The sample goals below are meant to support city staff and community leaders in identifying their own goals for collaborative data analysis processes.

- **Strengthen working relationships** between city staff, community partners, and resident leaders from impacted communities.
- **Increase the effectiveness of climate action plan** by understanding which communities are disproportionately impacted, in what ways, and to recognize the kinds of solutions that won't cause or exacerbate disproportionate impacts.
- **Develop an equity-based screening method for budget cuts**, to reduce the possibility of exacerbating harm against communities hit hardest by COVID-19 and other disproportionate impacts and burdens.
- **Establish equity goals for our city**, identifying short, mid, and long-term priorities for reducing disproportionate burdens on the same communities over generations by answering the question, "What do we want the data to look like in the future?"
- **Develop a targeted strategy for ensuring affordable and clean energy for all**, using the GEM platform and collaborative analysis process to inform approaches for reducing energy cost burdens on specific communities and examining how more community-driven energy projects may help to reduce existing climate equity gaps.
- **Collaborate on a campaign for health equity**, through community engagement, education, and organizing around community-supported solutions.
- **Identify communities for community engagement** around a specific issue, represented in the maps.



Photo by Camille Seaman, The Solutions Project



## SECURE FACILITATION CAPACITY

Effective city-community collaboration requires facilitative leadership and guidance. Facilitative leaders/guides focus on cultivating the conditions for collaboration and maximizing the unique strengths of stakeholders to advance a shared vision or goal(s). They are attentive to power dynamics and group needs, and can design and adjust processes accordingly. At the start of the process to establish goals and design collaborative data analysis activities, work with community partners to identify an appropriate facilitator. This person could potentially work for the city or for a community-based partner organization, or could be a duo with representation from each. It may, however, make sense to work with a third-party facilitator. When selecting a person or team for facilitation, look for the following desired qualities and competencies.



Photo by Partnership for Southern Equity

### DESIRED FACILITATOR QUALITIES

- **Trusted** by impacted communities. A trusted facilitator can make a difference for community members skeptical of public processes due to generations of systematic disenfranchisement.
- **Creative** in designing group processes. Making shared meaning of comprehensive data sets requires creative methods to make the information and related stories relevant and compelling to participants.
- **Skilled** in navigating conflict, facilitating consensus-building, and developing collaborative solutions across diverse stakeholder groups.
- **Knowledgeable** of the structural root causes of poverty, housing insecurity, climate vulnerability, preventable diseases, high energy burdens, incarceration, and other inequities.
- **Experienced** in facilitating root cause analysis sessions with communities of varying educational backgrounds.
- **Able to synthesize** significant amounts of information and inputs into digestible content accessible to both communities and local governments, and to translate them across differences.





## CO-DESIGN A PROCESS FOR COLLABORATIVE ANALYSIS OF THE DATA

As mentioned above, the collaborative data analysis process is a tremendous opportunity to strengthen city-community partnerships and mutual accountability. Forming a small process design team that includes city staff and community partners is a powerful way to foster healthy working relationships and build trust. The following steps can help city-community teams to design a responsive data analysis process, potentially with the support of a third party facilitator:

### 1. Clarify purpose:

If you have completed the preparation activities outlined in previous sections of this guide, then clarifying the purpose of the collaborative data analysis activities will be fairly straightforward. The purpose of the activities is essentially the driving motivation for engaging in the work and the unique role these activities will play in the larger effort to understand and address inequities. The purpose is the answer to the question, “Why are we doing this?” Simply ask yourselves why and keep asking until you arrive at a purpose statement that resonates with city staff and community partners. The purpose may be similar to the shared goals city staff established when forging the city-community collaboration.

### 2. Articulate concrete objectives:

A few tangible take-aways from the collaborative data analysis activities will help to focus the work and ensure some forward momentum to advance your shared purpose. Some examples of concrete objectives are listed below to spark your own ideas:

- A video documentary of the collaborative analysis process that highlights the power and practice of city-community partnerships to address climate inequity.
- An initial list of equity considerations to inform climate action planning.
- A set of community recommendations to inform budgetary priorities.
- A Photovoice campaign to connect equity map data with the lived experience of residents from impacted communities.
- A set of next steps for establishing equity goals.



Stephen Yang photography of PUSH Buffalo for The Solutions Project

**3. Develop a list of participants**, determining together who needs to be engaged to achieve the purpose.

**4. Identify and translate relevant data points to resonate with participants:** The Greenlink equity maps can be downloaded and printed. Choose the indicators most relevant to your purpose and goals for the session(s) and generate the appropriate maps. Work with community partners to assess whether these maps contain enough data to achieve the goals, and whether they are in a format that is relevant and accessible to participants. If not, consider working with an artist or graphic designer to generate user-friendly graphics of the data in language that is accessible to participants. If participants speak languages other than English, ensure adequate translation.

