

# Equitable Development as a Tool to Advance Racial Equity



LOCAL AND REGIONAL  
GOVERNMENT ALLIANCE ON  
**RACE & EQUITY**



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This report is published by the  
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# ABOUT THE GOVERNMENT ALLIANCE ON RACE & EQUITY



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

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

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

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

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

To find out more about GARE, visit [www.racialequityalliance.org](http://www.racialequityalliance.org).

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*The Government Alliance on Race and Equity (GARE) is producing a series of briefing papers that support the work of jurisdictions committed to achieving racial equity. This paper provides a policy framework for implementation strategies that advance equitable development. It provides the historical context, current conditions, and some key data points that inform the framework. But first the document introduces some key definitions and a vision for the elimination of racial disparities and achievement of racial equity. Developing this vision is a critical step for all jurisdictions to take.*

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# Achieving Racial Equity

*Racial equity—when race can no longer be used to predict life outcomes, and life outcomes for all groups are improved.*

To achieve this vision requires the fair and just inclusion of all residents into a region’s economic, social, and political life—an essential component of planning for sustainable and thriving regions (PolicyLink). Prioritizing and working towards equity is work for the long haul and it begins with us—in our institutions—authentically listening to community, building an inclusive vision, and holding ourselves accountable for the strategies necessary to make that vision reality.

**Authentically listening and responding to community’s needs are new practices for government, challenging the status quo.** It can also bring us into spaces, figurative and literal, in which we are confronted with the historical and current injustices experienced by communities and the role of government institutions in creating and maintaining racial inequities. This can cause discomfort, fear, and frustration for us as representatives of institutions. GARE encourages you to embrace this part of the work as a normal and expected part of authentic listening to community—for it is only through authentic listening that we build the trust necessary to arrive at community owned visions, needs, and solutions.

**It also requires that government institutions make structural changes to address the history of inequality.** In the fullest sense, this would include amending public policies to ensure that they promote equity; prioritizing investments to best support those who need it most; and retooling processes to best do this work, including communication feedback loops that hold us accountable to community priorities. We will only achieve equity through authentic listening and responsive institutional actions rooted in community feedback.

## What is Equitable Development?

*Quality of life outcomes, such as affordable housing, quality education, living wage employment, healthy environments, and transportation are equitably experienced by the people currently living and working in a neighborhood, as well as for new people moving in. Public and private investments, programs, and policies in neighborhoods that meet the needs of residents, including communities of color, and reduce racial disparities, taking into account past history and current conditions.*

**When we achieve equitable development,** we increase the capacity of people of color to strengthen their communities and determine their own future and that of their neighborhoods. We distribute the benefits and burdens of growth equitably among people of all races, ethnic backgrounds, incomes, and geographies/neighborhoods. We encourage multicultural communities where tenured and newcomer residents can thrive. And we provide meaningful choices for the most impacted people of color to live, work, and define their own culture throughout all neighborhoods.

To achieve this ideal, we need a systemic approach that can create those kinds of outcomes. This requires coordinated and comprehensive investments, policies, and protections to prevent displacement of vulnerable residents, businesses, and community organizations. That approach should address the two major obstacles to achieving equitable outcomes related to development: 1) involuntary economic and cultural displacement of communities of color and 2) inequitable access for communities of color to the key determinants of social, physical, and economic well-being needed. A clear policy framework is helpful for developing, implementing, and measuring effective strategies.<sup>1</sup>

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1 City of Seattle Comprehensive Plan Race and Social Justice Resolution 31577, 2015

Two foundational equity elements guide the framework presented here:

1. **Strong communities and people.** People and communities with stability and resilience in the face of displacement pressures fare better. An intact community in which people are able to have high quality jobs and financial security; culturally appropriate goods, services, and support; and strong social networks that support the acceptance of a range of cultures has better outcomes.
2. **Great places with equitable access.** A city where all neighborhoods are healthy, safe, and afford their resident access to the key determinants of well-being promotes inclusion.

Equitable development strategies presented in this brief aim to achieve the above policy goals and operationalize the definition of equitable development.

## A Framework for Advancing Equitable Development

An Equitable Development Framework integrates people and place to create strong communities and people, as well as great places with equitable access. The Framework, with its equity drivers and outcomes, functions as an analytical tool to guide implementation to reduce disparities and achieve equitable outcomes for marginalized populations. The equity drivers build on the [Puget Sound Regional Equity Network's Principles of Equitable Development](#); local context may influence specific aspects of some of the elements as you work in your own community.

