



LONG BEACH
OFFICE OF EQUITY

Equity Toolkit





THE CITY OF LONG BEACH is committed to making our City a place where everyone can thrive. The Office of Equity strives to support City staff and community partners as we incorporate equity and inclusion into our work.

The Equity Toolkit includes an overview of what equity means and provides specific strategies we can apply to our work to make positive changes through our policies, programs, and services. Each tool contains questions to answer when applying an equity lens to our work, along with case studies that show what the City is doing to make Long Beach a healthy, safe, and thriving community for all.

THE LONG BEACH OFFICE OF EQUITY strives for a city where everyone can reach their highest level of health and potential for a successful life, regardless of background, neighborhood, or identity. We do this by:

1. Partnering with those most affected by inequities to advance equitable policy and systems changes
2. Making inequities visible using data and storytelling
3. Building our City's capacity to advance equity through training, tools, and technical assistance



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A Message from the Mayor

A Message from the Director of Health and Human Services

Terms to Get Started

What is an Equity Lens and When Do We Need to Use It?

How to use the Long Beach Equity Toolkit

Equity Tool: Communications

Equity Tool: Community Outreach and Engagement

Equity Tool: Gathering Data and Information

Equity Tool: Monitoring and Evaluation

Equity Tool: Planning Services, Projects, and Programs

Equity Tool: Policy Development

Equity Tool: Strategic Planning

Equity Tool: Training Staff and Volunteers

Equity Tool: Working with People

Appendix A: Spectrum of Public Participation

Acknowledgments



A MESSAGE FROM THE MAYOR

I'm proud to live in and serve one of the most diverse cities in the country. In my role as Mayor, I have focused on making Long Beach a leader in economic development, sustainability, education, and technology. Equity is an important factor in each of these areas, as we know that our diverse neighborhoods and community members have varying levels of access to the resources needed to succeed. I am committed to closing these gaps, which in turn will improve outcomes across our entire City.

The City's commitment to equity can be seen in the development of our Climate Action and Adaptation Plan, Early Childhood Education Strategic Plan, Language Access Policy, Digital Inclusion efforts and the economic inclusion focus in our Economic Development Blueprint. This Equity Toolkit will uplift those important stories and give staff across the City the tools to incorporate equity and inclusion into all our work. From community engagement to policy development, we all play an important role in making our City a vibrant and inclusive place to live.

I am grateful to work alongside dedicated and passionate staff that continue to drive innovation, creativity, and ensure that all members of our community have what we need to thrive.

Dr. Robert Garcia
Mayor of Long Beach

**A MESSAGE FROM
THE DIRECTOR OF HEALTH
AND HUMAN SERVICES**

For many people, Long Beach is a great place to live, work, learn, and play.

Yet data shows us that significant racial and social inequities affect our economic well-being, our neighborhoods, and our health. For example, our life expectancy differs by **17 years** depending on where you live in the City. Rates of poverty, unemployment, preschool participation, educational attainment, HIV and sexually transmitted diseases, asthma hospitalizations, diabetes, and people who are precariously housed differ significantly across the City.

A history of unfair laws and practices, in the U.S. and in Long Beach, created many of these differences. Hiring discrimination, laws about who could buy homes and where, and poorly funded schools created many obstacles for people of color and low-income residents. These inequities are not random—they have been created and sustained over time and they will disappear only if we are proactive and collaborative. Exciting progress is happening in Long Beach with the increased mobility options such as bike lanes and walking paths across the City, new park spaces and programming, a new justice fund for immigrants facing deportation, and the implementation of an Office of Equity to partner with City departments and community members to build policy and programming that highlight and build upon our communities' strengths.

The road to equity isn't easy. It requires a long-term commitment to learning, the courage to have hard conversations, and a willingness to try new things and think about investments in a different way. This toolkit supports City of Long Beach staff to evaluate burdens, benefits, and outcomes for historically underserved or underrepresented communities while improving conditions for all Citywide. Together we are leading the way among cities working for more equitable, sustainable, and healthy communities.

Kelly Colopy
Director, Long Beach Department of Health and Human Services



Children born in neighborhoods with safe parks, healthy foods, and opportunities to grow and thrive live up to

**17
YEARS**

longer on average than those in neighborhoods without those resources



Terms to Get Started

EQUITY

When everyone can reach their highest level of health and potential for a successful life, regardless of their background and identity.

Equity is when everyone has what they need to be successful, while equality is treating everyone the same. **Equality** seeks to promote fairness, but it can only work if everyone starts from the same place and needs the same help.

DIVERSITY

Physical, social, and psychological differences between people and groups, including things like

race, ethnicity, gender, ability, sexual orientation, gender identity, national origin, tribe, socio-economic status, thinking and communication styles.

INCLUSION

Puts diversity into meaningful action and builds a culture of belonging, respect, and connection by actively inviting the contribution and participation of all people.

What is an Equity Lens and When Do We Need to Use It?

Using an equity lens means we are thoughtful and inclusive in all decisions, including policies, practices, programs, and budgets. An equity lens can be applied to decisions around how funding is allocated, how programs are planned and implemented, and how we prioritize maintenance of our existing assets.

It means we partner with community to set goals and strive for processes and outcomes that promote health and wellbeing for all community members. We take an equity lens when we ask ourselves questions about community involvement, decision-making processes, values and assumptions, and outcomes.



Basic Questions for Using an Equity Lens

- 1. Burdens and Benefits:** Who would benefit or be burdened by this proposal? Would low-income households or communities of color experience a disproportionate burden?
- 2. Understanding Data:** What do the various data tell us about who is affected? Specifically, look at race, income, languages spoken, ability, gender, and neighborhood.
- 3. Community Engagement:** How do we engage those who are not often represented in decision-making or those most impacted by inequities? Do we engage people early enough in the process to have an impact?
- 4. Decision Making:** Who sits at the decision-making table? Who has the power to invite or participate? Whose interests are represented?
- 5. Implementation:** How can we advance equity through the goals of a policy or program?
- 6. Unintended Consequences:** What unintended consequences might be produced by the program or policy?
- 7. Accountability and Communication:** How will we be accountable to, and communicate with, the community throughout implementation?

How to Use the Long Beach Equity Toolkit

The Basic Questions for Using an Equity Lens are a helpful starting point for considering equity in the City's work. But what does it look like to apply these questions?

