

Institutionalizing and Operationalizing Racial Equity in City Hall, Community and Beyond



INSTITUTIONALIZING AND OPERATIONALIZING EQUITY IN CITY HALL, COMMUNITY AND BEYOND

INTRODUCTION

The focus of the Closing the Gaps Network is to convene a community of changemakers and racial equity sparkplugs who are ready and willing to use their power to shift policy and practices in local government to close racial wealth and income gaps, among other goals.

Lucky for us, we are not starting from scratch. There are people and places across the country changing policies and practices to intentionally center and achieve better outcomes for Black and brown people. In this resource we will highlight some of our favorite stories of policy and practice change within local governments and communities. These stories all illustrate tangible changes to our local policies and practices that have actually resulted in better outcomes for people of color.

One of the biggest takeaways we've had in compiling this group of stories is that racial equity is truly a process even more than an outcome. It's a daily practice that takes intentionality and purpose to truly integrate across systems and practices. We cannot assume that a single policy or practice change is enough to say we have done all there is to do to achieve equity. It is a process and can only happen over time.

We additionally identified multiple themes woven throughout these stories, including:

- Changing Decision-makers & the Decision-making process for Racial Equity
- Changing Policy and Practice to Advance Racial Equity

Please see the index for a key that will help identify these themes throughout the resource.

Some of these stories are from our work and experience with the changemakers and cities highlighted, and others are stories of victory from across the country. These stories are specific to how decision making processes are being challenged and changed to create more accountability to the community, normalizing conversation about race and its critical role in our systems, and the prioritization of racial equity within leadership. These are stories exemplary of how behavior change can lead to policy change and how both must go hand in hand.

INDEX

INSTITUTIONALIZING AND OPERATIONALIZING EQUITY IN CITY HALL, COMMUNITY AND BEYOND

Leveraging Power And Organizing	4
Repairing Past Harms/Systems.....	9
Leveling the playing field for DBEs and MBEs.....	14
Authentic Community Engagement.....	18
Workforce Development.....	21

KEY

CHANGING DECISION-MAKERS &
THE DECISION-MAKING
PROCESS FOR RACIAL EQUITY



CHANGING POLICY/PRACTICE
TO ADVANCE RACIAL EQUITY





**LEVERAGING POWER
AND ORGANIZING**



CASE STUDY:

ALUMNI NETWORK GOES BEYOND TRAININGS



TIPS:

- After racial equity trainings, find ways to reconnect attendees to encourage the practicing of anti-racist principles and develop leaders in the community.
- Encourage city partnerships based on shared language and analysis about race.
- When hosting trainings on race for city employees, involving community members, not just staff, is critical to keep conversations real.

OVERVIEW

ROCHESTER DEVELOPS PARTNERSHIP WITH PEOPLE'S INSTITUTE FOR SURVIVAL AND BEYOND

After completing Undoing Racism® training, organizers within the City of Rochester formed a regional chapter to assist alumni of the workshops in their development as anti-racist organizers, resource developers, planners and trainers. The network priorities include facilitating more workshops and preparing members for community organizing around salient issues and causes in the Western New York region.

APPROACH

DEVELOPING DEEP RELATIONSHIPS IS VITAL

The City of Rochester's Office of Community Wealth Building partnered with the People's Institute for Survival and Beyond (PISAB) after taking the training themselves and developing a personal relationship with the organization. The City of Rochester used grant dollars and hosted three Undoing Racism® workshops in 2019. Eighty-five alumni from these trainings who come from various sectors and organizations now meet monthly to discuss the principles of anti-racist organizing, learn how to perform the activities from the training by revisiting them, learn resilience tools (stress management); and provide updates on regional organizing efforts underway.

RESULTS

STANDARDIZED TRAINING TO CREATE SHARED UNDERSTANDING

The City is now embedding the training as a requirement for organizations who wish to use their online platform, Nexus i90, to provide technical assistance services to businesses owned by people of color in Rochester.

