



Using an Equity Lens in One Planet Work: The Case of Energy

Conversations for a One Planet Region
March 12, 2020

Victoria Barr, PhD

Good evening!





Quick Bio ...

Victoria Barr, MHSc PhD



Planning & Consulting

**Fostering Strong, Healthy Communities
Where Everyone Can Thrive**

LevelUp Planning & Consulting is a multidisciplinary consulting collaborative focused on supporting organizations and communities to become stronger, healthier and more equitable.

The LevelUp Team



levelupplaning.ca

Agenda

1. Social Justice Implications of One Planet Living
2. Intro to Equity
3. What an Equity Lens is (and what it's not)
4. How to Implement an Equity Lens
5. Examples & Conclusions
6. Questions & Discussion



	Health and happiness
	Equity and local economy
	Culture and community
	Land and nature
	Sustainable water
	Local and sustainable food
	Travel and transport
	Materials and products
	Zero waste
	Zero carbon energy



One Planet Living

10 Principles

Potential Health & Well-being Co-Benefits of One Planet Living



Reduced air
pollution



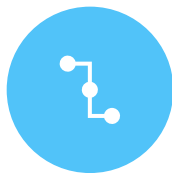
Healthier eating &
increased physical
activity



Healthier built
environments



Potentially more
positive social
connections



Greater connection
with nature



Stronger governance
systems



Good health and well-being for all!