City Staff have a wide range of roles and responsibilities across departments. The Office of Equity has developed task-specific tools City staff can use, along with a series of case studies highlighting best practices and showcasing the great work already taking place in the City. The tools and case studies cover the following areas:

- Communications
- Community Outreach and Engagement
- Gathering Data and Information
- Monitoring and Evaluation
- Planning Services, Projects, and Programs
- Policy Development
- Strategic Planning
- Training Staff and Volunteers
- Working with People (Clients, staff, volunteers, community)



IT'S A TEAM EFFORT

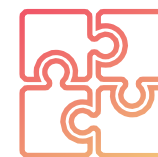
Equity tools work best when a group of staff applies them together. Ideally, a diverse group of people from different backgrounds such as professional, racial/ethnic, language, age, ability, gender, sexual orientation and sexual identity, meet to discuss and respond to the questions together. However, keep in mind that one person does not represent an entire group of people. If the team realizes additional perspectives are needed, others should be invited to participate.



ENGAGE IN HEALTHY DIALOGUE

Start with group agreements to create a safe and productive environment for discussion. Examples include:

- Make sure everyone participates and contributes.
 - Step up if you are usually quiet, step back if you tend to talk more.
- Only one person speaks at a time.
- Respect opinions even, or especially, if you don't agree with them.
- Maintain confidentiality. Some things should not be repeated outside of the meeting.
- Be conscious of time. Help stick to the agenda or ask for more time if needed.
- Turn off mobile phones to minimize disruptions.



WE'RE ALL ON A LEARNING JOURNEY

A group may not know the answer to every question all the time. Discussing the Equity Toolkit questions on an ongoing basis is a great way toward learn, grow, and move the City toward more equitable processes and outcomes.

Equity Tool:

Communications

When we apply an equity lens and we are inclusive in our communications, we ensure that all people are heard, informed, and engaged.



Inclusive Strategies

- Consider how different perspectives and contexts affect meaning and messages
- Connect through storytelling, photos, art, and music
- Use the City's Language Access services for translation or interpretation

1. Who determined the purpose or desired outcome(s) for the communication? What are underlying reasons for this desired outcome?
2. Does the intended audience understand and agree this is a priority? If not, how does the data support the need for this communication?
3. How can we include the intended audience in the development and testing of messages, materials and strategies, especially if the goal is to reach various racial/ethnic groups?
4. What are all possible audiences and their specific needs, interests, and strengths? What data or information was used to identify these factors?
5. What communication strategies are needed to reach the audience? For example, working with community members, bulletin boards, community newspapers, social media, and hosting community conversations. Consider the audiences that might be missed by using only certain communications methods such as e-mail and social media.
6. Who is the best person/organization to develop and deliver the message? How will our communications messaging and materials be distributed? How will we check to ensure materials are stocked and being used, and if they are not, find out why not?
7. How will we monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of our communications and how they have been received by different audiences? How can we test that the messages work for the audience we want to reach? Consider conducting ongoing surveys in varied formats. (See the *Monitoring and Evaluation tool*)
8. How does our communication foster inclusion, respect, and equity? Are there certain topics that might be highly stigmatized or inappropriate in some cultures or populations? What have we done to learn about cultural communication preferences?
9. Do images represent the full diversity of employees or community members?
 - Do they capture the diversity within specific groups of people?
 - Will the people in the images relate to and feel included in the way they are represented?
10. Is everyone portrayed in positive images that challenge stereotypes? For example, consider who is active and passive, who is at the center, who is serving and being served.
11. Are there terms that are culturally specific? How can messaging be improved to make it more easily understood?
12. Is the communication easily accessible and understood by the full diversity of our audience? Examples could include plain language written at a 6th-8th grade reading level, using photos and icons, translated in multiple languages, having online and print formats, or using recorded messages.
13. Does the budget include appropriate funding for written translation or oral interpretation services? Contact the Long Beach Language Access Program (LanguageAccess@LongBeach.gov) for more information.

"Students took an intentional approach in connecting with the people in Long Beach who were most affected by the rising STD rates to hear and include their views, needs, and stories into the campaigns."

CASE STUDY

STD Awareness Campaigns

In 2016, the **Long Beach Department of Health and Human Services (Health Department)** pursued an innovative communications strategy to raise awareness of the rising rates of sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) in Long Beach. The City faced sharp increases in the reported cases of gonorrhea, syphilis, and chlamydia while the rate of new HIV infections was twice as high as the state rate. The highest rates of infection generally occur among people living in low-income communities, African-American and Latinx populations, and among men who have sex with men.

The uptick in STD rates could partially be explained by the growing popularity of online dating apps, casual hookups, and unprotected sex. Seeking a new approach, the Health Department partnered with Designmatters, an incubator within the ArtCenter College of Design in Pasadena, known for producing creative, authentic, and empowering art and design campaigns.

Students took an intentional approach in connecting with the people in Long Beach who were most affected by the rising STD rates to hear and include their views, needs, and stories into the campaigns. Ultimately, the Health Department selected the following two awareness campaigns to launch in 2018 and 2020:

- The **"Know More" campaign** is an edgier take that focuses on dating culture. Each poster includes a statement that begins with bold text that then grows faint until the final word—you. This campaign is geared toward the broader public with the goal of activating people to educate themselves about STDs. The poster says: *"Your boyfriend loves receiving oral sex from [long list in faint text] you."* Fact: 1 in 2 sexually active persons will contract an STD by the age of 25.
- The **"Dear Long Beach" campaign** is a raw "ode to the City" that features black-and-white portraits of real Long Beach people with strategic masking of their identities, which also invites the viewer to see themselves in the person's story. Each poster is geared towards a specific group that was disproportionately affected by STDs. By uplifting people's stories, the goal is to remove shame and empower others in the community to share their stories. From the above photo: *"Dear Long Beach, ... I was angry, really angry."*



What About This is an Equity and Inclusion Practice?

Used data about STDs, HIV and other factors to guide the engagement with people and groups most affected. Data included age, race, ethnicity, gender identity, and zip codes.

Met people where they already gathered with the goal of connecting, learning, and building trust.