CASE STUDY:

RACIAL EQUITY BEGINS WITH LEADERSHIP



TIPS:

- When mayors and city managers jointly lead on commitments to racial equity, the staff and the public respond.
- Incorporate literature, art, music, dance and local culture creators in efforts to start dialogue about race and racial equity in your communities.
- Residents and peer cities should hold electeds and city leaders accountable to public commitments on racial equity.

OVERVIEW

ELECTED OFFICIALS IN GRAND RAPIDS MAKE PUBLIC COMMITMENTS

Grand Rapids made an explicit commitment to advance racial equity by designating its top-level elected and appointed officers to participate in a national initiative focused on operationalizing racial equity, Racial Equity Here. The Mayor and City Manager each firmly supported the project by conveying a shared vision of racial equity and telling their staff to take the initiative seriously.

APPROACH

LAUNCHING A COMMUNITY BASED APPROACH TO RACIAL EQUITY

When she came into office after running a campaign based on equity, Mayor Rosalynn Bliss launched the Mayor's Book of the Year with *A City Within a City: The Black Freedom Struggle in Grand Rapids, Michigan* to start a broad dialogue with the community about racial equity. The City Manager similarly told his managers that promoting racial equity "is like any other process change within government. We did this successfully before with LEAN and this is no different. I expect that all of you in this room will adopt this just like we adopted LEAN." Through their dedicated, hands-on participation, the Mayor and City Manager deployed their formal power to lead Grand Rapids staff and residents.

RESULTS

RACIAL EQUITY IS RESOURCED

The results include incorporating racial equity in multiple policy and program arenas including budget decisions, city-wide work plan accountability, and hiring and promotions policies. Through initiatives such as the Grand Rapids Neighborhood Summit, its Neighborhood Match Fund, and its Neighborhood Leadership Academy, the city strives to expand the narrative of racial equity beyond city hall.

CASE STUDY:

PROVIDING COVER AND VISIBILITY TO CREATE A CULTURE OF EQUITY AND INCLUSION



TIPS:

- Using your personal relationships with colleagues to shift practices in daily work can lead to organizational shifts.
- Empowering departments to discover inequities and develop strategies to address them builds staff competencies and leadership for citywide change.
- Make visible the intention and results of efforts to address disparities in process and programmatic efforts to cultivate a culture of equity and inclusion.

OVERVIEW

USING VARYING STRATEGIES TO PROMOTE RACIAL EQUITY

In January of 2020, Philadelphia Mayor Kenney announced the creation of the Office of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion and passed an executive order establishing a formal commitment. The decision to make a citywide commitment started with individual initiatives in partnership with the City's Equity Officer.

APPROACH

INTERNAL STAFF ORGANIZING FOR LEADERSHIP BUY-IN

Then-Deputy Diversity and Inclusion Officer for the City of Philadelphia, Nefertiri Sickout, sought out colleagues throughout the City who wanted support in improving outcomes for residents by applying a racial equity lens. Through discrete departmental projects, evidence of inequities and staff recommendations to address them were developed. For example, the Department of Licenses & Inspections disaggregated data to examine whether response time to addressing complaints differed based on race, poverty, crime, and population density. The findings indicated disparities in response times to housing and abandoned building complaints that led to departmental policy recommendations that were then approved by city leadership.

RESULTS

NEW NORMS ARE BEING ESTABLISHED

Increasing visibility of improved policies and programs led to more departments reaching out to Nefertiri and her team for tools or training. Now as the Acting Director of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion, Nefertiri has released a citywide racial equity strategy that requires all departments to produce an annual Workforce, Diversity and Inclusion Plan, a Racial Equity Assessment, and a Racial Equity Action plan to address disparities. These actions and efforts targeted towards community engagement and accountability are aimed at realizing the vision of a city where race is not a determinant of success.

CASE STUDY:

RACIAL EQUITY COMMITMENTS SURVIVE MAYORAL TRANSITION



TIPS:

Formalizing racial equity processes is necessary to create the infrastructure needed to truly embed equity.

Sometimes, equity looks like asking the right questions.

Invest in equity by creating formal leadership positions for it.

