A diverse group of people, including a smiling woman in the foreground, at a community event. The woman has red hair and is wearing a grey jacket and a blue lanyard with 'LOCAL 1505' on it. Other people in the background are wearing dark jackets and caps, some with patches. The overall atmosphere is positive and engaged.

How Can We Advance Social Equity?

Mitchell Silver, FAICP, Hon. ASLA
Principal, Urban Planning at McAdams

Email: silver@mcadamsco.com
Twitter & Instagram: [@mitchell_silver](https://www.instagram.com/mitchell_silver)



BACKGROUND
ABOUT MITCHELL

URBAN PLANNER with 35+ years
experience

LED THE GROWTH OF RALEIGH for
9+ years

SERVED AS PRESIDENT of American
Planning Association + American
Institute of Certified Planners

PARKS COMMISSIONER 7+ years,
completed 850 capital projects,
multi-billion capital program

BACKGROUND
ABOUT MCADAMS



**LAND
PLANNING**

13
professional
land surveyors

100
professional engineers
+ engineering interns



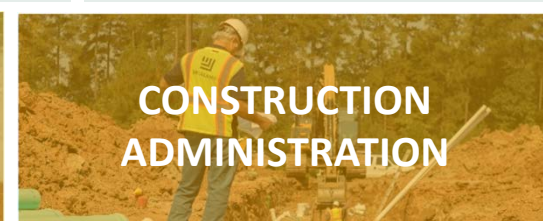
STORMWATER



CIVIL ENGINEERING



SURVEYING



**CONSTRUCTION
ADMINISTRATION**



**STREAM +
WETLAND DESIGN**



**LANDSCAPE
ARCHITECTURE**

7
certified
planners

8
LEED AP's

24
registered landscape
architects + designers



**SUBSURFACE UTILITY
ENGINEERING**

creating experiences through experience



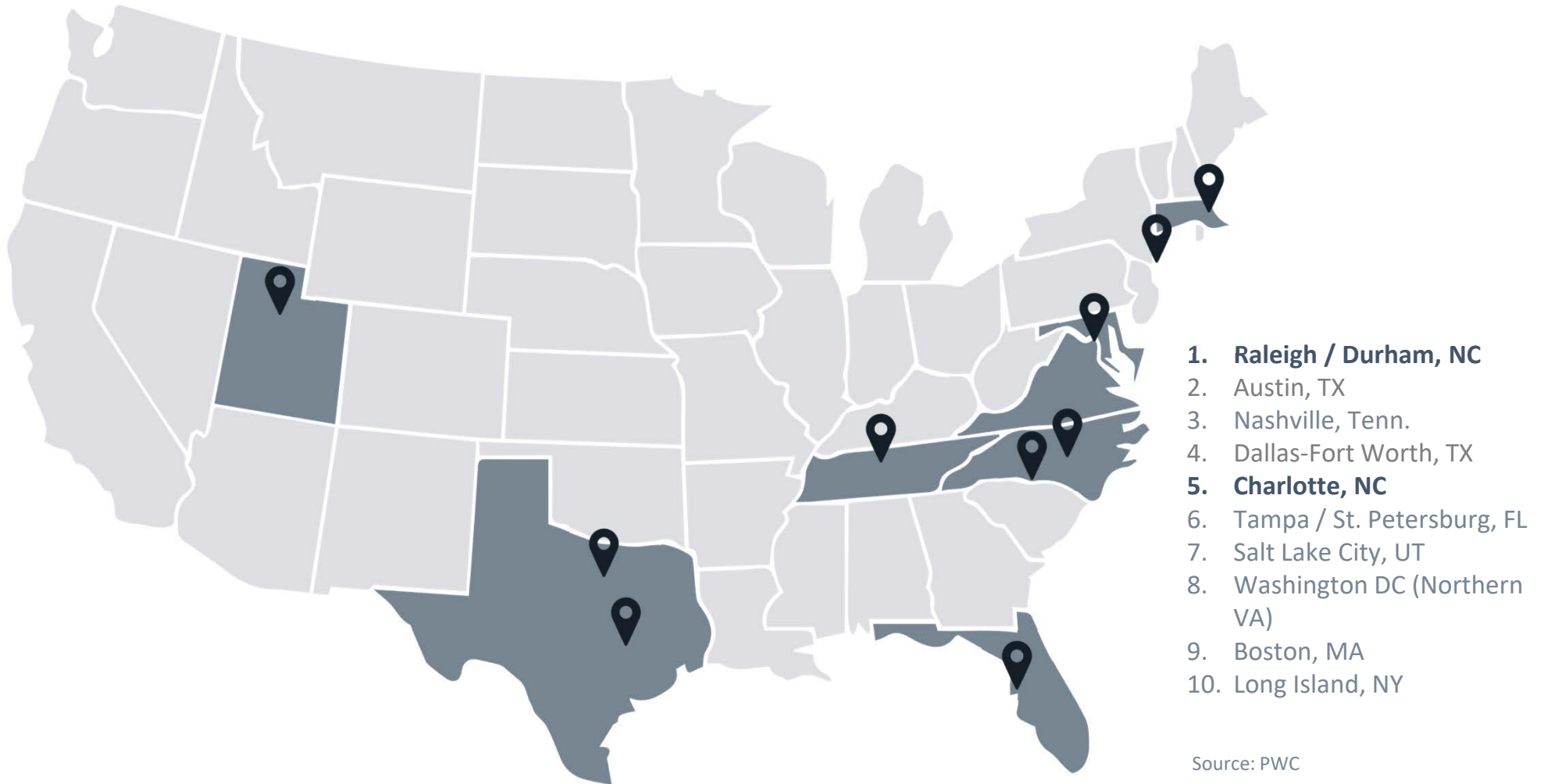
 **MCADAMS**

landscape architecture . land planning . civil engineering . stream + wetland design . geomatics . stormwater