Applied insights to the campaigns that were gathered from talking with and learning from the groups of people most at risk for STDs and those already living with STDs and HIV.

Centered the human story behind the facts with compassion and authenticity.

Focused on motivating people to learn about STDs and empowering those with STDs and HIV to share their stories without shame.

Equity Tool:

Community Outreach and Engagement

When we welcome the diversity of perspectives of staff and community, we shape processes and outcomes to ensure everyone benefits.

Planning Community Outreach & Engagement

1. Who are the key stakeholders that might stand to benefit or be harmed by the policy, project, initiative or service?
2. What role will these stakeholders play in our engagement process? Will they inform, consult, involve, collaborate, or have community direct our efforts? (Refer to *Appendix A: IAP2's Spectrum for Public Participation*).
3. What kind of approaches will help increase the likelihood that key stakeholders are able to elevate their experiences, express their concerns, and contribute as experts?
4. What input or information do we want from these stakeholders? How can we create opportunities for people least likely to be heard to ensure they share their ideas or concerns? For example, can we use multiple feedback techniques such as online surveys, dot voting at events, interviews, or focus groups to give us a variety of perspectives?
5. Is our planning and outreach team representative of the diversity of the stakeholders we are engaging? What steps can we take to ensure we are inclusive of the diversity of perspectives?
6. Who are the appropriate messengers for outreach? Which employees, departments or community organizations with experience in these specific communities can help us do outreach?
7. Is there a history – between City and community, or between communities – that we need to consider? How may this history help inform outreach and engagement efforts?
8. What message do we want to get across? How will we know if our message reaches and is understood by key stakeholders?

9. What are barriers to stakeholders' full participation and what steps can we take to remove them? Examples include child watch, transportation, language interpretation, accessible location, convenient time, multiple formats, avoidance of religious and cultural holidays, and ensuring culturally appropriate content.
10. Do we use plain language (6th grade reading level or lower) in our promotional materials and communications? Are our messages understood by diverse audiences who may not already have deep knowledge of the issue?

During Community Engagement

11. Is the space safe and welcoming for everyone, especially key stakeholders and participants who may be reluctant to share their views? If not, what can we do to change this? For example, pair up a new participant with an experienced one to help those new to the process feel encouraged to participate.
12. Does the pace, format and language of the engagement allow everyone to contribute, including participants who are least likely to speak up or for whom the information may be new?

Community Engagement Follow-Up

13. Who participated in our engagement efforts? Were any important groups missing?
14. Are the insights from groups who face economic, social, or health inequities reflected in the report and the final product?
15. How will we report back to all who were involved in the engagement activity and ensure they understand how their participation and input shapes the process or outcomes of your effort?

Language Access

- The City's Language Access Policy (LAP) provides document translation and interpretation at community meetings
- To learn more, email: LanguageAccess@longbeach.gov

CASE STUDY

Climate Action and Adaption Planning

Long Beach Development Services' Planning Bureau (Planning Bureau) created an inclusive, community-centered planning process to engage the Long Beach community broadly and with attention to those most affected by climate change. Older adults, youth, low income communities, and people of color are among the most at risk of being harmed by the impacts of climate change, such as extreme heat and flooding. The planning process sought to co-create knowledge related to climate impacts, co-define priorities and solutions to inform the City's Climate Action Adaption Plan (CAAP), and keep residents safe and healthy.

The Planning Bureau developed its community engagement strategy for CAAP based on an equity assessment it conducted the prior year in partnership with several other City departments. In addition to considering community feedback in the CAAP, staff also assessed each potential action based on equity criteria developed for the plan. Scientific, businesses, and community working groups also helped shape the CAAP and deliberately sought to incorporate environmental justice principles.

"The planning process sought to co-create knowledge related to climate impacts, co-define priorities and solutions to inform the City's Climate Action Adaption Plan, and keep residents safe and healthy."

Partnering with community organizations, staff participated in more than 60 community meetings/events as well as a series of community open houses. For example, staff partnered with youth programs and local schools to engage youth and emerging leaders on climate change. CAAP events were educational, family-friendly, and interactive, encouraging community members to share their feedback and generate solutions to climate change. Each open house also included a sustainability resource fair, interactive activities, food, and free giveaways. Interpretation services and translated materials were available at all community events.

Further engagement includes co-hosting Spanish-only and Khmer-only CAAP events with community partners. LBTV also created animated videos on climate change in Spanish and Khmer.

Community input shaped the draft CAAP goals, objectives, and strategies, and the Planning Bureau is currently incorporating this feedback into the plan before it is finalized and adopted by the City.



What About This is an Equity and Inclusion Practice?

Engaged communities most impacted by climate change to inform for CAAP.

Allocated funding in budget for extensive community engagement.

Met communities where the residents already gathered, such as school events, summer activities, and cultural fairs.

Co-created knowledge and co-defined priorities and solutions.

Hosted events at community-friendly, trusted, and easily accessible locations during days and times that were most convenient for the participants.

Considered cultural appropriateness of all engagement activities.

Provided translation and interpretation services in multiple languages.

Honored the community's time and expertise by offering food, beverages, and CAAP giveaways.

Included equity in CAAP prioritization framework.

Equity Tool: Gathering Data and Information

When we consider equity in data collection and information gathering, we ensure our actions better reflect the community's strengths, assets, and priorities.



1. How can our data collection reflect the many strengths and needs of our diverse community? This could include measures of safety, accessibility, affordability, racial/ethnic background, family responsibilities, income, and access to decision-making?
2. What types of qualitative data (stories, art, quotes, interviews) can be used along with quantitative data (surveys, census measures)?
3. How do the current statistics or demographic data help us understand the barriers or inequities that some communities face? What are the root causes or historical factors that created these barriers?
4. Does the data capture the diversity of the population, even within sub-groups? For example, how can we gain access to data about Cambodian and Filipino residents when they are often grouped together with Asian/Pacific Islanders?
5. How can our data help us understand the multiple ways different individuals or groups of people are affected? For example, how does rent burden affect those who identify as African American female heads of households? Do the data distinguish differences between women, men, transgender, and non-binary individuals (people who do not identify with any gender)?
6. How can we ensure that those historically excluded from engagement are able to fully participate in, learn about, or benefit from our research?
7. How will we identify and challenge assumptions about specific populations throughout the data collection process? For example, false assumptions could include the belief that all parents in a program will be heterosexual or that low-income people do not value education.
8. How will we make sure the data collected is accurate and reliable? How will we consult with people most affected by the issue to provide feedback on our data, approach, and findings?
9. Does our final report include the findings on the specific equity and inclusion concerns we identified, as well as an analysis of the root causes of any disparities?
10. Does our final report provide a clear call to action for community residents, leaders, and stakeholders?
11. How will we report back the findings to people who were involved in the research?