OVERVIEW

LEADERSHIP SETS RACIAL EQUITY AS A PRIORITY

Former Albuquerque mayor Richard Berry eloquently supported racial equity at the Spring 2017 SxSW Festival. Later that year, newly-elected Mayor Tim Keller campaigned on racial equity and made it a priority upon his inauguration in December of 2017.

APPROACH

CREATING FORMAL EQUITY POSITIONS AND INVESTING IN INCLUSION

In his first six months in office, Mayor Keller hired a diverse leadership team and created the Office of Equity and Inclusion—formerly the Office of Diversity and Human Rights—and hired Michele Melendez, who has a wealth of experience in community development, social justice, and economic development. He simultaneously normalized the language of racial equity internally and publicly. Under his leadership, Albuquerque launched a 2020 Equity Training Initiative for city employees to enhance the role of local government in dismantling institutional inequity and building more equitable practices.

RESULTS

PROCEDURES ARE PUT IN PLACE TO MAKE SURE EQUITY IS PRESENT

In little time, the Mayor was able to use his position of formal power to make significant progress in the city's approach to racial equity. The city is embedding racial equity standards into the coordination of city contracts, moving more than \$5 million dollars to minority- and women-owned contracting businesses, and modified its W-9 form (which individuals have to complete when they register a business), asking if a business is local, owned by a person of color, or woman owned, to collect information about the types of businesses with which the city government contracts. (Women Leaders of the Administration)



REPAIRING PAST HARM/SYSTEMS

CASE STUDY:

RICHMOND, VA'S OFFICE OF COMMUNITY WEALTH BUILDING



TIPS:

Community wealth building leads towards inclusive development rather than the trickle-down strategies that have failed.

Community members are the experts on the conditions of their daily lives and also the solutions.

OVERVIEW

RICHMOND'S LOCAL GOVERNMENT REIMAGINES WEALTH

The Office of Community Wealth Building (OCWB) was established by Former Mayor Dwight C. Jones in the spring of 2014 and operates as a first-of-its-kind City office. Using "community wealth" in the name of the office means intentionally leveraging local assets, encouraging cross-sector collaboration and catalyzing opportunities for broad-based ownership.

APPROACH

COMMUNITY ORGANIZERS AND CITY COUNCIL WORK HAND IN HAND

A 2011 Mayor Jones' Anti-Poverty Commission was formed to address the City of Richmond's 27% poverty rate. The Commission recommended the creation of the Maggie L. Walker Initiative for Expanding Opportunity and Fighting Poverty. In 2015, the initiative became an office with a \$3.4 M budget aimed at poverty reduction initiatives. The office serves as a ladder out of poverty for the City's lowest-income residents through access to quality employment and related supports. The Office has a citizen's advisory board which reviews and provides feedback on all of the proposals coming out of the office. Half of the advisory board are residents who are below the poverty line.

RESULTS

COMMUNITY MEMBERS FEEL IMPACT OF RESOURCES

Since the inception of the OCWB, several major projects advancing the aims of the city's poverty reduction initiative have moved forward significantly. The Greater Richmond Transit Company (GRTC) Pulse Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) project, the spine of a potential regional transit system, and the first set of projects supported by the Affordable Housing Trust Fund are examples. Other cities have since created similar offices, e.g., Rochester, NY. Virginia cities have replicated the offices and together they call themselves the Virginia First Cities Coalition. They successfully advocated for a \$7.5-million statewide Community Wealth Building Fund to "assist localities that undertake holistic measures designed to move individuals and families into employment and sustainability."

CASE STUDY: EVANSTON, IL'S REPARATIONS PROGRAM



TIPS:

- Systemic racism was created intentionally and will require intentionality to undo.
- We must interrogate how policy changes are related to one another as Evanston did with the legalization and recreational sale of cannabis.
- Make repairing harm caused by local and federal governments a priority.

OVERVIEW

CITY OF EVANSTON'S CITY COUNCIL COMMITTS TO END STRUCTURAL RACISM

The City of Evanston's reparations planning process began in June 2019 following the City Council's adoption of a resolution affirming the City's commitment to end structural racism and achieve racial equity.