TOP SHRINKING CITIES (1950-2010)

City	1950	Peak Population	2010	Percent Decline from Peak
St. Louis, MO	856,796	856,796 (1950)	319,294	62.7%
Detroit, MI	1,849,568	1,849,568 (1950)	713,777	61.4%
Youngstown, OH	168,330	170,002 (1930)	66,982	60.6%
Cleveland, OH	914,808	914,808 (1950)	396,815	56.6%
Gary, IN	133,911	178,320 (1960)	80,294	55.0%
Pittsburgh, PA	676,806	676,806 (1950)	305,704	54.8%
Buffalo, NY	580,132	580,132 (1950)	270,240	53.4%
Niagara Falls, NY	90,872	102,394 (1960)	50,194	51.0%
<i>Total</i>	<i>5,271,223</i>		<i>2,203,300</i>	<i>58.2%</i>

TOP REAL ESTATE MARKETS FOR 2021



20 FASTEST-GROWING U.S. METROS (2010-2023)

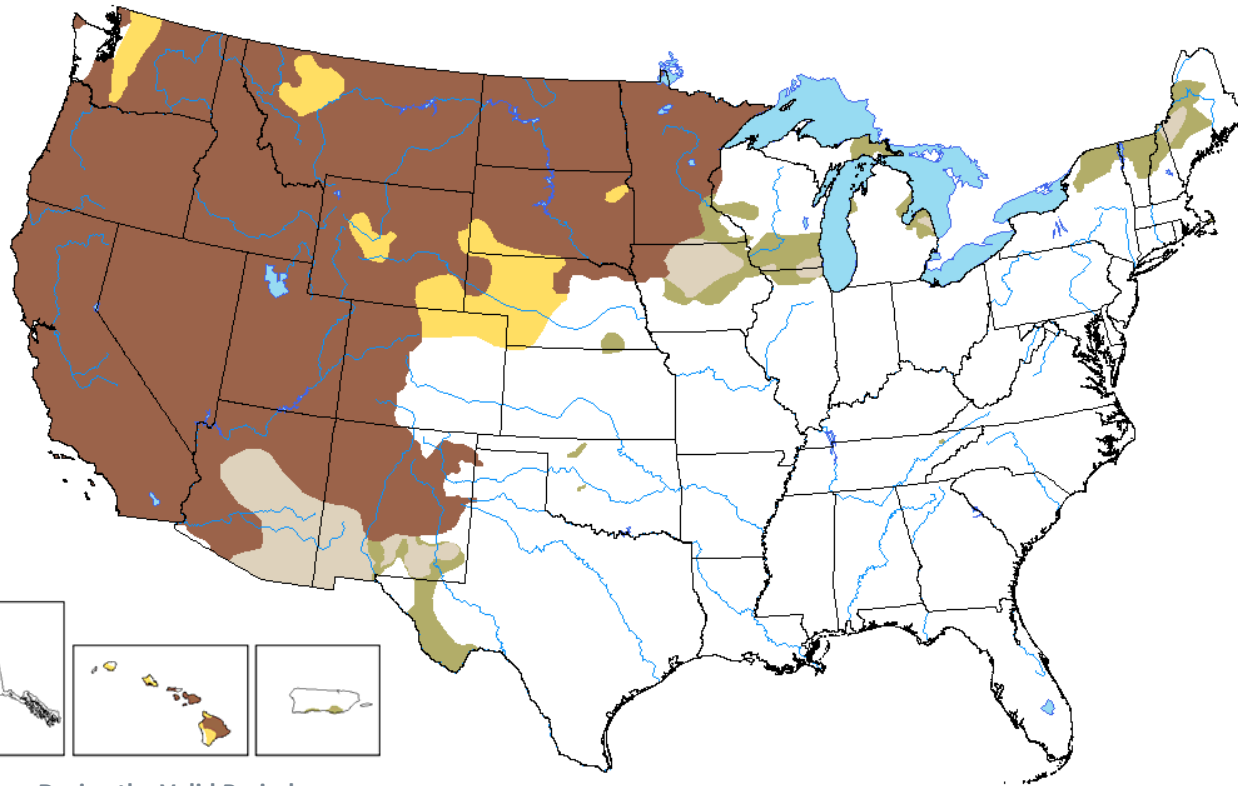


Source: ExplodingTopics

MIGRATION TRENDS FOR 2022

1. Cost of living is the top concern for movers in 2021. **QUALITY OF LIFE** was top concern for 2022. Moving closer to nature with ample **OUTDOOR EXPERIENCES** as well as the **CONTINUATION OF REMOTE WORK**.
2. **LOWERING TAX LIABILITY** (property and income tax) was another reason why people moved.
3. California, Illinois, Michigan, Pennsylvania and New Jersey are the five states with the most outbound moves. Pennsylvania replaced New York in 2022.
4. The top five inbound states in 2020 are South Carolina, North Carolina, Tennessee, Arizona and Florida. Florida surpassed Idaho in 2022.
5. Many of the moves revolve around **FLEXIBILITY OF REMOTE WORK OR EARLY RETIREMENT**.