1. **Advance economic opportunity.** Promote local economic development and entrepreneur opportunities, enhance community-serving establishments, and increase quality living wage jobs for people in all neighborhoods.
2. **Prevent displacement.** Develop policies and programs that allow anyone who wants to live in the community to do so, especially current residents, and discourage displacement of viable small businesses that serve community needs.
3. **Preserve and expand affordable housing options.** Create healthy, safe, and affordable housing for all family sizes and incomes in all neighborhoods.
4. **Understand and respond to local context.** Respect local community character, cultural diversity, and values. Preserve and strengthen intact neighborhoods, building upon their local assets and resources.
5. **Promote broader mobility and connectivity.** Prioritize an effective and affordable public transportation network that supports transit-dependent communities and provides equitable access to core services and amenities, including employment, education, and health and social services.
6. **Practice meaningful community engagement.** Require local community participation and leadership in decision-making to reflect a diversity of voices, including targeted strategies to engage historically marginalized communities. Build cultural competence and responsiveness among all stakeholders, and structure planning processes to be clear, accessible and engaging.
7. **Develop healthy and safe communities.** Create built environments that enhance community health through public amenities (schools, parks, open spaces, complete streets, health care, and other services), access to affordable healthy food, improved air quality, and safe and inviting environments.
8. **Promote environmental justice.** Eliminate disproportionate environmental burdens and ensure an equitable share of environmental benefits for existing communities. Secure resources to mitigate and reverse the effects of environmental hazards past and present.

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

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9. **Achieve full accessibility.** Ensure any development that results from investments in the built environment is accessible and welcoming to people regardless of age, physical condition, or language.

These drivers are not designed to be deployed independently; their inter-relationship is fundamental to undoing the structural racism perpetuating current disparities. If implemented piecemeal or in isolation, they will result in transactional wins that do not produce lasting change. The Equitable Development Framework presents an integrated fabric of strategies to close racial disparities. Used together, these drivers have the potential to transform systems and shift from the current trajectory of growth that marginalizes many populations and compromises the diversity that makes communities strong.

## The Importance of Data

**Data is another way to understand equitable development.** A growing cannon of research<sup>2</sup> has identified measures that show racial disparities in outcomes related to growth. Policy and investments can be oriented toward eliminating these disparities. A few measurement frameworks and assessment tools are listed in the effective practices that follow. However, communities most impacted by growth are best positioned to collect more meaningful data through community-based research.

Measurable outcomes tracked over time with disaggregated data, reported on, and tied to performance can be an effective accountability strategy for improving government function to achieve equitable outcomes.

Several chronic racial and ethnic inequities resulting from lack of access to opportunity, including:

- life expectancy
- substandard housing conditions
- commute times, proximity to public transit, and transportation costs
- unemployment, poverty, wealth, and income
- proximity to public open space and healthy affordable food, rates of obesity and high blood pressure
- proximity to environmental hazards and rates of asthma

Racial inequities related to or resulting from displacement include:

- severe housing cost burden and rates of homeownership
- overcrowding, evictions, and homelessness
- stress and anxiety
- disruption to health care, medications, and social services
- disruptions to school attendance and performance
- loss of social supports and increased social isolation
- financial distress, loss of wealth and assets
- relocation to neighborhoods with fewer health-promoting resources and amenities
- segregation and discrimination in the housing market

## Evidence of Progress

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# toward Racial Equity through Equitable Development

**Equitable development ultimately manifests in tangible development projects and programs.**

The examples below illustrate some of the characteristics, benefits, and challenges of implementing equitable development. Each serves the dual purposes of both preventing displacement and increasing access to opportunity.

## Community Cornerstones and Seattle's Equitable Development Framework, Seattle Washington

The City of Seattle's Community Cornerstones program demonstrates the power of a collective impact model for equitable development. Its aim is to strengthen Seattle's most economically and culturally diverse communities while also welcoming new residents and businesses. The program is directed by community-developed neighborhood plans responding to displacement pressures resulting from the introduction of light rail service in southeast Seattle. The program's strategies ensure that existing low-income communities and communities of color participate in and benefit from decisions that shape their own neighborhoods. Some examples include:

- business technical assistance and promotion services to stabilize and grow local businesses in the established multicultural business districts;
- land acquisition for projects with a mix of commercial and community uses on the ground floor and primarily family-sized affordable housing above;
- multicultural coalition building to build out a network of shared multicultural community centers; and
- capacity-building of immigrant and refugee leaders and organizations to serve their communities and also work across cultural lines on shared agendas.

