



Equitable Development

Principles & Scorecard



Updated 2022

INTRODUCTION

The Equitable Development Principles & Scorecard is a tool to answer the question: “How can development repair past harms and contribute to a stronger, more inclusive and thriving community?”

The social, physical, and historic landscape both defines and reflects the dominant powers in our communities. From the theft of Indigenous lands to the exclusion of communities of color from property ownership, generations of intentional policies and practices have stripped power and decision-making around development from low-wealth, immigrant and Black, Indigenous and People of Color (BIPOC) communities. Now, Minnesota leads the nation in health and wealth disparities and feelings of exclusion among BIPOC residents.

This tool provides a framework to reclaim power and ensure that development is not an isolated project but rather becomes an integral piece of a collective commitment to create wealth, opportunity and stability for historically and systemically marginalized communities.

REVERSING LEGACIES OF EXCLUSION

New development or redevelopment must start from a recognition of past harms committed by systemic racism and white-centered practices, and must explore restorative approaches to reverse the harm. Centuries of disinvestment in marginalized communities has created cycles of gentrification, as investors capitalize on devalued land and property, while those interests gentrify spaces and environments to financially or culturally exclude previous residents. Because of these normative practices, our neighborhoods have been shaped by the voices and actions of those interests, and have excluded the input of and life potential of BIPOC communities.

Therefore, any development or project must implicitly disrupt this pattern and explicitly direct benefits to the most impacted and systemically marginalized communities.

KEY DEFINITIONS

Equity is not about equality or adaptation.

EQUITY is about liberating our lives from white supremacy through transforming the systems and practices that are perpetually replicating and enforcing it. Therefore, equity must be:

- *claimed and defined by those most harmed by systems of oppression*
- *fundamentally about building power, capacity, and leadership to reverse structural and institutional racism*
- *intersectional, recognizing people are made up of many overlapping identities such as race, gender, class, sexual orientation, ability, and ethnicity*
- *a human right, providing opportunities and creating positive outcomes for everyone*

Therefore the *Equitable Development Principles & Scorecard* is explicit in its definition of **COMMUNITY** which cannot be defined simply by geography. The community to be centered in any project must be defined by the legacy of racism and exclusion.

Identifying those **MOST IMPACTED** must actively center the needs and vision of the communities that have been most harmed by these past and current inequities, regardless of their current presence in the surrounding area of the project. That’s why the use of the *Equitable Development Principles & Scorecard* must be connected to local organizing and align with a shared understanding of equity.

PRINCIPLES OF EQUITABLE DEVELOPMENT

EQUITABLE DEVELOPMENT AND INVESTMENTS SHOULD RESULT IN CONCRETE AND MEASURABLE BENEFITS FOR HISTORICALLY AND SYSTEMICALLY MARGINALIZED PEOPLE AS DEFINED BY THEIR COMMUNITY.



LIVABILITY ensures development both accounts for past harms and forecasts for future impacts. This principle shapes restorative, regenerative and healthy outcomes for historically and systemically marginalized people; promotes inclusion and belonging; and puts intention and focus on the history, power and wellness of the community.



COMMUNITY POWER requires engagement practices that connect with and take leadership from community members who are most affected or who have been historically excluded from planning processes — especially people of color, immigrants, low-wealth people, renters, people with disabilities and those with other marginalized identities.



HOUSING practices require evidence that current community members and those historically marginalized or excluded play a central role in defining community housing needs; are able to stay in their chosen communities; and ultimately have access to affordable dignified housing options, tenant protections, and opportunities for individual, collective or cooperative ownership.



ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT practices require evidence that projects prioritize community wealth building, high-quality job opportunities, and local investment and ownership opportunities to prevent unwanted displacement of historically and systemically marginalized community residents and small businesses and build stronger local and neighborhood economies.



ENVIRONMENTAL practices require evidence that the overall vision, plan and implementation honor local community's assets — including the land, water and air — to develop projects that promote, sustain and regenerate the health, wellbeing and thriving of the people and place.



TRANSPORTATION practices require evidence that transit is integrated into walkable, livable, and affordable land use practices to enhance healthy living within low-income communities and communities of color.



USING THE SCORECARD

This tool was originally co-created in 2016 with the input of the following organizations: Alliance for Metropolitan Stability; Asian Economic Development Association; Asian Media Access; Aurora St. Anthony Neighborhood Development Corporation; Blake Road Corridor Collaborative; Centro de Trabajadores Unidos en la Lucha; Community Stabilization Project: Harrison Neighborhood Association; Heritage Park Neighborhood Association; Jewish Community Action; La Asamblea de Derechos Civiles; Lao Assistance Center of MN; Metropolitan Interfaith Council on Affordable Housing; New American Development Center; Nexus Community Partners; Northside Residents Redevelopment Council and Umoja Community Development Corporation.