**5. Choose collaborative data analysis activities that foster relationships**, genuine dialogue, and forward thinking. See the following section, “Conducting Collaborative Data Analysis” for ideas. Put yourselves in the shoes of the potential participants and consider what they need to experience together to achieve the purpose and objectives you’ve outlined.

**6. Identify actions to address uneven power dynamics:** For those who hold more positional power, it can be easy not to see how uneven power dynamics affect collaborative efforts. A staffer within city government may feel they have very little institutional power, but for a resident who has experienced generations of disenfranchisement, those who work at the city hold power that has been used against them, and therefore must be addressed. Simply being aware of power dynamics is an important first step. Discuss with community partners how you might work together to balance uneven power dynamics starting with the space where collaborative data analysis will take place. Below are examples of actions that cities can take to balance power within community meetings and forums:

- **Be conscious of who will be speaking in front of the room.** Avoid only having city staff or elected officials in the front. Ensure a diversity of voices who reflect the diversity of the city and send a message of shared expertise. Engage resident leaders as speakers at the front of the room from the start so others see themselves reflected in the leadership of the meeting.
- **Invite resident leaders who are part of organized efforts to address local inequities.** This helps to avoid the tokenization of residents who are not truly prepared to represent the needs, interests, strengths, and priorities of their communities. While residents of impacted communities may not have significant political or positional power as individuals, when part of organized efforts, they represent people power. This is one of the reasons the work of community-based organizations that engage in community organizing is so vital.
- **Be mindful of the power and privilege you hold and resist allowing your fear of discomfort<sup>6</sup>** to limit community expression. Remember that members of impacted communities may have directly experienced disproportionate hunger, violence, loss, untimely death, and other traumas, and have a right to be angry about it. People of color are often expected to refrain from expressing anger and to “move on.” On the other hand, white people and people with white privilege are often afforded much more space to communicate outrage when and if they feel their rights have been infringed upon. When planning to be in dialogue about inequity with community members who live those inequities on a daily basis, those with more privilege must be willing to respectfully witness the pain and outrage of others, and to not silence it or move away from it, take it personally, or be offended by it.
- **Ensure accessibility needs are met** so that resident leaders from impacted communities can be as fully present as possible.

### STRATEGIES FOR ACCESSIBILITY

- Schedule event at a time when working people can attend (outside of regular work hours).
- Provide equity stipends to resident leaders who have to miss work hours to attend.
- Ensure effective translation, if needed. If the majority of resident leaders participating speak a language other than English, consider hosting the event primarily in that language and offering translation into English.
- Use multiple ways of communicating that go beyond just the verbal-logical modes, such as embodied activities, visuals, theater, etc. when and if appropriate.
- Offer culturally relevant food, music, and atmosphere.
- Provide child care if needed.

6 See Appendix for specific resources on privilege, power, and white supremacy.

# 3. CONDUCTING COLLABORATIVE DATA ANALYSIS

## ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS FOR TRANSLATING LEARNING INTO ACTION

Regardless of the scope of the collaborative data analysis process, the four essential elements are:

**CONNECTION:** Relationship-building and activating existing knowledge

**LEARNING:** Collaborative analysis and connecting the dots together

**INTEGRATION:** Harvesting from the learning key principles, practices, and actions needed to advance equity goals

**ACTION:** Identifying concrete next steps and clear roles for applying the learning to advance equity goals

Each of these elements allows for a holistic process that will help establish or reinforce the conditions for healthy city-community partnerships based on learning and action. See examples below of each of these elements in the collaborative data analysis process:



Photo by Jesús Venezuela

## 1. CONNECTION

**Show up human:** Start with an opportunity for people to get to know one another as people. Everyone has a role to play in the process, and everyone is a human being behind the role that they play. Genuinely seek getting to know people informally (outside of the agenda) and formally (as a part of the agenda). Below are examples of how city staff can show up human and create space for others to do the same.

### Examples of informal relationship-building outside the agenda:

- Smile and make sure people feel welcome in the space, know how to sign-in, where to put their things, etc. If hosting the forum online, greet people as they come into the video conference.
- Introduce yourself to folks before the event starts. Ask people how they are doing, where they come from, etc.
- Make introductions between people who may be meeting for the first time. Introduce your colleagues to community members and share what roles they play in the work.
- Practice cultural humility. This means make sure your own privilege and/or fear of discomfort does not get in the way of people's authenticity. Power and privilege manifest in certain cultural norms or expectations rooted in the construction of whiteness in the US, which is often coded as "professionalism." Being aware of one's own privilege and open to all forms of cultural and personal expression is key to building authentic relationships across differences.