**Seattle 2035** is the City of Seattle's Comprehensive Plan for managing growth. The plan provides long-term guidance to help the City make decisions over the next 20 years about managing growth and providing services. In May 2015, Mayor Ed Murray sent Seattle City Council a resolution making race and social equity a foundational core value for the City's Comprehensive Plan. Council passed the resolution unanimously.

The resolution calls for the City to:

- incorporate new race and social equity goals and policies throughout the Comprehensive Plan;
- analyze the impacts of proposed growth strategies on the most vulnerable communities, and change policies, programs and investments to help offset the impacts of the selected growth strategy;
- close racial and social disparities with capital and program investments; and,
- create, monitor, and report on equity measures.

## Dudley Street Neighborhood Initiative, Boston Massachusetts

The Dudley Street Neighborhood Initiative (DSNI) is a model for capacity-building and community-led development. Formed in 1984 when one-third of the Dudley Street neighborhood's land (1,300 lots) was vacant from years of abandonment and arson. The DSNI organized and empowered community members to develop a shared vision to revitalize the physical and social infrastructure of the community. Since then over half of those lots have been rehabilitated for homes, gardens, parks, orchards, playgrounds, schools, community centers, and a Town Common. More than 400 new homes have been built and 500 housing units rehabbed since DSNI was

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formed. They are the only community group in the nation to win eminent domain power from a local municipality. This power was central to DSNI's achieving such tangible success.

The physical revitalization of the Dudley Street neighborhood is only eclipsed by the human and social infrastructure investments DSNI has made. DSNI's programs for resident leadership, youth mentoring, parent advocacy, and community organizing are just a few examples. Most telling is that DSNI's 3,600+ members include many residents who were children when DSNI began and are now leaders throughout the community—underscoring the multi-generational nature of community organizing for systems change.

## Fruitvale Station Village, Oakland California

The Unity Council's Fruitvale Station Village development exemplifies the importance of community organizing and establishing community anchors in equitable development. The Unity Council organized the Fruitvale neighborhood's predominately Latino community throughout a process of protesting a proposed light rail park n' ride, designing a mixed-use project, and ultimately controlling the development and operation of the project.

The development provides a public market, office space, small retail spaces, a library, senior center, community health center, childcare facility, and mixed-income housing. The culturally relevant design principles—along with the provision of local services that meet community needs—has resulted in the project becoming a community anchor. This new asset in the community has directly contributed to lowering neighborhood crime and commercial vacancy rates nearby while also increasing transit ridership and catalyzing new development in the neighborhood.

## Healthy Development Guidelines, Oakland California

A community-based planning partnership launched a process in July 2014 to develop a set of "Healthy Development Guidelines" for the City of Oakland. It is a joint effort between several nonprofit community-based organizations as part of East Oakland Building Healthy Communities, along with the Alameda County Public Health Department and the City of Oakland Planning Department, with technical assistance from ChangeLab Solutions and Raimi & Associates. This multi-year resident engagement process resulted in a set of guidelines that city planners and developers can use to review all new development projects above a certain threshold to ensure that they meet community-identified priorities for health equity. The partners are working on implementing some of the Guidelines administratively with the City Planning and Building Department. The partners are also in the process of adopting some Guidelines legislatively.

## Affordable Housing Preference Policy, Portland Oregon

The City of Portland's Affordable Housing Preference Policy is heavily informed by the history of the City's urban renewal policies and investments in North and Northeast Portland, specifically the displacement of African-American households and the disinvestment in public infrastructure. Gentrification fueled displacement, higher foreclosure rates, and a large racial wealth gap are some of the impacts of this legacy. The City is addressing these historic and current day inequities by giving priority for public funding to households with generational ties to these neighborhoods. Current and former residents of these areas that were subject to urban renewal, and their descendants now have priority when applying for City-funded affordable rental apartments, ownership homes, and down payment assistance for first-time homebuyers. Top priority is given to households (and their descendants) who owned property that was taken by eminent domain. This policy serves as a model of restorative justice that can be undertaken by local governments.

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# What does our past tell us about the importance of growth and racial equity?

