

Advancing Social Equity through Planning, Design, and Investment in Edmonton's Future Public Systems and Spaces

Project Report

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This technical study was initiated to inform the development of The City Plan. The technical studies were considered alongside public engagement, modelling and professional judgment to determine overall outcomes for The City Plan.

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The University of Alberta respectfully acknowledges that we are located on Treaty 6 territory, a traditional gathering place for diverse Indigenous peoples including the Cree, Blackfoot, Metis, Nakota Sioux, Iroquois, Dene, Ojibway/ Saulteaux/Anishinaabe, Inuit, and many others whose histories, languages, and cultures continue to influence our vibrant community.

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Disclaimer

This report was prepared as a deliverable for the University of Alberta's Sustainability Scholars Program, and therefore does not necessarily reflect the opinion or views of the City of Edmonton. The conclusions and recommendations are solely that of the author's, based on the research and analysis carried out and described in this report. Questions or comments may be directed to the author at jelang@ualberta.ca.

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Thank-you!

Connected

“We create as a community to connect people to what matters to them. We care about the impact of our actions on our social, economic, cultural, spiritual and environmental systems. We serve those here today and those who come after us.” *The City of Edmonton, ConnectEdmonton: Edmonton’s Strategic Plan 2019 - 2028 Guiding Principles*

This project, consisting of a partnership between the University of Alberta’s Sustainability Scholars Program and the City of Edmonton, seeks to actively reflect and support the City of Edmonton’s Vision of a Connected community that cares about the impact of its actions on social, economic, cultural, spiritual and environmental systems, and therefore help it strive to be a more sustainable and equitable place for those here today and tomorrow.



Executive Summary

Equity, along with the environment and the economy make up the three pillars of what researchers refer to as the ‘3Es’ of sustainability. This report sets out to focus on and explore the issue of social equity and how it relates to planning policy and procedure, design and investment and to examine how other jurisdictions have taken an equity approach. Through this inquiry a City of Edmonton Social Equity Assessment Tool prototype was developed and piloted based on the research findings.

The report is divided into five main parts. The first section of the report consists of the literature findings. The academic component examines current research on equity, while the jurisdictional review focuses on a key analysis of cities that have taken an equity approach. Also, within this section are some specific research examples of equity and its relation to urban form, transportation and carbon reduction. The section finishes with a brief description of current City of Edmonton initiatives or strategies that promote and support equity. The second and third part of the report focuses on the development of the

Edmonton Equity Assessment Tool, and provides a description of the tool and how to use it. The tool has been included in its stand alone format in Appendix 1. The fourth section of the report discusses the application of the tool to current and developing City of Edmonton policies of *PlanWhyte* and the *Centre LRT Route Proposal* to assess the impacts on social equity within the City of Edmonton’s urban planning realms of urban form and transportation. Recommendations for ways the tool prototype can be improved are also included. The fifth part provides overall recommendations of how planning (and beyond) within the City of Edmonton could take an equity lens approach based on the research findings. A conclusion and one page project report summary consisting of a report overview and recommendations complete the report. Finally, several appendices provide the tool and a list of links that can be used for further inquiry.

“Social equity is inherent to democracy, and it is an integral component to sustainability efforts” (Svara et al., 2014, p.10).

Introduction

Taking a social equity approach or using an equity lens strives to ensure that all people have full access to resources and opportunities that allow them to reach their full potential and participate fully in society. It means that the outcomes of someone's life are not based on their characteristics or identity. Therefore, applying a social equity lens assists with identifying and mitigating systemic barriers or burdens that impact individuals or groups based on a number of intersecting factors that may hinder people. These intersecting factors could be of an economic, social and/or cultural dimension and could be based on historic or systemic barriers. Yet despite the fact that “social equity is inherent to democracy and ... an integral component to sustainability efforts” (Svara, Wall, & Takai, 2014, p.10) and part of the seventeen United Nations Sustainable Development Goals as a way to promote sustainability for all (United Nations, 2015), researchers have found that an equity lens is often not applied in decision-making regarding sustainability and/or public policy. This is often due to the challenges in defining what equity actually is, why it is important and how it is measured. Therefore, decision-makers must be cognizant of these three challenges when embarking on a process of equity. This report may provide more understanding of these challenges and in conjunction with an Equity Assessment Tool may help to support and provide clarity on social equity; therefore, removing some of the confusion or reluctance decision-makers may have towards it.

Using an equity lens may also give decision-makers an opportunity to address and fix barriers faced by some, and in turn make Edmonton a more progressive and welcoming city, joining the multiple other jurisdictions across Canada and the United States that have taken an equity approach. Many researchers and governmental jurisdictions, both at the international, such as the United Nations, national and local levels, along with other sectors, such as educational institutions, like the University of Alberta, acknowledge that inequity leads to costs in terms of productivity, health, social support reliance, criminal justice, etc. and that taking steps to foster a more equitable society helps to eliminate these costs and will produce a more just and healthy place.

-----“Equity and inclusion create more sustainable cities where people from all walks of life ... can participate fully in social, economic, political, and cultural life” (City of Ottawa, 2015, p.6).

Report Methodology

The methodology used to develop and apply the Edmonton Equity Assessment Tool and subsequently the final report consisted, firstly, of a literature review of academic, jurisdictional and grey area literature, and information gathering sessions with knowledgeable key actors both internally and externally to the City of Edmonton. Secondly, The Edmonton Equity Assessment Tool was developed based on this information. Feedback and input on the tool was sought, primarily from other internal City of Edmonton sources, in order to make the tool as relevant and user friendly as possible. Thirdly, the Edmonton Equity Assessment Tool was applied to two City of Edmonton plans/projects: *Plan Whyte: Whyte Avenue Commercial Area Land Use Study* (completed plan) and *Centre LRT Route Selection* (plan currently in progress). Finally, a brief overview of the findings of using the tool on these assessments was compiled within this final report, along with future recommendations on how the City of Edmonton, particularly urban planning/The City Plan, but also outside of urban planning, can implement a more equity based approach.

Objective

The scope of this project focuses on social equity and how it relates to urban planning within the realms of urban form, transportation and carbon reduction. The equity assessment tool was developed with the potential to be used to examine urban planning policies and projects prior, during and after implementation with the idea that it would assist with measuring and mitigating potential social inequities. It was a joint venture between two City of Edmonton Sections: The City Plan, Urban Form and Corporate Strategic Development and Social Development, Citizen Services. The City Plan will provide the foundation to help guide the city as it grows and moves forward into the future. As the City Plan is being developed to ensure that the City Vision of a Connected community is articulated in policies and priorities, it is important that equity and sustainability are part of the process.

The tool can be applied to identify, evaluate and communicate both positive and negative impacts on equity that an urban planning policy or project causes and there is also potential for the tool to be adapted to be used in other departments or sections outside of urban planning. This tool can help to allow City of Edmonton decision-makers more insight into equity and to use the results as an influencing factor in their operations. This

in turn will make urban planning/The City Plan within the City of Edmonton more sustainable and equitable and thus aligning with its current Vision and Goals. The findings from this project and tool development are compiled in this final report and recommendations for taking an overall equity approach are provided at the end.

1.0 Literature Findings

The literature review is organized into four sections. Section One undertakes an inquiry into what current academic as well as government and nonprofit research have undertaken in terms of the examination and application of general social equity theory, research, measurement, and assessment tools and also how these tie into sustainability. It is important that a clear general foundational overview of equity be examined before delving into how it specifically relates to urban planning. This section also includes an explanation of who research identifies as the groups or individuals at the greatest risk of experiencing inequities, how equity relates to reconciliation in Canada, and a general overview of methods used to approach equity. Section two consists of an inquiry into how equity relates to urban planning within the scope of urban form, transportation and carbon reduction and highlights a few specific research examples of challenges and ideas for solutions found in the literature. Section three will report on the analysis of jurisdictions that have taken an equity practice approach, including specific analysis of the Cities of Ottawa and Portland, OR, and the Region of King County, WA. Together these sections will provide an overview of the topic of equity based on research evidence, including academic, grey literature, and jurisdictional findings (e.g. policy, program, or project reports, formal/informal practice guidelines, recommended or promising practices, etc.). The final section will consist of a brief review of current City of Edmonton strategies and initiatives that support and promote equity overall. Collectively, these sections' findings assisted in guiding the development of the Edmonton Equity Assessment Tool and the recommendations provided in this final report document.

1.1 Literature Review

1.11 Social Equity and Sustainability- General Emerging Themes in the Literature

Sustainability, as defined in the United Nations Brundtland Report (1987a), is generally thought of as the ability to meet the needs of current generations without compromising future generations of the ability to meet their own needs. It is based on this general definition that current research and theory have defined sustainability to be encompassing of a three pillar approach of what researchers call the '3 E's of Sustainability' - the environment, economy and equity (Opp & Saunders, 2013). Recently, the United Nations has developed 17 Sustainable Development Goals in its *2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development* with the focus being "that ending poverty and other deprivations must go hand-in-hand with strategies that improve health and education,

reduce inequality, and spur economic growth – all while tackling climate change and working to preserve our oceans and forests” (United Nations, 2015). These UN goals provide an excellent lens demonstrating how sustainability and equity can function together for local efforts to work on a global scale and could be included in guiding equity and sustainability efforts. The following figure consists of the current United Nations Sustainable Development Goals.

United Nations Sustainable Development Goals



Figure 1: United Nations, 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, 2015

Yet, despite being part of the 3 pillar sustainability approach, equity is often the least understood or examined and may not even be taken into consideration in government policies (Svara et al., 2014). This issue along with the problem of equity being difficult to define or measure, in both assessments and outcomes (Pitts, 2011), frequent the literature. Therefore, it is these themes of equity lacking a universal definition, being difficult to operationalize and measure and how researchers, policy makers, and jurisdictions have examined, acknowledged and/or overcome these issues in order to apply them to social policy, that will be examined in this section of the literature review. Attention will also be paid to Reconciliation in Canada and how taking an equity approach helps to move this forward. Finally, a brief overview of concrete examples about how to foster Equity within public administration will be examined.

-----“Residents of a community are connected economically, ecologically, and socially; the social equity dimension of sustainability refers to how burdens and benefits of different policy actions are distributed among them.” (Svara et al., 2014, p.10).-----

1.11.1 Equity is not Equality

There seems to be no one common definition of social equity within the literature or any universal policy guidelines and this is where the difficulty may often lie in acquiring an understanding of what equity actually is. Some definitions and frameworks have focused on equating equity with equality and defining equity through equality measures in such that everyone, regardless of economic resources or personal traits, should receive equal treatment (Shafritz, Rusell, Borick & Hyde, 2016), or that all people will be treated with “fairness, justice and equality and ... individual differences, rights and freedoms [will be respected]” (American Society for Public Administrators, 2013, para 7). On the surface these definitions seem to make sense, yet Blessett, Fudge and Gaynor (2017), make the case that these definitions take only a flat distributional approach. This means that the approach is grounded in the notion of everyone having an equal starting point and that it is only a matter of redistribution of goods and services that can solve the problem of disparities amongst people (Blessett et al., 2017). For example, equality means that “whether you are two feet tall or six, you still get a five-foot ladder to reach a 10-foot platform” (Putnam-Walkerly & Russell, 2016). Equity, on the other hand, goes beyond this to examine and address the deeper issues of race, class, gender, etc. experiences that foster disparities. For example, often those in lower socioeconomic income stratas, have been treated differently by the government in the provision of basic services such as water and sewer, in protection from environmental hazards or municipal waste and even from participating or voting in local government (Spina, 2013). Without deeper examination and acknowledgment of these systemic barriers, applying only a distributional approach (everyone gets the same) to equity may actually lead to an increase of disparities rather than helping to eliminate them (Blessett et al., 2017). Therefore, it is crucial that when beginning to think about the issue of equity and developing an equity framework or applying an equity lens in urban planning or any other sector, one does not just think giving everyone equal resources, such as a five foot ladder to get to the ten foot platform, will solve the problem. The following diagram provides a good visualization of this.

Equity is not Equality

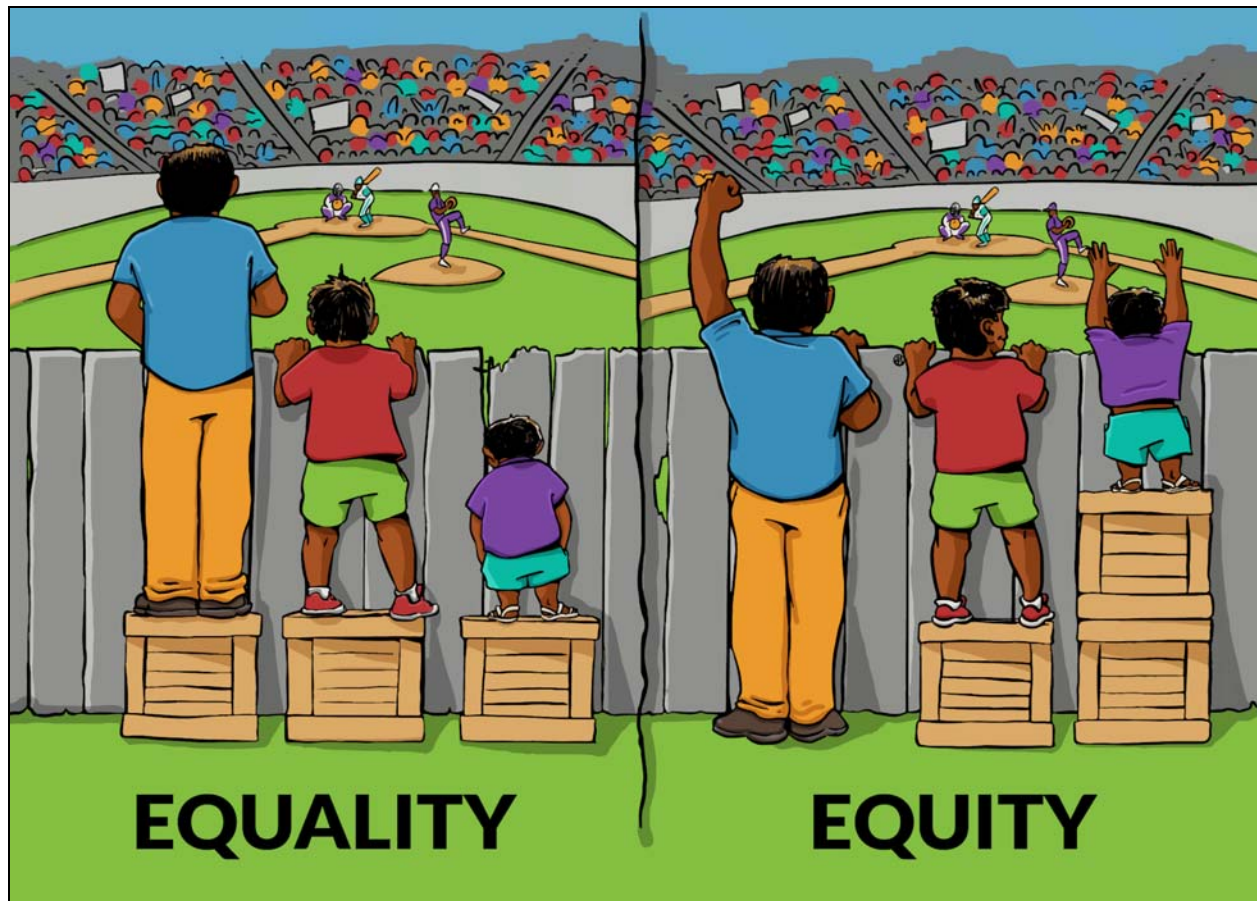


Figure 2: Interaction Institute for Social Change | Artist: Angus Maguire.

1.11.2 Defining Equity

Many researchers have now moved beyond the distributional approach when trying to define equity. Newer definitions view equity not as an equal distribution of resources, but rather as an equal access to resources. It means taking into account that “residents of a community are connected economically, ecologically, and socially; the social equity dimension of sustainability refers to how burdens and benefits of different policy actions are distributed among them” (Svara et al., 2014, p.10). This means that to be equitable some may need more support and some less support in order for each to have the same benefits (Government of Canada Status of Women, n.d.). Yet, overall equity can mean different things to different people. The following ‘Equity Wordle’ (Besser, 2014) is a representation of the most common words found in a United States sample of city, county and state agencies as well as advocacy organizations’ equity policy statements. The larger the word the more times it appeared.