10 CRITICAL ELEMENTS THAT WILL MAKE TOMORROW'S COMMUNITIES US SEASONAL DROUGHT OUTLOOK



Depicts large-scale trends based on subjectively derived probabilities guided by short- and long-range statistical and dynamical forecasts. Use caution for applications that can be affected by short lived events. "Ongoing" drought areas are based on the U.S. Drought Monitor areas (intensities of D1 to D4).

NOTE: The tan areas imply at least a 1-category improvement in the Drought Monitor intensity levels by the end of the period, although drought will remain. The green areas imply drought removal by the end of the period (D0 or none).

- Drought persists**
- Drought remains but improves**
- Drought removal likely**
- Drought development likely**



Drought Tendency During the Valid Period
Valid for July 15 – October 31, 2021



Source: News&Observer



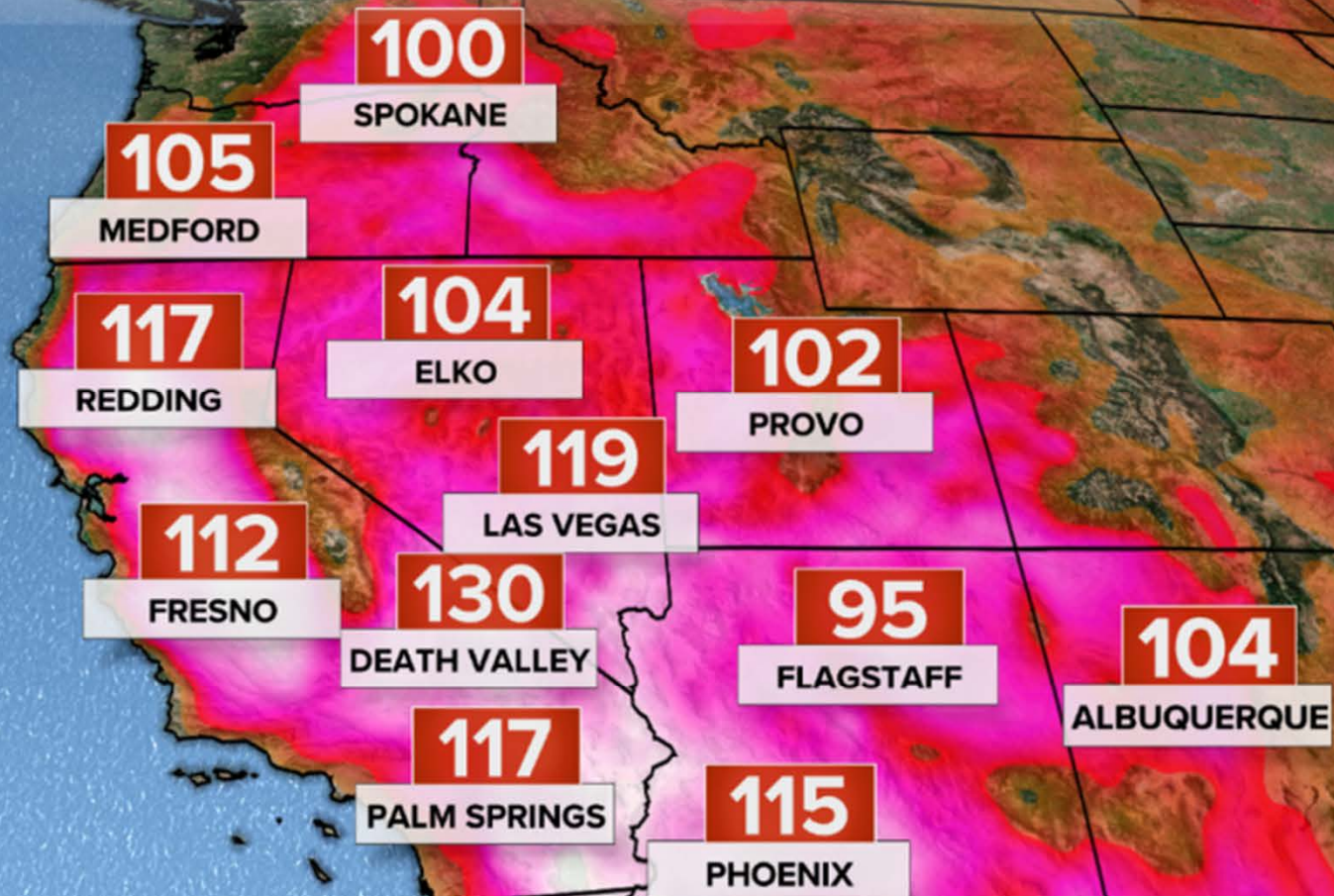
Source: Weather Underground



Source: Scientific American

MORE EXTREME HEAT

SATURDAY 4:00PM



Source: CBS News



21ST CENTURY CHALLENGES + EMERGING TRENDS

1. GRAYING + BROWNING OF AMERICA
2. RISE OF THE SINGLE PERSON HOUSEHOLDS
3. Traditional family is changing
4. AGING INFRASTRUCTURE
5. Urban sprawl, aging suburbs, shrinking rural areas
6. EXTREME WEATHER, DROUGHTS, FLOODING, HEAT, WILDFIRES
7. Antiquated + exclusionary zoning tools
8. Energy
9. RACIAL + SOCIAL JUSTICE
10. DIVISIVE POLITICS
11. POST-COVID BEHAVIOR
12. ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE



What is our role as planners, designers, or public works professionals?