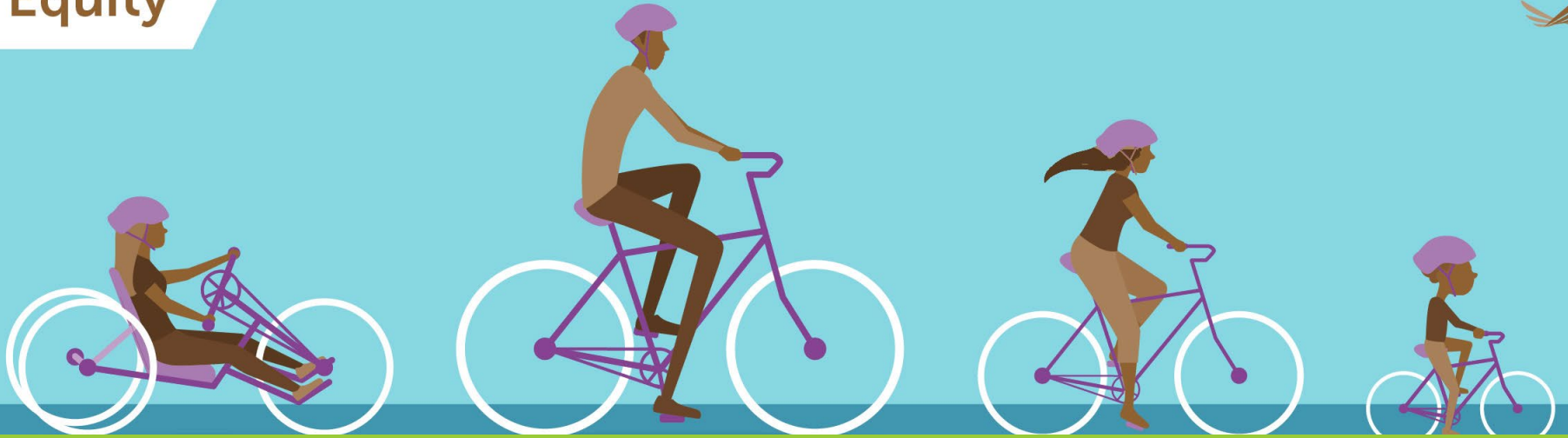


Health &
equity in
solutions, not
just in
describing the
problem

Equality

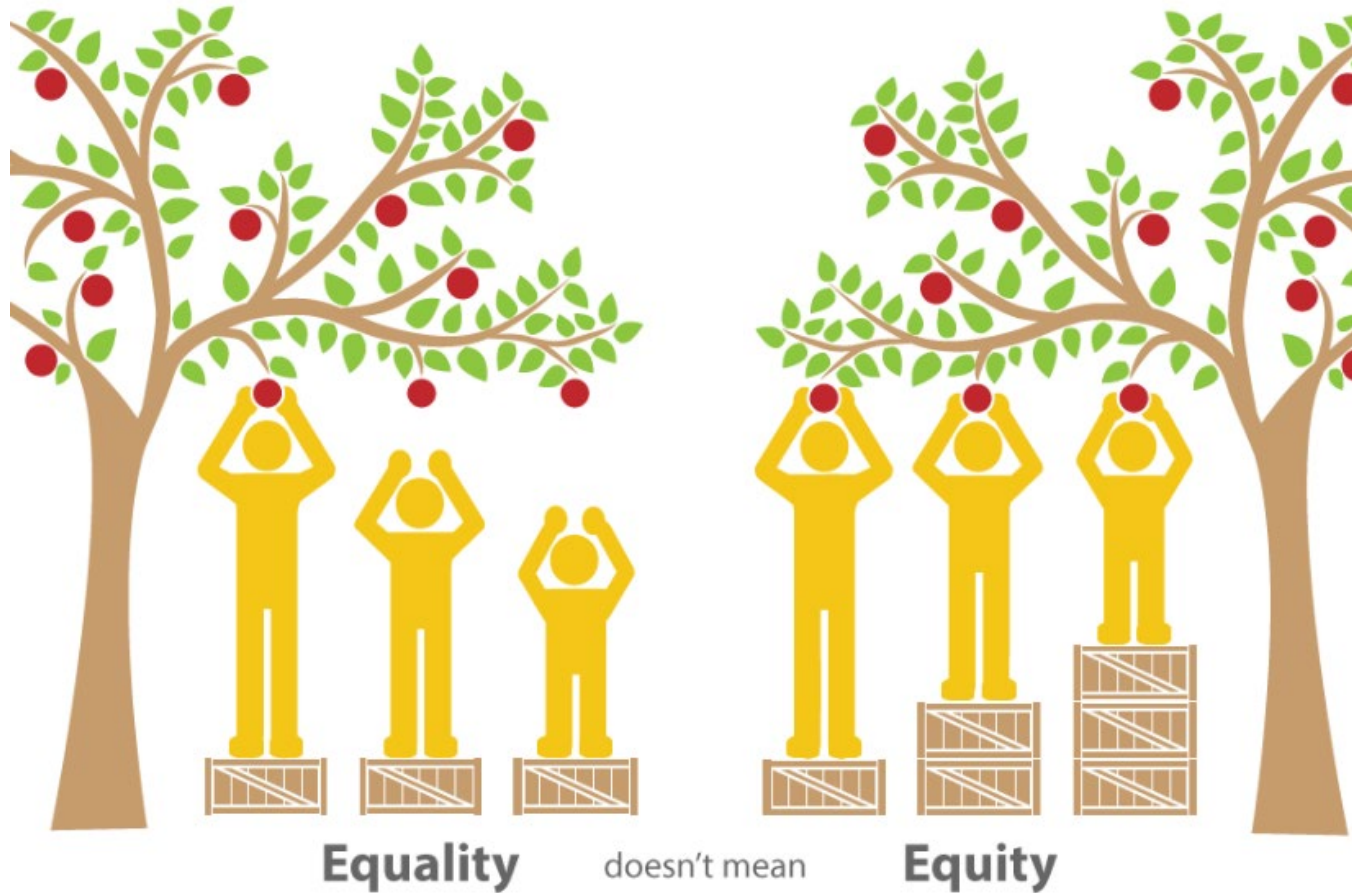


Equity

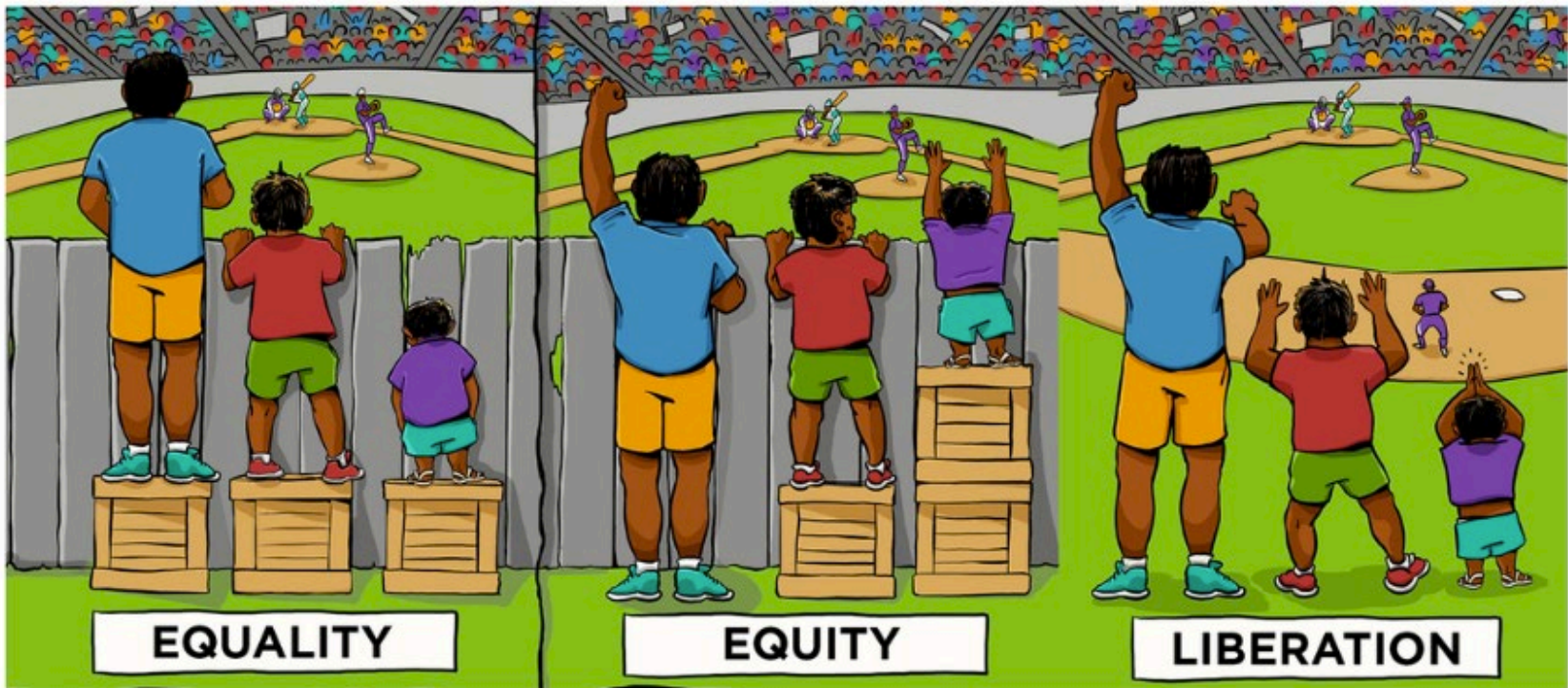


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EQUITY IN DESIGNING SOLUTIONS



EQUITY IN DESIGNING SOLUTIONS



EQUITY IN DESIGNING SOLUTIONS

“Quit whining. It’s the same distance.”





Equity doesn't mean the same for everyone; it means that everyone gets what they need.

Elementary School Principal, Florida

WHAT IS EQUITY?

Equity means just & fair inclusion. It means the conditions exist where all people can get what they need & thrive.



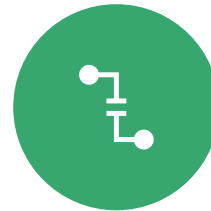
Definition from Policy Link: <https://www.policylink.org/equity-in-action>



4 Dimensions of Equity



Procedural
(Inclusion)



Distributional
(Access)