APPROACH

CITY ACTS TO REPAIR HARM CAUSED BY SYSTEMIC RACISM AND MASS INCARCERATION

The City Council's Equity and Empowerment Commission held two community meetings to gather public input on reparations in July, and summarized input and recommendations in a report to the City Council. In September, the Council accepted the Equity and Empowerment Commission's report and authorized the creation of a City Council subcommittee to begin the planning process. In November, a Reparations Fund was created and adopted a resolution as part of the City's 2020 Budget. The City Council committed to utilize tax revenue collected from sales of recreational cannabis to support reparations in Evanston.

RESULTS

COMMUNITY MEMBERS WORK ALONGSIDE LOCAL GOVERNMENT

The City Council's reparations subcommittee includes 5th Ward Ald. Robin Rue Simmons, 2nd Ward Ald. Peter Braithwaite, and 8th Ward Ald. Ann Rainey. The subcommittee will work with residents, City staff and experts to explore and identify programs and opportunities to be supported by the Reparations Fund, including initiatives related to workforce development, entrepreneurship, homeownership, education and infrastructure. The process has just begun to consider many important issues, including the scope of funding opportunities, criteria and qualifications for participation, and level of funding. A Reparations Plan will be proposed for City Council consideration in 2020. Once a plan is approved by the City Council, distribution from the Reparations Fund will begin, possibly in early 2021.

CASE STUDY: ELIMINATING EXCLUSIONARY SINGLE-FAMILY ZONING



OVERVIEW

COMMUNITY CALLS FOR EXPANSION OF ZONING ORDINANCES

Zoning policies, and a variety of other discriminatory practices and decisions, have created concentrations of poverty in many cities and towns. Inclusionary housing policies like eliminating single-family zoning help reverse these trends by creating affordable housing and communities with mixed income levels and races. Leaders in Minneapolis proposed the idea of eliminating single family zoning altogether in their city to increase density, create more housing units, and help address racial segregation. In 2018, the proposed ban was included in a massive city planning document released every ten years that requires a city council vote.

APPROACH

NEIGHBORS MOBILIZE TO GAIN PUBLIC SUPPORT FOR POLICY

Alongside other community organizations that have been organizing for years, an emerging community group, Neighbors for More Neighbors, helped mobilize support for the plan, distributing lawn signs around the city, and getting people to show up at city planning hearings.

RESULTS

CITY COUNCIL APPROVES COMMUNITY PROPOSAL

Their new Minneapolis 2040 comprehensive plan, which has been approved by the city council, declares the city's intent to abolish single-family-home zoning and allow duplexes and triplexes to be built anywhere in the city and acknowledged — in writing — its own role in perpetuating inequities related to housing availability and affordability. This piece of their plan has the potential to reshape the urban streetscape around walking and mass transit and has the potential to reboot the American dream to be more racially and economically inclusive.

TIPS:

- Community members should rally for the causes they believe in and hold their local governments accountable.

- Local governments must see themselves as accountable to community, first.

- Cities must adapt to the changing landscape and populations in their cities whose needs are changing.

CASE STUDY:

CHICAGO REPAIRS THE DEBT SPIRAL



TIPS:

- Consider if the systems set up to keep residents accountable are harmful.
- If made aware of how legislation has been used to harm residents, propose new solutions to mitigate harm.
- Orient city practices around meeting community where they are, listening to their concerns and adjusting to meet their needs wherever possible.

OVERVIEW

COMMUNITY ORGANIZES TO STOP DEBT SPIRAL

According to a 2018 report by ProPublica, Chicago was the second city in the U.S with the most fines for its residents, with an average of \$118 per resident. That winter, the POWER-PAC IL's Stepping Out of Poverty Campaign published the "Stopping the Debt Spiral" report exposing the devastating consequences that families face due to debts of all sorts. The report highlighted municipal fees and fines as an area in need of reform.