To talk about equitable development as our future, hard realities about the United States' past have to be acknowledged. Throughout the nation's history, some communities and neighborhoods prospered at the expense of others. Real estate redlining and racially restrictive covenants dictated where racially or culturally distinct communities could and could not live and where investments occurred.<sup>3</sup> The Federal Highway Act tore apart communities of color with highways from central urban business districts to the predominately white suburbs and the G.I. Bill, along with discriminatory real estate lending and marketing practices, gave white households billions of dollars in home equity as they fled to the suburbs—greatly disinvesting in many urban neighborhoods with high populations of people of color in the process. The 1949 Housing Act's Urban Renewal policy targeted low-income neighborhoods for redevelopment, many of which were primarily inhabited by residents of color. Homes and businesses were demolished and thousands of residents were displaced, drastically transforming the racial makeup and geography of our country's cities.

Weakened by continued disinvestment in urban neighborhoods with high populations of people of color, the 2008 housing bubble-induced foreclosure crisis, and more recent shifts related to gentrification, development, and investment in urban areas has often exacerbated rather than reversed historic patterns of racial segregation and wealth inequality in place for generations. Both the private and public sectors helped solidify this systemic and racialized structure of wealth and poverty across the country.

Social structures and cultural identities were also solidified by these place-based policies and investments. Community-based organizations rose to meet the needs of specific cultural groups and neighborhoods. This still occurs today as new immigrants and refugees settle in the U.S. and look to preserve the continuity of their cultures within the mainstream American culture. These organizations and the associated social infrastructure are assets from which to build an equitable future.

The past injustices and numerous policy practices that undermined the integrity of certain neighborhoods cannot be undone, but there are strategies to bend the arc of future growth toward achieving racial equity. And these strategies require public agencies, including local jurisdictions, to recognize and embrace the critical role that public policy and decision-making play in facilitating growth and investment patterns. By consciously and proactively working to reverse patterns of racial inequity in investment and development, communities and their local governments can leverage public and private resources and existing community assets to create neighborhoods of opportunity for everyone, regardless of race or means.

# What are current trends and how do they inform our strategies?

**U.S. cities are undergoing a major demographic transformation in which the racial and ethnic groups that are most economically and socially excluded are driving cities' population growth.** Census data shows a cyclical pattern of white flight phenomenon and reinvestment in urban communities that has led to a diaspora of communities of color with weakened infrastructure spread throughout metropolitan regions despite those regions having a majority of

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people of color.<sup>4</sup> Many metropolitan areas are also experiencing the growth of immigrant and first-generation populations in new distribution patterns across their regions, highlighting the importance of building a more sophisticated physical and social infrastructure. Greater racial and social inclusion is required for these areas to maintain their economic competitiveness and still be environmentally sustainable. Cities must embrace their changing demographics and renewed desirability and make the investments needed to allow current residents and the next generation to reach its full potential. This is true for suburban neighborhoods as well, where demographic trends indicate a suburbanization of poverty<sup>5</sup> and increase in concentrated poverty. Regional solutions are needed to serve the needs and aspirations of a multi-cultural society that is becoming more diverse.

**Publicly supported and market driven gentrification of urban neighborhoods home to communities of color are again reshaping the geography of opportunity.** The pattern of development revitalizing some neighborhoods is higher density with a mix of uses within walking distance or accessed by transit, thus reducing the need for automobiles. It is an efficient market-based model of development to accommodate future residential and employment growth and lower greenhouse gas emissions. This trend is supported by most major U.S. cities public policies and driven by private market actors which price new housing and commercial space at the highest levels market demand will pay. This type of growth in neighborhoods with weakened social and financial ecosystems is especially more likely to produce racialized outcomes like the displacement of communities of color. Revitalization in one area can then trigger a wave of new development in surrounding previously underinvested areas occupied by communities unprepared to adapt, much less benefit.

**The public sector can ensure the benefits and burdens of growth are equitably distributed.** Community-led planning and development efforts are essential for development patterns that work for communities of color. Providing the resources that enables residents to organize themselves across race, culture, and class for collective benefit is an emerging but essential arena of public sector finance. Supportive public policy and proactive public investments in underinvested neighborhoods can create community stability and economic mobility opportunities before the market is catalyzed. Public investments can meet the needs of these neighborhoods when the market will not and position them to directly benefit from future growth.