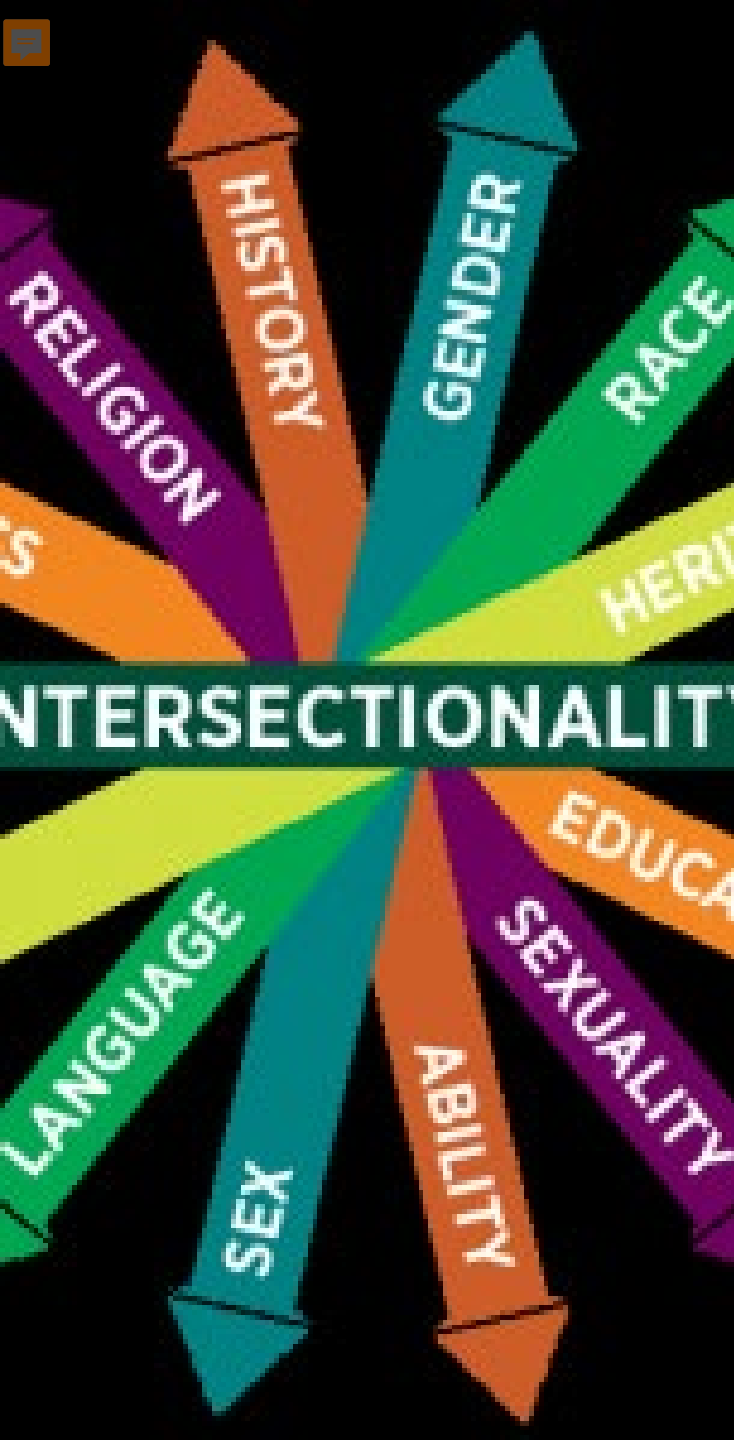


Structural



Transgenerational

USDN Equity and Sustainability Scan (2014). <https://www.usdn.org/products-equity.html>



Intersectionality

the complex, cumulative way in which the effects of multiple forms of discrimination (such as racism, sexism, and classism) combine, overlap, or intersect especially in the experiences of marginalized individuals or groups

<https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/intersectionality>

What is an Equity Lens?



Using an equity lens means continually asking:



Who will benefit from a project or policy?



Who might be excluded from those benefits? Who might be harmed?



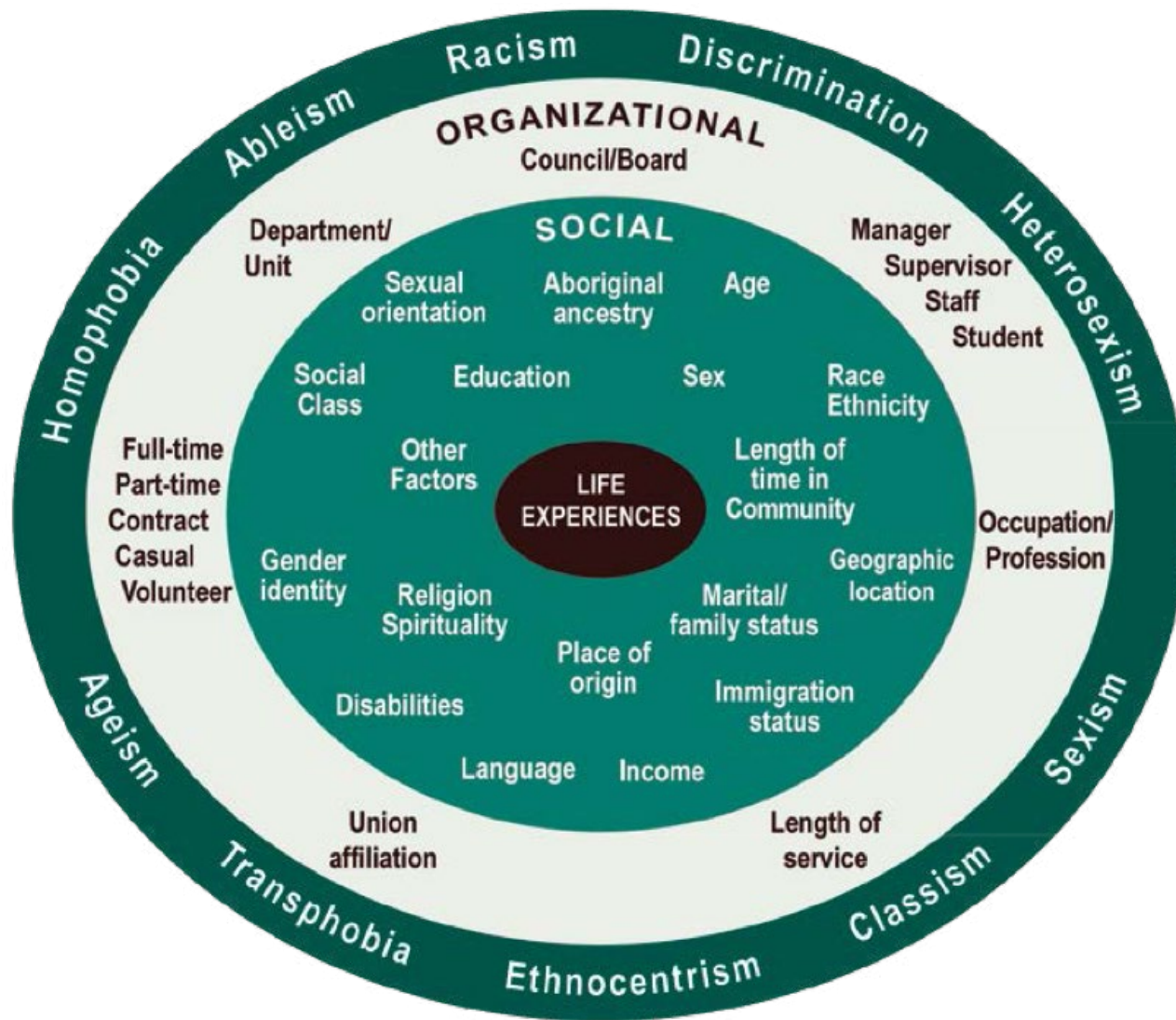
How might some groups be unfairly burdened today or in the future? How might privilege be entrenched?



Have important decisions been made with the direct input of those who will be most affected?



From whose perspective are you evaluating the 'success' of your project or policy?