*The Scorecard was updated in 2020-2021 with input from a range of community partners and scorecard users to include a new **livability** principle, found on pages 8 and 9.*



WHO

This scorecard was created by Twin Cities community leaders to ensure that the principles and practices of equitable development, environmental justice, and affordability are applied to development in our communities. It is intended to be used by:

COMMUNITY MEMBERS

including community-based organizations, urban neighborhoods, suburban or rural communities and cultural groups

PUBLIC & PRIVATE SECTOR

including city council members, county commissioners, planners, private developers or consultants



WHEN

This scorecard can be used in a variety of circumstances related to growth and development at a local level. This includes:

COMMUNITY VISIONING AND/OR PLANNING

with a focus on equity, for instance for a small area plan, development plan, or master plan

ENGAGING residents, businesses and developers in measurable economic growth and healthy communities

SCORING a proposed development project or a project currently in progress

EVALUATING the impacts of policy and investments on the needs of community

Making **POLICY CHANGE** recommendations

USING THE SCORECARD



HOW

There are many ways to use this tool! For reviewing and scoring a particular project, policy or plan, you can use the following process:

1. Fill out the Project Overview on pages 6-7 to describe the project and the people who are involved — or should be involved — in the process.
2. Review the Principles of Equitable Development on page 3 — and the scorecards for each principle through this document.
3. Discuss each section Scorecard with your group, and decide as a group how many points the project needs to pass in each section. On each scorecard not all criteria may apply to your community or project. Tailor the scorecard to meet your needs: remove any criteria that don't apply, and add any items that are important. For scoring, decide how important an item is to your community and weight the scores accordingly. For example, if one criteria is critical to your community consider giving it 10 points, rather than 5.
4. Add up all of the scores from each section for a Final Score in the box below.
5. Decide as a group the next steps based on the score.

SCORING



1. Write the score from each section below, along with the maximum possible score for the section (Points Earned / Max Possible)
 - ___/___ Livability Score
 - ___/___ Community Power Score
 - ___/___ Economic Development Score
 - ___/___ Housing Score
 - ___/___ Transportation Score
 - ___/___ Environment Score
2. Add up all of the above scores to get a Total.
 - ___/___ Total (Points Earned/Max Possible)
3. Turn the Total into a Final Score.
 - Divide the total Points Earned by the Max Possible
 - Write the Final Score here: ___/___

DEFINING OUR VISION

Community power means historically and systemically community members **define for ourselves** what we want for our futures. There are many definitions of equitable development created by government agencies and local organizations. **What is your vision — or your group's vision — for equitable development in your community or neighborhood?** If you were to travel into the future you want to see for yourself and those who come after you, what would it be like? What would you see, hear, smell, feel? Write some ideas about what equitable development means to you below!



PROJECT OVERVIEW

Project/Plan Name: _____

Location of Project/Plan: _____

Is the project part of a bigger land use plan? Y N If yes, please attach plan

Public Investments(s):

- Public Subsidy Funding amount and source
- Tax abatement amount and source
- Public land sale and amount
- Zoning changes/variances
- Infrastructure improvements (sewer/water, street, sidewalk, etc.)
- Other: _____

Developer: _____

Developer Contact Info: _____

Public Agency: _____

Public Agency Contact Info: _____

Other Stakeholders: _____

Description of the Project:

Community Profile (demographics – please attach additional information to the Scorecard):

LIVABILITY



Livability is the foundation of equitable development, recognizing that any project or investment exists within a larger historical and social context. Equitable livability ensures development both accounts for past harms and forecasts for future impacts. This principle shapes **RESTORATIVE, REGENERATIVE** and healthy outcomes for historically and systemically marginalized people; promotes inclusion and belonging; and puts intention and focus on the history, power and wellness of the community.