Equity Wordle- Equity Means different things to different people



Figure 3: *Equity Wordle: Besser, 2014, p. 19*

Reflecting on the wordle, there are many words included and therefore different representations and components of what equity means. This does make it difficult in some regards to determine a set definition, but a good starting point is to think about where one is approaching from and move from there. In the case of this report for the City of Edmonton, it is essentially examining public administration (urban planning), therefore the definition of equity used should reflect this. Blessett et al. (2017) provide the following reflective definition of equity and how it relates to public administration. The definition also incorporates measurable concepts that have the potential to aid policy makers when developing social equity measures.

Equity, in public administration, refers to policy formulations and implementation, public management practices, the provision of public goods and services, and administrator/resident interactions that reduce (and ultimately eliminate) disparity, marginalization, and discrimination while increasing social and political inclusion (p.11).

The authors claim that this definition is concrete and applicable in that it avoids using ambiguous terms, such as “fairness” and instead uses the terms: disparity, marginalization and discrimination which are more measurable (Blessett et al. 2017) especially when viewed through an urban planning lens. Essentially, the definition reminds us that when thinking about equity one must take a holistic and clear approach towards what public administration should and could be doing and this definition provides a good starting point (and goal) to reflect on, for when thinking about urban planning realms within

public administration.

1.11.3 Intersectionality

A person's identity is not defined by a single component. In fact, trying to compartmentalize a person's identity into one category does not take into account the comprehensiveness of that person's experiences (Kelly & Smith, 2014) and unfortunately organizations "have historically addressed diversity by putting a zoom lens on single-axis attributes" (Kelly & Smith, 2014, p.3). Many different components, such as race, gender, income, etc. intersect to make up the identification of a person and how that person experiences the world. For example, the widely used *Social Determinants of Health* model uses this approach and serves as a good template to refer to when thinking about social equity. Developed by the World Health Organization, the *Social Determinants of Health* examines relationships between various indicators and health outcomes (WHO, n.d.) and how they intersect. *The Social Determinants of Health* have been widely accepted throughout the world, including here in Canada, as a good indicator of health indices and include linking variables such as income and social status, employment and working conditions, education and literacy, childhood experiences, physical environments, social supports and coping skills, healthy behaviours, access to health services, biology and genetic endowment, gender, culture and race to health outcomes (Government of Canada, 2018). The jurisdiction of King County, WA, used the *Social Determinants of Health* as a model to develop their own *Social Determinants of Racial Equity Index*, and this will be discussed later in the report.

----- "While corporations have historically addressed diversity by putting a zoom lens on single-axis attributes ... it is now time to widen the aperture to include a broader view of the richness of human experience" (Kelly & Smith, 2014, p.3).-----

Taking an intersectional approach looks to illuminate and understand multiple ways that oppression and privilege intersect and to challenge them (Hankivsky & Christoffersen, 2008). According to Jones (n.d), addressing equity involves looking for inequities in exposures and opportunities, as well as for disparities in outcomes and then intervening as needed. This is where remembering that multiple factors can intersect and to examine all these factors in decision making is beneficial in order to achieve the desired equitable outcomes. Yet, in order for decision makers to be able to understand this they need to have the knowledge. They must be able to realize that intersectionality means

understanding that even though individuals may share a commonality it does not mean that they will experience the world in the same way.

1.11.4 Populations at Risk

People most at risk of inequity include those who are historically underserved or excluded from society and decision making. According to the City of Ottawa (2015), people at the greatest risk of inequity in Canada include:

- *Indigenous Peoples*
- *LGBTQ+*
- *Immigrants*
- *Older Adults*
- *Persons with Disabilities*
- *Persons Living in Poverty*
- *Racialized People*
- *Rural Residents*
- *Women*
- *Youth*

(The City of Ottawa provides diversity snapshots of each of these groups with more information about the specific burdens they may bear and a link is included in Appendix 1)

Due to underlying systemic biases the above groups of people are at a greater risk of experiencing inequity. It is also important to remember that individuals belonging to these groups will have intersecting factors that impact the equity or inequities that are experienced depending on intersecting factors. Remember, individuals are classified into groups vulnerable to inequities, but that does not mean that each individual has the same intersecting factors of someone else within the group. For example, a female wheelchair user may have an experience different than a female non-wheelchair user, despite the fact they are both female. When applying an equity lens to administration and urban planning it is important to remember this.

1.11.5 Social Equity and Reconciliation in Canada

-----“We call upon federal, provincial, territorial, and municipal governments to fully adopt and implement the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples as the framework for reconciliation” (Call to Action 44, Truth and Reconciliation Commission, 2015).-----

The Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada presented its final report along with

94 Calls to Action in 2015. Equity in a Canadian context means doing the hard work and applying what is required for true reconciliation. This includes Call to Action 44 that calls on municipalities to “fully adopt and implement the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples as the framework for reconciliation” (Call to Action 44, Truth and Reconciliation Commission, 2015). A link to the Declaration is provided at the end of this report in Appendix 2. In Canada taking an equitable approach means working towards reconciliation and this should be part of the process and forefront of discussions and approaches to equity.

1.12 Equitable Approaches in Urban Planning

1.12.1 Equitable Public Engagement

An equitable approach means that residents who are the most vulnerable and facing the greatest social and economic challenges need to be sought out and encouraged to participate in the decision making process. When thinking about planning, designing and investing in the public realm - engagement can inform policy. This in turn will help to assist with fostering the well-being of the whole community (Ontario Healthy Communities Coalition, 2018). Brown-Wilson (2018), reiterates this with her statement: “to claim that complex urban problems can be solved without the situated knowledge of the people with lived experience in the place is not just naive, it is dangerous” (p.27). It is the people who are experiencing inequities that should be the ones who guide the decisions impacting their communities. They have the knowledge and can provide ideas on how to do this, but it is up to decision makers to seek out this knowledge. In the planning field, often public engagement is the main way information is sought as well as given. It is not uncommon that when a municipality undertakes a new project they will hold public engagement sessions, therefore it is important to spend some time thinking about how these standard sessions relate to the populations most at risk of inequities.

----- “Those who do not speak the dominant language will rarely contribute, those who have historically been ignored will not attend” ‘public engagement meetings’ (Brown-Wilson, 2018).-----

According to Crandall (2019), public engagement need not be complicated, in fact he argues that the opposite is true. If public engagement meetings are too complicated or cumbersome to people they will not participate. Brown-Wilson (2018) adds that decision-makers also need to be cognizant of the power differential experienced by populations vulnerable to inequities (not only in the planning process but in their

everyday lives- all the time) and engage accordingly. The power differential between affluent decision-makers and vulnerable populations is why some public engagement processes, such as town hall meetings, may not work for populations most at risk of exclusion (Brown-Wilson, 2018). For example, at open house engagement sessions or meetings those who do not understand or speak the dominant language will not participate, those who have been ignored historically will not show up and that if past trauma is not acknowledged residents will have to keep explaining how this trauma is manifested today, making the whole process very difficult (Brown-Wilson, 2018).

Crandell (2019), also warns of issues of “lite” urban planning public engagement that certain public involvement processes facilitate where substantive or controversial issues are avoided with the goal of such engagement to make the public feel good rather than seeking out their concerns in a meaningful way. He provides the example of the standard open house engagement session model where planning information is displayed, the public can ask questions and then provide feedback. He reminds us that this can be problematic because in general the public is often unfamiliar with the subject matter, not accustomed to reading plans and deciphering information and most importantly that the feedback provided is subject to misinterpretation by planners and may be used by the design team to suit their own purposes. Brown-Wilson (2018) adds that in many traditional models of public engagement it is those who are outspoken and rarely representative of full community interests that are often attracted to the sessions and that overall the sessions often “reduce decision-making power to a series of sticky-dot votes instead of privileging the substantive power of collective conversation” (p.1).

So, how does one practice community engagement that is accessible and inclusive and will take an equitable approach? Firstly, if a standard public engagement session (open house, townhall, etc.) is to be done, ensure it is as accessible and inclusive as possible. Ensuring that locations are as convenient as possible, marketing is clear, and the agenda is culturally appropriate is a good approach (Brown-Wilson, 2018). Secondly, look to quantitative data, such as neighbourhood statistics and demographics. The American Planning Association (2018) has developed a guidebook of *100 Great Community Engagement Ideas* that offer some good insight on this. Interestingly, some of their guidelines for public engagement include using “demographic analysis to better understand the makeup of the community at stake as this will provide context with how to proceed with engagement activities. This is important because there tends to be a strong correlation between context, values, and priorities” (APA, n.d., p.5). The guide also recommends when using data to help seek vulnerable population engagement, to look beyond the standard: income, race and age factors to other factors like “health indicators

such as prevalence of chronic disease and opioid deaths and how average lifespan differs across the community. Look at households without a car, crime statistics and type, commuting patterns, and scan for concentrations of other social indicators that might impact the project or program” (APA, n.d., p.5). Another important idea related to using data, is to track participation; discover where meeting attendees or those engaging are from and who they are, to ensure that the population you are trying to target is actually being heard (APA, n.d). A link to this guidebook is provided in Appendix 2.

Looking at what other jurisdictions have done, while remembering the context will be different in Edmonton, is also helpful when approaching public engagement. According to Naomi Doerner, Transportation Equity Program Manager at the Seattle Department of Transportation, cities need to be creative and not afraid to try different approaches that work in their context. Cities “should find out where their resources are, and carve some time out just to listen, and create community-vetted solutions — and find ways to pay people for their time and input” (Doerner as quoted in Singer, 2018). In her book, *Resilience for All*, Brown-Wilson (2018) provides eight case studies across the United States of community led design projects that relied on public engagement and the voices of those facing the greatest risks of inequity to guide the planning process. Although each case presented exists in a different sociopolitical context, the case studies can still be drawn on to examine what was done in each community and the challenges and successes each had. The City of Edmonton has the opportunity to be creative, the following example provides an example of this.

1.12.1a Voices from the Streets - Stories of Vulnerable Youth in the Shadow of Urban Development

Thinking outside the box is one way of approaching engagement with populations at risk of inequities. One idea is using a method called photovoice. This method allows community members to take pictures to share their stories (Palibroda et al., 2009). Recently, Grant MacEwan researcher, Cynthia Puddu, in partnership with Boyle Street Community Services and PLACE Research Lab, completed a project that engaged with youth who were homeless and allowed them to tell their stories using this method. In the summer of 2016, several youths from Boyle Street Community Services took photos of their experiences of living in downtown Edmonton. These stories and photos were compiled for the final research project. Part of the story telling expressed the youths’ experience with recent downtown development (e.g. the flooding of the youth unit of The Boyle Street Community Centre due to a broken water line from nearby Rogers Place construction), of having or not having a safe place to sleep, of getting clothes out of

clothing donation bins, and of being displaced because of new development (Puddu, 2018). The project allowed the youth to express their concerns and experiences and by looking at their photos and stories, a different perspective can be seen, especially as it relates to urban planning, and gives planners a fresh way of seeing how development may impact someone who is traditionally underserved. A link to the project is provided in Appendix 2 and I highly recommend it for planners. More ideas and specifics on this topic are discussed in the Recommendation Section and a link is provided to the Prairie Women's Health Centre of Excellence manual on this photovoice technique in Appendix 2 for those who are interested.

1.12.2 The Context of Equity

Despite the fact that the term equity is being used more frequently it still lacks a clear standard of operationalization; that is defining equity variables into measurable factors. According to Pitts (2011), part of the difficulty is that equity has been grouped amongst other concepts, such as diversity, cultural competency and representation. Although these concepts overlap, they are often used interchangeably when they should not and thus can cause a blurring of the issues (Lopez-Littleton & Blessett, 2015). Recently strategies, including within urban planning, have tried to mitigate these two issues by using equity indicators and equity mapping to try to measure equity outcomes in a more concrete way (both of these strategies will be discussed in more detail later on). Yet, these methods are not without their challenges and one must be cognizant of these limitations (Besser, 2014). For example, demographic mapping indicators are “only imperfect representations of reality” and the challenges include potential issues regarding validity, reliability and timeliness and lack of relevant qualitative data when using them (Besser, 2014).

Because there is some unclarity about the measurements of equity and the challenges related to measuring equity, taking an equity approach may seem difficult if not impossible. For example, in terms of urban planning, does equity mean that everyone can access all areas of the city without any hindrance at all or that no one will ever bear any environmental burdens? Can this even be accomplished and measured without any validation issues? Probably not, but it does not mean that an equity lens or approach can not be used. Rather, taking an equity approach, means that these burdens and inequities are acknowledged and that mitigation factors are implemented as much as possible and no one group or individual bears a constant burden (Spina, 2013). It means using the data, such as indicators and mapping as best as one can, coupled with educating decision-makers on interpreting and using that data all the while without forgetting to

listen to and involve the important voice of key stakeholders through public engagement (Besser, 2014).

Yet, Spina (2013), states that in an age when public administration is being forced to try to do more with less, that this task of trying to ensure that a city takes an equitable approach of the above methods can seem very difficult. This is true especially when there are no clear universal parameters of equity, making it hard to operationalize, as stated, but this does not mean it is impossible or that jurisdictions can not set their own operationalization parameters of equity. In fact, just the opposite. Policy and decision-makers have the freedom to develop and apply their own context specific equity lens that can help them look deeper into systemic barriers or burdens (historical, structural and institutional) and to understand, for example, how a policy may address and counter these disparities or instead support the “status quo” (Blessett et al., 2017). In order to accomplish this, it can be argued that firstly policy and decision-makers need to have an understanding of equity and the intersectionality of multiple factors that impact equity and the context that supports or eliminates these factors. This can be done through examining the jurisdiction’s own context and acknowledging the inequitable historical factors that have played a role (Spina, 2013) while looking for ways to remedy these inequities. It means that the organization’s goals “are incorporated at the level of defining equity objectives and outcomes specific to the organization” (Besser, 2014, p.5).

1.12.3 Equity Metrics (Operational measurements)

Some questions pop up about quantitative indicators and outcomes when taking an equity approach. How can we know who is bearing more of a burden? Are equity processes and mitigation efforts working? Have the equity goals been achieved? Besser (2014) provides examples of three equity indicators that have been developed by researchers and decision-makers to help visualize and measure equity issues over space and time. These context specific metrics provide a good way of assessing who to consult for engagement, if projects are equitable (i.e. burdens are not borne by one group and/or mitigation occurs), and examining if projects are actually working operationally as base measurements can be scored against measurements taken after project implementation. For the scope of this report I have provided a brief overview, for a more detailed analysis, see Besser, 2014.

1. ***Social Equity Indicators Measurements*** measure an integrated set of measures taken over time that can vary from social to economic. These measures are derived from various data sources and help provide information for decision-making, monitoring and evaluating policies. Some specific indicator

examples include: life expectancy rate, poverty rate, suicide rate, educational attainment measures, and life satisfaction (objective and subjective). An example of utilization of social equity indicators on a global scale would be with the United Nations 17 Sustainable Development Goals (U.N, 2018). Within each sustainable development goal are targets and indicators that are used to track progress. Another example of social equity indicators in use globally would be with the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) that uses social indicators to develop its *Society at a Glance Report* (OECD, 2014). The report compiles quantitative evidence on social well-being trends across OECD countries and includes the equity indicators of poverty rates, income inequality, living on benefits, social spending, and recipients of out of work benefits. It then compiles the findings into a report to measure how each member country is doing in terms of equity (OECD, 2014).

A Canadian example is provided through The City of Winnipeg's United Way- *Peg*. Currently, the United Way, Winnipeg, uses an on-line tracking of community indicators to measure the city's well-being. It allows citizens to see how their city is changing and/or measuring up. This system groups its indicators into the areas of built environment, basic needs, economy, education and learning, health, natural environment and social vitality and governance. An important note to include is that *Peg* has integrated the United Nations 17 Sustainable Development Goals into its indicator framework. A link is provided in Appendix 2.