### Examples of formal relationship-building within the agenda:

- In pairs or small groups, respond to a prompt, such as: *Share a personal story that speaks to why you are inspired to address inequities in our city.* After sharing in small groups, the facilitator can ask the whole group, *What were some shared values you heard in each other's stories?* Scribe the shared values. This can be done online using the breakout room function included in most video conference technology.
- Ask people to line up according to how long they have lived in the city. Group people by decades and ask them to come up with an event that impacted them in the city during that decade that they can share with the rest of the group.
- Ask people to take turns shouting out things about the city that they love and hope never change.
- Ask everyone to write down one thing they love about their city, and one thing they want to change about their city, and then meet three new people and share what they wrote.

**Uncover background knowledge:** Connecting to what we already know about a topic is an important on-ramp to learning something new about that topic. And it can also serve as a way to connect with others. Below are some sample activities for uncovering background knowledge among participants.

#### Topic Walk

Put posters up on the wall with titles of the different topics covered in the data people will be reviewing. Give everyone a marker and invite them to walk around and write and/or draw images of what that topic means to them, what questions they have about that topic, or any relevant information they want to share about the topic. If conducting the forum online, people can conduct the “poster walk” via a shared google doc with topics listed as headings that people can write beneath. Assign small groups to different posters to read what’s been written and report out a brief summary of what stands out to them in terms of what we, as a group, already know about this topic. Select topics that merit deeper learning and discussion. Sample topics:

- What energy burdens look like in our city
- How energy burdens relate to housing instability in our city
- Gaps in healthcare coverage
- Gaps in internet accessibility

#### Inequity Truth Talks

Group people in pairs and small groups and ask them to describe, based on their lived experience, what inequities are, and how they affect our capacity as a community to survive and thrive through crises and disasters. Invite people to share out ideas, scribing them until the group has a definition of the problem that reflects the multiple perspectives in the room. Next, ask the same groups to describe equity and how equity practice affects our capacity as a community to survive and thrive through crises and disasters. Again, ask people to share out ideas, scribing them until there is a definition of the solution/purpose for collaboration that reflects the multiple perspectives in the room.



## 2. LEARNING

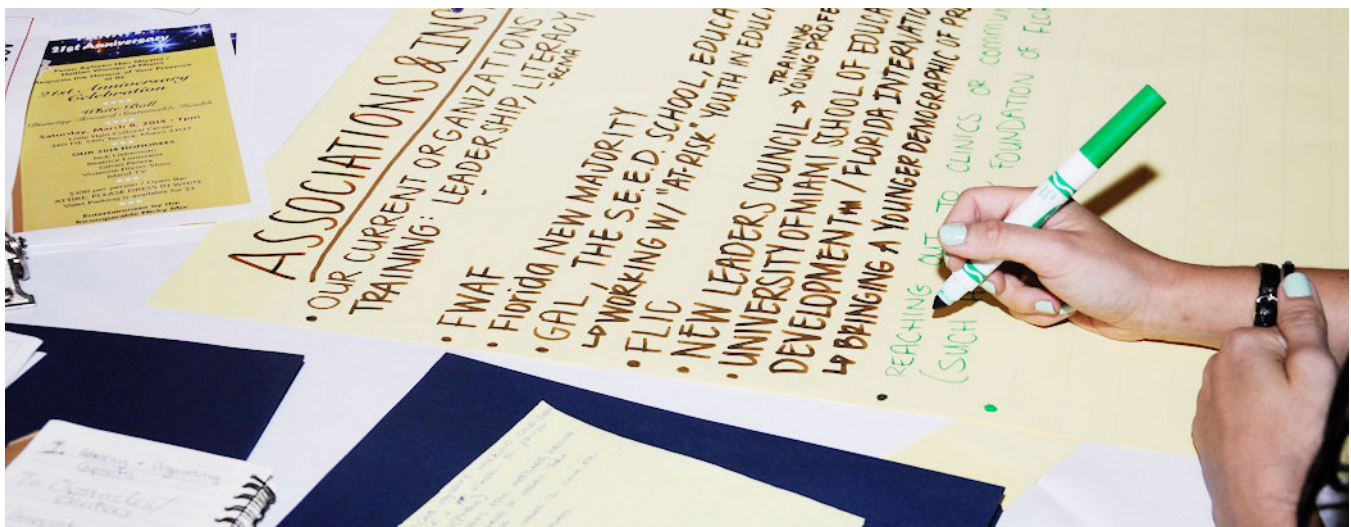
**Understand the data in the maps:** Once the group has had a chance to connect with their own knowledge on the topic, it is time to take in new information. The city-community collaboration team will decide on the best way for the group to build shared understanding of the data in the equity maps and what data to focus on. Learning activities that allow people to absorb the information in different ways are recommended.