Where can I find useful data?

Try these useful data tools to show economic and social factors, health outcomes, and more!

HEALTHY PLACES INDEX:
healthyplacesindex.org

NEIGHBORHOOD DATA FOR SOCIAL CHANGE:
la.myneighborhooddata.org

RACE COUNTS
racecounts.org

NATIONAL EQUITY ATLAS:
nationalequityatlas.org

CITY HEALTH DASHBOARD:
cityhealthdashboard.com

US CENSUS BUREAU
factfinder.census.gov

CASE STUDY

"Everyone In" Economic Inclusion Listening Tour (Community Conversations)

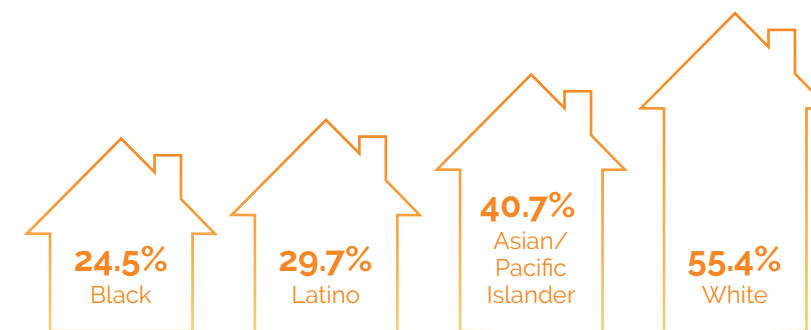
In November 2017, the Long Beach City Council approved the "Everyone In: Economic Listening Tour." The goal of the Listening Tour was to understand the lived experiences of community members, especially those least likely to participate in public engagement activities. This valuable qualitative information is being used to provide direction and accountability for the City's 10-year Blueprint for Economic Development (Blueprint).

The Listening Tour was informed by quantitative analysis of key measures in Long Beach disaggregated by race, gender, and other factors. For example, according to the National Equity Atlas, the 2015 homeownership rate for Black residents was 24.5%, less than half the homeownership rate for White residents at 55.4%. This inequity is caused by factors such as practices that made housing attainment difficult for specific populations, fewer educational opportunities, racism, poverty, and other factors.

Following strategic outreach and recruitment, 107 community members participated in nine Community Conversations, including millennials/ youth, women, Latinos, Native Americans, Asians/Pacific Islanders, Black/African Americans, LGBTQ

individuals, people with disabilities, and minority small business owners. The discussion questions focused on strengths and assets rather than problems and needs, were worded at a 6th-8th grade reading level, and aligned to the focus areas of the Blueprint. Community members evaluated the Community Conversations to make sure the objectives were met and to adjust for future conversations.

Themes and proposed solutions from the Community Conversations informed the City's plan to: 1) address identified economic barriers, challenges, and inequities; 2) foster community partnerships and secure resources for the proposed solutions; 3) implement institutional changes in City programs, policies, and procedures; and 4) assess and report progress for continual improvement and accountability.



What About This is an Equity and Inclusion Practice?

Looked at socio-economic data by race, gender, and other factors to reveal inequities.

Applied findings and suggested solutions as direction and accountability for the implementation of the Economic Development Blueprint.

Valued community members' lived experiences, especially voices historically not heard in public decision-making.

Partnered with local community-based organizations for culturally competent outreach and engagement.

Used strategies that met the community where they were, such as outreach at farmers markets, barber shops, hair salons, senior centers, and libraries.

Hosted Conversations at community-friendly, trusted, and accessible locations during days and times most convenient for the community.

Provided child watch and interpretation services in multiple languages.

Offered incentives to thank and honor participants for their time and expertise such as food, beverages, and gift cards.

Data Tips

- Disaggregate data by race, gender, language, etc.
- Identify gaps and inequities between groups and neighborhoods
- When there are inequities, seek to understand what caused them. These reasons are known as root causes.

Monitoring and Evaluation

When we consider equity and inclusion in how we measure success, we ensure that all benefit from the process and its outcomes.



Helpful Resources!

- Refer to the Gathering Data and Information Equity Tool
- Use the City's Language Access Program to request translated documents and interpretation
- [Getting to Equity](#) from Government Alliance on Race & Equity



1. What populations could be missed by only using certain evaluation methods? For example, consider who might use online surveys or attend public meetings? What other approaches might also be useful?
2. How does the makeup of those designing and implementing the evaluation reflect the diversity of people participating in the evaluation?
3. How do the evaluation questions elevate the experiences of diverse residents?
4. How can our evaluation include those who stopped using the service and potential clients who never used it, to address any unknown barriers or biases?
5. How can we make it easier for people to participate? Do the interviewers share a similar cultural background as participants? Are we providing transportation and childcare, offering a stipend or gift card for focus groups, and/or holding interviews or focus groups at safe, convenient, and welcoming locations?
6. Can we interview in the languages in which the people are most comfortable or have a high-quality interpreter available?
7. How will we ensure a diversity of perspectives in analyzing our data? How will we validate the findings with the community to minimize any biases?
8. How will we report back our findings or recommendations to the people who participated in the evaluation process?
9. How might the service or program impact certain groups differently? Here are some ways that inequities might be revealed through evaluation or monitoring so we can work to correct them:
 - **Processes:** Examining the fairness of processes in such areas as hiring, promotion, and award of contracts.
 - **Access:** Reviewing the level of access to services/benefits, any barriers to participation, reasons for unequal access, and approaches to address inequities.
 - **Quality:** Evaluating the level of consistency or quality of existing services delivered to groups and individuals.
 - **Outcomes:** Understanding whether policies or programs have the same impact for all groups and individuals to identify and understand any disparities.