Criteria	Score
The project has taken proactive steps with community leaders to understand the local history, cultural lineages and environment assets of the project area to repair, honor and integrate that legacy into project planning.	/
Building from history gained from community and research, the developer has worked with community leaders and government agencies to understand the current demographics, languages, natural and human assets, and other key features of the project area to ensure development enhances the valued attributes of the area and aligns with the vision of historically and systemically marginalized people most impacted by the project.	/
The developer is committed to co-creating a set of mutual agreements at the start of any project to ensure a community engagement process that centers the dignity, power and agency of historically and systemically marginalized peoples — and has committed to accountability measures and long-term neighborhood relationship building beyond the design and construction of the project to address any negative outcomes and embrace community ideas.	/
The developer acknowledges the impact of structural and environmental racism on historically and systemically marginalized communities in the project area — and Black, Indigenous and People of Color communities with historic ties to the project area who have been pushed out or excluded — and works with those communities to ensure the project design actively addresses past harms.	/
The project identifies clear avenues to re-allocate resources and direct long-term measurable benefits to historically marginalized community members.	/
The developer works with historically and systemically marginalized communities to integrate an anti-displacement lens to the development process that reverses the mindset of extraction and rather invests in strategies that strengthen communities economically, ecologically and spiritually, while preventing the displacement of current residents and businesses.	/
The developer recognizes how the built environment impacts the safety and belonging of communities of color and is invested in conversation with community to reimagine public safety in ways the project can reduce surveillance and policing and enhance collective care.	/

The project considers opportunities for community ownership of material and natural assets, including housing and retail units, and green spaces for food cultivation and energy generation.	/
The project design integrates elements that enhance networks of community care and encourage social interaction and belonging by creating or restoring spaces for residents to connect, heal and build power with each other.	/
The project design seeks to establish or enhance welcoming and inclusive community access to green spaces and public gathering areas to enhance the physical, emotional and spiritual wellbeing of current residents.	/
	/
	/
	/

SECTION SCORE

IMPORTANT TERMS

RESTORATIVE development explicitly acknowledges and seeks to repair the harms of structural racism through projects that proactively redirect power and benefits to historically and systemically marginalized communities to heal on their own terms and define their own futures.

REGENERATIVE development intentionally seeds processes and practices that create health, wealth and community power in ways that are renewed, cultivated and sustained over time.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

THE DIVERSITY OF GENTRIFICATION IN MINNEAPOLIS AND ST. PAUL is an important report published by the Center for Urban and Regional Affairs (CURA) at the University of Minnesota-Twin Cities. [Read it here.](#)

COMMUNITY POWER



Authentic community power requires **ENGAGEMENT** practices that connect with and take leadership from community members who are most affected or who have been historically excluded from planning processes — especially people of color, immigrants and migrants, low-wealth people, renters, people with disabilities and those with other marginalized identities. It goes beyond feedback and input to co-creation and a meaningful role in decision-making to ensure real and palpable community benefit from any project or development.

Criteria	Score
The project was initiated by historically and systemically marginalized community members and the developer is intentionally responding to that identified need	/
The developer involves local historically and systemically marginalized community members during the ideation phase of and throughout the planning and implementation processes to establish and ensure priorities and criteria guide the project	/
The developer is working with the community to identify potential negative impacts and the planning process is actively oriented to avoid or mitigate those potential harms before the project is finalized or construction begins	/
Community has authority in the decision-making process and the developer is accountable to the community by having explicit mechanisms in place for community to stop, change, or alter a design or plan if needed.	/
Project information, materials, and meetings are communicated and available in real time in multiple formats, presentation styles, and languages that are representative of the impacted community.	/
Priority for consulting and contracting related to planning, analysis and engagement is given to existing community and cultural organizations and those who have demonstrated deep and lasting connection to the neighborhoods and cultures impacted by the project.	/
Design promotes social connectedness for a stronger community.	/
	/
	/

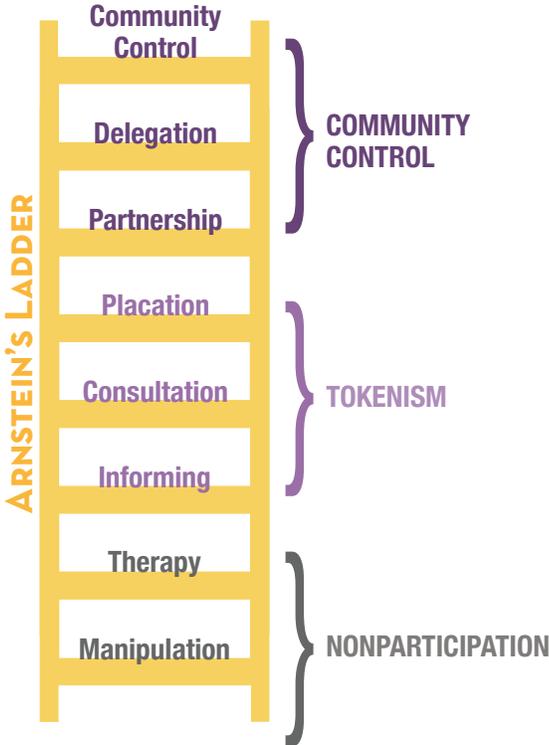
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SECTION SCORE

IMPORTANT TERMS

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT: Community engagement involves residents or stakeholders, especially those who are excluded and isolated, in collective action to create a healthy community. Impacts of effective community engagement may include community healing, reclaiming a healthy identity, reconnecting with culture and spirituality, building relationships, and embracing individual and collective power.