Ethics gives your profession purpose by establishing aspirational values and rules for professional conduct



Code of Ethics *and* Professional Conduct

The American Institute of Certified Planners requires its members to adhere to the ethical standards of a detailed Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct.

THE PRINCIPLES TO WHICH WE ASPIRE ARE:

- To continuously pursue and faithfully serve the public interest
- ... with integrity

OUR RULES OF CONDUCT ADDRESS THE FOLLOWING:

- Quality and integrity of practice
- Conflicts of interest
- Improper influence/abuse of position
- Honesty and fair dealing
- ... to employer

Codes, Cannons and the Charters



The American Planning Association's
Professional Institute
**American Institute
of Certified Planners**
Creating Great Communities for All



American Society of
Landscape Architects



American Institute of Architects





Aspirational Principles: Code of Ethics

1. People who participate in the planning process shall continuously pursue and faithfully serve the **public interest**;
2. People who participate in the planning process shall do so with **integrity**;
3. People who participate in the planning process shall work to **achieve economic, social and racial equity**;
4. People who participate in the planning process shall **safeguard the public trust**; and
5. Practicing planners shall **improve planning knowledge and increase understanding** of planning activities.



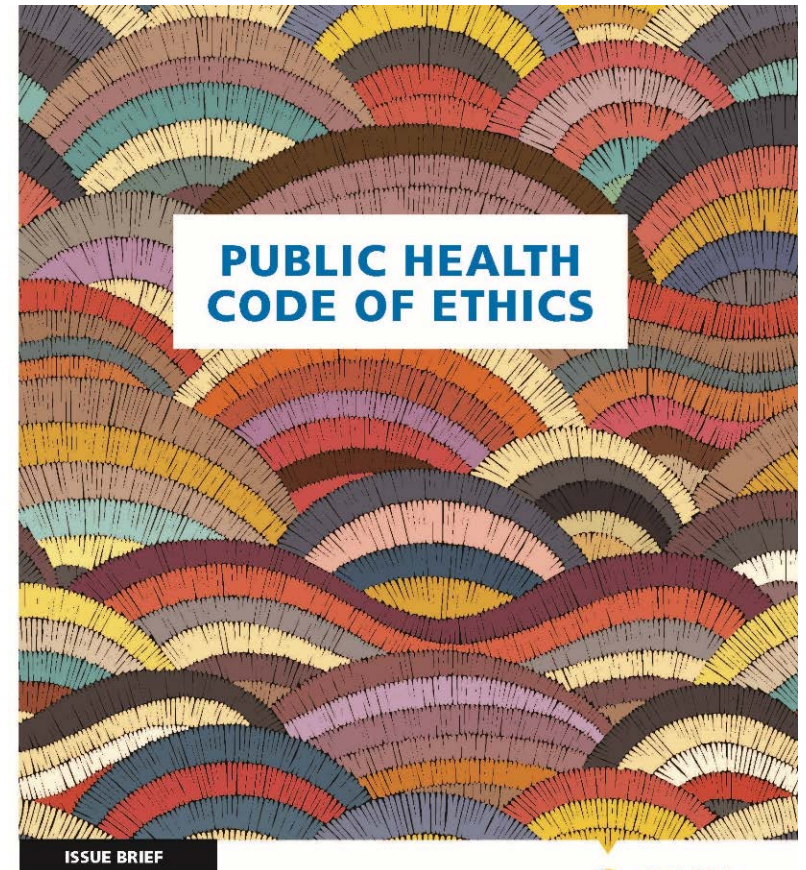
Effective: January 1, 2022



1. Introduction
2. Public Health Core Values and Related Obligations
3. Guidance for Ethical Analysis
4. Ethical Action Guidance for Policy and Practice in Functional Domains of Public Health

Public Health Core Values and Related Obligations

- A. Professionalism and Trust
- B. Health and Safety
- C. Health, **Justice and Equity**
- D. Interdependence and Solidarity
- E. **Human Rights and Civil Liberties**



34 pages of pure aspiration

Engineers, in the fulfillment of their professional duties, shall:

1. Hold paramount the **safety, health, and welfare of the public.**
2. Perform services only in areas of their competence.
3. Issue public statements only in an objective and truthful manner.
4. Act for each employer or client as faithful agents or trustees.
5. Avoid deceptive acts.
6. Conduct themselves honorably, responsibly, ethically, and lawfully so as to enhance the honor, reputation, and usefulness of the profession.