APPROACH

LOCAL CITY LEADERS CONSIDER RESIDENTS' CONCERNS

The report grew out of a parent-led survey developed in collaboration with the Chicago Foundation for Women and the Center for Urban Research and Learning at Loyola University of Chicago, where parent leaders across Illinois interviewed other parents and community members about the effects of debt on their lives. POWER-PAC leaders in Chicago found an ally in City Clerk Anna Valencia who, with POWER-PAC parents, co-convened the Chicago Fines, Fees, and Access Collaborative which also included other city officials, advocates and researchers. They held listening sessions throughout the city and published recommendations for reform in July 2019. It came to light that Chicago's Black and brown residents on the south and west sides of the city were disproportionately impacted by punitive dispositions around city stickers (the local permit residents who drive, park, lease and/or own a vehicle in Chicago must have).

RESULTS

REFORM LEGISLATION INTRODUCED TO OVERHAUL DEBT COLLECTION SYSTEM

Chicago's new mayor, Lori Lightfoot, joined POWER-PAC and City Clerk Valencia in announcing her support for reform legislation. In September 2019 Chicago City Council voted 49-1 in favor of the ordinance that overhauls Chicago's ticketing and debt collection system, including ending driver's license suspension over unpaid parking tickets, reducing down payment requirements to pay ticket debt, forgive city sticker debt for all residents, offering solutions for people who couldn't afford city stickers, and start a conversation on how to reimagine the city's revenue system.

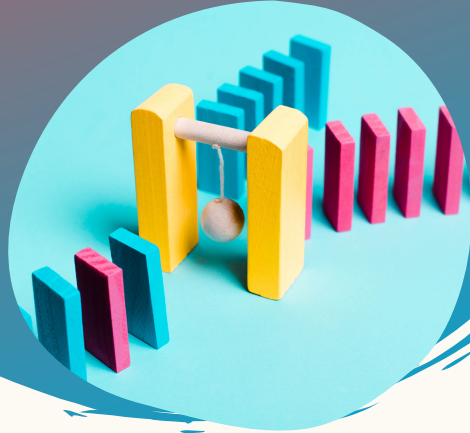


**LEVELING THE PLAYING FIELD FOR
DISADVANTAGED BUSINESS
ENTERPRISES (DBES) AND MINORITY-
OWNED BUSINESS ENTERPRISES
(MBES)**



CASE STUDY:

CHARLOTTE AND MEMPHIS' DISPARITY STUDIES IN ACTION



TIPS:

- Use data as a mirror to help you understand where and how to best assist under resourced populations.
- The data in disparity studies should be used as a tool to help under served populations, not harm them.
- Disparity studies can help an organization understand how to shift their practices to become more equitable.

OVERVIEW

DISPARITY STUDIES PROVIDE THE DATA TO HIGHLIGHT INEQUITIES

When disparity studies reveal that the availability (“ready, willing and able”) of minority women small business enterprises (MWSBEs) are not represented in local government contracts, cities have the opportunity to act on recommendations to remediate their programs. Unfortunately, many cities do not aggressively address their disparity study’s findings. Charlotte and Memphis are examples of cities that did. They crafted policy and programmatic responses to achieve equitable contracting goals.

APPROACH

USING DATA AS AN ACCOUNTABILITY MECHANISM

Memphis’ study identified delays in their payment processes that were preventing businesses from have the cash flow necessary to do their work. The city constructed a pilot program that identifies invoices, marks them received, and identifies whether the contractor is a city certified MWSBE. Once received, the City expedites the invoices for payment. Meanwhile in Charlotte, the City Manager started the Procurement Advisory & Inclusion Council (PAIC), which is comprised of City leaders across departments. The PAIC reviews the disparity study data, then recommends and implements citywide procurement inclusion efforts.

RESULTS

DATA USED TO UNDERSTAND HOW TO ADDRESS INEQUITIES

Memphis’ pilot program was aimed to have City-certified MWSBE firms paid within five business days and they met that goal. This and other initiatives led to city spending increases on MWSBEs that significantly outperformed its historical utilization. Charlotte’s Business Inclusion program created AMP UP to provide businesses owned by people of color with training in strategic planning, financial management, accessing capital, and human resources in order to compete for contracts successfully. The City has helped these businesses compete for contracts with the NBA, Charlotte-Douglas International Airport, and Atrium Health, a network of more than 40 hospitals.