See Arnstein’s Ladder of Participation as an example on the right and [learn more here](#).



ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT



Equitable economic development practices require evidence that policies, programs, and investments prioritize **COMMUNITY WEALTH BUILDING**, high quality job opportunities, and local investment and ownership opportunities to prevent unwanted displacement of historically and systemically marginalized community residents and small businesses and build a stronger local economies at the neighborhood level.

Criteria	Score
Investments create opportunities to promote local small business development, arts/cultural-based businesses, and entrepreneurial ventures.	/
The project involves or supports businesses and enterprises owned by people of color to sustain a strong economic base and provide job opportunities for the community.	/
Lease options prioritize neighborhood business opportunities.	/
Local community is given preference when hiring consultants, contractors, and developers for project	/
Project uses local workforce/education programs to connect residents to long term employment within the project and any business, organization, or property management company occupying the final development.	/
The project ensures that their workers have living wage jobs with benefits and the right to organize for labor agreements without fear of retaliation.	/
Planning involves collaborative research done by nonprofit organizations, city officials, foundations, and historically and systemically marginalized people to inform and support economic development driven by the community vision.	/
	/
	/
	/

	/
	/

SECTION SCORE

IMPORTANT TERMS

COMMUNITY WEALTH BUILDING aims at improving the ability of communities and individuals to increase asset ownership, anchor jobs locally, expand the provision of public services, and ensure local economic stability. [Read more from the Democracy Collaborative’s Wealth Building website.](#)

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

HIRE MINNESOTA is a campaign to end racial employment disparities in Minnesota, which has some of the worst employment disparities in the country. HIRE Minnesota has set an ambitious goal: to bring our state from worst to first in employment equity. [Learn more.](#)

WEST SIDE COMMUNITY ORGANIZATION integrated a subcontractor agreement as an addendum to its scorecard to add to explicitly include subcontracted workers in its considerations of equitable labor conditions. [Read more in the case study about their work.](#)

HOUSING



Equitable housing practices require evidence that current community members and those historically marginalized or excluded play a central role in defining community housing needs; are able to stay in their chosen communities; and ultimately have access to **AFFORDABLE** dignified housing options, tenant protections, and opportunities for individual, collective or cooperative ownership.

Criteria	Score
Project increases the amount of deeply affordable housing that is relative to the income of the community	/
The percentage of housing that accommodates large families with 3 to 4 bedroom units reflects the community's need	/
Project centers and integrates ACCESSIBILITY	/
Housing is located near amenities (health and social services, transportation, education, and quality job opportunities) that promote walkability, livability, and community	/
All new and renovated housing is built or retrofitted with energy efficiency to reduce utility bills for the residents and is free from environmental hazards	/
Developer Lease Agreement defines provisions for rent increases that assure affordable housing units are maintained as permanently affordable or affordable for at least 30 years	/
Project considers permanently affordable and community-controlled options, such as co-operative housing owned by current community members and/or those who have been historically marginalized, excluded or displaced	/
Developer commits to make units attainable to community members with reasonable screening criteria and security deposits, and does not discriminate based on a resident's source of income (including Section 8), race, ability, immigration status or other aspects of their identities.	/
Developer commits to respectful and relational management practices that create safety from landlord harassment, including advance notice and right to cure for any resident facing eviction, and a stated just cause for the non renewal of any lease	/
Developer acknowledges in writing and honors tenants' right to organize and create a tenant association to address any building or site-wide issues	/

	/
	/
	/

SECTION SCORE

IMPORTANT TERMS

AFFORDABLE housing is defined as when a household spends 30% or less of its monthly income on housing costs.

ACCESSIBILITY: In Minnesota, at least 5% of rental units that are Type A must be accesible per ANSI A117.1 Section 1003 of the 2020 Minnesota Accessibility Code. You can [click here](#) or find the full code at bit.ly/MN-Accessibility-Code

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

EQUITABLE HOUSING Affordable housing isn't enough. For our communities to thrive, we need equitable housing. In 2019 and 2020, the Alliance co-led a project to work with community-based partners along the Green Line to articulate a vision for housing principles that keep community and culture rooted in the places they call home. [Download the graphic.](#)

TENANT RIGHTS are essential to equitable housing, including the right to organize and form a tenants union. One example or template is the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's "[Resident Rights and Responsibilities.](#)"

TRANSPORTATION



Equitable transportation practices require evidence that transit is integrated into walkable, livable, and affordable land use practices to enhance healthy living within low-income communities and communities of color.