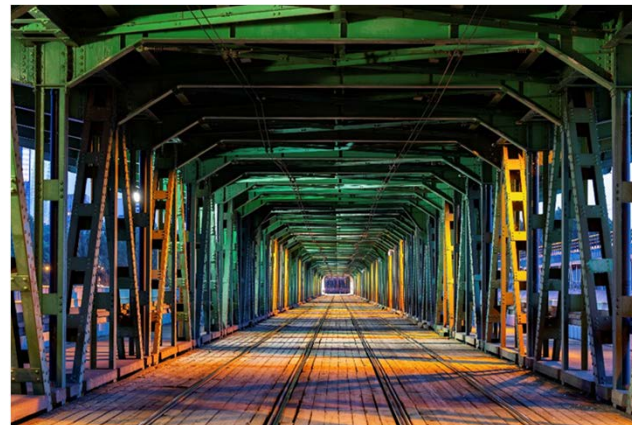
Engineers' Creed (2021)

- As a Professional Engineer, I dedicate my professional knowledge to the **advancement and betterment of public health, safety, and welfare.**

I pledge:

- To give the utmost of performance;
- To participate in none but honest enterprise;
- To live and work according to the highest standards of professional conduct;
- **To place service before profit, the honor and standing of my profession before personal advantage, and the public welfare above all other considerations.**

In humility, I make this pledge.





Public works is the combination of physical assets, management practices, policies, and personnel necessary for government to provide and **sustain structures and services essential to the welfare and acceptable quality of life for its citizens.**



Source: APWA

Common purpose among allies

- Serve the public interest
- Protect the public health, safety and **welfare**
- Enhance the quality of life of humanity
- Protect the environment



How do we protect the public welfare?



HOW DO WE PROTECT “PUBLIC WELFARE” AND WHAT *IS IT* EXACTLY?

By Marjorie Pitz, FASLA, Landscape Architect member of the Board

CLARB, the Council of Landscape Architecture Registration Boards, wanted to understand public welfare better because it prepares questions for the LA national exam that measures the candidate’s knowledge of health, safety and welfare. But how is public welfare measured? CLARB discovered that none of the design professions has a clear picture of this nebulous topic, despite the fact we are all required to protect “public health, safety *AND WELFARE.*”

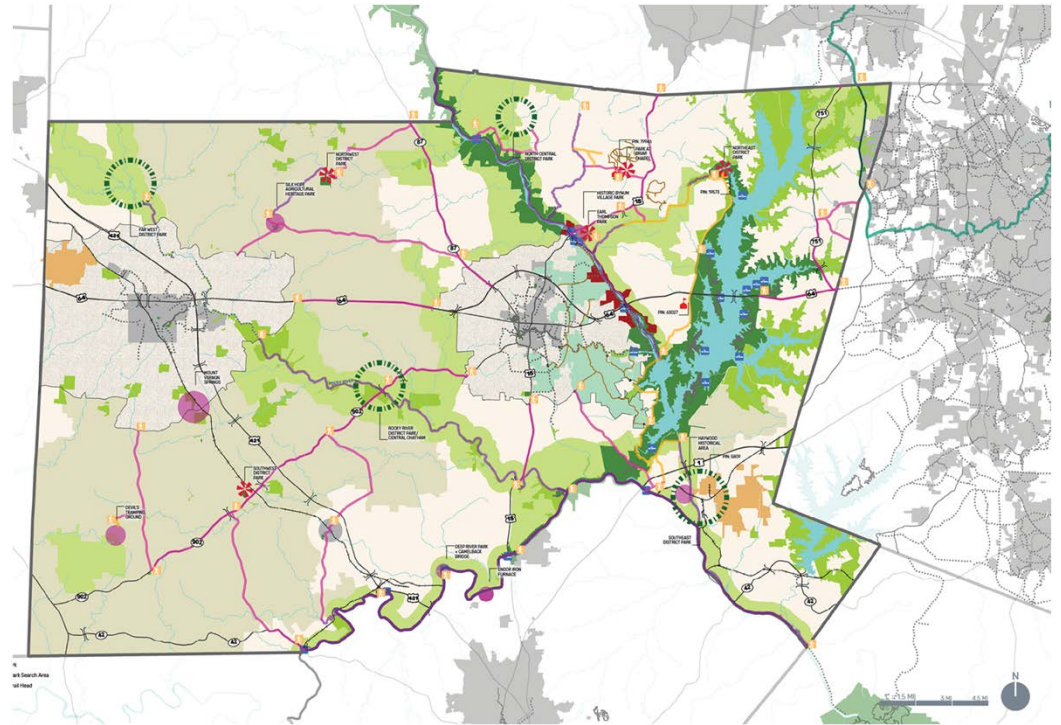
Surprising, right? How can we protect “public welfare” if we don’t know what it is?

CLARB hired a Canadian research firm, ERIN Research, to analyze “Public Welfare.” Here is their definition:

Public welfare,
in the context of Landscape Architecture,
**means the stewardship of natural environments and of human communities in order to
enhance social, economic, psychological, cultural and physical functioning,
now and in the future.**

People-centered Approach

- **Equity, Access and Inclusion**
- **Examples – walking the walk**
- **Acknowledging and addressing past and present harm**
- **Call to action**





The value of different perspectives

Diversity

Fairness

Equity

Welcoming to all

Inclusion

Removing barriers

Access

A photograph of four children of diverse backgrounds climbing a green and orange playground structure. The children are focused on their task, with one girl in the foreground wearing a white t-shirt and another in an orange t-shirt. The background shows lush green trees and a fence. A semi-transparent white box with black text is overlaid on the center of the image.