2. **Opportunity Mapping** helps to visualize the opportunities available to residents at the local level. According to Besser (2014), opportunity mapping consists of mapping opportunity in a region by choosing variables that are indicative of high (and low) opportunity. For example, high opportunity indicators could be the availability of employment, good quality schools, access to health care, a safe environment, accessible and good transportation, child care access, and low crime rates. All these indicators of opportunity are measured and mapped and therefore can produce an 'opportunity map' of a region. It can then inform decision makers where 'opportunity rich and poor' areas exist and allow them to attempt to mitigate any imbalances. It has been used by the City of Portland, where it ranks areas from 1 (low)- 5 (high opportunity). The following figure shows the Opportunity Map of Portland.

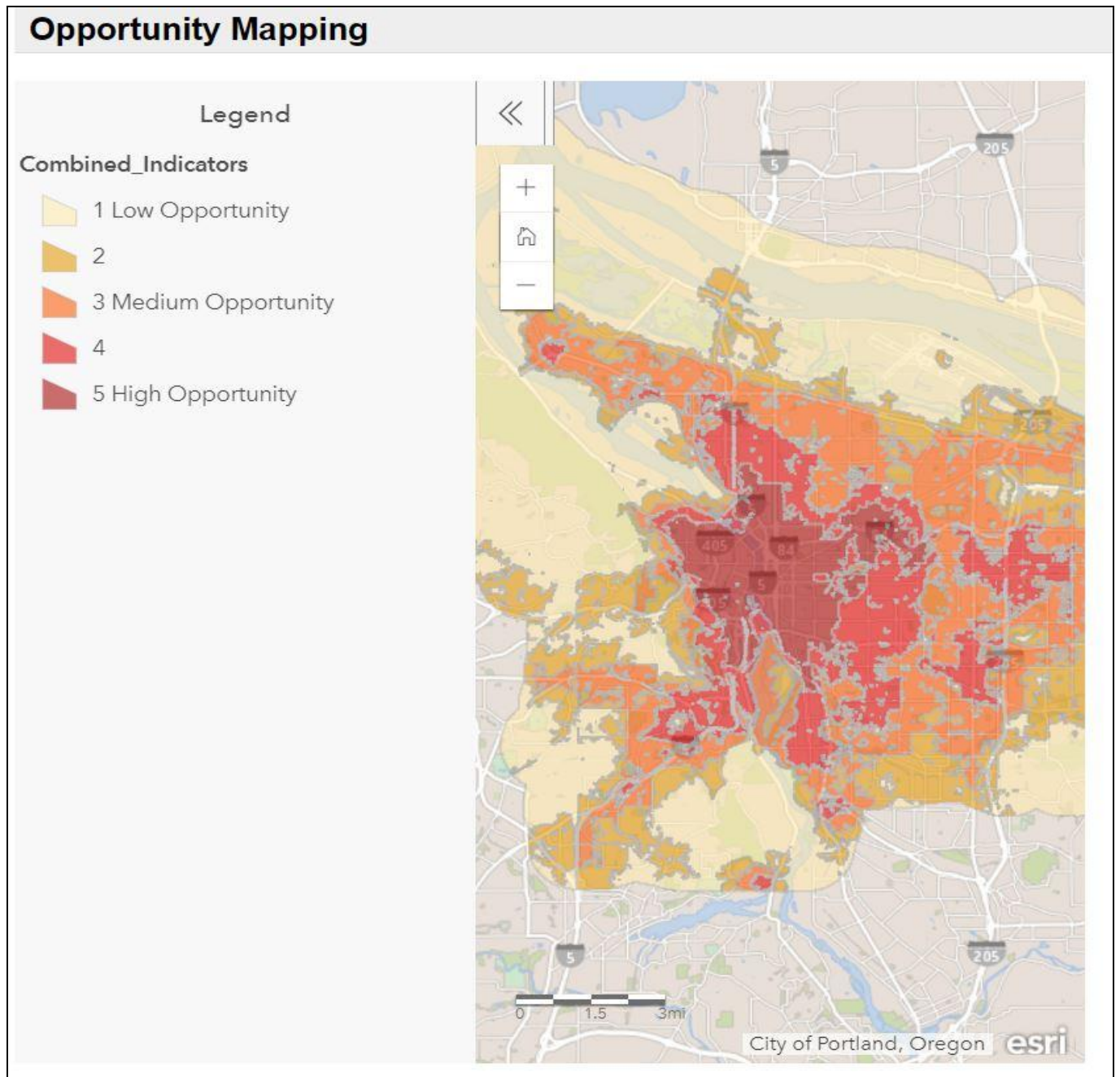


Figure 4: Portland, OR. Opportunity Map

3. **Indicators and Equity Mapping.** This tool is similar and can be used with opportunity mapping, except instead of indicators being mapped as a composite score, data is compiled and disseminated spatially on individual indicators. The Portland Metro Region uses Equity Atlases and provides a toolkit on how to

develop one. According to Besser (2014), by using “online mapping applications, equity atlases are now able to compile numerous indicators and create interactive mapping interfaces that not only offer customizable visualization tools (maps), but also analytical capabilities” (p.17).

Wellbeing Toronto. The following map from *Wellbeing, Toronto* maps 11 Indicators and their subsections in each Toronto neighbourhood. Users are able to visual the datasets in maps, graphs and tables.

Wellbeing Toronto

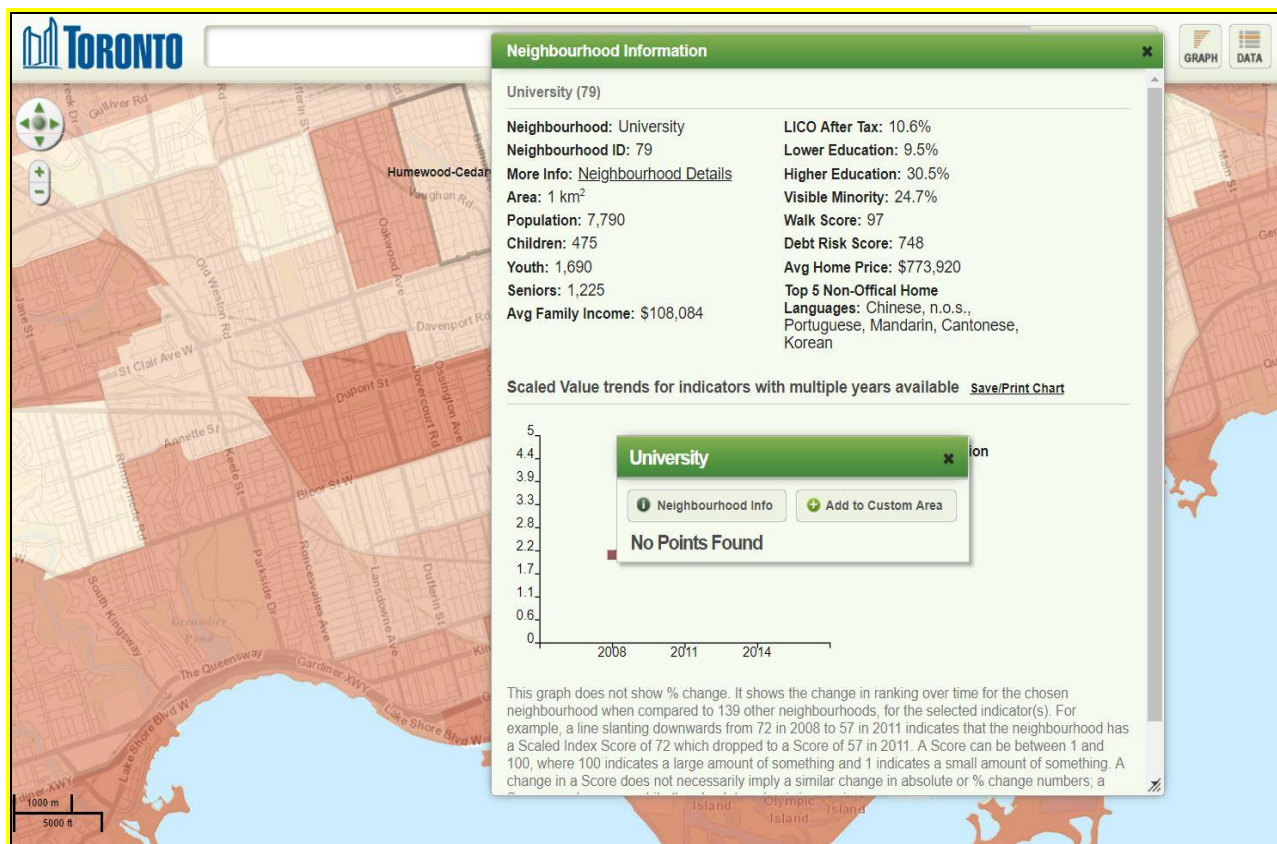


Figure 5: Wellbeing, City of Toronto, University Neighbourhood

Pathways to Education. Another example is Pathways to Education. The organization in partnership with the Canadian Council on Social Development (CCSD) has developed a Community Mapping tool that utilizes Statistics Canada’s census data to provide a map of Census Divisions, Census Metropolitan Areas, and Census Tracts’ indicators that make up each area. Although the tool was developed to assist with understanding the barriers youth face due to poverty, the indicators are quite inclusive of other aspects of equity. Indicators include

aggregated data of child and youth by age, lone-parent family rates, ethno-cultural make-up, income and employment, educational attainment. A link is provided in Appendix 2 . The following screenshot, shows the visualization the tool can provide.

Pathways to Education: Community Mapping Tool

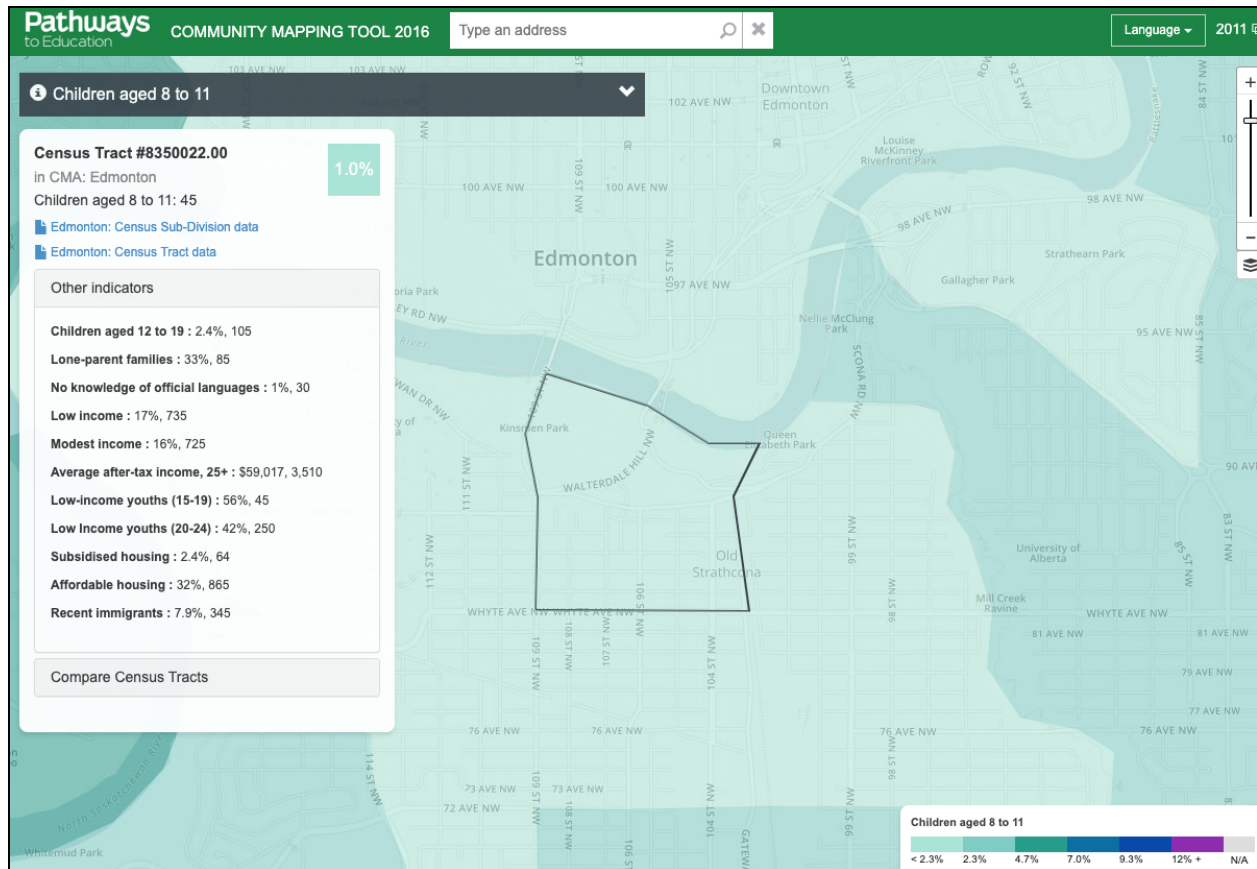


Figure 6: Pathways to Education, Community Mapping Tool

Using the above equity metrics provides a way to measure and visualize equity, but these are not without their problems. As Besser (2014) points out that there are issues concerning indicator selection bias and the adequacy of the available data. There are also issues concerning the cost of data processing and maintenance. Yet, as with most things, this does not mean they should not be used, but rather that there will be trade-offs concerning the metrics and one should be cognizant of their limitations.

1.12.4 Breaking down Administrative Silos

Another issue that needs to be addressed when discussing equity within municipal government and specifically urban planning, is that of breaking down administrative

silos. An administrative silo occurs when there is a lack of collaboration or idea exchanges between organizations, agencies or departments. Many current systems of government in Canada and the US help to foster strong policy and institutional silos, which leads to organizations having a difficult time linking goals and action plans of individual agencies with larger equity visions (Besser, 2014). Essential it is very easy for large organizations to struggle with this. Therefore, administrative equity silos need to be broken down through leadership “adopting equity- based tools that bridge sectors and departments, and development of equity outcome measures and indices that acknowledge cross-sectoral and inter-jurisdictional interdependencies” (Besser, 2014, p.6). Isett et al. (2011) adds that collaboration will break down equity silos through collections of government, nonprofits and for-profits working together to provide a public good or service. More exchanging of information and ideas is a way to ensure that equity is brought into focus while duplication of services, inefficiencies and unequipped solo operations are eliminated.

1.13 Putting it all Together

Putting it all together and moving forward means remembering multiple key factors. Firstly, it has been demonstrated in the research that taking an equity approach is not a simple or easy task and this must be acknowledged. In fact, in public administration, addressing equity will require the expectations and competencies of leaders to shift while these same leaders and decision-makers recognize their own bias (Kelly & Smith, 2014). In other words there must be buy in and a willingness to promote equity overall, not just in one or two departments, within the system as issues of inequity that are not addressed in one area will most likely become worse across the board. The issues will not disappear without conscious effort and leaders need to be aware of this and push for change throughout, which is not easy with so many limitations being placed on municipal governments (Spina, 2013). For example, despite one department’s best intentions to promote equity, these intentions will be useless if another department does not take an equity approach.

Secondly, according to Desiree Williams-Rajee, Equity Specialist in the City of Portland’s Bureau of Planning and Sustainability (as quoted in Besser, 2014), equity is about processes as well as outcomes. The process means continually trying to improve on “how” the city is moving towards equity outcomes. It means that understanding and using an equity lens is not the end of things, rather it is part of a constant evolving process.

Thirdly, it means that equity metrics can and should be used, but to also remember that

there will be limitations and that it is most important to always seek the voices of the people who you are planning for, especially the vulnerable ones. Remember that it is the people that come first. Don't wait for them to come to you, actively seek their input.