## What is success, and how do you achieve it?

What is success? When the phrase “equitable development,” is no longer necessary because equity is an inseparable part of the single word “development.” It will happen when all people of color experience the beneficial outcomes from growth as whites do. It will manifest when communities of color have the capacity for self-determination to create their vision of urban growth. Success will be when racial equity is achieved.

These are lofty goals that may evoke pushback from public, private, and even philanthropic investors in the form of, “it’s too complicated,” “growth is only indirectly related to racial equity, it’s more about class,” or “this is affirmative action and doesn’t benefit everyone.” Applying a racial equity analysis to specific issues of growth can build the capacity of equitable development practitioners and community organizers to achieve these goals. Identifying the issues will serve to focus the analysis. Understanding the historical context and root causes of inequitable development is critical. Identifying best practices can provide additional resources to formulate solutions.

4 PERE and PolicyLink, 2016 National Equity Atlas

5 Brookings Institute, “Confronting Suburban Poverty”

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Below is a policy framework fleshed out with equitable development strategies and accompanying best practices that local governments have adopted to address the historical and current context of inequity described above. The best practices are briefly introduced and referenced so readers can conduct further research into the details of each. Cutting across all these strategies is the need for citywide equitable growth policies and targeted investments that both explicitly aim to achieve measureable outcomes tracked over time.

## Goal 1: Strong communities and people. People and communities with stability and resilience in the face of real displacement pressures.

### Strategy 1: Recognize and build on communities of color existing capacity for self-determination.

The current patterns of disparity by race had many causes, but a lack of organized power amongst communities of color in terms of decision-making authority, financial, and physical assets, or the capacity to organize and advocate for equitable outcomes is one cause that has very specific remedies.

**Restructure decision-making processes so that people of color have real authority in planning and development decisions.** This will require a process that is open, inviting, and transparent to people new to the process and will need to be structured to accommodate the schedule and location needs of those with the least flexibility. This would increase opportunities for people of color to sit at the decision-making table with public officials such as ad-hoc advisory task forces or on public boards and commissions. It should also include inclusive community engagement<sup>6</sup> that brings the decision-making process to existing communication structures led by communities of color like standing meetings of cultural organizations and coalitions. Long-term community partnership should be based on and built upon interim successes, allowing for continual feedback and ongoing improvements to decision making structures.

**Make capacity building investments to elevate community voice and leadership in planning and development processes.**<sup>7</sup> An effective strategy is to simultaneously support the growth of individual, organizational, and coalitional leadership capacity for communities of color, so that communities and the organizations and individuals that lead them work together to understand shared concerns and effectively advocate for themselves. For most communities, these organizations serve many purposes from providing services such as senior meals and youth programs; to being the location for community problem-solving. They are often the place where community leadership resides as well as the place that reinforces the cultural identity of the community—through cultural arts, history, and celebrations. For many, the work of influencing policy decisions is new. This may include individual leadership development curriculum, community-based organization staff and program resources, or resources for coalition infrastructure like shared communications and staffing.

Other approaches include using arts and culture investments to affirm community identity in the face of neighborhood change.<sup>8</sup> Immigrant and refugee integration strategies can preserve cultural strengths as well grow economically strong communities.<sup>9</sup>

**Making capacity building investments within government institutions.** The responsibility of capacity building is also on government to give institutional staff the support they need to undertake equity work in a meaningful way. For example, supporting hiring managers to increase the diversity in hiring, retention, and recruitment of new staff as well as the membership of

6 City of Seattle Inclusive Outreach and Public Engagement Guide

7 The National Environmental Justice Advisory Committee's model plan for public participation, Detroiters Working for Environmental Justice's Build Up Detroit, and PolicyLink Sustainable Communities Community Engagement Guide

8 Kresge Foundation Arts and Culture Program

9 PolicyLink and PERE Immigrant Integration Guide

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boards and commissions advising governments on development related issues. Developing in-house curriculum on institutional racism, engaging with specific communities, and how to use racial equity tools to analyze planning processes and land use and investment decisions are all ways to increase government's internal capacity.

## Strategy 2: Anticipate and prevent displacement of vulnerable residents, businesses, and community organizations.

**This strategy is important because involuntary displacement—either directly due to eviction or demolition or due to market forces associated with growth—disproportionally impacts communities of color.** The tactics that follow acknowledge that the existing community will be competing with outside investors and incoming higher-income households for control of local assets like land and buildings, but it is important to identify opportunities to work cooperatively so that focus remains on the core goal—that as neighborhoods by their very nature evolve, that evolution does not become a choice between those who were there and those who now enter the community. Preparation for this balance between competition and cooperation is critical.