CASE STUDY:

EL PASO: IT TAKES AN ECOSYSTEM



OVERVIEW

EL PASO STRIVES TO BUILD AN EQUITABLE ENTREPRENEURIAL ECOSYSTEM

Local government and entrepreneurial support organizations often create programs in silos and these programs do not cover the full range of businesses' needs. The City of El Paso recognized the need for an ecosystem approach to improve support for businesses owned by people of color. The City improved its understanding of its population of business owners of color, shared this data, and with partners tailored its delivery of technical and job assistance training to its small businesses.

APPROACH

LEVERAGING PARTNERSHIPS TO CREATE THRIVING ECOSYSTEMS

The analysis of responses to a city survey from El Paso firms revealed that there was a gap in information about support for business owners and in the types of support offered. "Not all small businesses have the same issues, therefore, the training and programs implemented by the city should focus on identifying all the different needs from small businesses and target those needs in various ways," was one of 170 responses from El Paso business owners. To address the training gaps and resources identified in a needs assessment survey, the City of El Paso entered into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with seven unique partners. The entities comprising this partnership included a business incubator, the local small business development center, the university's Center for Hispanic Entrepreneurship, both chambers of commerce, a workforce data/solutions provider, and the El Paso County Economic Development Department.

RESULTS

EL PASO'S ECOSYSTEM MEETS THE NEEDS OF MINORITY BUSINESSES

The City's partnership is achieving the vision of the collective to "be the exchange center for minority owned businesses and entrepreneurs with the capacity to assist in accessing capital, training procurement, marketing strategies, and in the development of sustainable businesses." Since the initial MOUs were executed, the City of El Paso has entered into agreements with additional community partners to continue supporting businesses in the community.

TIPS:

- Whenever possible, use the tools at your disposal to standardize trainings.

- Use data to drive decisions.

- Invest in technologies that connect your communities.

CASE STUDY: CHICAGO'S CONTRACT PROCUREMENT FORECASTING



TIPS:

- The barriers MBEs face are unique and need unique solutions to address.
- Creating access for MBEs requires intentionality and planning.
- Meet your community where they are by leveraging social media as an engagement tool.

OVERVIEW

MBES ARE GIVEN A FAIR SHOT

A barrier MBE firms face is not being made aware of upcoming procurement opportunities. Usually, only contractors who have pre-established relationships with the City are made aware of this information. Forecasting makes it so that city governments anticipate their procurement needs ahead of time and are able to give new businesses and businesses who have not traditionally bid on government contracts the opportunity to do so.

APPROACH

CITIES EXPAND OPPORTUNITY FOR BIDS

The forecasting process, while daunting, often begins from data which most municipalities already collect. Before a government issues items for bid, the budget process is traditionally used to anticipate the needs for the upcoming year. Part of that process should involve public information about projects and opportunities that will be up for a bid. For an example of what it looks like to collect this data, the City of Chicago first compiled the expiring contracts which were going to be re-purchased, and from there began the effort of collecting additional contracting opportunities from City departments. What makes this approach unique is that the City updates and re-releases its buying plan on a quarterly basis, allowing them to regularly add new procurements and give further detail to procurements that had been included in earlier forecasts.

RESULTS

PROCUREMENT STAFF CLOSE COMMUNICATIONS GAPS

Forecasting allows procurement staff to account for communication gaps by providing the data to all firms simultaneously as a resource to guide their preparation. For larger contracts, forecasting also gives the MBE community time to design teaming arrangements and joint ventures to increase their competitive profile. Forecasting can serve as a foundation for cities to take a more aggressive stance in outreach, including communication certification, partnerships with “assist agencies,” and strategic matchmaking. Many cities we’ve worked with have placed increased attention on their recruitment by using social media profiles for the City MWBE offices or procurement services to increase awareness of upcoming bids, recruit bidders, and promote upcoming outreach events and links to technical assistance programming.



**AUTHENTIC COMMUNITY
ENGAGEMENT**



CASE STUDY:

SEATTLE STREAMLINES COMMUNITY COMMUNICATIONS



TIPS:

- A lack of cohesion across local governments comes across as unorganized and untrustworthy to community members.
- Streamlining messaging across offices and departments helps consolidate outreach and build trust with community.
- Community communication should be a two-way street. Cities must feel accountable to share how community ideas and conversations are leading to action.