Diversity, equity and inclusion is not something you do, but who you are.



Equity

Equity = Fairness

Framework for an Equitable Future

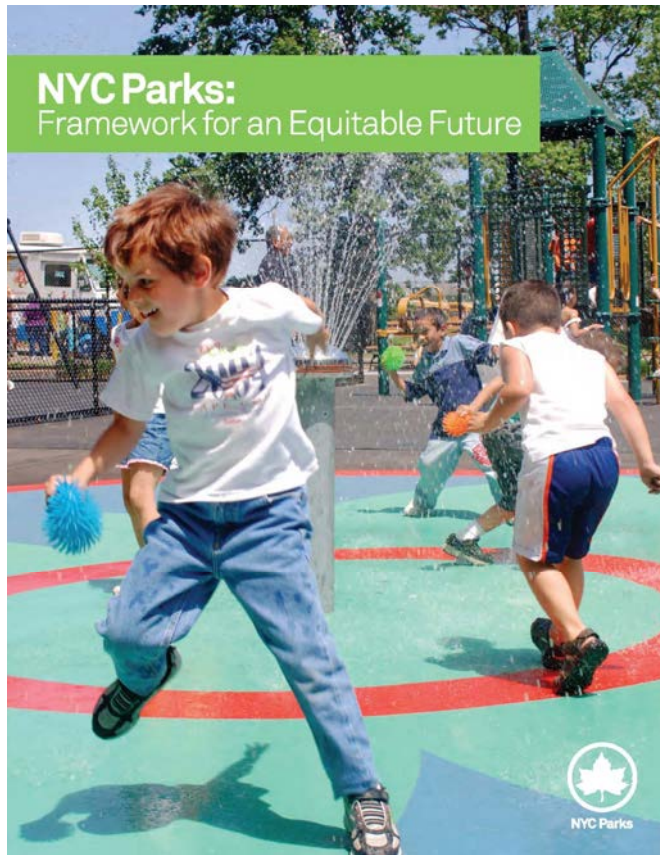


Photo: NYC Parks

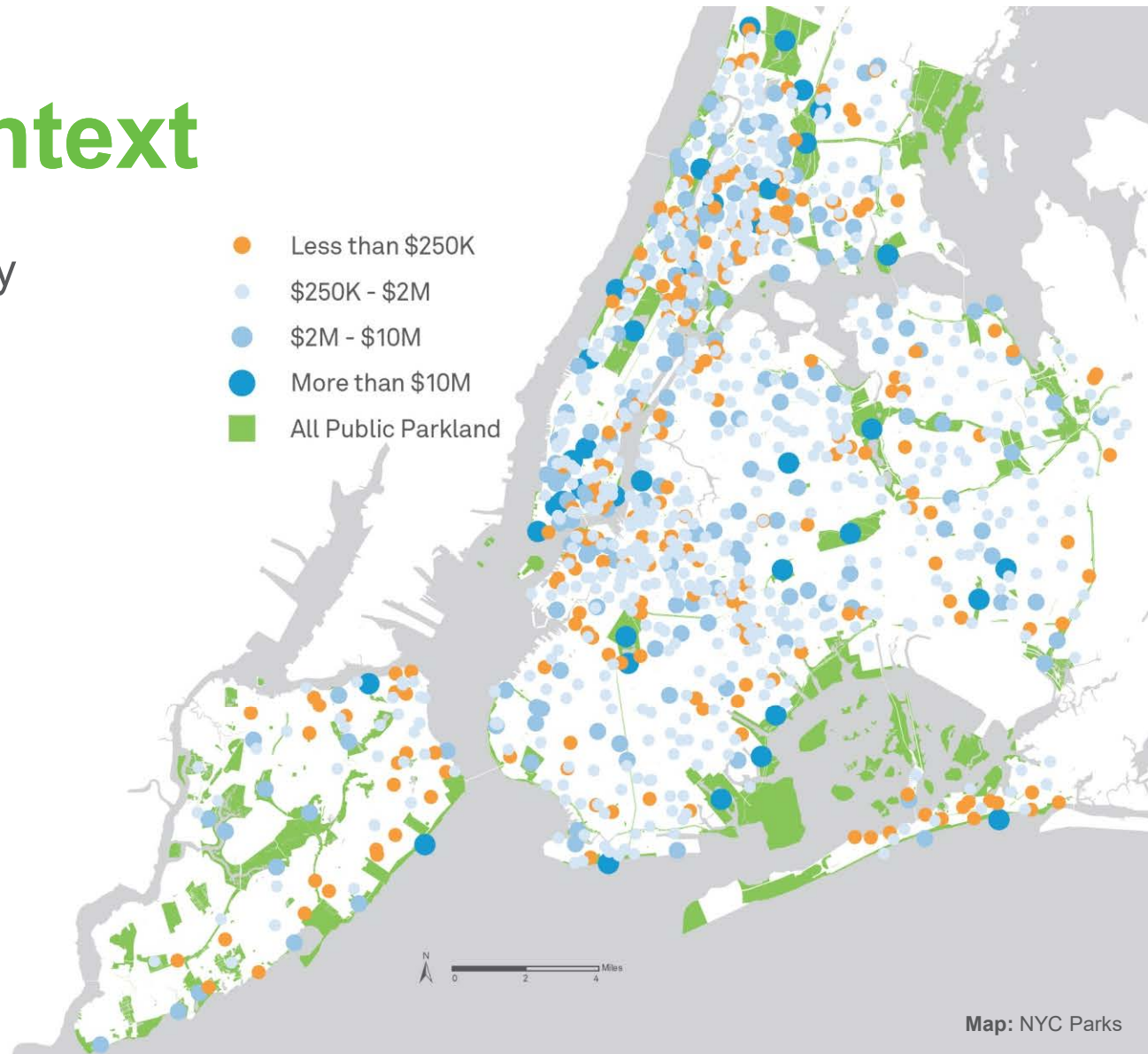
Capital in Context

- NYC Parks spent ~ **\$5.7 billion** on capital improvements over the past two decades
- Acquired **1,168 acres** since 2001
- **81.5%** New Yorkers live within a walk of a park
- Proximity vs. Quality



Equity in Context

- **215 parks** across the city received minimal capital investment - **less than \$250,000 over 20 years**



Community Parks Initiative

CPI Capital Program

Re-create **67 community parks**

Targeted Physical Improvements

136 smaller-scale physical park improvement projects

- All work done with in-house crews
- Repainting/repairing play equipment
- Repainting handball courts and multi-purpose play areas
- Repainting/repairing benches
- Improving horticultural areas and lawn restoration
- Sports coating



FOUNTAIN OF YOUTH PLAYGROUND // THE BRONX



SOUTH PACIFIC PLAYGROUND // BROOKLYN



SEAN'S PLACE // QUEENS



Park or parking lot?