All together, for urban planners the key aspects that need to be met in order to accomplish good urban design include - people, infrastructure and sustainability. Brown-Wilson (2018) provides a good general overview of this with her description of the three factors that lead to good community design. These include projects that:

1. **Are community led**- assets and resources from the community are actively sought out and participation is encouraged
2. **Impact public infrastructure**- infrastructure is changed for the better without causing inequities. Any inequities are mitigated.
3. **Ecology and equity** are considered as key factors in the approach taken.

The above three factors can be considered in any order, as they each hold equal weight. Remember these factors must be met in order for good and equitable community design.

-----Social equity is the fair management of institutions serving the public, equitable distribution of public services, implementation of public policy, and the commitment to promote fairness and justice informing public policy (Pynes, 2009).-----

1.2 Equity and its Specific Application to Urban Planning

The purpose of this section is to provide recent examples of how issues of inequity have been found in urban planning within the overlapping realms of urban form, transportation and carbon reduction. These examples demonstrate how using an equity lens has the potential to acknowledge inequities while remembering that when inequities are eliminated or mitigated the whole community will benefit (Svara et al., 2014). For planners this is extremely important as many decisions have long term and widespread implications. Accordingly Parker (2015), states that in order to achieve equity, planners must ensure that the planning process reflects an investment and commitment to equity and the plans need to include these equity elements. In other words, people must be the basis of planning in terms of urban form, transportation and carbon reduction. Equity for people is at the centre of it all. The following examples provide situations that can be learned from regarding how inequities occurred and how these inequities were mitigated. Although these areas of urban form, transportation, and

carbon reduction overlap, they will be examined separately.

1.21 Equity in Urban Form

-----“Urban mosaics result in an uneven geography of environmental amenities (e.g. parks) or disamenities (e.g. hazardous waste disposal sites), leading to an unequal distribution of social benefits or burdens across people and places” (Landry & Chakraborty, 2009)-----

Urban form can cover multiple aspects, such as open space, public realm, parks, mixed-use environment, etc. and can occur at a macro or micro level. Therefore, when undertaking the examination of urban form, Eberle and Serge (2007), remind us that the scale at which the discussion takes place is extremely important. Whether it is the site or neighbourhood level being examined or the city level that is being examined can have a bearing when it comes to applying an equity lens of who is benefiting or bearing the burdens. Eberle and Serge (2007), continue with stating that definitions of urban form vary within research as some see it as specific building blocks of street design, land type, accessibility, and circulation systems, whereas others view it as a pattern in how the city is used, while others define it as all areas other than private property. For the scope of this project the importance is not necessarily to define what urban form is and look at all its specific aspects and examples of inequities, but rather to focus on applying an equity lens to gain an understanding of what is missing in specific examples and learning from and applying the findings. This means remembering that there will always be potential for an unequal distribution of benefits and burdens within a city (Landry & Chakraborty, 2009) and to look for and mitigate these.

-----“The more evenly costs and benefits are distributed, the more equitable the community is, and this is reflected in [positive] economic, ecologic, and social outcomes” (Svara et al.,2014, p. 10)-----

1.21.1 Burdens in Urban Form- Environmental Examples

One common example of inequities in urban form found in the literature is that of environmental inequities, such as placement of large freeways next to lower income communities or lack of access to park space in marginalized neighbourhoods. Beder (2000), provides an example of this with describing the environmental burdens

experienced by certain marginalized individuals or groups as it is often “poorer people [who] tend to suffer the burden” (p.227) of these types of planning decisions and she lists a number of factors for this, including not having as many options of where to live and not having the resources to fight pollution causing industries or situations within their neighbourhood. A recent example, is that researchers determined in the United States, asthma rates are higher among African American children and part of this is due to poor housing quality and lack of area pollution control (Newman, 2019). To narrow in on these statistics, recently in Chicago, residents in a low income marginalized neighbourhood were impacted by an industrial plant that was built two blocks from a local highschool where air quality monitors had found the air “to have the state’s highest levels of toxic chromium and cadmium. Nearby [...] another company [was] seeking permits to build a kiln to burn refinery waste and scrap tires” (Spina, 2013, p.105). This example shows how without an equity approach being taken individuals or groups, in this case African American children and lower income neighbourhood residents, can bear an unfair burden.

Planners must also begin to think beyond what might be ‘good for most’ is not ‘good for everyone’. For example, Riddle and Phillips (2019), remind us that distance can be a barrier to mobility and that many current design principles for walkable and ‘accessible’ streets might not work for those with hidden disabilities (e.g. arthritis, COPD, heart disease, etc.), especially as the population ages. These people can only walk short distances, yet don’t want to use or need to use any other mobility aids such as wheelchairs or scooters (Riddle & Phillips, 2019). The following cartoon provides a good diagram of this issue as the street looks like it is well designed for people (no cars, flat, mixed-use, etc.) but to someone who can not walk far it is not accessible to them. The person in the foreground can not make it to his destination.

Walkable Neighbourhood?



Figure 7: Facing the burden of Distance, Valerie Ward in Riddle and Phillips, 2019.

Yet, it does not mean that this type of neighbourhood should not be built, rather through consulting people with hidden disabilities it might just mean an easy solution such as placing more benches or allowing a single car lane to allow for DATS or other vehicle drop off. More information about designing for those with hidden mobility disabilities is provided in Appendix 2.

-----“If you really want a plan for housing, economic development, land use (or anything else, really!) that results in more equitable outcomes, the process needs to reflect a commitment to equity, and the plans need to include elements that explicitly aim for greater equity” (Parker, 2015).-----

1.22 Equity in Transportation

Transportation planning covers the range of infrastructure projects from sidewalks, roadways, bicycle paths, and transit systems, essentially covering all the ways that people move through the city. According to Manaugh, Badami, and El-Geneidy (2015), in the 20th century most of the focus on transportation planning was mobility-focused with a lens towards congestion reduction and time saving for motorists, and safety. More recently, attention has shifted towards including an impact-focused lens with the

environment and sustainability now becoming key factors in transportation planning (Manaugh et al., 2015). Issues such as greenhouse gas emissions and carbon reduction have helped to shape the current transportation conversation. Yet, the question then remains that being one of the “3Es” of sustainability (environment, economics and equity), how can and does equity actually fit into sustainable transportation planning? According to Boisjoly and Yengoh (2017), that “although transportation is increasingly framed as a social issue by researchers and policy-makers, the social dimension is still largely marginalized in planning processes” (p. 2). A 2015 research study of 18 metropolitan areas in Canada and the United States found that many transportation plans focused mostly on congestion-reduction and environmental goals, and unfortunately did not include many equity focused objectives (Manaugh et al., 2015). The authors of this study argue that this could be because equity is not as easily measurable as issues such as traffic speed and tangible environmental impacts and therefore gets left out (Manaugh et al., 2015). This seems, as previously stated, to be a constant theme in the literature that because equity lacks tangibility (hard to operationalize), it is often ignored, but this does not mean it should be.

1.22.1 Transportation and Mobility - Accessibility and Trip Length

Often when it comes to transportation options, income seems to play a large role. For example, according to Wellman (2014), as one’s income increases, so do the transportation options along with the control a person has over those options. Dodson, Buchanan, Gleeson and Sipe (2006) add that lower income individuals may face stronger barriers to accessibility due to their location and financial restraints. Income does stand out as a factor that plays a large role in how one moves around a city and must be used in an equity lens. Yet, Miller (2018) argues that other factors that impact transportation options and access also could include other determinants such as race, language proficiency and physical or cognitive ability. Therefore, as usual, it is important to apply an intersectional equity lens when thinking about transportation. For example, according to Bezyak et al.(2017), people with disabilities face multiple barriers to using public transportation, thus impacting their quality of life. For example, it might not be only physical access (ramps, stairs, etc.) that hinder their access, but also signage and time of day transit is available or even blocked sidewalks due to construction or snow that prevent people easily getting to bus stops.

Another part of the transportation equation often ignored is time - how long it takes to get to places. A recent study across the cities of Montreal, Toronto and Vancouver, by Cui et al. (2019), found that lower income commuters spent more time commuting by public

transport, which has an impact on quality of life. Cities can help mitigate this by providing more mixed land use, essentially bringing more jobs closer to people's homes (Cui et al., 2019). It also means focusing on public transportation as a lifestyle instead of just a means to move commuters.

1.22.2 Equitable Transportation

Being able to move around is crucial to people's lives and to the ability to participate in community life. Taking an equity approach can ensure that mobility and access to transportation options are available to all people. PolicyLink (2016) provides an inclusive definition of equitable transportation that is helpful to consult when trying to bring a lens of equity to the situation:

An equitable transportation system is one that provides affordable transportation, creates quality jobs, promotes safe and inclusive communities, and focuses on results that benefit all. It also strengthens the economy by ensuring that all people—regardless of race, income, or ability—can connect to the education and work opportunities they need to participate in and contribute to society and the economy. (PolicyLink, 2016, p. 2)

Boisjoly and Yengoh (2017), claim that for equitable transportation to occur there needs to be a paradigm shift from an 'experts-top down approach' to more local and participatory approach that allows a diversity of stakeholders to participate in the process. Their study of local participatory transportation planning in Montreal focused on marginalized groups most at risk of transportation inequities and included children, youth, low-income people, unemployed people, people with disabilities, racialized people and outer urban dwellers. They found that the three factors of a socially sustainable transportation system include: "i) equitable access to opportunities; ii) reduction of negative externalities of transport for all; and iii) representative involvement in decision-making with an emphasis on marginalized groups" (p.2). Put together, this means shifting current transport planning practices of focusing on mobility and traffic to that of accessibility and people (Boisjoly & Yengoh, 2017). As for transit specific suggestions on how to accomplish this, the ITE Transportation Planning Council has developed a booklet of *Characteristics of Socially Equitable Transit Networks* and is referenced in Appendix 2 of this report. It provides a list of characteristics that transit planners can use to help to apply an equity lens when planning municipal transit.

1.22.3 The City of Portland Bureau of Transportation- Equity Matrix

The City of Portland has taken an equity approach with race as the centralized factor. Within this city wide strategy the Portland Bureau of Transportation uses an Equity

Matrix that maps out the demographics of race, income and limited english proficiency throughout the city. The interactive map provides a score for each neighbourhood based on the three demographics combined or per factor. Even though the focus is on three variables, these variables will have a lot of intersectionality with others, such as disability. This matrix tool has provided consistency in terms of addressing areas of marginalization in relation to city projects and programs and is a good demographic indicator for transportation and other planners. It is beyond the scope of this report to go into too much detail regarding this tool, but a link is referenced in Appendix 2 at the end of this report.

1.23 Carbon Reduction

Cities are responsible for a large portion of carbon emissions and therefore need to take the initiative in adopting carbon reduction strategies, such as managing vehicle emissions better to making buildings more energy efficient (Bloomberg & Aggarwala, 2008). According to Agyeman, Bullard, and Evans (2002), although many governments have adopted some kind of commitment to sustainability, many do not understand how important it is to place these commitments within a context of equity. They argue that public policy on carbon reduction should not force certain groups to bear more burdens than others. In order to accomplish this, it can be stated that an equity approach must be used when discussing carbon reduction and climate change.

1.23.1 Climate Change Burdens

Climate change burdens are often borne disproportionately by vulnerable populations, such as the elderly, poor and children (Casillas & Kammen, 2012). Salagnac (2007), provides an example of heat waves due to climate change that swept through Europe in 2003 and resulted in increases in mortality of elderly people in urban areas. Another example is that increased CO₂ in urban areas increases the pollen count, which contributes to higher asthma rates among children (Bloomberg & Aggarwala, 2008). These are just a sample of the ways climate change is impacting vulnerable people's lives. Anecdotally, in Edmonton, smoke from the summer of 2018 forest fires impacted vulnerable populations of houseless individuals. They have limited options of places to go to get out of the smoke, especially those living in tents, and therefore must suffer through the poor air quality.

As with urban form and transportation, an equity lens can be applied when examining the issue of carbon reduction and climate change burdens. Recently, the City of Seattle is attempting to take an equitable approach in terms of the environment through its *Equity*

and Environment Initiative. It is through this policy that that the city is attempting to ensure “communities are no longer unfairly burdened by environmental policies going forward but that the same communities who are deeply affected by environmental issues should also be highly involved throughout decision-making processes in meaningful ways” (Coven, 2018). This approach involves listening to key stakeholders, many of who are at risk of marginalization in order to mitigate any excessive burdens they are facing.

1.24 Equity Overall

Research has determined that it does not have to be one group bearing an overwhelming burden, while another group benefits. Part of using an equity approach is the mitigation of any unequal distribution, while ensuring that those most impacted have their voices heard. According to Parker (2015), in order to achieve social equity, it must be there from the beginning and woven into the whole planning process - whether it be urban form, transportation or carbon reduction. This view seems to be reflected in the research. Spina (2013) adds that one key issue is for policy makers not to ignore problems of inequity, but rather to recognize and acknowledge them. This can be the first step, of having an understanding that there will be benefits and burdens experienced throughout and then trying to bring the broader context of equity into the discussion in order to mitigate or remove the unfair burdens. It also means listening to the voices of vulnerable stakeholders and using what they say to develop policy, programs and services within the overalping realms of urban form, transportation and carbon reduction as none functions in insolation. It means ensuring that people have access to resources within their communities, such as housing, employment, transportation and park space.

1.3 Jurisdictional Findings

Multiple jurisdictions have taken an equity approach to policy, strategies and initiatives within Canada and the United States. For example, the City of Toronto, looks to acknowledge the issues surrounding equity within the city and strives to apply an equity lens to “its activities to identify and remove barriers and to support best practices in planning, budgeting, implementation and evaluation of its programs and services” (City of Toronto). The Cities of Ottawa; New Westminster, BC; Richmond, BC; Seattle, WA; Portland, OR; and Madison, WI, all have all put forward the issue of equity in their visions, strategies, and initiatives. Although all these jurisdictions were examined for best practices, this section of the report will focus specifically on examining in more detail the jurisdictional examples of the Cities of Ottawa and Portland, OR and the region of King County, WA. Included in this section is a brief overview of the Portland Region

Equity Atlas and although it is not a sole City of Portland initiative, it has been used by the city and demonstrates a partnership and breaking of administrative silos between institutions within a region to develop a useful tool of equity metrics that can then be used within the scope of an equity assessment tool. All these jurisdictions were chosen as they are more advanced in their application of equity and were involved in the development of an equity assessment tool or toolkit. Ottawa and Portland bring a municipal context. The Portland Region Equity Atlas demonstrates multi-institutional partnerships. While King County is a regional context, and includes the City of Seattle as a member of the region. Each will be examined in specific detail as the development of the Edmonton context equity approach was drawn from them. Links to each city's tools/tool kits and other pertinent documents and resources are provided in Appendix 2.

1.31 The City of Ottawa

-----“Check you assumptions” (City of Ottawa).-----

Key Findings

The City of Ottawa has recently developed the *Equity and Inclusion Lens Handbook* in partnership with the *City for All Women Initiative*, although it appears the process began over a decade ago. According to the authors of the tool, as a starting point they pulled best practices and assessment examples from Toronto, Vancouver and Lethbridge to help to deliver a tool that was usable in an Ottawa context (Jackson, 2015). This tool assists with city planning, program development and delivery to help foster equity and inclusion. According to the handbook (revised in 2018) it helps to:

- *generate better solutions by incorporating diverse perspectives*
- *take positive steps to remove systemic barriers and promote inclusion*
- *create a more positive and respectful work environment*
- *achieve improved client satisfaction*

The overall premise when using the tool guides users to:

- *Consider your diversity*
- *Check your Assumptions*
- *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?*

Overall the tool is considered to be used as an on-going learning medium to help decision-makers across realms take an equity lens approach. It provides actual breakdown questions of how to apply an equity lens within different realms for example, communications, policy development, strategic planning, etc. These questions help inform the user of different equity issues that may not have been examined and then formulate a plan to mitigate them. The toolkit also provides a set of “snapshots” that provide extra information regarding people who are at risk of exclusion. This helps to break down any systemic bias or misinformation that decision-makers may have. The City of Ottawa also provides training for staff through Diversity Cafes, where staff can listen to first person accounts and learn about diversity.