CASE STUDY

Direct Install Gardens (DIG)

The Long Beach Water Department designed the pilot of its Direct Install Gardens (DIG) pilot program, to address barriers for low-income residents to participating in the Lawn-to-Garden (L2G). L2G provides an incentive payment for residents who convert their lawn to drought tolerant plants after the project is completed.

To address this inequity in access, Long Beach Water developed the DIG program to directly install a garden for interested homeowners that meet income requirements.

Through ongoing monitoring and evaluation, Long Beach Water found significant program under-utilization in low-income neighborhoods by using

Geographic Information System (GIS) and U.S. Census data (pink areas of the map). Since landscape projects require large upfront investments (sometimes as high as \$25,000), lower income residents were less able to take advantage of the L2G program.

To address this inequity in access, Long Beach Water developed the DIG program to directly install a garden for interested homeowners that meet income requirements. The pilot phase, expected to launch late 2019, will serve 25-50 homeowners living in a census tract in North Long Beach. The pilot will be funded by Conservancy and Long Beach Water. The City's Office of Sustainability will provide the trees, and Conservation Corps of Long Beach will conduct the installation, providing local youth with workforce development opportunities.



Homeowners will participate in the pilot phase of the Direct Install Gardens program

What About This is an Equity and Inclusion Practice?

Reviewed and analyzed an existing program to determine and utilization by different groups of residents.

Applied data at the Census tract level to identify and evaluate disparities in program utilization by low-income residents.

Examined and identified underlying barriers to program participation.

Centered the needs of low-income residents in historically underserved communities.

Removed the upfront costs for low-income residents.

Provide youth workforce development by partnering with Conservation Corps.

Planning Services, Projects, and Programs

When we center community voices in our programs and services, we eliminate barriers and create opportunities for everyone.

1. What challenge or opportunity is our service, project, program, or event addressing or in response to?
2. What are the goals or expected outcomes of our proposal?
3. How will people affected by this issue be meaningfully engaged throughout the planning, implementation, and evaluation process? For ideas, see the *Equity Tool: Community Outreach and Engagement*.
4. What data can identify or explain any racial, social, health, and economic disparities to elevate the significance and urgency of the issue? How will this data be used in development and implementation of our plan? See the *Equity Tool: Gathering Data and Information*.
5. What short-term and long-term strategies have we identified in partnership with community? Will these strategies help address the root causes of any inequities?
6. What time and resources are allocated in our plan to talk to and learn from those people most affected by the inequities our project, program, or service is addressing?
7. How does our proposal strive to close any of racial, social, health or economic disparities?
8. How will our proposal include or build upon of the strengths of the people it affects?
9. Are there best practices we can learn from other cities, departments or community organizations? How can their work inform the planning, design, and implementation process?
10. How will the project, program, or service benefit or improve the quality of life not only for the intended population but for everyone in Long Beach? In other words, what ripple effects might benefit the community at large?
11. How will we ensure that a full diversity of people can participate, benefit, and be treated with respect and dignity? Have we considered location, accessibility for mobility devices, visual and hearing impairments, child watch, transportation, safety concerns, and language access?
12. How does the time of the event or hours required consider conflicting priorities placed on people's time, such as religious and cultural holidays, work schedules, and family commitments?
13. How will we incorporate and measure equity and inclusion goals in our business and project management plans? How will we articulate these measures and goals to our participants and sponsors?
14. Have we determined up front how much it will cost in human and other resources to ensure we fully implement equity and inclusion strategies in the project? Have we done all we can to acquire those resources in the planning phases?
15. How can we use a pilot or prototype to test our proposal and adjust it based on our results?

Measuring Equity Outcomes

- Align program outcomes with opportunities to provide community benefits, close gaps, and minimize negative outcomes
- Share data with community members to get input on what measures matter most to them



CASE STUDY

Justice Lab: Clinician in Jail Programs

The City of Long Beach's Innovation Team (i-team) launched the Justice Lab in January 2018. The program, developed in collaboration with the City's i-team and Public Safety Continuum, seeks to divert residents from the justice system to appropriate treatment and care, including mental health services.

In 2017, the i-team conducted comprehensive research and analysis of more than 100,000 offenses in Long Beach and found that 85% of the repeat offenses were misdemeanors. Research also included participation in over 12 observational visits and in-depth interviews with 26 people who had 11 or more citations and arrests, and interviews with 21 subject matter experts, many of whom are now part of the Justice Lab Multidisciplinary Team (MDT) leadership team.

The data-driven and human-centered research process showed the most effective interventions that would break the cycle of arrest and incarceration at a municipal level. A series of initiatives were developed within the Justice Lab, including the Clinician in Jail Program. Facilitated by a partnership with the Police Department and The Guidance Center, the program provides a mental health professional in the jail to assess and connect individuals to care. The licensed clinician assesses individuals' needs, develops a post-release plan, and makes referrals to appropriate resources and support, including drug treatment programs, homeless services, and mental health agencies.

Through rigorous, real-time evaluation, the i-team found a gap between the normal work hours the Clinician in Jail Program support was offered (8am to 4pm) and the hours individuals most needed the services (12pm to 8pm). Working with partners, the schedule was changed accordingly. The new program has been widely viewed as a success for its effectiveness in redeploying public safety resources while giving individuals access to timely health services. The i-team funded the six-month pilot program, and it is now supported by the Police Department.

The data-driven and human-centered research process showed the most effective interventions that would break the cycle of arrest and incarceration at a municipal level.

A key factor to the program's success is the productive partnership between the Police Department and The Guidance Center, each willing to enter into the new, unconventional alliance and adapt as the program evolved. Opening its ranks to embed a mental health provider in its jail is evidence of the Police Department's goal to advance equity, achieve its mission of public safety through partnerships, and further its continued efforts in being a 21st Century Police Department.

What About This is an Equity and Inclusion Practice?

Used a human-centered process to research and understand the needs of a population cycling in and out of the jail.

Identified the best way to improve outcomes for individuals experiencing mental health issues in jail by connecting them to needed treatment.

Placed a mental health professional within the City jail to provide high quality services to recently arrested individuals with mental illness.

Applied rigorous evaluation of the program with the goal of making real-time adjustments to boost effectiveness and outcomes.

Adapted program delivery to better fit the times when individuals most needed the services.

Worked with a locally based mental health services provider known for tailoring its services to meet the specific needs of its participants.