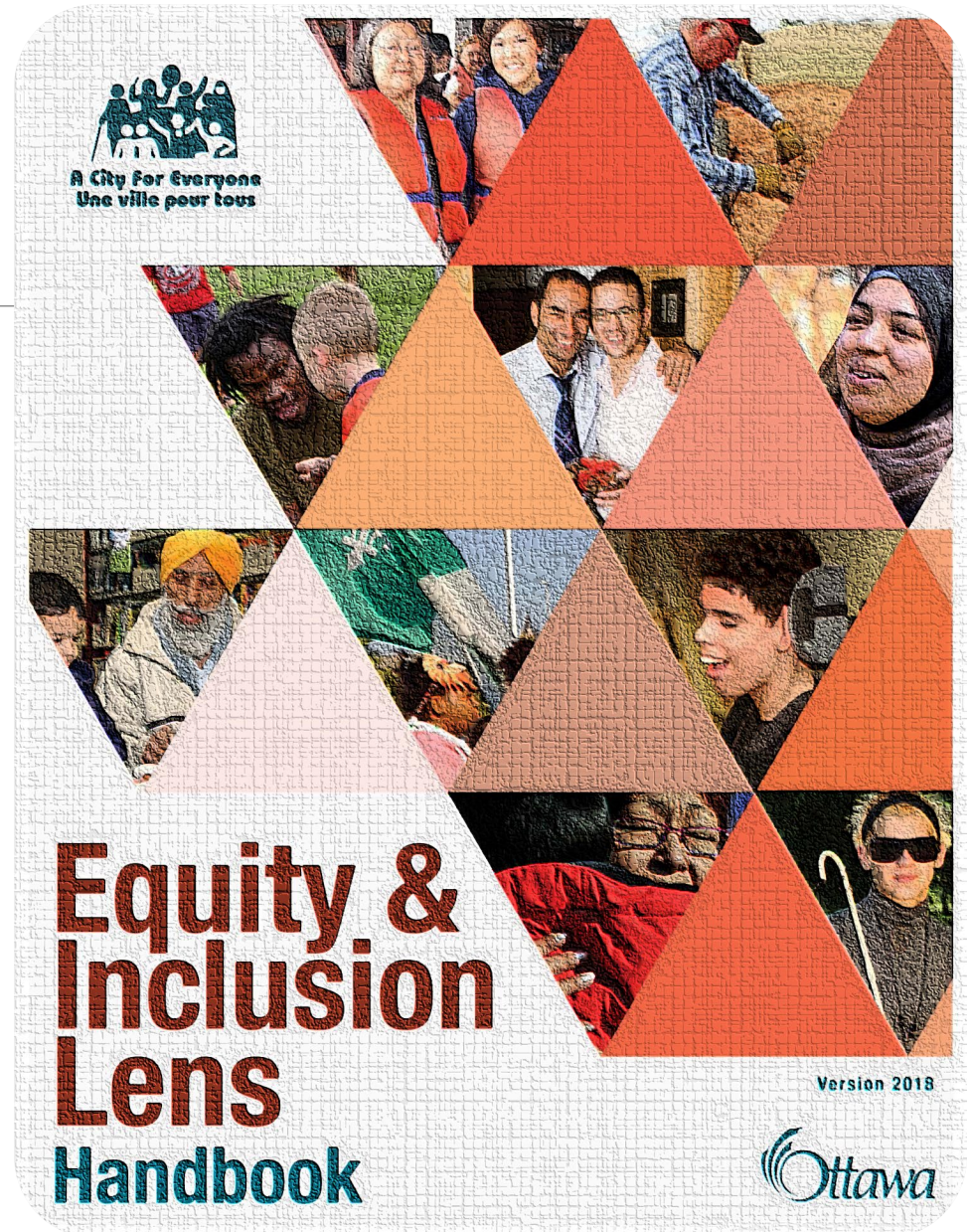




Equity Issues & Responses



City for All Women Initiative & City of Ottawa.



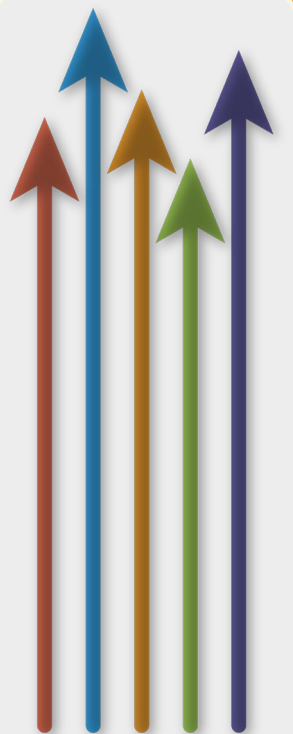
Why Use an Equity Lens?





Equitable communities are healthier, economically stronger communities.

More equitable societies experience:



Improved

- Overall population health
- Levels of trust
- Social & civic participation
- Voter turnout
- Economic stabilization