Recently, the City of Ottawa has developed the *Advancing Equity and Inclusion Guide for Municipalities* (2015) along with pushing for the City of Ottawa to advance its *Gender Equity through the GBA+* tool in 2019. The guide for municipalities was built upon the *Equity and Inclusion Lens Handbook* and provides an overview of how to advance equity within a community. A link to both these documents is provided in Appendix 2.

1.32 The City of Portland, Oregon

Key Findings

The City of Portland has taken an equity approach with race as the centralized factor. This approach is evident in many of the municipality’s equity initiatives (Besser, 2014). According to the City of Portland, through eliminating racial inequity other inequities will also be eliminated as they often intersect, such as race and income. In 2015 Portland’s city council unanimously adopted the *Racial Equity Goals and Strategies* as binding City Policy. The goals and strategies can be used as a model for other jurisdictions and include:

Goals:

1. End racial disparities within city government
2. Strengthen outreach, public engagement, and access to City Services
3. Collaborate with communities and institutions to eliminate racial inequities

Strategies:

1. Use a racial equity framework
2. Build organizational capacity

3. Implement a racial equity lens
4. Be data driven
5. Partner with other institutions and communities
6. Operate with urgency and accountability

Portland is taking an engagement and collaborate approach, with its government system leading the way to make institutionalized changes that reflect equity. Part of this ties into the city admitting its inequities (systemic racism and/or other biases, such as ‘redlining’) and trying to remedy these injustices while constantly being held accountable by the community itself (City of Portland Office of Equity and Human Rights, 2015). This is a reminder that taking an equity approach is not easy and requires a municipality to acknowledge its failures. But, it is through this acknowledgment that it can then move forward.

1.32.1 The Portland Region Equity Atlas

Key Findings

In 2007, a *Regional Equity Atlas* composed of maps, policy analysis and community-based research to promote equity and sustainability was established through a partnership between Portland Metro, Portland State University and Oregon Health Care Quality Corporation. It was the first regional equity atlas developed in the United States and is still in use today (Policy Link, n.d.). The Equity Atlas provides data on demographics (race, income, age and household composition), access measures (how well residents of areas can access key opportunities), and health outcome measures (mapping for correlations with health outcomes). The information is provided through maps, web-based mapping tool and outreach and education. The Equity Atlas receives its demographic data from the U.S. Census and the American Community Survey. Although, it is important to note that both of these sources have limitations, such as the undercount of certain populations (low-income populations and communities of color), yet despite these limitations the maps still provide valuable insight into geographical distribution of populations (Portland Regional Equity Atlas, n.d.).

The Atlas has been used to “shape investment priorities, guide system design and support advocacy campaigns” (Policy Link, n.d.). Accordingly, organizations and government decision-makers working on transportation, land use, food security, affordable housing, and health have used the Atlas to inform their decisions (Policy Link, n.d). For example, the Portland Bureau of Transportation used the Equity Atlas to determine where to prioritize investments in street lighting upgrades, while the Oregon Prosperity Initiative

used the Equity Atlas to decide which communities to target for programs that address poverty through systemic reforms.

Other communities that have developed Equity Atlases include Denver, Colorado; Los Angeles, California; and Atlanta, Georgia. Although beyond the scope of this report, the development of a similar tool within the Edmonton Region may help to streamline decisions and promote the use of an equity lens within planning and other departments. A link to all these jurisdictions' Equity Atlases is provided in Appendix 2.

1.33 King Country, WA

Key Findings

A comprehensive equity initiative was developed and is used by the jurisdiction of King County, Washington. King County is located in the Pacific Northwest and includes the City of Seattle. Historically the region was thought of as fairly homogeneous with limited inequities, yet upon further inquiry it was found this was not the case (Human Impact Partners Project, HIPP, 2018). In 2008, the county examined data on environmental, social and economic conditions and then disaggregated the data by race, income, and place. Surprisingly, the results found that the area's inequities were similar (not better as what was assumed) to those at the national US level and in some instances were even worse. For example, it was found that some wealthy communities had a life expectancy of over 90 years (higher than the national average), whereas poor communities and communities of people of color had much lower life expectancies, demonstrating a large discrepancy. After reviewing the data the county decided it needed to approach these issues by developing a deeper understanding of the determinants of equity and making the needed changes (HIPP, 2018).

The County uses a lens of equity within its *County Vision* through its *Equity and Social Justice Strategic Plan*, which includes the establishment of the Office of Equity and Social Justice. According to the county, its plan “is a blueprint for action and change that will guide our pro-equity policy direction, our decision-making, planning, operations and services, and our workplace practices in order to advance equity and social justice within County government and in partnership with communities” (King County, 2016). The Office of Equity and Social justice works within the region with an Inter-Branch Team to embed equity into other regional areas such as budgeting and business, while providing training to council and staff.

1.33.1 *The Social Determinants of Equity Report*

The County has worked to develop a list of 13 baseline indicators and created a community scale equity baseline called the *Determinants of Equity Baseline Project*. The project used existing data sources to measure the determinants of equity and form a baseline to measure against future outcomes as this will help to support equity reviews, plans, budgets and performance. The Determinants of Equity include:

- Early Childhood Development
- Education
- Jobs and job training
- Health and Human Services
- Food Systems
- Parks and natural resources
- Built and natural environment
- Transportation
- Community Economic Development
- Neighbourhoods
- Housing
- Community and Public Safety
- Law and Justice

Within each indicator there are specific community-level indicators for a total of 67 indicators determined. Overall the report's findings reinforce the research that race, place and income impact quality of life for residents of King County and that people of color, those with limited english proficiency, and low income face inequities in economic, health and education (King County, 2015).

The County uses a visual “stream” metaphor to frame its work. “The Stream is a visual reminder that inequities in outcomes have their start in “upstream” policies and practices that influence people’s access to power and resources” (King County, 2015). The stream helps to show a theory of change with measurable indicators. It shows the flow of outcomes from an upstream societal level, to mid-stream community level and then down to the individual level. Although it is a general theoretical overview, it can be applied to urban planning.

A Healthy Stream

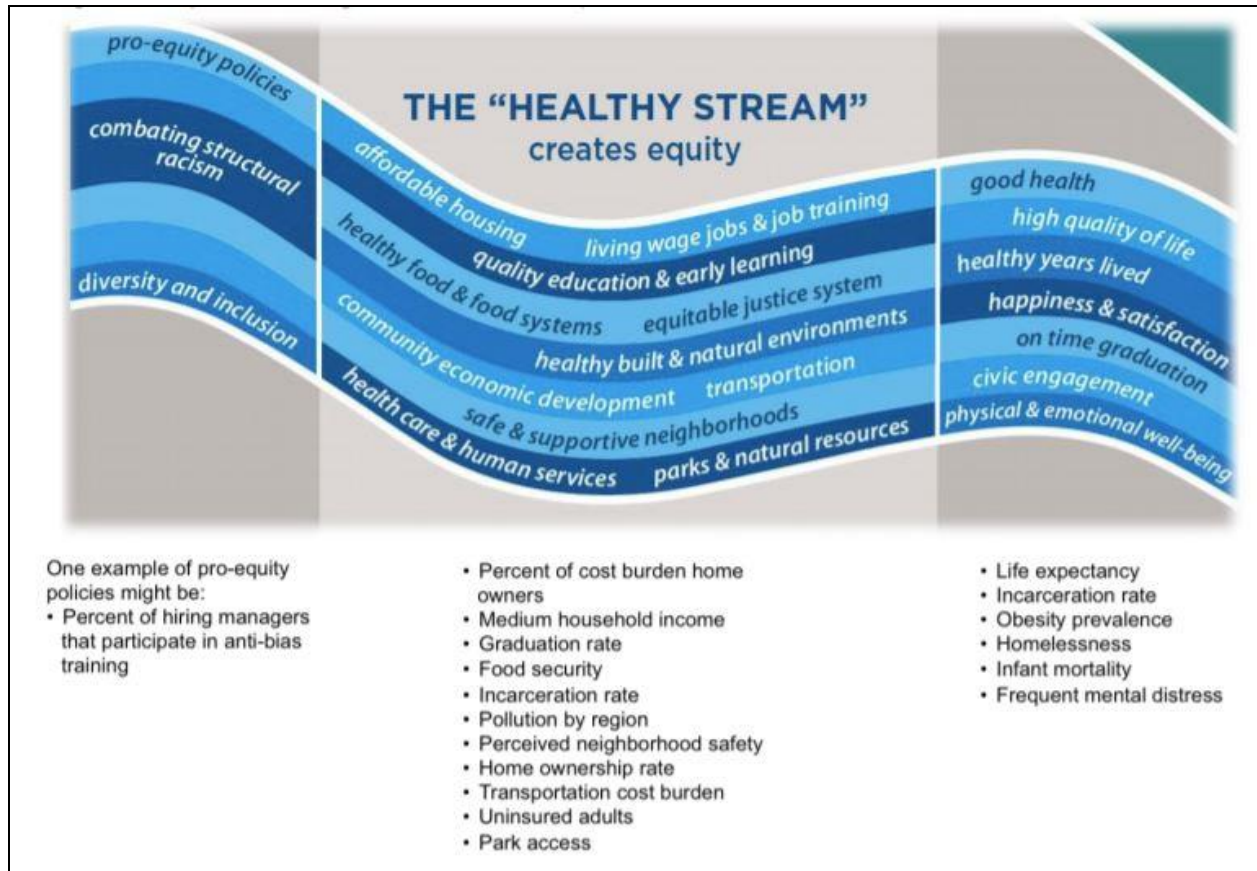


Figure 8: Example of a Theory of Change Stream with Indicators King County, 2015

Part of the County’s equity approach has included the development of the *Equity Impact Review Tool*. This instrument is used to determine, evaluate and communicate potential impacts, positive and negative, of a policy or program on equity and it consists of 3 stages and subsequent questions:

- Stage I: What is the impact of the proposal on determinants of equity? The aim of the first stage is to determine whether the proposal will have an impact on equity or not.
- Stage II Assessment: Who is affected? This stage identifies who is likely to be affected by the proposal.
- Stage III Impact review: Opportunities for action. The third stage involves identifying the impacts of the proposal from an equity perspective. The goal is to develop a list of likely impacts and actions to ensure that negative impacts are mitigated and positive impacts are enhanced.

(King County Equity Impact Review Tool, Revised October 2010)

This tool has been adapted for and used by other jurisdictions, such as the City of Madison, WI. According to Larson, Jacob and Butz (2017) the United States Standing Panel on Social Equity at the National Academy of Public Administration (NAPA) there are four overarching measures that should make up a comprehensive operational equity framework and the *King County Equity Impact Review Tool* meets them all. These four measures include:

- **Access measures.** Evaluates the extent that public services and benefits* are accessible to everyone.
- **Quality measures.** Evaluates the level of consistency in the delivery of public services to different groups and individuals.
- **Procedural Fairness Measures.** Examines due process, equal protection and eligibility criteria for people to access public policies and programs.
- **Outcome measures.** Assess the level to which policies and programs impact groups and individuals.

(* Urban form, transportation and carbon reduction can all be included under “public services or benefits”)

According to Larson et al. (2017), the above operational measures when used in an assessment tool can tell a story of equities and inequities. A comprehensive operational equity approach needs to hit each of the four measures. Because it is a highly comprehensive tool, the *King County Equity Impact Review Tool* was used to help form the prototype of the *Edmonton Equity Assessment Tool* for this project. A link to the King County equity toolkit is provided in Appendix 2.

1.4 The City of Edmonton

-----“**Public leadership intent on advancing social equity must encourage less personal well-being and more community well-being**” (Goggins, 2017, p.8).-----

Part of the City of Edmonton’s *2050 Vision* is to make Edmonton a place where everyone has what they need to succeed now and for generations to come. This means ensuring that the city is an equitable and sustainable place for everyone.

1.41 Connected

The 10 year *ConnectEdmonton: Edmonton’s Strategic Plan (2019-2018)* uses Connected as

the key principle that guides all city goals. Decisions and actions are guided by the City's core Connected principle to:

- *Create as a community to connect people to what matters to them.*
- *Care about the impact of our actions on our social, economic, cultural, spiritual and environmental systems.*
- *Serve those here today and those who come after us*

In essence it is based on the principles to create, to care and serve all people with the goals to take action, develop partnerships and collaborate on the following City of Edmonton goals of:

- ***A Healthy City*** - *Edmonton is a neighbourly city with community and personal wellness that embodies and promotes equity for all Edmontonians*
- ***Urban Places*** - *Edmonton neighbourhoods are more vibrant as density increases, where people and businesses thrive and where housing and mobility options are plentiful*
- ***Regional Prosperity***- *Edmonton grows prosperity for our Metro Region by driving innovation, competitiveness and relevance for our businesses at the local and global level*
- ***Climate Resilience***- *Edmonton is a city transitioning to a low carbon future, has clean air and water and is adapting to a changing climate*

Although equity is only specifically mentioned as a Healthy City goal, all of the above goals can actually be perceived through the lens of equity that takes into account the intersection of multiple factors, such as cultural, historical, socio-economic, etc. that places people in positions of power or vulnerability and in turn impacts people's ability to benefit from these goals. It is through an equity lens that the above City of Edmonton goals can truly be accomplished to foster an equitable and sustainable city that includes all individuals and allows them to participate in every aspect of city life - economic, political, cultural, and social, thus achieving the principle of Connected.

1.42 The City Plan

-----“Civic engagement is the cornerstone of building sustainable communities (Semenza, 2009).-----

The City of Edmonton is changing. Currently the population is at approximately 1 million and planning is ongoing for what it will look like when it is at 2million. This planning

process is currently being undertaken through *The City Plan*, which will replace the current Municipal Development Plan and the Transportation Master Plan. *The City Plan* will provide the foundation to help guide the city as it grows and moves forward into the future. It is about the city as a whole and how the city functions. Currently information is being gathered and policies are being developed to help determine the direction the City Plan should take. It is a process that will have lasting impact on future generations, therefore it is important to think about how it will foster an equitable and sustainable environment.

The four goals expressing Council’s vision intersect with the six *City Plan* guiding values of:

- *I want to BELONG and contribute*
- *I want to LIVE in a place that feels like home*
- *I want opportunities to THRIVE*
- *I want more ACCESS within my city*
- *I want to PRESERVE what matters most*
- *I want to be able to CREATE and innovate*

Together the council’s vision and the City Plan guiding values will come together to help shape the future of Edmonton. The City Plan has focused on collaboration and setting new priorities through its Big City Moves where Edmontonians are invited to participate in the process.

The Big City Moves include:

- *Greener as we grow*
- *Rebuildable City*
- *A community of Communities*
- *Inclusive and compassionate*
- *Catalyze and converge*

Within all these future visions and goals, the issues and Big City Moves, an equity approach can be taken to help make the city more inclusive and sustainable.

1.43 Other City of Edmonton Frameworks and Strategies

1.43.1 City of Edmonton Public Engagement Framework

The City of Edmonton provides a *Public Engagement Policy Framework* that can be built upon to focus on equity. Currently, the City of Edmonton’s goal is for “public engagement

[to] create opportunities for people to contribute to decision making by City Council and Administration about the City’s policies, programs, projects, and services, and communicate how public input is collected and used” (City of Edmonton, 2017, p.3). Engagement operates on a spectrum as seen in the diagram below.

City of Edmonton Public Engagement Spectrum



Figure 10: New Public Engagement Practice and Implementation Roadmap— FINAL REPORT, CITY OF EDMONTON

Taking an equity approach towards public engagement will make the process more inclusive and reflective by using the knowledge of those living in the city - the people. Essentially, it’s “honoring the community as the expert” (Semenza, 2009). It means seeking out and inviting those who historically have not been invited to engage.