Provided wraparound case management services and care by partnering with first responders.

Equity Tool: Policy Development

When we make policies that are equitable and developed in partnership with community, we ensure that everyone is included in the City's success and wellbeing.



1. Who or what is the policy intended for? Who does this policy impact directly and indirectly? Are there individuals and/or communities that will be disproportionately affected or harmed by this policy?
2. What internal or external factors demonstrate a need for this policy? How can existing policies – either within the City or from other jurisdictions - inform how we address equity and inclusion in this new or updated policy?
3. What data do we have to explain the need for or the impact of this policy? What information do we have about who is affected? For example, do we have data about ability, income/poverty, age, race/ethnicity, educational attainment language, cultural beliefs, or gender identity? What information are we missing and how can we gain access to that information? (See *Equity Tool: Gathering Data and Information*)
4. How will the groups most affected by the policy be engaged from the early stages and throughout development, implementation, and evaluation? How can we ensure their perspectives are included at all stages of the process? (See *Equity Tool: Community Outreach & Engagement*)
5. How can we learn about and develop innovative policy solutions that draw upon the contributions and assets of those people most affected?
6. How will this policy reduce racial, economic, and social disparities to advance equity?
7. If disparities are identified, how can they be reduced or eliminated to advance equity?
8. What are potential economic and/or health benefits of the policy? For example, are there potential cost-savings, increased local spending, improved social or physical environments, decreased need for social services, or other health-related benefits if the policy addresses the identified racial disparities gaps? For an example, see [Michigan's business case study](#) for racial equity.
9. What human and financial resources are required to address equity and inclusion in the implementation of this policy? If new resources are required, how can we build them in from the beginning? For example: develop partnerships with community groups, collaborate across departments, and seek matching funds.
10. How will this policy be interpreted or implemented? What are the arguments in favor and against the policy and whose interests are represented?
11. How can we communicate the policy to reach the full diversity of people affected? (See *Equity Tool: Communications*)
12. How will we know if the policy achieves what is intended? How will we measure the extent to which the policy advances equity by removing barriers or creating opportunities for people most impacted by an issue? Can we test individual policy components to evaluate their success? (See *Equity Tool: Monitoring and Evaluation*)

Business Case for Racial Equity

- Consider how closing racial gaps creates cost-savings and economic growth, including increased local spending or improved health outcomes
- Tailor the economic and social benefits message to fit the specific policy outcomes

CASE STUDY

Language Access Policy

In 2011, the **Long Beach City Council** requested staff work with community stakeholders to draft a Citywide Language Access Policy (LAP). At the time, 46.8% of Long Beach residents spoke a language other than English at home and 20.5% of residents spoke English less than “very well.” Other than English, the most commonly spoken languages were Spanish, Khmer, Tagalog, and Vietnamese.

The City worked with the Language Access Coalition (Coalition), a collaborative group of local organizations, to develop a policy that would allow community members to have greater access to City services in their native languages. In August 2013, the Long Beach City Council approved the LAP, which provides, interpretation for City meetings, document translation, and multilingual phone directories.

Since its adoption, the City has worked closely with community stakeholders to implement and evaluate the policy.

For example, in 2018, the Office of Equity worked with the Coalition to develop a comprehensive evaluation process of the LAP, including: 1) sharing the evaluation plan and tools with the Coalition for feedback; 2) partnering with community based organizations to host, recruit, and facilitate focus groups in Spanish and Khmer; 3) providing gift cards for each focus group participant; and 4) including stakeholder feedback into the recommendations to City Council.

Since the LAP passed, the City has worked toward a better implementation, including increased funding, and consistent use of translation and interpretation across the departments. City staff, including those who receive bilingual skill pay, have worked to increase the use of the LAP services in community engagement and outreach activities. City Staff have also been open to input from the Coalition to improve services, adopting a reduced timeframe needed for requesting oral interpretation services, increasing the number of City staff who completed language access training, and improving multi-lingual signage in City buildings.

The LAP honors the true diversity of Long Beach and its adoption and implementation have required long-term commitment and collaboration by both City staff and community stakeholders.

“Since the LAP passed, the City has worked toward a better implementation, including increased funding, and consistent use of translation and interpretation across the departments.”



What About This is an Equity and Inclusion Practice?

Co-developed the Language Access Program policy with the Coalition.

Centered the needs and voices of the community using data and the lived experiences of residents.

Partnered with trusted community organizations to provide culturally competent outreach and facilitation of focus groups to evaluate the LAP.

Offered fair compensation to community groups for conducting focus groups.

Provided gift cards to thank and honor focus group participants for their time and expertise.

Applied findings and suggested solutions as support for the implementation of LAP.

Engaged meaningfully with the Coalition, as the City's actions fall under 'Involve' and 'Collaborate' on IAP2's Spectrum of Public Participation (Appendix A).

Equity Tool: Strategic Planning

When we apply a vision of equity and inclusion to our strategic planning, we work to create a better City for everyone.

1. What issue(s) will this strategic plan address? With what other local efforts or strategic plans should we learn about or align?
2. What disparities in the baseline data will this plan need to address to create more equitable outcomes? For example, which communities or neighborhoods face greater challenges/barriers that need more focused or impactful strategies?
3. How will we ensure that the process of creating this plan is inclusive and that the process will not create obstacles to meaningful community participation? *(See Equity Tool: Community Outreach and Engagement)*
4. What do current demographic trends tell us about who is affected—positively, negatively, or neutrally—by the elements of the strategic plan? What are the specific advantages and/or barriers that face each group? *(See Equity Tool: Gathering Data and Information)*
5. How will issues, concerns, and priorities raised by diverse residents or employees inform the strategic plan? How might leaving out certain voices or communities create additional barriers or challenges between the city and the community?
6. What could be the benefits of taking demographic trends and equity issues into account? For example, by involving community voice in the planning process, how might it promote positive ties between the City and community?
7. How will the strategic plan reflect equity and inclusion in its vision, goals, and objectives? How can the long-term goals reduce disparities, contribute to leadership development, and benefit people from communities that face disproportionate challenges?
8. What human and financial resources will be needed to achieve equity and inclusion in this strategic plan?
9. How will performance measures assess how communities are impacted throughout the implementation of the strategic plan? How will we make changes along the way if the performance measures suggest we are not on the right track?
10. How will the plan measure outcomes, or real-life results, and not only outputs? Who will be involved to ensure these measures are reached, and what are the accountability mechanisms if these measures are not reached?
11. Does the collection of data allow us to measure benchmarks and goals for increasing equity and inclusion?
12. Before finalizing the plan, are there any additional opportunities that could enhance equity and inclusion? For example, are there any key stakeholder groups we still need to engage or data measures that we are missing?