**Establish community stabilizing policies and investments first.** People of color who live and work in redeveloping neighborhoods need effective rights and resources to anchor their interests and benefit from this change. Fundamental tenant rights policies for residents and businesses include just cause eviction policies to ensure evictions happen rarely and only with good reason, rent stabilization to limit landlord's abilities to quickly or substantially increase rents as their properties become more desirable, strong relocation protections and financial assistance for renters displaced by redevelopment, affordable housing preservation strategies (including policies for no net loss of subsidized housing), right of return policies to ensure displaced residents get the first choice of newly developed affordable housing, and proactive code enforcement to ensure that existing housing is being maintained for existing residents.<sup>10</sup>

Commercial stabilization strategies include providing public mitigation funding for small businesses impacted by major infrastructure improvements<sup>11</sup> and technical assistance programs and access to low-cost capital for businesses in commercial districts experiencing rapid demographic changes.

**Understand and make goals for managing neighborhood change.** This strategy should include establishing clear and bold goals upfront for community stability and economic prosperity for vulnerable populations.<sup>12</sup> Goals should be sourced by these vulnerable populations through a process that builds rather than drains their power—as is often the case in public planning processes. It should also include collecting disaggregated current and historical data on populations vulnerable to displacement pressures,<sup>13</sup> then identifying areas of change and areas of stability,<sup>14</sup> and assessing the benefits and burdens of land use changes and public investments on vulnerable populations. This process of goal setting and analysis can be done with GARE's Racial Equity Toolkit, which can be adapted to fit a land use and community development context.

**Anticipate change and develop tools to increase economic opportunity for existing communities.** Some jurisdictions are now developing data-rich tools to predict neighborhood change<sup>15</sup> and develop strategies to prevent gentrification from displacing existing communities.<sup>16</sup> Tools to improve upward mobility of low-wage workers include skills improvements through targeted workforce development and educational programs, raising of wage floors by increasing the

10 Alameda County Public Health, DWD

11 Supplemental Mitigation Assistance Program for businesses impacted by the Seattle Link light rail construction

12 All-In Nation, Manuel Pastor

13 Equity Analysis of Plan Bay Area, Metropolitan Transportation Commission and the Association of Bay Area Governments

14 Watsonville Vista 2030 General Plan

15 The Association of Bay Area Government's Anti-Displacement Early Warning System. Comprehensive Plan Gentrification Neighborhood Typology, Portland Oregon. Mapping Susceptibility to Gentrification, Karen Chappelle. Seattle Equity and Growth Analysis of the 2015 Comprehensive Plan

16 Maintaining Diversity in America's Transit Rich Neighborhoods, Northeastern University

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local minimum wage or restructuring wage scales in certain sectors, improving transit mobility,<sup>17</sup> and negotiating labor agreements or community benefit agreements from new developments to include training and living wage job opportunities for low-income workers of color.<sup>18</sup> Tools to preserve affordable housing choices include targeting public housing investments where gentrification is anticipated—like transit-rich areas.<sup>19</sup> Comprehensive shared investment strategies tying housing, jobs, transportation, and cultural amenities together provide the most promising anti-displacement, pro-growth models of equitable development.<sup>20</sup>

These last two best practices are structural solutions that require creating shared goals across traditional siloes, forging new partnerships with community and multiple institutions to share power and decision making, and making long-term investments before displacement becomes a crisis.

## Goal 2: Great places with equitable access. A city with an equitable distribution of great neighborhoods full of strong amenities that provide equitable access throughout.

### Strategy 3: Distribute the benefits and burdens of growth equitably.

The practice of jurisdictions underinvesting in some urban neighborhoods with high populations of people of color means these areas and populations have greater needs. A public investment strategy that addresses this inequity by equally distributing resources or only providing public amenities in response to market-led growth will only exacerbate inequitable outcomes.