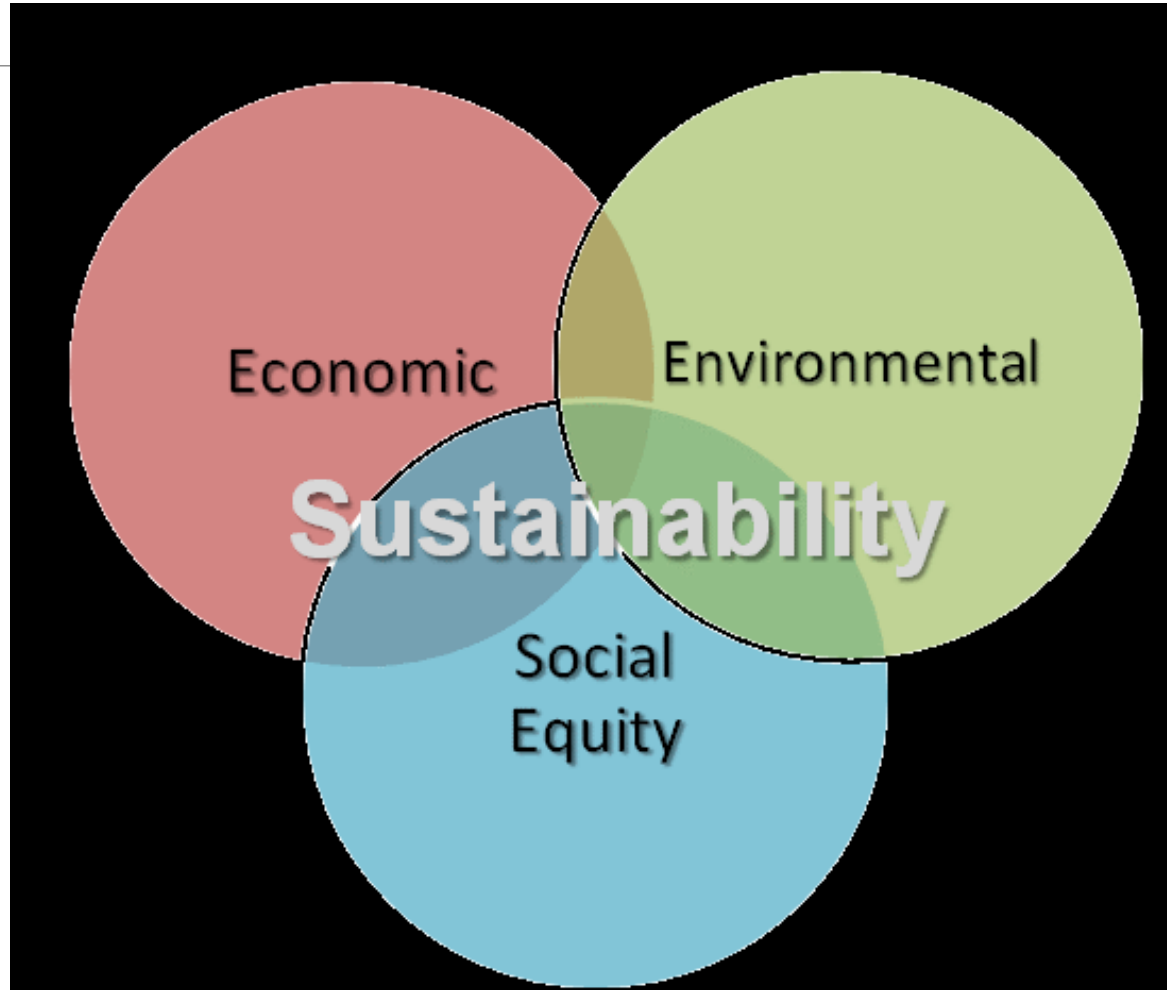
Reduced

- Crime rates
- Debt
- Inflation



Source: Wilkinson & Pickett, *The Spirit Level*

Equitable communities are more sustainable communities.





Using an equity lens is consistent with action towards reconciliation.

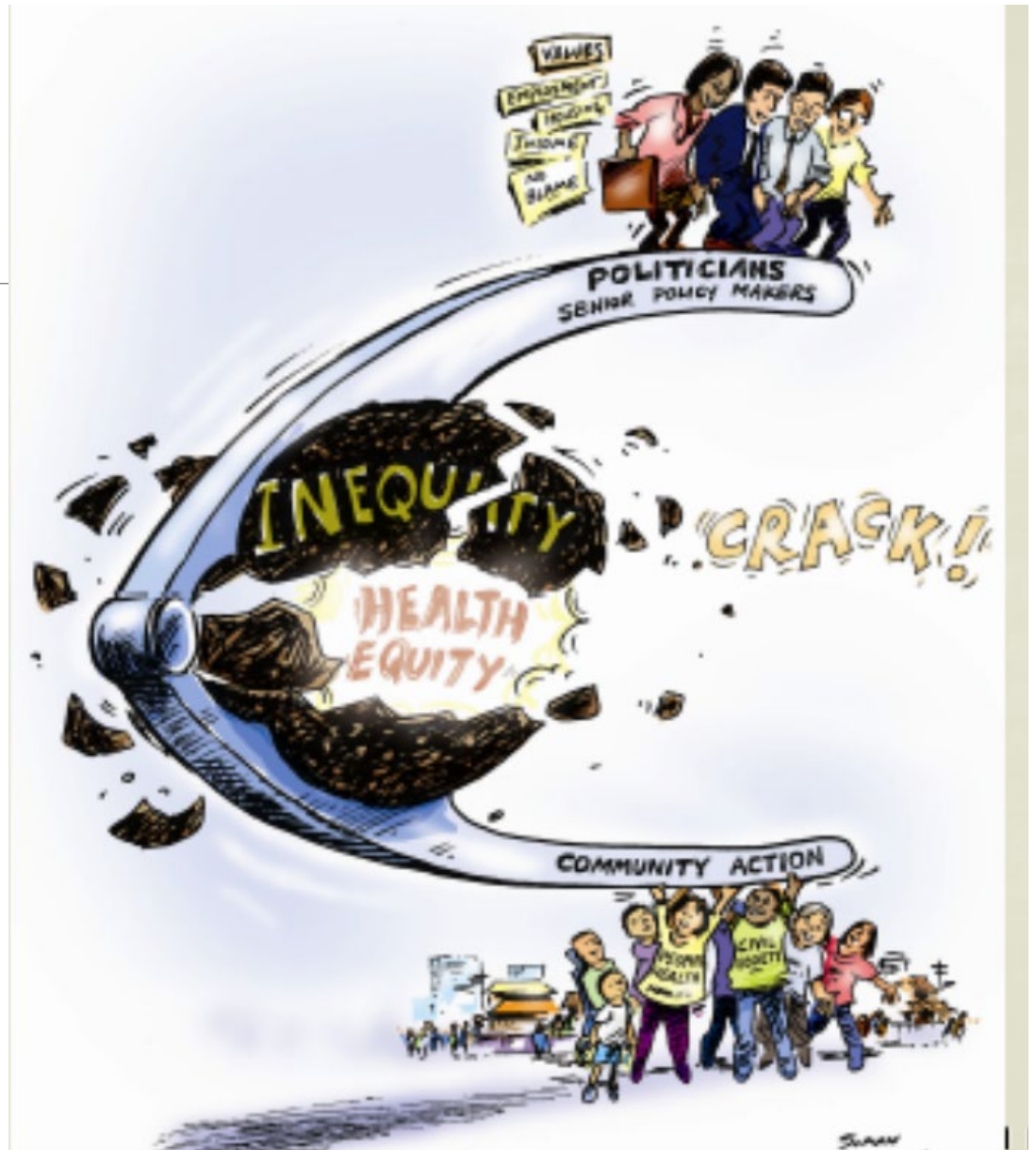
Truth, Reconciliation & Equity:
They Matter to Us!

*“For the mistakes of the past,
Canadians need to hear and tell the truth.
With the promise of reconciliation,
Canadians need to end the inequities of the present.”*