**Engage in joint meaning-making:** Data analysis involves combining perspectives, contextual information, and theories about how the world works with data points to tell a story or flesh out a cogent narrative. Making meaning out of a dataset heavily depends on the particular perspectives, background, knowledge, and lived experience of the people analyzing it. In order for data to tell an accurate and useful story on equity, impacted communities must be a part of the meaning-making process.

The “joint” part of meaning-making includes answering key questions separately and together to understand what might be going on by bringing together perspectives. Allow each group to describe what they experience and what they see, making connections to their own lives. Together, both city staff and community members are working towards answering these questions:

- ➔ What is going on from our perspective? (City staff, community group and members)
- ➔ What is the story (narrative) that the data tells?
- ➔ What are the stories (narratives) not shown in the data?
- ➔ What is our frontline communities’ experience with this issue? (e.g. energy burden)
- ➔ How does the data affirm the understanding (narrative/story) we have come to previously through our lived experience and other learning?
- ➔ How does the data diverge from that understanding or challenge it?
- ➔ How do we think the data *should* look? Why?

Photo by Catalyst Miami



Below are sample formats and activities you might use to explore these questions.

### **People's Panel**

Invite a few speakers, representing a range of perspectives or areas of focus, to describe what stands out to them in the maps, perhaps each focusing on a different aspect of the data, why it is significant, how it is related to the larger purpose of the city-community collaboration, etc.

### **Data Walks**

Invite participants to rotate through “stations” where data is displayed visually and textually to tell a story for them to interpret, discuss, and reflect on in small groups. Tips for how you might organize the data walk:

- Include a range of data points that capture community strengths as well as challenges that communities are facing as a result of structural inequities.
- Include prompts at each station, designed to spark dialogue that will help participants make sense of the data together.
- Invite small groups to take responsibility for presenting a piece of data or a specific data set to the larger group, first making sense of it together and then finding a creative way to share the information with the larger group.

**Connect the data to lived experience within impacted communities:** Collaborative data analysis activities between city and community are a valuable opportunity for researchers, planners, policymakers and community advocates to connect qualitative and quantitative data. Below are sample activities for sparking authentic conversations and storytelling relevant to the data:

### **Community Presentations**

Community partners may decide they would like to work with resident leaders to prepare a presentation to city staff on a particular inequity or set of intersecting disparities represented in the data maps. In this case, create space in the agenda for the presentation(s) and participate fully. These presentations may include storytelling, analysis, historical background, description of the impact of the inequity on communities, and/or recommendations for addressing it.

### **Data Dialogues**

Form small groups with a mix of resident leaders/community members, community-based organization staff, and city staff. Give each group a data set to focus on with clear prompts for discussion. Frame the prompts to encourage people to share stories and lived experiences represented by the data.

For example:

- ➔ What patterns do you see in the data? How do people experience these patterns in daily life?
- ➔ What, if any, aspect of your lived experience is represented by this data set? In what ways does the data help you make sense of your experience?
- ➔ What, if anything, surprises you in this data set? Why or why not?
- ➔ If you were to represent this data in the form of a true story, what story would you tell?

### 3. INTEGRATION

**Identify key lessons from data and stories:** It is important that the shared data analysis process not leave out the analysis. The point of collaborating with community partners and residents is not just to hear their stories; it is to create space for those most impacted by the disparities represented in the equity data maps to assert equity priorities, principles for advancing those priorities, and shifts in practice to ensure better collaboration between city and community to close equity gaps. City staff can use the following questions to prompt the collaborative data analysis group to harvest priorities, principles, and practices from the equity data maps and the stories shared.

#### Priorities

When setting priorities, avoid pitfalls that are contrary to equity practice and yet very common in local government, such as pitting issues or communities against one another as if scarcity dictates that we have to choose between issue x or issue y. False binaries contribute to the persistence of disparities. When communities living at the intersection of poverty, pollution, and political disenfranchisement set priorities, they are often values-based and cut across multiple issues, such as equitable economic development without displacement, or health for all. Priorities like these call for comprehensive strategies that put communities at the center. As part of a collaborative equity data analysis process with community partners, city staff may ask community partners and the resident leaders they have convened to share their recommendations for what the city should focus on to address existing disparities and/or what equity goals should be the focus of a city-community collaboration:

- ➔ Given what we are seeing in the equity data maps and what you are experiencing on a daily basis, what would you say are the top priorities for equity policy and practice in the city?
- ➔ Choose the top 2-5 equity issues and set five, ten, and twenty-year goals; what do we want the data to look like over the next twenty years, and what will it take to achieve those shifts?
- ➔ If you were to pick 1-3 equity goals for us to center our city-community collaboration on, what would you choose and why?
- ➔ Given what we are seeing in the maps, and the communities most impacted by disproportionate burdens, what negative impacts do you want to make sure we avoid when making budget cuts?
- ➔ In what ways would city priorities need to shift to address the inequities we've discussed?
- ➔ What win-win opportunities do you see to achieve multiple positive outcomes with one solution set?