Use an equity lens to prioritize investments based on need to achieve equitable outcomes. Clear planning policies and community accountability structures that guide public investments<sup>21</sup> can be coupled with programs that account for areas with greater need.<sup>22</sup> Decision-making criteria for public service and capital investments can be weighted to account for the disparate outcomes experienced by communities of color listed on pages 2 and 3, and others.<sup>23</sup> Criteria can also account for the historic injustices that led to current day disparities such as a neighborhood being redlined or damaged by urban renewal<sup>24</sup> or even the future likelihood of disparities worsening such as the likelihood of displacement.<sup>25</sup>

### Revitalize underserved areas while also connecting workers of color to the broader economy.<sup>26</sup>

For example, an equitable distribution of transportation investments will prioritize providing affordable and meaningful transportation options for people of color, low-income households, and renters because they have lower rates of car ownership and higher frequency of transit use.<sup>27</sup> Public and private development in historically underinvested areas is an opportunity to skill-up and employ residents who are not fully participating in the economy. Priority or local hire and workforce training agreements can ensure certain numbers of people from targeted areas or populations with high unemployment are trained and hired to not only build new projects but also be employed by the incoming businesses.<sup>28</sup>

### Prioritize rectifying environmental justice issues while also fostering green industries and

17 San Francisco Bay Area Economic Prosperity Strategy

18 University of Southern California University Park Specific Plan and Development Agreement

19 City of Los Angeles' Consolidated Plan

20 Community Cornerstones, City of Seattle. Dudley Street Initiative, Boston.

21 Richmond General Plan 2030 Land Use and Urban Design element

22 PlaNYC, Million Trees Initiative. Turning Towards Equity, the Atlanta-based Partnership for Southern Equity

23 Seattle Pedestrian Master Plan Equity Map and Performance Measures

24 City of Portland North/Northeast Affordable Housing Preference Policy

25 City of Seattle Equitable Development Implementation Plan

26 The Equity, Environment and Jobs growth alternative of the Metropolitan Transportation Commission and the Association of Bay Area Governments

27 The Toll of Transportation, Northeastern University.

28 City of Seattle Priority Hire Ordinance and Program

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**pathways to employment.**<sup>29</sup> The concentration of environmental hazards found more often in low-income communities has resulted in communities of color being more likely to live near heavy industry and pollutants. This exposure contributes to racial disparities in health outcome from infant mortality to life expectancy. Identifying and ceasing any current environmental justice issues is an immediate first step. Remediation of hazards requires an equitable distribution of mitigation investments to eliminate these burdens. Investments in environmental clean-up projects and more environmentally sustainable development practices are an opportunity to also increase economic opportunity, capacity building, and self-determination of these communities.

#### **Strategy 4: Increase opportunities for low-income households of color to live in all neighborhoods.**

Due to our past segregationist policies and current day practices that maintain these patterns, many neighborhoods with high performing schools and other quality services and amenities have disproportionately low percentages of low-income households and households of color who cannot afford the types of housing available in these areas. Limited housing choices and high desirability of these areas excludes communities of color and perpetuates segregation.

**Increase housing choices for households of color.** This can be done by identifying development and acquisition opportunities for affordable housing in higher cost neighborhoods,<sup>30</sup> coupled with re-zoning lower density single-family neighborhoods with access to services and amenities to allow for greater variety of housing types and price points. The full range of tactics for both affordable rental and homeownership should be employed as a top priority for the jurisdiction.

**Invest in cultural institutions and capacity-building for communities of color.** One potential unintended consequence of increasing housing choices in predominately white neighborhoods is the social and cultural isolation and assimilation of people of color as these areas desegregate. Investments in communities of color's social and cultural infrastructure should be coupled with the land use and housing investment approaches listed above. Additional investments in culturally-specific commercial enterprises will also serve to maintain community integrity and make sure diversifying neighborhoods meet all the needs of a diverse population.

More detailed policies and tools are provided in Table 1 below. For any of these to be successful there must be accountability for public institutions in the form of measurable goals that are publicly reported on and tied to performance expectations. Also, the institutions must have the urgency, commitment, and internal capacity to undertake this work. This means public commitments from elected officials and a workforce that reflects the community and is trained to deconstruct institutional racism. Resourcing these strategies sufficiently and supporting staff to implement them in partnership with community are critical to achieving equitable outcomes.