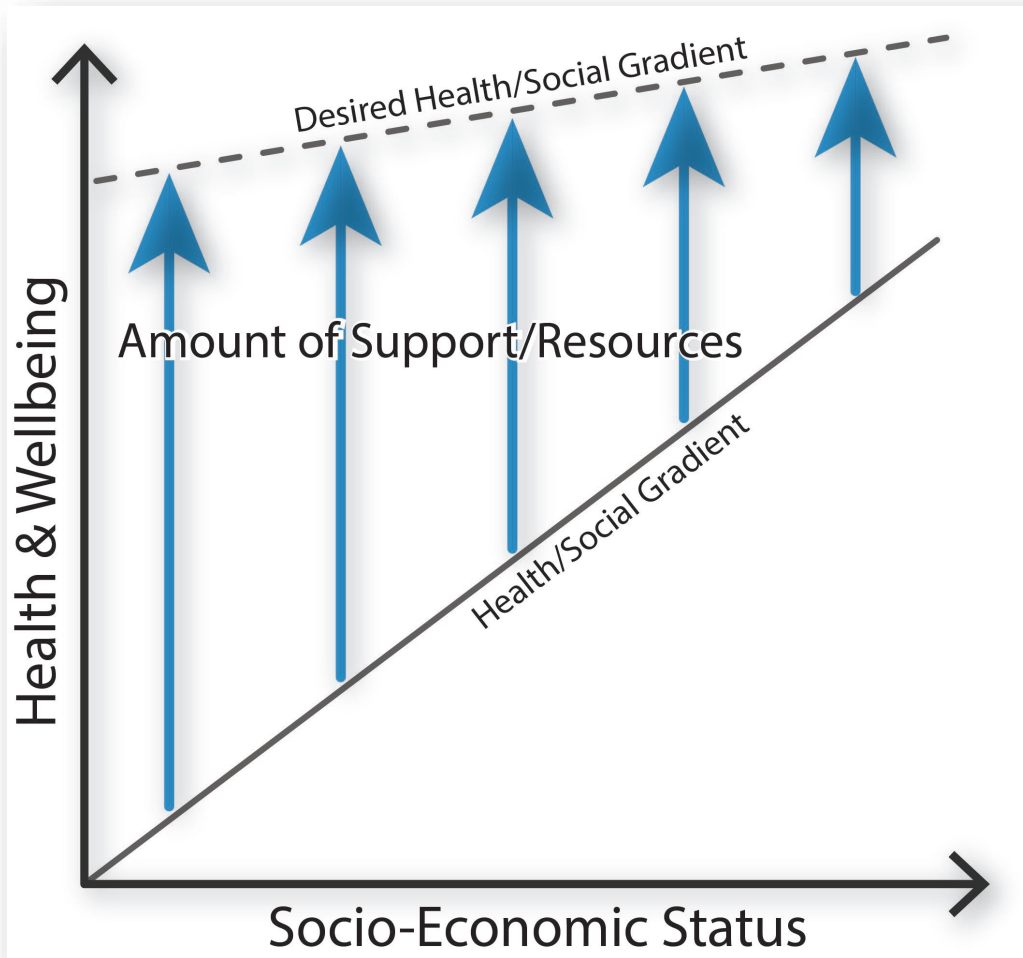
What Does it Look Like to Apply an Equity Lens?



Top Down and Bottom Up



But equity is not just about helping those who experience the greatest barriers...



...it's about supporting people according to their level of need.

This is known as **leveling up**, or **proportionate universalism**.



Key Elements of an Equity Lens Framework





1. CONSULT DIFFERENTLY



PRACTISE 'EXTREME OUTREACH': CREATE OPPORTUNITIES FOR PEOPLE FROM ALL WALKS OF LIFE TO PARTICIPATE IN PLANNING AND DECISION-MAKING.



DESIGN THOSE OPPORTUNITIES SO THAT PRIORITY POPULATIONS CAN PARTICIPATE AND FULLY ENGAGE IN THE PROCESS.



Influence	High influence, less impacted	High influence, highly impacted
	Low influence, less impacted	Low influence, highly impacted
	Degree Impacted	

Power Analysis Grid



Las Cruces, New Mexico



T'Sou-Ke Nation Solar Project



AUMA's Municipal Evaluation Toolkit: Measuring Inclusion



Welcoming & Inclusive Communities
Together we shine



2. LEARN DIFFERENTLY

Use many sources and types of data, gathered with the assistance of community partners, to better understand the diversity of the community and the day-to-day lives of residents.





Baseline Data for Equitable Clean Energy Program Design



BENEFITS



BURDENS



INCLUSION

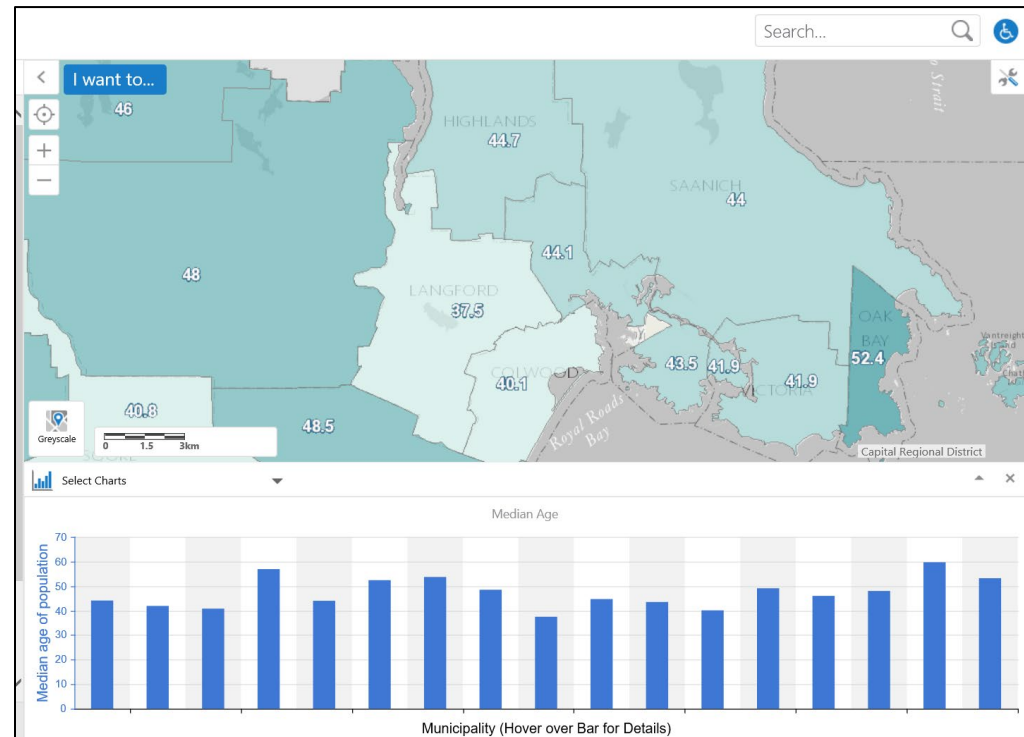


DEMOGRAPHICS

<https://cadmusgroup.com/papers-reports/a-guidebook-on-equitable-clean-energy-program-design-for-local-governments-and-partners/>

Geographic Information System (GIS) Mapping

Use **GIS mapping** to help visualize where diverse populations are living





Neighbourhood Assessments

What do you notice in this built environment?

- ☐ Do you feel safe, welcome and comfortable? why or why not?

- ☐ Are you able to safely travel along or across the street?

- ☐ Is there a wide, smooth, unobstructed sidewalk?
- ☐ Is there a crosswalk to cross the street?
- ☐ Is there a smooth transition from the sidewalk onto the road/crosswalk?
- ☐ Is there sufficient lighting for when it is dark outside?
- ☐ What else do you notice about travelling safely?

Engage diverse residents in a **Walk & Roll** or **Roll & Stroll** to identify features of the neighbourhood or facility that are positive & features that may be negative.

How do diverse residents feel in the space? Safe? Welcome? Comfortable?