Lafayette Playground, Brooklyn



Stockton Playground, Brooklyn

Design Precedent for New Parks



Spray Showers



Adult Fitness

Design Precedent for New Parks



Playground Ages 2-5



Fitness, Handball Courts, Gathering Areas

Design Precedent for New Parks



Planted Areas



Planting/Stormwater Capture

Design Precedent for New Parks



Multi-generational social seating



Garrison Park

The Bronx



Poor Access



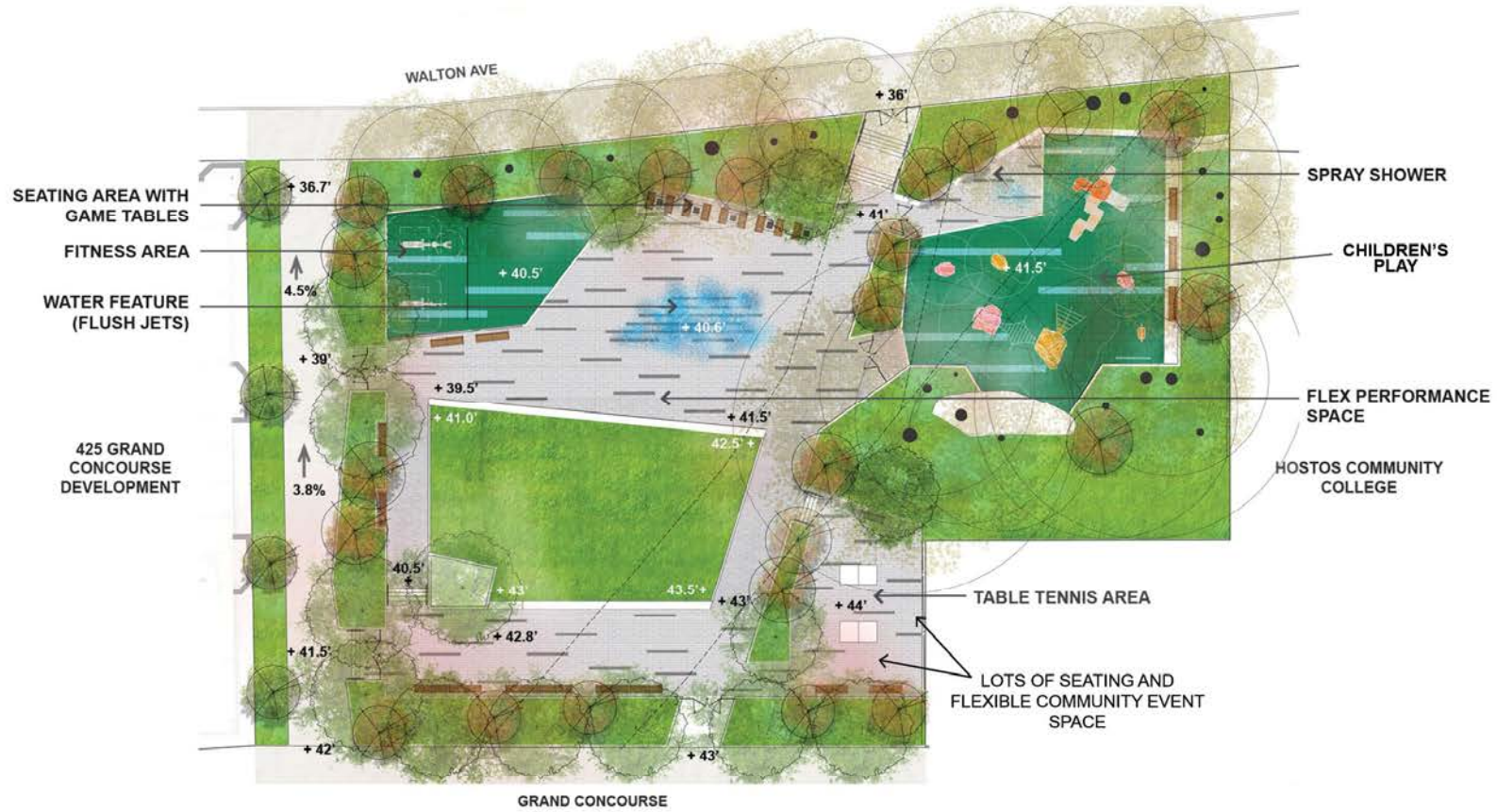
Garrison Park

Existing Conditions



Garrison Park

Concept Plan



Garrison Park

Multi-Generational Space



Garrison Park





Parks Equity Results

62 of 67 completed. Will improve 70 acres of urban parkland

Established new **“friends of” groups at 82% of CPI parks**

Usership increased by nearly 50% since Parks Equity renovation