## REPORT

### Equitable Development as a Tool to Advance Racial Equity

Government  
Alliance on  
Race and Equity

29 Emerald Cities Collaborative. In Buffalo, NY, the Green Development Zone, organized by PUSH Buffalo

30 New York City Housing Plan

**Table 1: Equitable Development Framework**

Goal	Strategy	Policies & Tools
<p><b>Strong communities and people</b></p>	<p>Increase communities of color's capacity for self-determination</p>	<p>Recruitment of diverse communities of color on boards and commissions (ex. planning and design commissions)</p> <p>Community outreach and engagement in governance and planning that reduces barriers to participation</p> <p>Capacity building investments in leaders, organizations, and coalitions</p> <p>Language access services and materials</p> <p>Participatory budgeting</p> <p>Integrate the arts and culture of diverse communities throughout city planning, development, and investment activities</p> <p>Government commitment to ending institutional racism</p> <p>Training for employees on deconstructing institutional racism, culturally relevant engagement, and conducting equity analysis</p> <p>Fair hiring, equal pay, and equitable promotion opportunities within the municipal workforce</p>
	<p>Anticipate and prevent displacement of vulnerable residents, businesses, and community organizations</p>	<p>Community controlled/owned development by community-based organizations</p> <p>Community workforce agreements and project labor agreements for public and private development (ex. priority or local hire requirements)</p> <p>Dedicated land acquisition and permanent funding for family-sized affordable rental housing</p> <p>Homeownership stabilization and foreclosure prevention programs</p> <p>Affordable housing program prioritization for displaced households</p> <p>Tenant protection policies include eviction protections, rent stabilization, relocation protections and assistance</p> <p>Prioritization of public land for affordable housing development</p> <p>Rental assistance and tenant legal services</p> <p>Licensing and zoning limitation on predatory, high-cost financial service providers</p> <p>Access to low-cost capital and financial services for residents, small businesses, and community organizations</p> <p>Mitigation and technical assistance programs for small local businesses and community organizations</p> <p>Fair housing and code enforcement</p> <p>Financing program and/or tenant right of first refusal policy to help residential or commercial tenants or community organizations purchase properties when landlords sell</p> <p>Minimum wage increases and wage-theft protections</p>

**REPORT**  
**Equitable Development as a Tool to Advance Racial Equity**

**Table 1: Equitable Development Framework (cont'd)**

Goal	Strategy	Policies & Tools
<p><b>Great places with equitable access</b></p>	<p>Distribute the benefits and burdens of growth equitably</p>	<p>Environmental justice, displacement risk, and health impacts analysis included in Environmental Impact Statements of planning processes</p> <p>Environmental mitigation funding targeted for low-income neighborhoods</p> <p>Public service and capital investment criteria that weights the needs of populations with the greatest racial disparities in outcomes</p> <p>Prioritize low-income neighborhoods with the greatest needs for public amenities (schools, parks, open spaces, complete streets, health care and other services)</p> <p>Focused municipal procurement and contracting for entrepreneurs of color, immigrants, and triple-bottom-line businesses (e.g., cooperatives, social enterprises)</p> <p>Eliminate credit checks and criminal history questions on applications for jobs and housing in both the private and public sector</p> <p>Reduced cost or free transit passes for transit-dependent populations</p> <p>Pre-apprenticeship training on development and infrastructure projects</p>
	<p>Increase opportunities for low-income households of color to live in all neighborhoods</p>	<p>Affordable housing strategies in high opportunity neighborhoods including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Inclusionary zoning,</li> <li>- development incentives,</li> <li>- multi-family zoning, and</li> <li>- public low-income housing development</li> </ul> <p>Local policy to implement the federal Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing rule</p>





The Haas Institute for a Fair and Inclusive Society at the University of California, Berkeley brings together researchers, community stakeholders, policymakers, and communicators to identify and challenge the barriers to an inclusive, just, and sustainable society and create transformative change. The Institute serves as a national hub of a vibrant network of researchers and community partners and takes a leadership role in translating, communicating, and facilitating research, policy, and strategic engagement. The Haas Institute advances research and policy related to marginalized people while essentially touching all who benefit from a truly diverse, fair, and inclusive society.

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The Center for Social Inclusion's mission is to catalyze grassroots community, government, and other institutions to dismantle structural racial inequity. We apply strategies and tools to transform our nation's policies, practices, and institutional culture in order to ensure equitable outcomes for all. As a national policy strategy organization, CSI works with community advocates, government, local experts, and national leaders to build shared analysis, create policy strategies that engage and build multi-generational, multi-sectoral, and multi-racial alliances, and craft strong communication narratives on how to talk about race effectively in order to shift public discourse to one of equity.

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