Criteria	Score
Development is people-focused, minimizing car-oriented design by providing and increasing safe, attractive, and convenient access to pedestrian, bicycle, bus and rail transit, and zero emission car sharing systems.	/
Parking facilities accommodate bicycle daily use and secure storage and do not limit access of pedestrians.	/
Attractive, comfortable, accessible transit facilities are available or provided.	/
Developers commit to long term maintenance of transit stops and corners, such as snow clearance, tree trimming, clearing access to transit for people with disabilities.	/
Presence of wayfinding and systems information for pedestrians, bicyclists, and transit users is provided.	/
Development promotes traffic calming and pedestrian safety with the presence of enhanced crosswalks and other proven or innovative techniques.	/
Design contributes to a safe, accessible and welcoming neighborhood streetscape by adding green spaces and public art, including public art created by local community artists.	/
Accessible to all abilities by the incorporation of UNIVERSAL DESIGN .	/
	/
	/
	/

	/
	/

SECTION SCORE

IMPORTANT TERMS

UNIVERSAL DESIGN is the design of products and environments to be usable by all people, to the greatest extent possible, without the need for adaptation or specialized design.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

TRANSPORTATION EDITION: Cycles for Change led a community-based process to create an equitable development scorecard aimed specifically at transportation projects. [Learn more and download their scorecard here.](#)

HOW DO WE CREATE RESTORATIVE TRANSPORTATION PROJECTS: In 2021, the Alliance hosted an Actualizing Equity event exploring the concept of restorative transportation planning. [Learn more and download the recap here.](#)

ENVIRONMENT



Equitable environmental Practices require evidence that the overall vision, plan and implementation honor local community’s assets — including the land, water and air — to develop projects that promote, sustain and regenerate the health, wellbeing and thriving of the people and place.

Criteria	Score
Developer demonstrates an understanding of environmental justice and knows the local historical impact of environmental racism and takes direction from historically and systemically marginalized people to ensure a new legacy of environmental sustainability, economic prosperity and social vitality.	/
Development not only remediates past pollution and meets environmental standards on clean air, water and soil, but actively restores and improves environmental systems and habitats in the project area.	/
Both new development and repairs and improvements of existing structures use environmentally responsible, resource- and energy-efficient materials that support the health of the environment, local economy and the project’s occupants and users.	/
Development promotes or maintains access to green space; any green space disturbed by development is replaced or restored.	/
Project’s designed environment uses native plants and grasses, while removing and/or discouraging invasive plant species and integrates storm water retention Best Management Practices.	/
Development ensures that environmental improvements and assets — from parks to safe and accessible bicycle, walking, and rolling infrastructure — are designed in consultation with community to mitigate green gentrification.	/
Development is aligned with state and local climate resiliency goals and takes measures to reduce climate harms such as extreme heat stress on residents and infrastructure, flooding and invasive species.	/
Design reflects distinct identities of local cultural heritage through the presence, preservation, or addition of architectural assets.	/
	/

	/
	/
	/

SECTION SCORE

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

MINNESOTA'S CLIMATE ACTION FRAMEWORK: The State of Minnesota has developed a Climate Action Framework that sets a vision for how our state will address and prepare for climate change, identifying immediate, near-term actions we must take to achieve our long-term goal of a carbon-neutral, resilient and equitable future for Minnesota. [Access the framework here.](#)

Resource Links

The Diversity of Gentrification in Minneapolis and St. Paul: <http://gentrification.umn.edu>

Arnstein's Ladder of Participation: <https://organizingengagement.org/models/ladder-of-citizen-participation>

HIRE Minnesota: <http://thealliancetc.org/our-work/hire-minnesota>

West Side Community Organization Scorecard case study:

<http://thealliancetc.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/WSCO-case-study.pdf>

Community Wealth Building: <https://community-wealth.org/about/faq.html>

Equitable Housing model: <http://thealliancetc.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/GLC-Equitable-Housing.pdf>

U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development Resident Rights and Responsibilities

https://www.hud.gov/sites/documents/22272_MFHRRR.PDF

How do we create restorative transportation projects?:

<http://thealliancetc.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/AE21-Transportation-recap.pdf>

Equitable Transportation Scorecard: <http://thealliancetc.org/our-work/equitable-development-scorecard>

Minnesota Climate Action Framework: <https://climate.state.mn.us/minnesotas-climate-action-framework>

Learn more about the Equitable Development Principles & Scorecard

thealliancetc.org/equitable-development-scorecard

Questions or comments? Email us at info@thalliancetc.org



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