1.43.2 Other City of Edmonton Frameworks and Strategies

Other City of Edmonton existing policy frameworks and strategies that help to promote diversity and inclusion on various levels include:

- **Gender Based Analysis Plus (GBA+)** This tool uses the intersectional approach with a focus on gender equity.
- **Diversity and Inclusion Framework and Plan** This framework assists with determining how to serve people of diverse backgrounds through City of Edmonton policy and practice.
- **Others include:** End Poverty Edmonton, RECOVER, WAVE: Women’s Advocacy Voice of Edmonton, WinterCity

The City of Edmonton also has specific assessment tools relating to:

- **Age friendly**
- **Child friendly**
- **Accessibility**
- **Public Engagement**

Despite all the frameworks and strategies currently established by the City of Edmonton, using an equity lens and the Edmonton Social Equity Assessment Tool, will bring a greater depth of understanding and add a more holistic approach of examining not only the intersectionality of experience and identities, but also an examination of disparities and ways to challenge and break the barriers that cause the disparities. It is a way that the City of Edmonton can meet its Connected principle.

2.0 Development of Edmonton's Equity Assessment Tool

The development of the Edmonton Equity Assessment Tool was made through examining the literature of what equity is, how it is measured and how it can be used as a lens. It also consisted of compiling jurisdictional tools and best practices to form a tool that can be used in a Canadian/Edmonton context. This included examining current City of Edmonton tools and meeting with key players in different section initiatives (GBA+ lens, Poverty Assessment lens through End Poverty Edmonton, Seniors Friendly Edmonton, WAVE, RECOVER, transportation), learning more about the Canadian Federal Government initiatives (GBA+ tools and Health Canada's Determinants of Health), and examining other cities' and regions' resources and tools (Ottawa, New Westminster, Toronto, Seattle, Portland, King County). From these resources, a prototype of an Equity Assessment Tool was made. From this prototype I added new specifications related to an Edmonton context. Feedback on the initial assessment tool was provided from different internal City of Edmonton staff that included Lucenia Ortiz (End Poverty Edmonton, Service Planner), Micheal Strong (City Plan, Planner), Howaida Hassan (City Plan, Transportation Engineer) and then the initial tool was presented to the City of Edmonton's Mobility Strategies team of Daniel Vriend (Engineer), Dallas Karhut (Engineer) and Kasturi Mahajan (Engineer) for additional feedback. This provided a good sounding board on how to make the prototype tool more applicable and user friendly, especially in an internal City of Edmonton context. The tool was then revamped with the feedback incorporated. It was then used to assess two City of Edmonton plans: *PlanWhyte* and the *Centre LRT Route Selection Plan*. The findings of using the tool are compiled later within this report, but as *PlanWhyte* and *Centre LRT Route Selection* assessments used information internal to the City of Edmonton and are secondary to the goal of this report, the details of the equity findings will not be published within this document, but instead will remain internal.

2.1 Recommendation for Using the Tool

Prior to using the tool, it is recommended for users to take part in the GBA + training offered by the City of Edmonton, as well as specific equity based training. It would be very difficult and inefficient to attempt to use the tool without any background or understanding of equity.

2.2 Stages to the Assessment Tool

The tool is compiled of three Sections:

Stage I is to be used as the proposal/project/plan/service (referred to as ‘the proposal’ for simplicity sake) overview. It is to assess whether equity is being addressed and whether the proposal will create inequities. What are the decision makers trying to accomplish? For example, the Indicator Summary in ConnectEdmonton provides four Equity Indicators of affordable housing demand, crime, income inequality and poverty (ConnectEdmonton, p.20). Is the proposal addressing any of these?

Stage II examines the people who will be impacted by the proposal. This section will focus on examining the community engagement that occurred (checking if vulnerable groups identified as being impacted had been consulted) and using quantitative data (e.g. using equity metrics such as neighbourhood demographic data) to examine who will be impacted and at potential risk of marginalization. Vulnerable stakeholders must be taken into account and brought into the decision process.

Stage III looks to find if mitigating factors to remove any inequitable burdens that have been addressed in the proposal. This section also provides an area to examine what was learned from the analysis.

The Scoring section will help the user establish an idea of how strong the equity component is within the proposal. It also provides an opportunity to reflect on the proposal’s overall strengths and weaknesses, along with what can be learned.

3.0 Edmonton’s Equity Assessment Tool

The Edmonton Equity Assessment Tool is found in Appendix 1 in its stand alone state, to ease access for those mostly interested in the tool. It can be applied to urban planning plans to determine how equitable the proposal is.

4.0 Application of the Tool: PlanWhyte and Centre LRT

In order to test and help revise the Edmonton Equity Assessment Tool, it was applied to two City of Edmonton projects, *PlanWhyte: Whyte Avenue Commercial Area Land Use Study* and *Centre LRT Route Selection*, as previously mentioned. The general findings of using the tool (not the equity findings of the plans, which will remain internal) are reported in the following sections.

4.1 PlanWhyte and Centre LRT Route Selection Backgrounds

PlanWhyte: Whyte Avenue Commercial Area Land Use Study, was undertaken by the City of Edmonton's City Planning Branch and finalized June 8, 2018. The study began in 2016 in response to development pressure, a need for the consideration of the area's heritage and the potential re-assessment of the Strathcona Area Redevelopment Plan. It provides a series of recommendations to strengthen the heritage and character of the Whyte Avenue corridor, manage future growth within the area that is beneficial to community residents, visitors, and local businesses, and to foster revitalization of the area to enable it to remain as one of Edmonton's premier destinations for arts, culture and tourism (PlanWhyte, 2018). Within these recommendations three key strategic areas were determined:

- *Amendments to the Strathcona Area Redevelopment Plan*
- *Public Places Plan for Old Strathcona*
- *Transportation Safety and Operational Considerations* (PlanWhyte, 2018, p. 2)

The idea was that these recommendations would over time help to preserve the heritage character of the neighbourhood, while providing more housing options, local business support, strengthen the community and foster the long-term livability and success of the commercial area (PlanWhyte, 2018). A link to the full plan is provided in Appendix 2.

Unlike *PlanWhyte*, the *Centre LRT Route Selection* plan, is currently an on-going project within the City of Edmonton's design and implementation of City Council's long-term LRT Network Plan that will connect all quadrants of the city. This project is focused on determining the best route to connect users to Strathcona, Downtown, Bonnie Doon and East Edmonton. It will provide Edmontonians with greater access and travel options to connect to these areas. The Equity Assessment Tool was tested on *Phase I* of this project that went to Council's Urban Planning Committee on August 14, 2018.

4.2 Findings of Tool Use

In order to test the tool, I consulted background documents regarding each project. This included accessing information available online, such as the projects reports and Council Reports and Amendments, and information available internally, such as public engagement plans, consultant reports, and consulting those who worked on the project. I compiled this information to gain an overall view of the project before applying the tool. Once I had sufficient information I progressed through each stage of the tool; searching for and requesting more information as needed from those who worked on the project.

Some resources I used to source quantitative data, including neighbourhood

demographics, that included the Edmonton Census Data based on neighbourhoods and the Pathways to Education Community Mapping Tool. The Community Mapping Tool provides information based on Canadian Census Tracts on a number of social indicators. This was extremely helpful, although in certain cases the census tract did not match the Edmonton neighbourhood boundaries. I also consulted google maps to look for clues of services and facilities in each area, such as schools, seniors homes, social service agencies, etc., that could provide information about populations at risk of being left out of the planning decisions. I also talked to city employees who worked or had knowledge of each project for information. Because the Centre LRT Route Selection Plan, focused on transportation, I referred to Kramer and Goldstein's (2015), *Characteristics of Socially Equitable Transit Networks* to help focus on who, historically, are vulnerable to transit characteristics. This included focusing on low-income households, teenagers, young adults, university students, newcomers to Canada, racialized populations, seniors, households with young parents, single parents and mobility impaired people for the LRT project. This allowed me to seek information in the data on these groups and look for mitigations within the Centre LRT plan.

Strengths: Overall, the tool provided a good gauge of how equitable a project was. It provided an opportunity to examine how equitable the approach was, how data was or was not used, if the public was engaged equitably and if there were any mitigation measures put into play for any burdens found. By using statistical data it was able to help focus on individuals at risk of exclusion within the plan areas.

Challenges: Firstly, as an outsider with no background knowledge of the plans it was time consuming to try to gain knowledge of all the details within each plan needed to apply the assessment, and I still worried I was missing pertinent information. Therefore, it would be beneficial to have someone familiar with the plan, having worked on it, assisting with applying the tool. On reflection I also feel it would have been beneficial to consult the area's Neighbourhood Resource Coordinators for their insight on what is happening in the community. Secondly, I found some difficulty with the scoring, as I found it somewhat arbitrary. Although it could be that the scoring application of the tool could be easier and more concise if done by someone with more background knowledge of the plan and area. Thirdly, it would be helpful if the City of Edmonton had greater equity metrics. Stronger equity indicators and equity mapping tools would have made application of the assessment easier. Examples such as *Peg* in Winnipeg and *Wellbeing Toronto*, as previously mentioned, provide examples of this. Lastly, I found that sections of the tool need to merge better, such as the stakeholder feedback section needed to be integrated more with the data findings in order to make it more user friendly

5.0 Recommendations

Based on the research and feedback received throughout this project, recommendations have been compiled on how to move forward. There are tools and best practices that other jurisdictions have developed that can assist and be modeled upon to help improve the City of Edmonton's equity lens for the City Plan. Looking at what worked (and didn't work) for other jurisdictions can help ease the process, while remembering that Edmonton will have a different context and the freedom and creativity to establish its own distinct path. Although this project is focused on Urban Planning and the City Plan, a multidisciplinary approach needs to be taken as administration should function as a whole when taking an equity approach. Overall my recommendations include the following:

- 1. Develop an equity lens framework to be used in conjunction with GBA+ that the City of Edmonton is launching. Connect it to the *United Nations Sustainable Development Goals*, especially Goal 10 of “policies should be universal in principle, paying attention to the needs of disadvantaged and marginalized populations” (UN, 2018) and the *Truth and Reconciliation Call to Action 44* within that Framework. Education/training of decision makers and staff on equity.**

One way to improve buy-in and compliance of taking an equity approach and using an equity assessment measurement tool is to impose some foundational equity workings. Help decision makers and staff understand why equity is important. Implementing an Equity Framework that is connected to the *United Nations Sustainable Development Goals* and the *Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action*, would be a good starting point. Currently, the City of Edmonton is implementing GBA+ and taking an equitable, sustainable and reconciliatory approach is complementary to this. Education and training on equity will help decision makers to gain an understanding of the importance of equity and its ties to sustainability and reconciliation no matter what task they are faced with. It means helping planners and other staff to gain the knowledge that equity applies to everyone and that making the City of Edmonton equitable is part of the overall city's vision and goals. Taking an equity approach also helps to broaden planner's and other staff's own views and experiences as they begin to see things through an equity lens, thus improving their own work and lives. It also means acknowledging that the

process is not quick or easy and that leadership must have buy in and accept that cities can achieve equitable and sustainable global goals at their own local level.

2. Encourage partnerships and information sharing to break down administrative silos internally and externally

Having leadership and staff educated in equity will help with the removal of administrative silos. Good communication between all city departments and sectors and outside agencies or resources will help to eliminate any information blockages that can cause a barrier to achieving equity goals. This means that city planners should continue to seek input from other departments or sections such as Citizen Services (End Poverty Edmonton, Age Friendly Edmonton, Child Friendly Edmonton, Multicultural Relations, Indigenous Relations, etc.) to gain knowledge and feedback when progressing with a policy, plan or proposal. For example, upon reflecting on applying the tool, I feel it may have been helpful to consult the area's Neighbourhood Resource Coordinator to get their insight of what is currently happening in the community and they could provide links to community advocates and those to engage with, instead of just relying on statistical data or personal assumptions to determine who is most at risk. This ties into continuing to seek feedback from outside agencies or resources, especially when it comes to public engagement.

3. Improve availability, access and quality of data and equity metrics (demographics, indicators, equity/opportunity mapping, etc.): accessibility to good quality data will help to guide, drive and monitor projects, plans and services ensuring all have opportunities to participate in society.

Part of an equity approach is remembering that people come first. The city is being run for the people - all people. Therefore, urban planning decision making needs to include those groups identified as vulnerable and that have historically, due to many factors, been left out of the public voice. These voices need to be sought out, included and used to help guide policy, programs and services, while looking for past systemic barriers and burdens that should be eliminated. Having better data sources can help facilitate this entire process.

Edmonton based Equity Metrics in the form of increased development of community data, equity/opportunity mapping and baseline indicators/mapping would be helpful to improving data sources that can inform urban planning. Having this data available could assist with guiding a more equitable approach towards policies, projects, plans and services. Community data and equity mapping would assist planners in understanding

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how specific groups of people have been marginalized by past planning decisions and if future projects will add to this marginalization. This will help avoid the situation of asset replacement ('like for like' planning) and continuation of systemic burdens or barriers for some people. It will help to increase accessibility and look for areas that lack opportunities (e.g. designing mixed use communities help to mitigate lack of access to employment, transportation, park space, etc.). It will also help planners determine who to initially seek out for public engagement.

Equity Indicators and Equity Mapping

ConnectEdmonton: Edmonton's Strategic Plan 2019-2028, has developed indicators for each City of Edmonton Goal (ConnectEdmonton). Within the current City of Edmonton Goals of Equity are included:

- Affordable Housing Demand (Statistics Canada)
- Crime (Statistics Canada)
- Income Inequality (Statistics Canada through Edmonton Social Planning Council)
- Poverty (Statistics Canada) (ConnectEdmonton, p. 20)

These goals could be built upon to include even more equity indicators and incorporate the *United Nations Sustainable Development Goals*. When developing and tracking a plan or project, planners could look at the baseline indicators within the area to help inform the project direction. Then subsequently re-examine the indicators after project implementation to track the outcomes. This is why having access to good quality data is so important. It is part of the outcomes, but also the process. Currently, the City of Winnipeg uses an on-line tracking of community indicators called *Peg*, run by the United Way, that allows decision makers and citizens to see how their city is changing. *Peg* is a good example as the multiple sub categories of indicators are grouped into the areas of built environment, basic needs, economy, education and learning, health, natural environment and social vitality and governance. A link to this source is provided in Appendix 2.

Eventually, Edmonton could develop its own Equity Mapping Tool, building upon its current *City of Edmonton Neighbourhood Interactive Map* and *Census Compilation of Neighbourhood Results*, that could help guide policy, plans, projects and services. Currently, Pathways to Education in partnership with the Canadian Council on Social Development, has a good cross Canada *Community Mapping Tool* based on Statistics Canada data (originally developed to measure youth access to education in different regions). It is a great source of information, but there is potential for jurisdictions, such

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as Edmonton, to develop its own version using data and equity indicators that reflect the area's goals and vision. Opportunity mapping of areas that are 'opportunity rich or poor' would also be helpful and can be used to see how accessible different areas are. Using examples such as the United States *National Equity Atlas 2.0* and Toronto's *Wellbeing Toronto* (mapping tool) would be a way to develop an Edmonton or Edmonton region based context map that can be a visual tool to allow planners to gain an understanding of spatial community make-up, if communities are able to access services and essentially how healthy a community is in this area. Some key factors that could be included in the consolidated equity mapping could be based on multiple Indicators such as those used in *Wellbeing Toronto's* Neighbourhood Mapping Tool Indicator tracking system of:

- Demographics
- Civics and Equity
- Economics
- Education
- Environment
- Health
- Housing
- Culture
- Safety
- Transportation
- Recreation

These indicators could be reported on an interactive map, allowing users to see area breakdowns and comparisons. This provides a good visualization to assess how equitable or healthy a community is. All these above mapped indicators could then be used to inform policy, plans or projects and help planners determined who to seek out for public engagement within communities. A link to the US *National Equity Atlas 2.0* (that originated in the small area of Portland, OR) and *Wellbeing Toronto* and *Pathways to Education* are included in Appendix 2 as examples of how it has been done in different jurisdictions.