Photo by Catalyst Miami



## Principles

There are inherent values within your equity goals (and within equity practice generally) that can guide your collaborative efforts to success. Combine priority-setting with articulation of principles for how you will approach advancing your priorities. This will contribute significantly to relationship-building and to building the capacity of city staff to work effectively with constituents.

- ➔ What community values are at the heart of these equity priorities?
- ➔ What values or principles do you want to guide our collaborative work to advance equity priorities?
- ➔ What do you want us to keep in mind as we develop a plan for addressing these equity priorities?
- ➔ When the city has to make tough choices, or when the city is developing a plan in collaboration with impacted communities, what are the top three things you want us to always keep in mind?
- ➔ What principles should guide how we partner with your community on this effort?

## Practices

Fundamental culture shifts within government-community relations are needed to cultivate equitable governance practice. Resident leaders actively involved in community-driven campaigns for equity have a great deal of insight to offer government staff in terms of how to best engage with community members.

- ➔ What can these maps teach us about the kinds of practices that have led to disproportionate burdens, and therefore what practices we need to shift? Having a sense of the kind of practices that contributed to inequity, what top three practices should we focus on to close equity gaps?
- ➔ What in the past has contributed to distrust of government? Going forward, what can we do to build trust over time?
- ➔ What do the values/principles we just named look like in practice? What are some examples of how we could put those principles into action?
- ➔ Break into role-based groups – resident leaders, community-based organization staff, city staff, and elected officials and philanthropic partners if applicable – so each group can discuss their unique roles in advancing the stated equity priorities, and how they would uniquely put the principles into practice. They can also discuss what they need from the other roles in order to play their role well. Small groups can then report back to the larger group and take questions and feedback from others.





**Apply lessons to racial equity strategies:** It is worthwhile to discuss with community partners the specifics of applying priorities, principles, and practices to policies, plans, and program design. This is an iterative process and so it wouldn't be completed in one session, but it is useful and responsive to start the process with community partners as part of the data analysis process. Perhaps you will develop an equity action plan, or integrate the equity priorities, principles, and practices into an existing climate action strategy.

- Ask the group to consider an existing or potential climate/equity action plan and discuss what the implications are of leading with the priorities that have been identified by the group.
- Choose an example of a policy or program within an existing or potential climate/equity action plan, and ask small groups to discuss how it could be enhanced by applying the principles and practices the group has generated.

## 4. ACTION

**Concrete next steps:** No matter how simple, it is important that everyone leave the collaborative data analysis process clear about what the next steps are and what roles they each have to play.

- City staff and community partners who plan the collaborative analysis agree ahead of time on at least one clear next step that helps the work and partners stay in action.
- Share the predetermined next steps and ask for feedback
- Ask if people are seeing other important next steps that should be added.

**Opportunities for people to play their respective roles:** This is the moment in the process when city staff can return to the larger purpose of the collaborative data analysis process and the opportunity to activate community leadership and capacity to transform the conditions. Make sure all stakeholders are supported to play their respective roles in advancing equity.

- Create space for everyone (including city staff) to share the strengths and assets they bring to the work of advancing the stated equity priorities.
- Invite everyone to share what they have time, energy, and resources for, and what they feel inspired to do next.
- Divide up by role in the ecosystem and have small-group conversations about how each respective role can step up now to advance the stated equity goals. Then report back to the whole group and take questions and feedback from the rest of the group.



Mikayla Wiseman, photo by Erik Voss



# 4. FOLLOW-THROUGH FOR SUSTAINED ACTION

**What happens before and particularly what happens after a collaborative data analysis process is just as important, if not more so, than the data analysis process itself.** Equity data is not meant to be static; it is meant to inform and inspire collaborative action aimed at improving the outcomes for communities who are bearing unjust burdens. Unfortunately, what often happens after communities are engaged in providing input into city activities (level 2 CONSULT on the Spectrum of Community Engagement to Ownership tool), is a lack of follow-through. This lack of follow-through is what prevents the process from moving into phases of deeper engagement and can potentially hinder the ability to continue to work together in the future. When community partners and resident leaders do not hear back from city staff as to how their input was used, what decisions were made as a result, and/or if they discover that their input was not heeded, it reinforces the message that community voices do not matter. Distrust of the public process is reinforced if community partners perceive their valuable time and effort (and potentially, the risk they took to engage) was wasted. On the other hand, maintaining communication and collaboration beyond the collaborative data analysis process strengthens the city-community collaboration for the kind of sustained action that is so critical to effectively addressing equity gaps. The following section outlines a number of key actions city-community partners can take together to build authentic collaboration for equity that is grounded in community accountability.