OVERVIEW

SEATTLE CONNECTS CITY COMMUNICATIONS AND DEPARTMENTS

In Seattle, lack of communication between city departments about their own outreach efforts to local neighborhoods resulted in the same neighborhoods being contacted repeatedly by different departments. Eventually, these neighborhoods viewed this as a lack of listening and began to lose trust in the engagement process itself. During their tenure in City Accelerator in 2015-2016, Seattle created an internal system to better enable communication across its various departments so that offices can collaborate on their outreach and engagement efforts. It also sought to build upon prior interactions for more meaningful relationships.

APPROACH

CITY COORDINATES OUTREACH AND ACCOUNTABILITY TO COMMUNITY

Seattle's team created a central pipeline of communication for its nearly forty city offices and departments to coordinate internally across engagement efforts, approaches, and evaluation practices. In addition, a simple checklist is now filled out before and after every engagement experience with every City department. This checklist also provides a basic means of reporting back to communities about what they've heard, how they are responding, and what relevant issues remain to be discussed. An Executive Order was also issued.

RESULTS

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT AS A TWO-WAY CONVERSATION

The work of archiving and cataloging conversations with citizens has helped to frame public engagement as a continuous conversation, rather than a one-way mechanism for relaying information. By improving interdepartmental communication, the City of Seattle has improved their relationships with local neighborhoods, too. As a result, Seattle has seen increased participation numbers in public engagement. Seattle improved their public meetings by consolidating the outreach efforts of different departments and standardizing the process to include translators, captured notes, and interactive exercises.

CASE STUDY:

ATLANTA'S COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT PLAYBOOK



TIPS:

Community partnerships are critical to gathering data. Consider working with a university or community based organization to serve as a project manager, to access researchers and students, and support in applying a rigorous method.

The way we gather knowledge from communities of color can enable structural racism to reproduce itself. Be sensitive to the survey and research fatigue that communities of color experience often without follow-through on recommendations or even compensation for their time and knowledge.

OVERVIEW

CITY LEARNS FROM MISTAKES MADE IN DISPLACING RESIDENTS

Following the opening of a stadium in Atlanta's Westside neighborhood which displaced many of its poor residents, city officials decided to create a Community Engagement Playbook for city officials and community advocates to use during project planning to prevent this level of displacement from occurring again. The playbook includes: principles, action guides, plays, and checklists for implementing mutually-beneficial partnerships.

APPROACH

ATLANTA DEVELOPS STRONGER COMMUNICATION WITH RESIDENTS

The City of Atlanta partnered with Georgia Tech to research how residents want to be engaged in decision-making and built upon existing neighborhood efforts to capture data and stories. They collected their guidelines as a series of "plays." These plays, along with guiding principles, were workshopped by residents to capture the key ingredients to successful public engagement planning. The input from residents, community associations, service providers, in addition to approximately 100 city employees surveyed about their communication practices with residents, culminated in this playbook. The playbook emphasizes themes of transparency and responsiveness and provides a clear framework for implementation.

RESULTS

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT PLAYBOOK TO GUIDE DECISION MAKING

The Playbook is a clear outcome, but it emerged out of relationships, open dialogue, and collaboration. The Community Engagement Playbook is still used today to inform public participation efforts on various City decisions, such as hosting trainings across eighteen departments and using the playbook as part of their standard procedure for community engagement. 2300 playbooks have been printed and distributed to residents all over Atlanta. Neighborhood associations, Neighborhood Planning Units (NPU's), and other community groups are also using it to advocate for and effect change in their communities.



**WORKFORCE
DEVELOPEMENT**



CASE STUDY:

HIRE NOLA ORDINANCE



OVERVIEW

NEW ORLEANS ESTABLISHES A LOCAL HIRING POLICY

While many municipalities have local and targeted hiring policies, some are unenforced and don't work. In October 2015, the City of New Orleans established one of the first such policies in the American South. The local hiring goals set in 2015 increased by 5% to full implementation in 2020 and it has yielded results. The policy requires contractors to prioritize Orleans Parish residents when hiring and to demonstrate good-faith efforts to hire local and disadvantaged workers.