Ask About Inclusion

- Who is not included in the work you do?
- What could contribute to this exclusion?
- What can you do differently to ensure inclusion?



The plan is based on a set of guiding principles that seek to focus on strengths, remove barriers, consider the “whole child,” and ensure that all children and their families receive the respect and opportunities they need to succeed.”

CASE STUDY

Early Childhood Education

The City of Long Beach Early Childhood Education Strategic Plan was developed in 2018 through a collaborative led by the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) in partnership with the Long Beach Unified School District (LBUSD) and Long Beach Early Childhood Education Committee. The comprehensive plan promotes equitable access to high quality services for all families, including those who have been historically underserved. It also provides a road map to guide early childhood investment, advocacy, and new collaborative opportunities that can strengthen citywide programs and services for young children and their families. The decision to invest in Early Childhood Education (ECE) was itself an equity practice, as it centers the needs of the most vulnerable children (over half of the city’s young children are of color) and prioritizes effective intervention at a critical point in child development.

Throughout the development of the plan, DHHS worked closely with and sought input from inter-disciplinary

professionals across multiple organizations, community partners, various City departments and elected officials, LBUSD, and parents and children living in Long Beach. DHHS facilitated 22 focus groups and conducted 11 interviews with stakeholders across the community. Three focus groups gathered information directly from young children ages 3 to 5; one of which engaged children with special needs. The engagement of young children in the development of the plan was a first for the City.

As a result, the plan is based on a set of guiding principles that focus on strengths, remove barriers, consider the “whole child,” and ensure that all children and their families have the opportunities needed to succeed. To achieve this vision, the plan identified seven outcomes-based goals with objectives and activities to achieve each. The objectives are organized by short-term, mid-term, and long-term efforts, with an overarching vision of community-wide support for all children and their families.

22

FOCUS GROUPS FACILITATED

11

INTERVIEWS CONDUCTED

3-5

AGE RANGE OF CHILDREN



What About This is an Equity and Inclusion Practice?

Decision to invest in ECE provides intervention at the time that has been proven to be the foundation of all growth.

Gathered information from diverse groups and stakeholders on the needs and strengths of young children and their families.

Engaged directly with young children, who the plan is for, to include their ideas and input.

Considered demographic information such as race, income, ethnicity and zip code to confirm research sample reflective of the Long Beach community.

Paid close attention to the voices of all families, with a focus on underrepresented populations, such as LGBTQ and foster parents, throughout the plan’s development.

Held focus groups in communities’ preferred language that were led by culturally competent members of the community.

Emphasized the measurement of outcomes to assess progress on goals.

Equity Tool:

Training Staff and Volunteers

When we apply equity and inclusion to all stages of the training process, we create an environment where everyone can learn and contribute.



1. How have we considered equity and inclusion issues when staffing for internal trainers or hiring consultants?
2. How can we demonstrate our commitment to equity and inclusion in procurement documents when hiring external trainers?
3. Consider that the population of Long Beach is over 70% people of color and has a celebrated LGBTQ+ community and large foreign-born population that speaks a variety of different languages. How can we recruit trainers who reflect the population we work with?
4. What type of outreach could help ensure we include certain groups or individuals as facilitators or participants?
5. How will the training content increase the participants' awareness and consideration of individuals and communities from diverse backgrounds? How will participants develop the competency and skills to work sensitively and effectively with individuals from diverse backgrounds? Consider whether the training provides a variety of activities for different learning and participation styles and builds cultural awareness or humility.
6. What are some potential barriers to participation and how can we address them? For example, how have we considered safety, accessible location and time, cultural appropriateness, transportation, child watch, language preferences, and accommodation needs for individuals with disabilities?
7. How can we welcome the diverse perspectives of people who have specific concerns or needs, even if they may not be obvious? For example, are we creating a training that is inclusive of all gender identities, language needs, family responsibilities, immigration status, or those who have experienced chronic trauma through discrimination?
8. Is the training content responsive to the experience of participants who may experience barriers? For example, consider the transportation or travel requirements of participants who rely on public transportation, implicit bias toward different groups, or housing and employment barriers faced by those affected by the criminal justice system.
9. How will the training content include the perspectives of residents or staff who will be participating in the service?
10. How will the training be evaluated? Will we ask whether there were any barriers to participation or whether they found the facilitator to be inclusive of the diversity of participants? How will we make changes to the training based on evaluation feedback?
11. Have we considered the appropriate level of trainee participation in co-facilitating and/or co-creating the training? Review *Appendix A: Spectrum of Public Participation*.

Equity Focus

- Embrace the diversity of both trainers and trainees
- Consider intersectionality
- Factor in language preferences
- Recognize systemic and historical barriers

CASE STUDY

Developing Great Leaders

The City of Long Beach Housing and Neighborhood Services Bureau offers the Neighborhood Leadership Program (NLP), a five-month long multilingual training program, that helps residents build skills and experience needed to improve the quality of life in their neighborhoods. Started in 1992, the NLP focuses on cultivating leadership and organizing skills of primarily low-income and residents of color living in Long Beach. The program is offered at no cost to participants and partially funded through the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Program.

The training helps residents recognize the benefits of diversity, improve public speaking and communication skills, create innovative solutions to improve their neighborhoods, identify resources and apply for grants, build key partnerships, and complete community projects. The program also connects participants with City decision-makers, including the Mayor and City Council, government and non-profit leaders, and NLP alumni.

Past graduates of NLP facilitate the training in collaboration with participants. The training starts by covering topics such as communication, cultural awareness, and group dynamics. Participants learn and discuss the program's communication guidelines, including: "I" statements, active listening, patience, respect, risk-taking, honesty, personal responsibility, cultural sensitivity and understanding, and confidentiality. Program facilitators guide the discussion as needed, but the process is mostly participant-led. NLP also offers activities for participants to consider forms of oppression and discuss the impact of where individuals may hold privilege in their interactions with others. Encouraging participants to lead their own training helps to integrate a diversity of backgrounds and experiences into the training.