## EVALUATION & REFLECTION

Conducting a collaborative evaluation of the process reinforces the message that community voices matter. It strengthens city-community collaboration by providing shared language and a safer container to have authentic conversation. It provides crucial information to city staff regarding how to continue improving practices that center the voices of impacted communities and ultimately create more effective and just policies. The following are sample methods for evaluation and reflection on the collaborative data analysis process:

### Be Explicit About Intention

Evaluation gets us closer to answering one of our most important questions, which is how collaborative data analysis and joint meaning-making can help city staff and frontline communities develop the mutual understanding, trust, and effective working relationships that will be essential to taking productive next steps of any kind.

Mutual understanding and trust are just one part of productive working relationships. Accountability, resources, and power sharing are also critical components, which city staff can be specific about when evaluating the process. However, this guide won't flesh out those details.

Be clear about who will interpret the results of the evaluation, what will happen with the collected feedback, and how next steps will be designed so that participants continue to have a clear line of sight into how their efforts contribute to the process.

### Return to Shared Goals

When you begin the evaluation, start by simply returning to the goals you set together at the beginning of the process. Review them with your community partners and invite them to bring in any of their goals if they were articulated elsewhere/separately. Use these goals to create questions to better evaluate the process.

## Shared Indicators

Determine indicators of success collaboratively among the city-community process design team, by asking each person to answer the question: how will we know this collaborative data analysis process was a success? What indicators of success will you as city staff be looking for? Use those indicators to create a survey for participants and/or for the design team to use in reflection and debrief after the process.

## Spectrum of Community Engagement to Ownership

Use the Spectrum of Community Engagement to Ownership as an evaluation tool on page 8. Ask participants to assess where along the spectrum the process lands and why. Allow each person to express their view on a post-it and place all the sticky notes on a wall along a 0-5 spectrum scale. Invite the group to reflect on what they see. If there is basic consensus on where the process lands along the spectrum, ask the group to share:

- ➔ What practices and conditions supported community participation?
- ➔ What practices or conditions served as barriers to community participation?
- ➔ What goals should we set together for improvement and what action steps will get us there?

If there are notable gaps in perception as to where the process landed on the spectrum, ask the group to pinpoint the differences in experience and perspective that may be resulting in the gap. And then continue with the questions/prompts bulleted above.

**NOTE:** The “Impact” column includes multiple possible impacts. For example, transparency may be the impact if the level 2 work is part of a larger equity strategy.

Placation may be the impact if level 2 is where the work stops. Be sure to take into account where you might be along the spectrum in the context of the larger work at hand.

## Simple Survey

At the end of each engagement, it is a good idea to give participants a simple survey to gather feedback on the process. Using the shared goals and indicators described above, decide on a brief survey with specifics to derive pointed information. Be clear about who will be reading the survey, the intention of the survey, and what will happen with the feedback collected, so that participants continue to have a clear line of sight into how their efforts contribute to the process.

Mural by Tomokazu Matsuyama, photo by Victoria Pickering



## SAMPLE QUESTIONS

**To what extent do you feel this collaborative data analysis process strengthened relationships between city staff and community members?**

- Significantly
- Somewhat
- Not much
- Not at all

**What follow-up action could further strengthen relationships between city staff and community members?**

**To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?**

**This process offered multiple chances for my voice to be heard.**

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Somewhat agree
- Somewhat disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

**I feel informed about how the input I provided during this process will be used.**

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Somewhat agree
- Somewhat disagree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

**How likely are you to stay involved with the city's efforts to partner with impacted communities to address existing inequities?**

- Very likely
- Possibly
- Not likely

**Does digging into this data alongside your narratives and perspectives on these issues help create better working relationships between city staff and community members?**

- Significantly
- Somewhat
- Not much
- Not at all



## Quadrants for Facilitated Reflection

If the city-community design team is able to have a facilitated reflection on the process, the following quadrants can be helpful for developing a shared understanding of high-level outcomes as well as more detailed feedback on what worked and what did not work. For a reflection like this, it is a good idea to have the entire design team read participant feedback in the surveys, or a summary of it, and then proceed to the facilitated reflection, using the following quadrants for note-taking.

<b>What were the positive outcomes that came as a result of this collaborative data analysis process?</b>	<b>What were the missed opportunities?</b>
<b>What specifically was done well, or contributed to the positive outcomes?</b>	<b>What could have been done better, to avoid missed opportunities?</b>

In addition to reflecting on the overall process, this kind of reflection tool can also be applied to specific issue conversations (for example, collaborative analysis of energy burden and eviction data), and to the development and implementation of collaborative strategies to address it.