- 4. Build public on engagement to seek out voices of those historically not heard, think about why they have not been heard and mitigate this. These voices can inform policy, plans, projects and services. Remember planners have the professional training but it is the community that has the first hand knowledge.**

Public engagement plays a large role in taking an equity approach. Currently, the City of

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Edmonton has a *Public Engagement Framework*. This can be utilized and built off of in order to promote greater equity within planning decisions. Accordingly, the City of Edmonton also has a substantial list of key stakeholder organizations that is available through the *Citizen Access and Inclusion Section* within *Citizen Services*, that can also be used by planners seeking more inclusive public engagement. Using both of these resources is a good starting point, as is utilizing data to inform who to initially seek engagement with. Other specific recommendations for taking an equitable approach to urban planning public engagement include:

- **Actively seeking vulnerable voices.** Having access to good data will help planners initially determine who should be actively sought out for engagement, depending on the project. Look for organizations or associations that work with these groups as a start (can use the City of Edmonton's list), but make sure the voices being heard are from those in the community, not just the organization itself.
- **Seek informal community leaders.** City of Edmonton Neighbourhood Resource Coordinators or Multi-Cultural Relations Coordinators would be a good resource to assist with determining informal community leaders that can help provide a voice for those in their community and be willing to work with planning on a project or plan.
- **Utilize other city departments/resources,** such as Neighbourhood Resource Coordinators, Multi-Cultural Relations Coordinators, Age and Child Friendly Edmonton, End Poverty Edmonton, etc. to access their knowledge and perspectives on how to make engagement more inclusive.
- **Hold smaller meetings** focused on individuals communities and groups. Meet people at places where they gather such as drop in centres or community centres. If it's about public transit, go to the bus and LRT terminals to talk to people. Essentially, **go to the people instead of always having them come to us.**
- **Ensure that engagement meetings are accessible**
 - Be cognizant of:
 - physical accessibility: e.g. are display boards at a height that wheelchair users can view; is there seating for those who are not able to stand or walk for longer periods; do any activities require specific movement or dexterity that some may not be able to participate in, is the building and washroom accessible (ramps, elevators, etc.).
 - Language: are translators needed, including for the information displays

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- Literacy: is language used at a level appropriate
- Transportation to and from meeting: is transportation available and accessible (e.g. will bus still be running at the end of the meeting)
- Dietary needs (medical, religious and cultural)
- Issues related to poverty (e.g., provide food, childcare, bus fare, etc.)
- Track who is attending public engagement meetings to determine who is being heard.

The above are standard ways (with an equity approach) to engage, but also remember there are other ways of approaching engagement and to be creative- there are no set rules to public engagement, therefore there is the opportunity to be creative. The following are two potential examples, although not direct recommendations, that show some creativity and out of the box thinking.

Photovoice

Photovoice is part of what is referred to as participatory action research. Individuals take pictures of areas and things within their communities that impact their lives and situation. Photovoice “creates opportunities for those who are marginalized; it allows them to actively participate in enhancing their communities by giving them a chance to tell their stories and have their voices heard” (Palibroda et al., 2009). It demonstrates to decision-makers what an area’s strengths and weaknesses are and can help inform policy decisions. A link to the Prairie Women’s Health Centre of Excellence, *A Practical Guide to Photovoice* is provided in Appendix 2.

Financial Compensation

Naomi Doerner, transportation equity Program Manager with the City of Seattle Department of Transportation, in an interview, expresses how communities should find ways to pay people for their time and effort (Singer, 2018). An interesting anecdote of this is described in Moskowitz (2017), by a lower income social justice advocate of color in New Orleans, who speaks of how she is expected to often “volunteer” her time to offer her knowledge regarding community planning, she explains: “a lot of these times I would go [in] and people would want to ‘pick my brain’. If I was wearing a suit and from New York that would be called consulting and I would be billing you \$250 an hour... [instead] I come from a community where you’re supposed to help out your neighbours” (p. 28). There is an expectation for certain people to ‘volunteer’ their time to engage with the city and this needs to be acknowledged - the city planner or consultant is being paid, the one providing the guidance (i.e. the public voice) is not. When taking an equitable approach

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to public engagement, we not only need to seek out those whose voices are not heard but also think about the reasons why they are not engaging and mitigate this. Sometimes those able to engage come from a position of privilege and planners must be aware of this. One of the reasons for not engaging could be due to financial constraints and paying the informal community leaders and advocates in some way may help to mitigate this. Although, this issue may be controversial and raises a lot of potential drawbacks, such as cost, it does not mean that it should not be examined for future reference and it does occur in other jurisdictions such as Seattle, WA.

-----“there’s also just a need for more information delivered in the appropriate language and in a context-sensitive way”- Naomi Doerner, Transportation Equity Program Manager at the Seattle Department of Transportation (Singer, 2018)-----

5. Continue to design and plan equitable and sustainable communities through ensuring accessibility and opportunity access.

Research has shown that mixed-use areas with good transportation are more sustainable and allow for increased accessibility to opportunities leading to equity. Using an equity lens when planning communities, allows for many intersecting barriers or burdens to be mitigated by increasing individual’s opportunities and access (e.g. access to housing, transportation, employment and park space). Continue to use an equity lens to ensure that individuals or communities are not bearing any unnecessary or constant burden in their communities’ plan and design and actively try to mitigate any negative externalities (e.g. freeways, flood zones, etc.).

6. Expand, develop, formalize and use the Edmonton Equity Assessment Tool prototype

The Edmonton Equity Assessment Tool was developed and piloted for this project, but it is still in its initial stages. It would be beneficial moving forward to have city decision makers, with internal knowledge and experience to assess the tool prototype and formalize it within the internal context. I would recommend a team effort, with members from different sections and/or departments involved, in order to make the tool as efficient, effective and user-friendly as possible.

Once it is past its prototype stage, implementation of the tool should occur to gain an

Recommendations

understanding of equity within projects, plans and proposals in urban planning and beyond.

Conclusion

The City of Edmonton has a Vision to be a *Connected* and sustainable community. Equity is part of sustainability and true sustainability efforts will not occur without it- it is not only about the economy and the environment. Therefore, taking an equitable approach to city planning and beyond is part of this conversation. Imagine the City of Edmonton joining multiple other jurisdictions in working towards an equitable society where everyone has access to the resources they need in order to function fully. A city where no one faces overwhelming burdens due to their intersecting characteristics. This is the goal of a connected and sustainable community.

Taking an equity approach to the City Plan means doing the hard work of examining the past burdens experienced by certain people and mitigating these. It means that when planning, any burdens are determined and mitigated and no one's voice is left out. But, it also means being creative and understanding that planners and the City of Edmonton in general have the ability to put Edmonton's own parameters on equity. It means imagining what equity can mean in an Edmonton context and moving forward with this through planning, policies, education, training, and tools. This means essentially that equity is part of all conversations. In order for the City of Edmonton to reach its Goals and Vision an equity lens must be used.

Project Summary

The objectives and goals of this Sustainability Scholars project was to research and develop a social equity assessment tool that can be applied to City of Edmonton's current policies and plans, focusing on urban form, transportation and carbon reduction. The project was accomplished through a literature review (academic and jurisdictional), information gathering discussions and meetings with key actors, developing an equity assessment tool and applying the equity assessment tool. This project has the potential to assist in determining how Edmonton is currently faring in regards to social equity and can help guide future policy, with a focus on The City Plan.

Literature Review: Academic and jurisdictional research

Findings:

- Equity is part of the three components of sustainability: Economy, Environment, and Equity
- There is no universal definition or operationalization of equity
- Although equity should be looked at through an intersectional lens, historically there are certain populations who are more exposed and at risk of inequities due to systemic burdens or barriers.
- Equity plays a large role in Reconciliation in Canada
- There are ways for municipalities to be more equitable: including strengthening equity indicators, equity metrics (such as equity mapping), and public engagement
- Research examples of inequities in urban planning: include environmental burdens (urban form), inaccessibility (urban form and transportation) and climate change burdens.
- Key analysis of Ottawa, Portland, OR and King County, WA for jurisdictional equity best practices.

Development of the Edmonton Equity Assessment Tool

The development of the tool was based on of the previous section's research. It was developed for an Edmonton context.

Testing of the Edmonton Equity Assessment Tool

The tool was tested on PlanWhyte: Whyte Avenue Commercial Area Land Use Study and

Recommendations

the Centre LRT Route Selection Proposal. Results will remain internal to the City of Edmonton.

Findings

Strengths

The tool provided a good overall measurement of equity. It also helped to determine who may be at risk of inequities and/or exclusion and to seek out their voices and provide mitigation to any negative externalities.

Challenges

Not being familiar with the projects or City of Edmonton internal procedures made it challenging to gain this knowledge it also made it challenging to score certain sections.

Recommendations

More training and education on equity will help with universal buy in and understanding. This will also help break down administrative silos; as people take an equity lens more resource and information sharing should occur. Improving equity indicators and metrics would also help with improving the equity lens. As will a multi team approach to formalizing the tool.

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Appendix 1: Equity Assessment Tool

Appendix 1: Equity Assessment Tool

Edmonton Equity Assessment Tool

Draft



Developed for the City of Edmonton

Jill Lang

July 11, 2019



Appendix 1: Equity Assessment Tool

Conditions for Successful Tool Use

Prior to embarking on using the Equity Assessment Tool there are some recommendations to be followed. Just like you would not undertake an environmental assessment without having knowledge about environmental factors, the same can be said for an equity assessment.

It is recommended prior to using the tool that staff:

- Be trained in GBA+ analysis
- Participate in an orientation/training on equity and how to use the tool
- Have access to appropriate data to assist with the assessment
- Have access to staff that can assist with support pertaining to tool use

Introduction

Equity is one of the pillars in overall sustainability, as it is one of the “3Es” of environment, economy and equity, that form the basis for true sustainability. Part of the City of Edmonton’s 2050 Vision is to make Edmonton a place where everyone has what they need to succeed now and for generations to come. This means ensuring that the city is an equitable and sustainable place for everyone.

The 10 year ConnectEdmonton: Edmonton’s Strategic Plan (2019-2028) uses Connected as the key principle that guides all city goals. Decisions and actions are guided by the City’s core Connected principle to:

- Create as a community to connect people to what matters to them.
- Care about the impact of our actions on our social, economic, cultural, spiritual and environmental systems.
- Serve those here today and those who come after us

In essence it is based on the principles to create, and to care and serve all people with the goals to take action, develop partnerships and collaborate on the following City of Edmonton goals of:

- A Healthy City - Edmonton is a neighbourly city with community and personal wellness that embodies and promotes equity for all Edmontonians
- Urban Places - Edmonton neighbourhoods are more vibrant as density increases, where people and businesses thrive and where housing and mobility options are plentiful

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- Regional Prosperity- Edmonton grows prosperity for our Metro Region by driving innovation, competitiveness and relevance for our businesses at the local and global level
- Climate Resilience- Edmonton is a city transitioning to a low carbon future, has clean air and water and is adapting to a changing climate

While, equity is only specifically mentioned as a Healthy City goal, all of the above goals can actually be perceived through the lens of equity that takes into account the intersection of multiple factors, such as cultural, historical, socio-economic, etc. that places people in positions of power or vulnerability and in turn impacts people ability to benefit and participate in these goals. It is through an equity lens that the above City of Edmonton goals can truly be accomplished to foster an equitable and sustainable city that includes all individuals and allows them to participate in every aspect of city life - economic, political, cultural, and social, thus achieving the principle of Connected.

The City Plan

The City Plan will provide the foundation to help guide the city as it grows and moves forward into the future. It is about the city as a whole and how the city functions. As the City Plan is being developed to ensure that the City Vision is articulated in policies and priorities, it is important that equitable and sustainable growth is an important consideration in this work.

Equity

Diversity, Intersectionality, Equity and Inclusion

Equity can be best understood within the context of diversity and its relation to inclusion.

Diversity acknowledges that people and populations are diverse in their identities.. Among the most common group identities are age, gender, race, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, abilities and disability status. It is important to understand that these identities do not exist in isolation of each other but instead they interact and cluster together. These identities intersect with each other at given times and situations.

Intersectionality states that one's identity is not defined by a single factor or characteristic. Rather many different factors (e.g. age, race, gender, income, etc.) intersect to make up an individual and how that individual experiences the world. Intersectionality determines a person's social location and confers an individual a

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position of power and privilege or vulnerability and disadvantage.

Intersectionality is about understanding that people can face multiple forms of overlapping oppression or privilege. It is also acknowledging that not everyone experiences the world in the same way based on similar characteristics. For example, a female wheelchair user will experience the world differently than a female non-wheelchair user, despite the fact they are both female. Hence one's social location can create experiences of equity or inequity.

Equity means all people have full access to opportunities that enable them to attain their full potential. Inequities occur when barriers or burdens exist that prevent people from reaching their full potential.

An equity approach emphasizes that those who have been excluded or marginalized due to historical, political, economic and socio-cultural factors are given the extra tools and resources to be included and able to actively participate in society, while looking for ways to break down these same systemic barriers (a proactive instead of reactive approach).

Equity recognizes that individuals do not start from the same level playing field and that this experience of advantage and disadvantage creates disparities among populations in accessing resources and opportunities to realize their potential. Disparities often are rooted in systemic barriers.

Systemic Barriers are obstacles that exclude groups or communities of people from participating and benefiting from social, economic, cultural, and political life. They may be hidden or unintentional but ingrained in the way society functions. Assumptions and stereotypes, along with policies, practices and procedures, reinforce these barriers.

Inclusion is the process of improving the ability, opportunity, and dignity of people, disadvantaged on the basis of their identity, to take part in society. The ultimate goal of addressing inequities is inclusion where conditions exist in society for people who have been excluded are able to fully participate in all aspects of community life.

Why should the City of Edmonton take an equity perspective?

Taking an equity approach ensures that the City of Edmonton is inclusive for everyone and that systemic barriers that prevent or limit participation in all aspects of society are addressed and removed. An equity lens brings into scope the full intersection of economic, social and cultural dimensions that impact individuals and groups ability to

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participate fully in a healthy society, while identifying the challenges and barriers that halt full participation.

It gives the City of Edmonton an opportunity to address and fix these challenges and barriers and in turn make Edmonton a progressive and welcoming city, joining the multiple other jurisdictions across Canada and the United States that have taken an equity approach. Many governmental jurisdictions, both at a national and local level, along with external sectors acknowledge the reality that inequity leads to costs in terms of productivity, health, social support reliance, criminal justice, etc. and that taking steps to foster a more equitable society helps to eliminate these costs.

Benefits and challenges with an equity approach

Research has shown impacts on social equity are sometimes hard to measure or define, thus equity is often ignored or not considered when developing proposals. Decision makers may lack knowledge of how to apply an equity lens or they may also lack the understanding and tools needed to use an equity lens.

An equity assessment tool can help mitigate this. The benefits of using an equity lens can not only assist in making the city more inclusive and sustainable, but it can also benefit decision makers and municipal staff themselves, as well. For those who learn to use an equity lens, it can help them in gaining an understanding of how and why a decision can impact people differently and to become more sensitive to the realities of all people and their experiences. This in turn allows for decisions to be made that take all people into account, not just a select few and in turn help make better solutions.

Other Jurisdictions

Municipalities across Canada and the United States have been taking a progressive approach of focusing on equity and developing equity assessment tools to be used in policy and program development. For example, the City of Ottawa in partnership with Status of Women Canada, has developed the Equity and Inclusion Lens Handbook that assists with city planning, program development and delivery to help ensure equity and inclusiveness. Another jurisdiction taking an equity approach is King County, Washington, which includes the City of Seattle. The County has taken a pro-equity approach through its Equity and Social Justice Strategic Plan to its policy direction, decision-making, planning, operations and services, and workplace practices.

Other examples of jurisdictions using an equity approach include the City of Toronto, New Westminster, Vancouver, Madison, WI, and Portland, OR. The lens of equity has been

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applied not just in a municipal context, but also through out social planning organizations and post secondary sectors.

What is the City of Edmonton currently doing?