Staff performs evaluations at the end of every session to confirm the training meets the participants' needs. Staff and facilitators review evaluation results and make changes to the training in real-time, which is a key tactic to ensure the objectives are met.



"The NLP focuses on cultivating leadership skills and organizing capacity of primarily low-income and residents of color living in Long Beach."



What About This is an Equity and Inclusion Practice?

Taught participants skills to co-facilitate and customize training.

Integrated the diversity of participants' backgrounds and experiences into the training.

Program graduates serve as facilitators, demonstrating leadership potential for the new cohort and ensuring relevancy of training.

Evaluated every training session and rigorously applied learnings in real-time to make changes.

Provided training materials in the City's four primary languages of English, Spanish, Khmer, and Tagalog.

Facilitated training in multiple languages.

Connected program participants and City leaders to ensure those who may not have traditionally participated in public decision-making felt more confident to do so.

Co-developed valuable and lasting skills in participants to create positive change in their neighborhoods.

Equity Tool:

Working with People

When we treat all people with respect, we create a welcoming workplace and provide high quality services for our community.



1. What questions can I ask myself to understand my potential assumptions?
 - How does my own background or cultural experience impact my perception of people from different backgrounds or experiences?
 - Are there any experiences or environments where I have been in the minority? If so, what did I learn from it?
 - What groups or types of people cause me to have a reaction (positive or negative)?
 - How can I understand how overlapping identities affect an audience, community partner, client, or colleague?
 - How can I show that I respect our differences and recognize what we have in common?
2. Am I able to acknowledge my own power/privilege and support people who may not be in a similar position?
3. How can I get input or questions from those who may not verbally express their ideas, questions, or concerns? For example, many people value nonverbal expressions and participation whereas other people value words and direct communication instead.
4. How do I encourage feedback and full participation from everyone? Am I the most appropriate person to engage with the specific audience? Would the group feel more comfortable if the facilitator spoke in their preferred language and/or co-facilitated with a trusted community member?
5. How can I ask questions or present information in a way that encourages dialogue with the specific groups of people with which I am working? Consider how the room environment, staff uniforms/badges, introductions and icebreakers, word choice, tone of voice, types of questions (open-ended versus close-ended) and behavior can help promote a safe and inclusive space where all people feel comfortable fully participating.
6. What are potential barriers in each situation, and how can I work to minimize them? Examples include language, prejudice, physical or mental ability (including reading/writing skills), sexual, gender or racial discrimination.
7. If I am not sure what barriers may exist, have I done my research and/or asked community members or the people I work with for input? (See the Equity Tool: *Gathering Data and Information*)
8. How do I address jokes, insults, behaviors, and comments that are offensive to people and make it clear that they are not acceptable? For example, consider co-creating an inclusive tone at the beginning of the meeting with group norms or agreements. Some examples of group agreements are listed on page 8.
9. How do I recognize and build on the strengths and assets of all individuals?
10. What procedures, policies, and practices limit or support my capacity to be inclusive? How can I bring awareness to the importance of inclusive policies?

Quick Definitions

- **Power:** the ability to affect an outcome
- **Privilege:** an advantage that someone did nothing to earn
- **Intersectional:** how race, class, gender, ability, and other identities “intersect” with one another and overlap

CASE STUDY

Homeless Services

The Long Beach Department of Health and Human Services (Health Department) offers comprehensive services and support for people currently experiencing or at risk of homelessness. In working with a variety of people experiencing homelessness, partner organizations, and City staff, Homeless Services keeps the focus on the commonalities: their shared humanity and the reality that no one is immune from poverty. Sharing the stories of those experiencing homelessness has helped the community and its partner organizations to see people experiencing homelessness with a greater sense of empathy.

Homeless Services works hard to create an inclusive environment while providing services to meet a wide range of challenges and needs. For example, transgender individuals experiencing homelessness may not feel safe at a shelter due to their expressed gender. In response, staff made showers available after hours and take other steps to accommodate individuals as needed.

Homeless Services works with many other public and private partner organizations to promote progress towards permanent housing and self-sufficiency. With the complex challenges of providing homeless services, the Health Department identified the need for better coordination of the City’s delivery of homeless services and formed a cross-departmental team that meets monthly to share information and resources based on the needs of those they work with.

Coordination on the Citywide team has helped each other learn about challenges that other departments face in delivering homeless services. Learning in this direct and collaborative way has led to more empathetic and compassionate engagement with people experiencing homelessness.



What About This is an Equity and Inclusion Practice?

Took intentional and proactive steps to remove barriers that people face.

Fostered an inclusive environment while providing services to individuals experiencing homelessness.

Centered the needs of people that have long been stigmatized, misunderstood, and underserved.

Facilitated the sharing of stories of people who are homeless to build awareness of what community members have in common.

Created an inter-departmental team to increase effectiveness of the City’s response to homelessness.

IAP2 Spectrum of Public Participation



Inform



Consult



Involve



Collaborate



Empower

Public Participating Goal	Inform	Consult	Involve	Collaborate	Empower
Promise to the Public	<p>To provide the public with balanced and objective information to assist them in understanding the problem, alternatives, opportunities and/or solutions.</p>	<p>To obtain public feedback on analysis, alternatives and/or decisions.</p>	<p>To work directly with the public throughout the process to ensure that public concerns and aspirations are consistently understood and considered.</p>	<p>To partner with the public in each aspect of the decision including the development of alternatives and the identification of the preferred solution.</p>	<p>To place final decision making in the hands of the public.</p>
Example Techniques	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fact Sheets • Websites • Open houses 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public comment • Focus groups • Surveys • Public meetings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Workshops • Deliberative polling 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Citizen advisory committees • Consensus building • Participatory decision-making 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Citizen juries • Ballots • Delegated decisions

Source: International Association for Public Participating (IAP2)



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SOURCES AND ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Government Alliance on Race and Equity (GARE) Communications Guide

Life expectancy data: *Healthy Places Index*, <https://societyhealth.vcu.edu/work/the-projects/mapping-life-expectancy.html>



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