Photo by Seattle City Council





## SHARING THE DATA (AND STORIES!) MORE WIDELY

City-community collaborations are a powerful vehicle for sharing the data and stories relevant to the equity data maps more widely. Efforts to share the data with the wider community can be connected to your shared equity goals (e.g. to engage residents in climate action planning). These tips can help city staff maximize the partnership's potential to ensure access to the data that inspires action around your shared goals:

**Provide resources to community partners with the capacity to make data relevant and accessible to residents:** If possible, avoid hiring outside communications consultants and instead, resource community partners with the capacity to make data relevant and accessible to residents. Many community-based organizations have developed significant communications capacity with methods that are culturally relevant to their constituents. Depending on the kinds of leadership development programs they may have for engaging resident leaders, community partners may be equipped to develop a team of resident leaders to design and implement a data-sharing campaign in their own communities. If additional communications capacity is needed, work with community partners to select the right consultant to inform development of the plan for sharing data more widely. Examples of relevant and accessible data sharing methods include:

- **Infographics** designed with the communities of focus in mind.
- **Photovoice project** in which residents take photos to document the lived experiences relevant to the inequities reflected in the data maps.
- **Radio interview** with resident leaders from impacted communities discussing the equity data maps and the stories behind the data.
- **Newsletter** that is disseminated to constituents that includes visuals and narratives that depict key data points around inequities.
- **Video documentary** created by and/or featuring residents living the inequities reflected in the maps sharing their experiences, analysis, and goals for transforming the inequities.
- **Popular theater** events curated by community groups to portray the impacts of inequities and to facilitate discussions about potential community-driven solutions.

**Activate accessible channels:** City-community partnerships can identify together the communications channels that are most accessible to the communities in focus. For working class communities that spend a great deal of time at work and may have limited access to technology, the radio is often one of the more accessible channels. For youth, social media can be best, but social media campaigns should be led by youth with knowledge of the most relevant social media outlets and influencers. Community partners who do community organizing are a tremendous resource because door-to-door or house-meeting-style information sharing is often the most effective method.

- **Create a joint statement:** Documenting the shared learning can be a powerful and useful process. It doesn't have to be long, but if authentically co-created, a short statement on the issues and the results of the collaborative data analysis designed by the city and community and ready to present publicly can be powerful. Such a document could even be an invitation for others to look at the data and share what they see, or to join in some more direct change work to move the needle and advance shared priorities.
- **Host community events** featuring documentary through Photovoice, videography, or popular theater.

## INVESTING IN ON-GOING CITY-COMMUNITY COLLABORATION

City staff should see the start of a city-community partnership based on mutual understanding and respect as a way to advance equity work across the city. What city staff decides to do next, and how they invest in these relationships, is key in advancing equity. There are myriad issues to be addressed and many different strategies that city and community members can work on together. The important thing is to continue to invest in the partnership by prioritizing the collaborative activities that continue to build understanding, trust, and productive long-term relationships. Those activities include:

- **Action:** Being an effective champion within systems to advance equity solutions means committing to go beyond rhetoric to take substantive action in collaboration with community partners. Genuine action requires resources, including funds and staff time. Be specific about the purpose and desired outcomes of ongoing collaborative work. Set goals together, allocate resources to achieve those goals, develop a plan, and implement the plan in collaboration. Use the information gathered in the evaluations to determine realistic and necessary next steps with community partners. Ask community partners how you can be most helpful in the next steps, while being clear about realistic limitations (resources, government positionality, other possible limits). Be clear with partners about process and planning.
- **Accountability:** Commit to continuing your own learning. Resources like those included in the appendix below are very useful to explore. Make sure you have a plan for following up on the next steps identified in evaluations or by community partners. Be clear about what you can and cannot do, and commit to finding ways to do the work even if trust is not there, if it falters, and/or when challenges arrive by exploring further resources to assist in that process. Make sure community partners are credited at every step of the way during and after this process. As you use your learnings from the process, be sure to be clear whose work went into the development of recommendations, materials, policies, and processes that may have been shaped or informed by the collaboration with community groups and members.
- **Power & Politics:** Openly investigate power dynamics within the collaboration and in the broader effort to advance equity action. How can ongoing work in the city-community collaboration shift power to historically marginalized people and communities? How can city staff/departments and community work together to understand how power is wielded to perpetuate inequities? How can that be transformed? Work with community-based organizations to help navigate the politics of city government to be able to actually advance the solutions and ideas that are generated. A major piece of coming together with the community is being able to help open some doors to advance the priorities identified by communities in the collaborative data analysis process.
- **Continuity:** Establish a regular venue to convene the members of the collaboration. This could include regular meetings (even quarterly) to stay connected and up to speed. Having a trusted facilitator can help add continuity to the conversations as they shift from exploring the data to ongoing work. Bring forward other champions along the way to avoid interruption, and to ensure knowledge and relationships are transferable through different projects, shifting city council priorities, and other transitions. We want to be bringing new people into the partnership on both sides to learn from people who have been through earlier versions. Helping community-based organizations to establish inroads into city government, and working with other staff/departments to solidify the role and expertise of organizations in the work of the city government, is key to sustaining community relationships outside of specific staff at both the city and the organizations (who may come and go).