Currently the City of Edmonton has a number of existing policy frameworks and strategies that help to promote diversity and inclusion on various levels. These include:

- Gender Based Analysis Plus (GBA+). This tool uses the intersection approach with a focus based on gender equity.
- Diversity and Inclusion Framework and Plan. This framework assists with determining how to serve people of diverse backgrounds through City of Edmonton policy and practice.
- The City of Edmonton also has specific assessment tools relating to:
 - Age friendly
 - Child friendly
 - Accessibility

Using the Edmonton Social Equity Assessment Tool, will bring a greater depth and add a more holistic approach of examining not only the intersectionality of experience and identities, but also an examination of disparities and ways to challenge and break the barriers that cause the disparities. It is a way that the City of Edmonton can meet its Connected principle.

Edmonton Equity Assessment Tool Overview

Purpose of the tool

The purpose of the tool is to help decision makers analyze through an equity lens how individuals and communities could be impacted by a proposed action that creates barriers or disparities and how any negative impacts can be mitigated. It is also a way of shifting approaches from that of a reactionary problem and crisis solving one to one of addressing the root causes of problems and eliminating systemic barriers.

Using this tool will help decision makers to identify issues that attempt to take into account the full and more holistic impact of a policy or project due to an individuals' or group's experience and history. It also encourages users to acknowledge their own complex intersecting identities in relation to others. In essence, it helps decision makers realize how they see and experience the world can be quite different from others.

Appendix 1: Equity Assessment Tool

Defining Equity to use the Tool

The following definitions will assist in gaining an understanding of equity and for using this equity assessment tool. As you read through the definitions it is important to remember:

People experience disparities when accessing resources and opportunities due to intersectioning factors, such as race, gender, income, etc.

These disparities are often due to systemic barriers

That there is no “level playing field” and providing resources equally to everyone, is not taking an equitable approach. An equity approach may in fact provide support or resources to those who need it in order to “level the playing field”. But, it does not end there, the final goal of equity is addressing and removing the root causes (systemic barriers) so that no extra resources or supports are needed in the long run

It is important to note that using this tool is not necessarily quick or simple (although it is not difficult), nor should it be something that is tacked on at the end of a project or considered as a “checked box.” Instead it should be thought of as an important tool to see how policies, programs and services can be made better for everyone, especially those currently underserved, while at the same time building capacity amongst City staff to improve their decision making. It can be used at all stages of the policy cycle, as it is not a linear process, but the sooner it is applied the better.

The tool moves through three analysis stages:

- Stage I: Overview of the proposal
- Stage II: Who is impacted?
- Stage III: How are people impacted? What are the opportunities and recommendations for Mitigation and action?

Edmonton Equity Assessment Tool

Answer the following questions based on your knowledge of the proposal (policy, project, plan, service) and other available sources of information. Make sure to score each section as you work through the assessment. Depending on the proposal not all questions may be relevant.

The tool moves through three analysis stages throughout the planning process:

- **Stage I: Proposal Overview.** In this section you will describe the proposal, problem being addressed, proposal outcomes, and if there are inequities being created by it. This section will identify whether equity is considered in the proposal and whether or not this proposal will create inequities.
- **Stage II: Population Impacted by the Proposal: Impacts and Mitigation.** Who is impacted? In this section you will determine who is impacted by the proposal through data analysis and stakeholder engagement and feedback. This includes ensuring that vulnerable stakeholders are involved in the decision process and recording what they are saying.
- **Stage III: Proposal implementation and reflection.** Does the proposal provide mitigating actions?

General Proposal Information
Policy, plan, program, initiative or service title:
Department and/or Section:
Main contact name(s) and contact information for the analysis:

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Stage I: Proposal Overview

A. Overview of proposal.

What is the issue or problem being addressed (make sure to include any existing policies, structures or historical factors related to the proposal that could be negatively impacting individuals or groups of people).

B. Is the proposal:

- Region-wide
- City-wide
- Focused on a specific geographical area: Quadrant, Area Structure Plan, Neighbourhood Structure Plan, Area Redevelopment Plan
Area: _____
- A capital project
 - Project and describe project: _____
- Focused on a specific population
 - Population: _____
- Other: _____

C. Which area(s) will the proposal being analysed primarily impact:

- Urban Form
 - Specify: _____
- Transportation
 - Specify _____
 - Transit:
 - Radial or Multidirectional Network
 - LRT or bus
 - Speed
 - Stop spacing
 - Frequency
 - Reliability
 - Capacity
 - Cost
 - Safety
- Carbon Reduction
 - Specify: _____

- Other
- Specify: _____

Initial Comments:

D. Describe the intended OUTCOMES of the proposal being analyzed (ie. what does the proposal hope to accomplish)?:

Stage I Scoring Assessment (please tick):

- STRONG (3)**
Clear analysis of problem being addressed in the proposal and linking it to issues of equity/inequity
- FAIR (2)**
Proposal partially analyzes problem being addressed and partially identifies issues of equity/inequity
- WEAK (1)**
Proposal does not analyze problem being address or identify issues of equity/inequity

Score (3, 2, 1) _____

Stage II: Who is Impacted? Gather information from data, community stakeholders and staff regarding benefits or burdens.

Data Resource examples:

- Stakeholder engagement and consultation
- City of Edmonton Data <https://data.edmonton.ca/>
- Department or section specific data (e.g. City of Edmonton's poverty profile)
- Community partner data (e.g. Edmonton Social Planning Council Digital Resources)
- Relevant research or literature
- Statistics Canada
- City department/staff information
- Other jurisdictional best practices

Pay attention to the following vulnerable groups when seeking data and doing stakeholder engagement. Look for those who have been historically NOT included:

- Indigenous Peoples
- LGBTQ people
- Newcomers to Canada
- Older Adults
- Persons with Disabilities
- Persons Living in Poverty/homeless
- Racialized People
- Women
- Youth
- Lower-income households
- Lower education level households
- Primary language spoken not English
- Single parents
- People with mobility impairment
- Other: _____

A. The following breakdown will assist in determining some quantitative data sources to examine depending if the proposal is (this should be done along with stakeholder engagement and consultation):

- Region-wide:** identify population characteristics and maps relevant to the population(s) most directly impacted
- City-wide:** identify population characteristics and maps relevant to the population(s) most directly impacted
- Focused on a specific geographical area:** identify the demographics of the area

Appendix 1: Equity Assessment Tool

A capital project: identify both population characteristics and maps relevant to the region and/or city as well as geographical areas or specific population(s) that are targeted in the proposal

Focused on a specific population: identify the demographics of the population, e.g. Mobility aid users

*** attach maps or other data findings as necessary**

*** data can be disaggregated (broken down by factors such as gender, age, income, education, etc.) and should include other intersecting identity factors as needed**

B. Is any DATA unavailable or missing (ie. what are the data gaps)?

C. According to the RESOURCE FINDINGS who (individuals and/or groups) may benefit OR be burdened from the proposal?

Benefit	Burdened
<input type="checkbox"/> Indigenous Peoples <input type="checkbox"/> LGBTQ people <input type="checkbox"/> Newcomers to Canada <input type="checkbox"/> Older Adults <input type="checkbox"/> Persons with Disabilities <input type="checkbox"/> Persons Living in Poverty/homeless <input type="checkbox"/> Racialized People <input type="checkbox"/> Women <input type="checkbox"/> Youth <input type="checkbox"/> Lower-income households <input type="checkbox"/> Lower education level households <input type="checkbox"/> Primary language spoken not English <input type="checkbox"/> Single parents <input type="checkbox"/> People with mobility impairment <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Indigenous Peoples <input type="checkbox"/> LGBTQ people <input type="checkbox"/> Newcomers to Canada <input type="checkbox"/> Older Adults <input type="checkbox"/> Persons with Disabilities <input type="checkbox"/> Persons Living in Poverty/homeless <input type="checkbox"/> Racialized People <input type="checkbox"/> Women <input type="checkbox"/> Youth <input type="checkbox"/> Lower-income households <input type="checkbox"/> Lower education level households <input type="checkbox"/> Primary language spoken not English <input type="checkbox"/> Single parents <input type="checkbox"/> People with mobility impairment <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____

D. Looking at question C, what are any disproportionate impacts on specific communities or individuals? Explain for each selected.

- _____(group): how are they benefited or burdened (circle)?

- _____(group): how are they benefited or burdened (circle)?

- _____(group): how are they benefited or burdened (circle)?

- _____(group): how are they benefited or burdened (circle)?

Stage II A-F Scoring Assessment (please tick):

- STRONG (3)**
Appropriate data was examined and data gaps identified and sought out. Greater than 50% of groups identified in Section II C. will benefit from the proposal based on evidence, not assumptions.
- FAIR (2)**
Some data was examined and some data gaps identified and sought out. Less than 50% of groups identified in Section II C. will benefit from the proposal.
- WEAK (1)**
Limited data was examined and data gaps were not identified and sought out.
Because of lack of data sourcing limited or no groups or individuals were determined to be benefiting from or bearing the burden of the proposal were based on assumptions rather than evidence.

Score (3, 2, 1) _____

E. Have stakeholders identified as those impacted in Section II C been informed, involved, and represented in the development of this proposal or plan?

- If yes, was The City of Edmonton's Public Engagement Framework followed?
- Describe how stakeholders were engaged?

- If no, why were stakeholders not engaged?

- Will missing stakeholders be sought out for engagement?

F. What feedback did stakeholders identified in Section II C provide? ("What we heard form")

Describe feedback from groups identified as impacted (*from Section II C*).

Was overall feedback similar to initial proposal outcomes/overview (ie. what was heard was similar to data findings in Stage II F)?

If no, explain why not?

Stage II E-F. Scoring Assessment (please tick):

- STRONG (3)**
All stakeholders identified in Section II C were informed, involved, and represented in the development of the proposal.
- FAIR (2)**
Some or limited engagement occurred with stakeholders identified in Section II C in the development of the proposal.
- WEAK (1)**
Very limited or no engagement occurred with stakeholders identified in Section II C in the development of the proposal.

Score (3, 2, 1) _____

Stage II E-F. Scoring Assessment (please tick)

- STRONG (3)**
The proposal addressed the issues identified between Stage II predictions/findings and information provided by stakeholders.
- FAIR (2)**
The proposal was limited in its addressing of issues identified between Stage II predictions/findings and information provided by stakeholders.

WEAK (1)

The proposal did not address the issues identified between Stage II predictions/findings and information provided by stakeholders.

Score (3, 2, 1) _____

Stage III Opportunities for Action. Mitigating adverse impacts and reducing barriers

A. Describe recommendation strategies to address and mitigate adverse impacts on each identified individual and/or group (Stage II C.) and promote equity:

- How are disparities reduced?
- How are adverse impacts resolved?

B. What identified potential burdens be documented and evaluated?

- a. What are the adverse impacts?
- b. What are the beneficial impacts?
- c. How are the benefits of the proposal strengthened?
- d. What resources have been allocated to mitigate risks and reduce barriers?

Stage III Scoring

- STRONG (3)**
Mitigation measures are determined, action for mitigation is included and resources for mitigation are identified.

- FAIR (2)**
Some mitigation measures have been determined, some action for mitigation is included and some resources for mitigation are identified.

- WEAK (1)**
Very limited or no mitigation measures are determined, very limited to no action for mitigation is included and limited or no resources for mitigation are identified.

Score (3, 2, 1) _____

D. Is the proposal:

- Realistic
- Adequately funded
- Adequately resourced with personnel
- Adequately resourced with mechanisms (policy, systems) to ensure successful implementation and enforcement (e.g. there is a clear implementation plan outline)?
- Adequately resourced with provisions to ensure ongoing data collection, public reporting, stakeholder participation and public accountability?

If no, to any of the above, what resources or actions are needed?

Is there a risk for items to be “value engineered” out?

Stage III D. Scoring Assessment:

- STRONG (3)**
The proposal has at least 4-5/5 of the above resources or actions.
- FAIR (2)**
The proposal has 3/5 of the above resources or actions.
- WEAK (1)**
The proposal has 1-2/5 of the above resources or actions

Score (3, 2, 1) _____

E. What lessons can be learned from developing and implementing this proposal and improved upon for next time?

Scoring and Overall Reflection

Overall Score: Add up your score

Appendix 1: Equity Assessment Tool

13-18 = Strong Equity
7-12 = Fair Equity
1-6 = Weak Equity

Are there stages that scored higher than others? Which ones?

**What are the proposal's overall strengths (what stage/area(s) scored highest?
What can be done to maintain these strengths)?**

**What are the proposal's overall weaknesses (what stage/area (s) scored lowest?
What can be done to rectify these weaknesses)?**

Adapted from King County Equity Impact Review Tool, Status of Women GBA+ tool (Government of Canada), City of Ottawa Equity and Inclusion Handbook, Centre for Public Impact Public Impact Fundamentals Framework, City of Seattle Racial Equity Toolkit & City of Madison RESJ Tool

Appendix 2: Links to Resources

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Includes resources and links that were used in this report.

City of Edmonton Resources

ConnectEdmonton Edmonton's Strategic Plan 2019-2028:

https://www.edmonton.ca/city_government/documents/ConnectEdmonton_Book_Web.pdf

The City Plan:

https://www.edmonton.ca/city_government/city_vision_and_strategic_plan/city-plan.aspx

Diversity and Inclusion Framework and Implementation:

https://www.edmonton.ca/city_government/documents/Final_Diversity__Inclusion_Framework_Implementation_Plan.pdf

Gender Based Analysis +:

https://webdocs.edmonton.ca/siredocs/published_meetings/120/677815.pdf

RECOVER: Edmonton's Urban Wellness Plan:

<https://www.urbanwellnessedmonton.com/about>

Women's Advocacy Voice of Edmonton (WAVE): <https://womensinitiativeedmonton.ca/>

End Poverty Edmonton: <https://www.endpovertyedmonton.ca/>

Indigenous Culture and Wellness Centre: <https://icwcyeg.com/>

Whyte Avenue Commercial Area Land Use Study (PlanWhyte):

https://www.edmonton.ca/documents/planWhyteStudyFinal_aug242018.pdf

Other Jurisdictional Resources

The City of Ottawa, Equity Lens Handbook:

https://documents.ottawa.ca/sites/default/files/ei_lens_hb_en.pdf

Status of Women (Government of Canada), Gender Based Analysis +:

<https://cfc-swc.gc.ca/gba-acs/index-en.html>

King County, WA, King County Equity Impact Review Tools and Resources:

<https://www.kingcounty.gov/elected/executive/equity-social-justice/tools-resources.aspx>

Appendix 2: Links to Resources

Equity Metrics

Pathways to Education, Community Mapping Tool:

<https://www.pathwaystoeducation.ca/community-mapping-tool-mapping-communities-canada>

City of Toronto, Wellbeing Toronto:

<https://www.toronto.ca/city-government/data-research-maps/neighbourhoods-communities/wellbeing-toronto/>

United Way Winnipeg, Peg: <https://www.mypeg.ca/>

Portland Regional Equity Atlas: <http://www.regionalequityatlas.org/home>

Denver Regional Equity Atlas: <http://www.denverregionalequityatlas.org/>

Los Angeles Equity Atlas: <http://reconnectingamerica.org/laequityatlas/index.php>

City of Portland Bureau of Transportation:

<https://www.portlandoregon.gov/transportation/74234>

Other Resources

American Planning Association. *100 Great Community Engagement Ideas:*

<https://metroquest.com/wp-content/uploads/Guidebook-100-Great-Community-Engagement-Ideas.pdf>

Truth and Reconciliation Commission: Calls to Action:

http://trc.ca/assets/pdf/Calls_to_Action_English2.pdf

United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (2007):

<https://www.un.org/development/desa/indigenouspeoples/declaration-on-the-rights-of-indigenous-peoples.html>

Meeting the Public's Needs for Transit Options: Characteristics of Socially Equitable Transit Network:

https://www.researchgate.net/publication/292398342_Meeting_the_Public's_Need_for_Transit_Options_Characteristics_of_Socially_Equitable_Transit_Networks

A Practical guide to Photovoice: Sharing pictures, telling stories and changing communities: http://www.pwhce.ca/photovoice/pdf/Photovoice_Manual.pdf

Appendix 2: Links to Resources

Voices from the Streets - Stories of Vulnerable Youth in the Shadow of Urban Development (Cynthia Puddu):

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1r4dMdV8Sa1xGH4pbjemQocyZjIAdYcUR/view>