APPROACH

USING DATA TO SET RACIAL EQUITY GOALS

Local and targeted hiring policies usually require or incentivize businesses receiving public government contracts or tax breaks to hire workers living in a particular geographic area or from specific populations within the community. In New Orleans, the requirement is that at least 50 percent of all work hours on City projects has to be completed by local workers, of which 30 percent are to be completed by disadvantaged local workers. The contractors are required to use the city's workforce development program, Pathways to Prosperity, as the "first source" for hiring.

RESULTS

EXPANDED ACCESS FOR NEW ORLEANS LOCAL WORKERS

The local hiring goals set in 2015 increased by 5% to full implementation in 2020. In its first two years of implementation, the City of New Orleans reached the goals set for local worker participation. 2016 goal: 30%; 2016 actual: 30.42%; 2017 goal: 35%; 2017 actual: 36%

TIPS:

- Cities should build strong partnerships between workforce development programs, government, anchor institutions, and businesses to make local hiring successful.
- Engage employers and provide them support in complying with the policy so that requirements won't hold up their hiring processes.

CASE STUDY:

ELIMINATING BARRIERS TO HIGHER WAGES FOR ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS



TIPS:

The Pay for Success model can improve performance outcomes with rigorous data and evaluation.

Workforce development programs that intentionally reduce barriers, e.g., coupling English language training with job search assistance, will better serve those they intend to serve, many of whom have limited time to participate in programs.

OVERVIEW

MASSACHUSETTS ADDRESSES GAP IN WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT AMONG IMMIGRANT POPULATIONS

The Massachusetts Pathways to Economic Advancement Project will provide vocational English language classes, integrated with job search assistance and coaching, which will assist limited English speakers in making successful transitions to employment, higher wage jobs, and higher education.

APPROACH

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT IS RESOURCED WITH CAPACITY TO SUPPORT COMMUNITY

Jewish Vocational Services (JVS) and Social Finance are partnering on a workforce development program to improve the employment, earnings, and educational outcomes of residents with limited English proficiency. Social Finance raised \$12.43 million from investors including financial institutions, donor advised funds, individuals, and foundations, to fund JVS services. State payments are contingent on measurable improvements in the project's three outcome areas: increased earnings, successful transition to higher education, and program engagement. If performance targets are not met, investors can lose some or all of their investment. To achieve their goal, the program employed a whole-population approach to purposefully match the right individuals with the right services; developed data-driven outcome metrics and payment terms to incentivize achieving impact for participants through meaningful outcomes; and guided the development of a rigorous evaluation to enable the state's leaders to learn which programs work and inform future funding decisions.

RESULTS

PROGRAM ADJUSTS AND SHIFTS TO NEEDS OF COMMUNITY

The Massachusetts Pathways to Economic Advancement Project expanded evidence-based adult basic education services, provided critical workforce skills to individuals who need them, and tested new strategies. They are the first workforce-oriented Pay For Success (PFS) project in the nation. The project is also credited for pushing the PFS field towards addressing new issue areas in jurisdictions across the country.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES:

- [The Integration Initiative: Three Year Evaluation](#)
- [Report: What Does it Take to Embed a Racial Equity & Inclusion Lens?](#)
- [A Path to Authentic Community Engagement Guiding Questions](#)
- [The Integration Initiative: Final Report](#)
- [Facilitator's Guide for Continuous Improvement Conversations with a Racial Equity Lens](#)
- [Getting Ready for Racial Equity Work: The Racial Equity Here Evaluation](#)
- [Guide for Embedding Breakthrough Innovation in Local Government](#)
- [Accelerating Public Engagement](#)
- [Resilience, Equity and Innovation: A City Accelerator Guide for Urban Infrastructure Finance](#)
- [Culture, Collaboration and Capital: Leveraging Procurement for Economic Equity](#)
- [City Tech and Data Collaborative](#)
- [Accelerate This! Government as Social Innovator](#)
- [Start Up, Stay Up, Scale Up](#)
- [Racial Equity Here Panel](#)