*For more best practices and deeper learning on these concepts, refer to appendix resources.*



# FINAL THOUGHTS

*“You cannot change any society unless you take responsibility for it, unless you see yourself as belonging to it and responsible for changing it.”*

–Grace Lee Boggs

Writing this guide in the midst of a global pandemic and a global uprising for racial justice illuminated how high the stakes are for cities. Closing racial equity gaps is, for many, a question of life or death. Black, Indigenous, Latinx, Southeast Asian, and Pacific Islander communities are dying at higher rates than their white counterparts, and the research is clear – this is the result of compounded effects of institutionalized racism across multiple institutions. Communities of color bear disproportionate burdens in terms of energy utility costs, housing instability, access to health care, technology, healthy food, transportation, and more.

**To achieve the vision of thriving urban centers with the capacity to survive and thrive through crises, city staff and impacted communities will need to work together in meaningful ways. We hope this GEM guide offers worthwhile examples of what that work can entail, and practices that support an acceleration of efforts to advance community-driven solutions to our toughest challenges.**

Mural by Art Esteem, photo by William Newton





# APPENDIX

## VIRTUAL COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE & IMPLEMENTATION SUPPORT

**Join the virtual Community of Practice!** Meet and engage with other practitioners working on collaborative data analysis, city-community collaboration, and using data and maps for climate equity! Participate in peer-to-peer learning and support in implementing this guide, and in the work that goes beyond this document. Get updates on resources and support, and more more!

Visit [equitymap.org](https://equitymap.org) for details, to join the Community of Practice, and to learn more about the GEM platform.

## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES FOR IMPLEMENTATION

### Working with Communities/City-Community Relationships

Urban Sustainability Directors Network: [Equity Foundations Training](#)

Facilitating Power & Movement Strategy Center: [Spectrum of Community Engagement to Ownership](#)

Government Alliance on Race & Equity: [Advancing Racial Equity and Transforming Government](#)

Sherry Arnstein (1969): [Arnstein's Ladder of Citizen Participation](#)

Teaching Excellence in Adult Theory: [Adult Learning Theories](#)

Movement Strategy Center: [Framework on Community-Driven Climate Resilience Planning](#)

Partnership for Collaborative Change: [Participatory Action Research Curriculum](#)

Movement Strategy Center and USDN: [Engagement to Ownership](#)

Brentin Mock, City Lab: [Why Flood Victims Blame Their City, Not the Climate](#)

Race Forward: [Building the We: Governing for Racial Equity in Salinas, CA](#)

Brentin Mock, City Lab: [Why Detroit Residents Pushed Back Against Tree-Planting](#)

Aorta Collective: [Anti-Oppressive Facilitation fro Democratic Process](#)

Urban Sustainability Directors Network: [Guide to Equitable Community-Driven Climate Preparedness Planning](#)

### Addressing our Own Privilege, Power, and White Supremacy

[Ibram X Kendi's Antiracist Reading List](#)

[Project Implicit's Tests For Hidden/Implicit Bias](#)



[The Bias Of “Professionalism” Standards](#)

[The Characteristics Of White Supremacy Culture](#)

[Tips For Naming, Intervening And Addressing Systemic Power](#)

[Dismantling Anti-Black Bias In Democratic Workplaces: A Toolkit](#)

[Understanding And Resisting Divide And Conquer Tactics](#)

[How The Values Of Oppressive Systems Tend To Arise In Organizations](#)

[Me & White Supremacy](#)

[Justin Ford – Pedagogy of Privilege](#)

## Equity Practice

[Othering & Belonging Institute at UC Berkeley: Targeted Universalism Handbook](#)

[Race Forward: Racial Equity Impact Assessment Toolkit](#)

[Zero Cities Equity Assessment Tool](#)

[The Greenlining Institute: Making Equity Real In Climate Adaptation And Community Resilience Policies And Programs: A Guidebook](#)

[Race Forward: Introduction to Racial Equity Assessment tools](#)

[Urban Sustainability Directors Network: RESILIENCE HUBS: Shifting Power to Communities and Increasing Community Capacity](#)

[Participatory Budgeting Project](#)

[Urban Sustainability Directors Network: Equity Foundations Training](#)

## Data Analysis

[Emerald Cities Collaborative: Energy Democracy Scorecard + Flipbook](#)

[Urban Sustainability Directors Network + Cadmus: A Guidebook on Equitable Clean Energy Program Design for Local Governments and Partners](#)

[Othering and Belonging Institute at UC Berkeley: Equity Metrics](#)

[Urban Institute: Data Walks](#)

[James Rojas: Place It! Methodology](#)