Equity Lens Work in Victoria

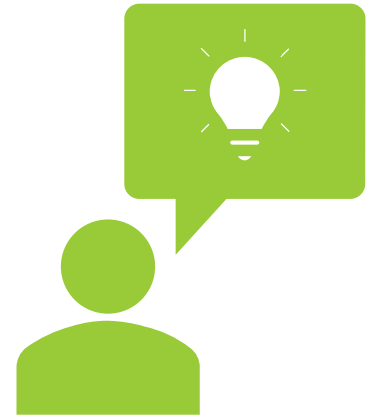
www.crystalpoolforall.ca

1. Use data to unearth root causes of income and wealth disparity and systemic inequities.
2. Develop a city-wide picture of who is being left behind (underserved, underrepresented, marginalized / ignored) in order to:
3. Evaluate how existing policies and practices of local government can continue to perpetuate or begin to address neighbourhood and household level inequities by analyzing internal data such as:
 - the allocation of city operating budgets and historical, current, and proposed capital investments;
 - the distribution of City services and infrastructure,
 - who is accessing civic buildings, services, programs and grants, and
 - who is represented on city staff, council, and committees.



3. ANALYZE DIFFERENTLY

Carefully examine proposed policies or initiatives to understand the potential impacts of those initiatives regarding access and inclusion for diverse communities and groups that experience racism, discrimination and prejudice.



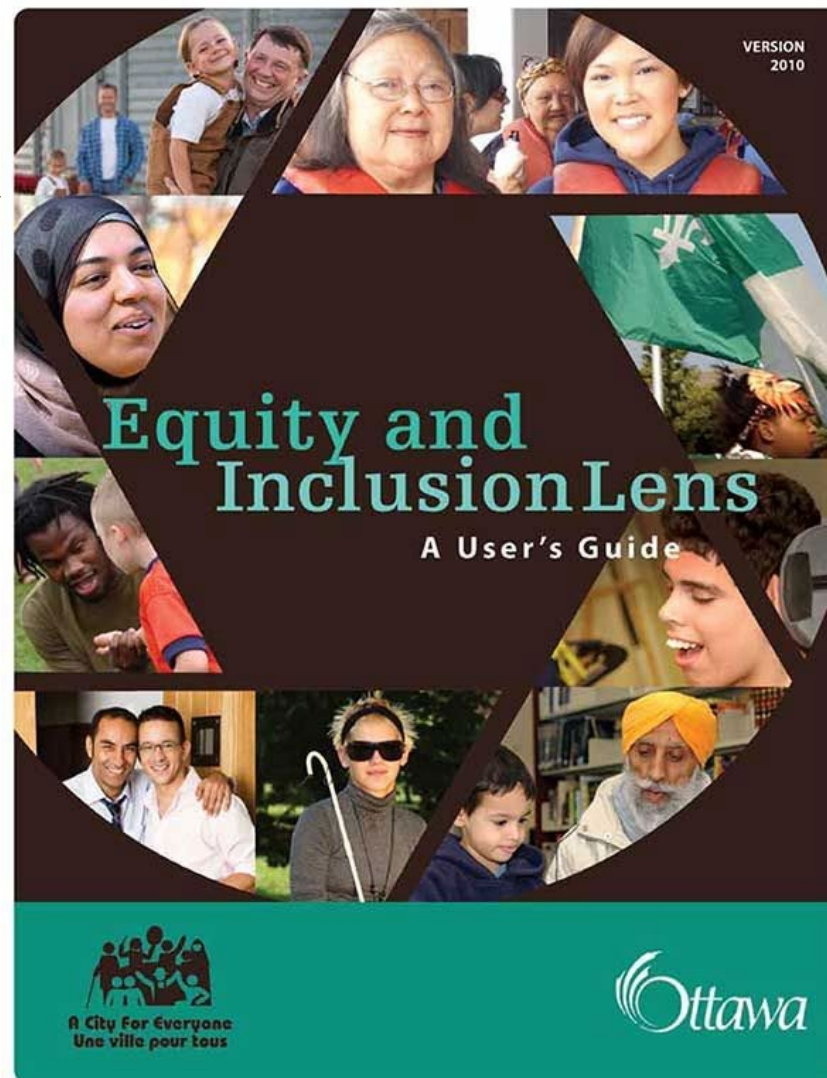


Ottawa, Ontario

Transportation Equity COMMUNITY CONVERSATIONS



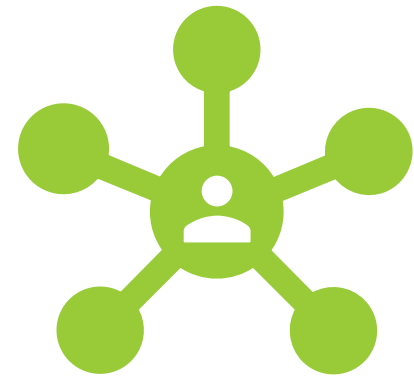
Healthy Transportation
Coalition
pour les transports sains





4. COMMUNICATE DIFFERENTLY

Ensure that all stakeholders and anyone likely to be impacted by the initiative receive information about it and are able to respond. Communicate information in clear, direct and easy to understand ways, and use a variety of communications tools and channels.





TOOLS FOR INTEGRATING AN EQUITY LENS

<http://tools.sparkpolicy.com/introduction-taking-an-equity-lens/engagement/>

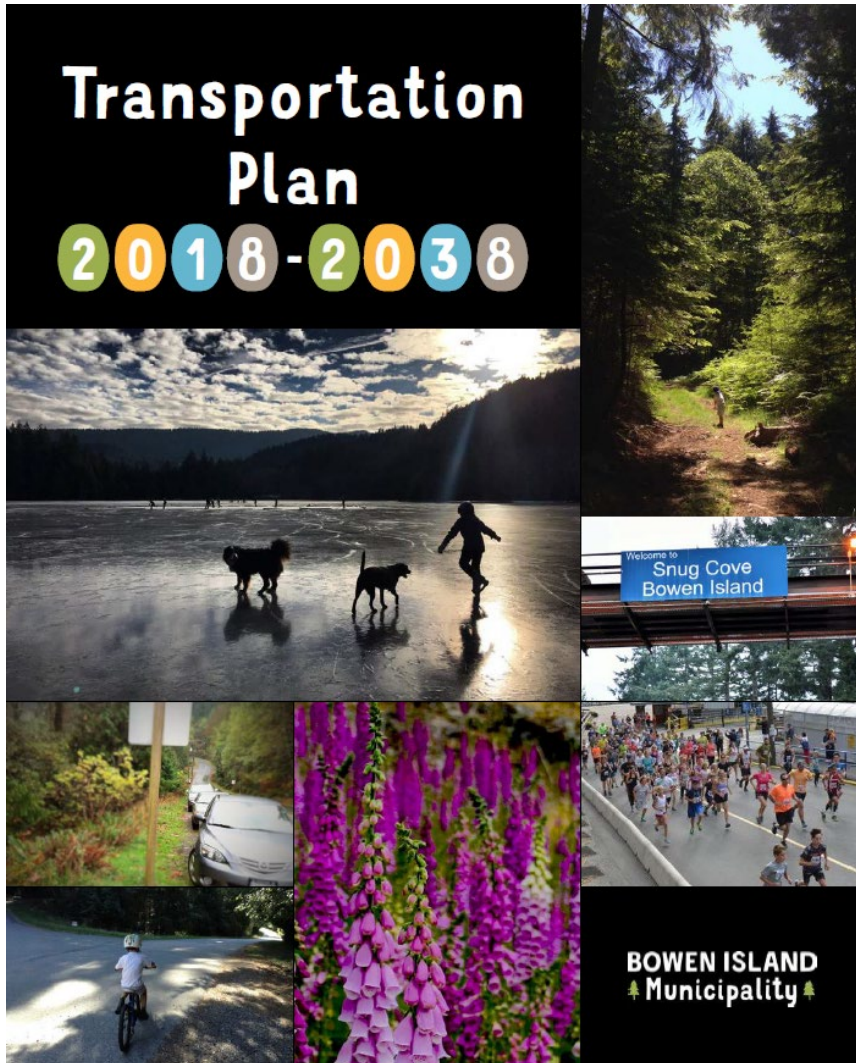


MOBILITY EQUITY FRAMEWORK

HOW TO MAKE TRANSPORTATION WORK FOR PEOPLE

Learn the steps to achieve mobility equity in transportation planning.





Bowen Island Transportation Plan

<https://www.bowenislandmunicipality.ca/files/TransportationPlanFinal.compressed.pdf>



5. EVALUATE DIFFERENTLY



Continually evaluate the new policies or initiatives developed, the process of developing them, and the equity framework itself.



Seek to understand using a wide variety of types of data and knowledge – from statistics to stories.



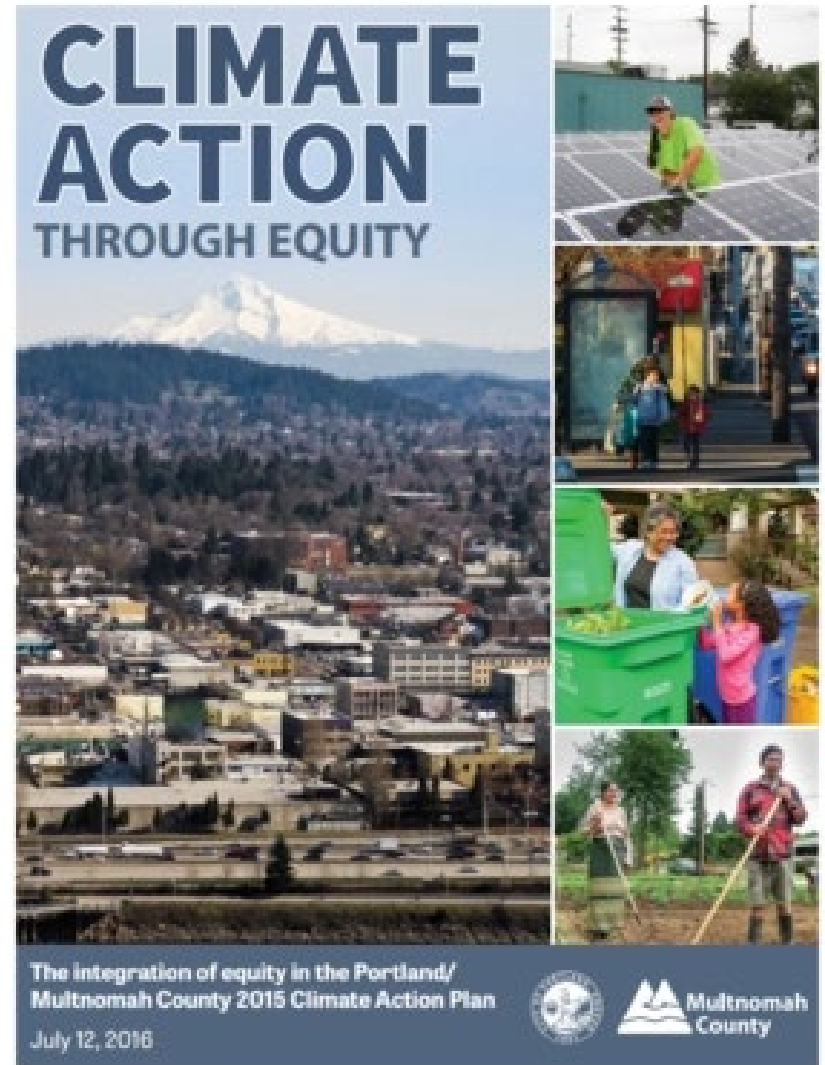
How to design and manage
Equity-focused evaluations

Equity- Focused Evaluation



Portland, Oregon

EQUITY AND THE PORTLAND PLAN



Examples	Potential unintended consequences	With an equity lens
Focus on electric vehicles	Electric vehicles are energy efficient, but they don't reduce traffic or commute times & cost is high.	Active transportation infrastructure prioritized in under-served neighbourhoods
Emphasize plant-based foods	Our idea of healthy food may not be culturally appropriate for all people.	Protection of traditional Indigenous food systems
Plant trees	Street greening & access to parks makes neighbourhoods more desirable & therefore more expensive	Diverse populations are engaged in parks planning to ensure parks are accessible & safe for all users
Retrofit buildings to reduce energy	Favours home owners	Offer incentives to landlords

CUSP Network

Energy Poverty and Equity Mapping

Energy Poverty in Canada: a CUSP Backgrounder

July 31st, 2019



<https://cuspnetwork.ca/energy-poverty-equity-mapping/>

Key Components of Equitable Clean Energy Program Design



A Guidebook on Equitable Clean Energy Program Design for Local Governments and Partners

SEPTEMBER 2018

USDN | urban sustainability
directors network

CADMUS

Listen and respond

Recognize structural racism – don't just target low income households

Ensure low income households can access energy efficiency benefits

Reduce financial burdens & make it easy

Seek to deliver services beyond clean energy technologies

Capitalize on co-benefits, such as job creation or community resilience for historically underserved populations.

Track progress in terms of outcomes & equity

<https://cadmusgroup.com/papers-reports/a-guidebook-on-equitable-clean-energy-program-design-for-local-governments-and-partners/>



6 Ways to Prioritize Equity in Energy Efficiency & Climate Policy

1. Acknowledge the historical legacies of energy systems.
2. Identify and understand the specific populations in an energy service territory.
3. Include all energy consumers at each level of design, staffing, and execution.
4. Ensure eligibility and applications for an energy service are not discriminatory.
5. Monitor differences in energy use and efficiency program take-up across groups.
6. Confirm that gaps in life outcomes, such as health and financial conditions, are shrinking.

<https://www.urban.org/urban-wire/six-ways-prioritize-equity-energy-efficiency-and-climate-policy>



Questions & Discussion



Thank you!

Please connect anytime:

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<https://www.linkedin.com/in/victoriabarr/>