Van Alst Playground, Queens



Access

A public square with a red and green photo booth, tables, chairs, and people sitting under umbrellas. The photo booth has the text "#MOORE SQUARE" on it. The scene is outdoors with trees and a paved area.

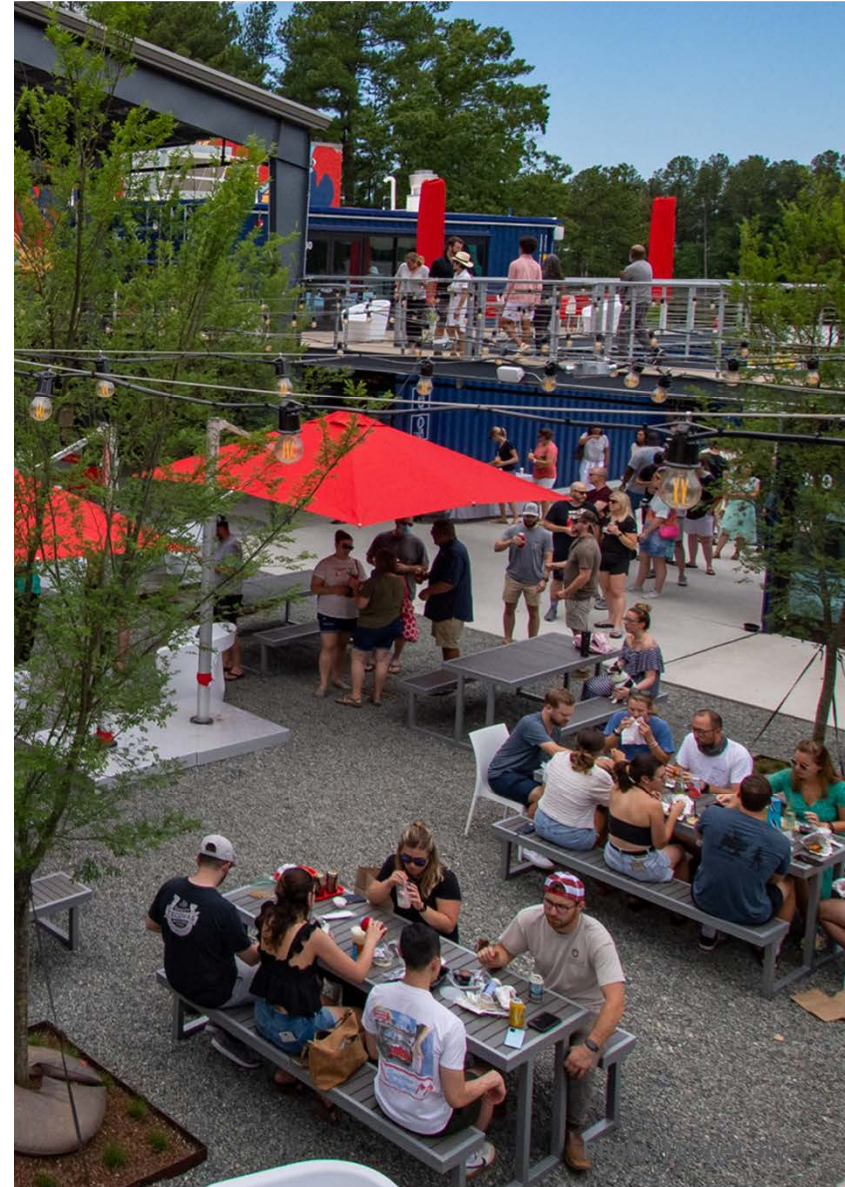
people may eat + sleep in their homes or apartments,
but **THEY LIVE IN THE PUBLIC REALM.**

Consumer Preferences

Previous generations were **consumers of goods.**

New generations are **consumers of experiences.**

We should not be just designers and planners, **but experience builders**





Reimagine the public space

What about the Public Realm?

Streets, sidewalks, bike lanes, parks, and public spaces are viewed as separate systems and managed by different agencies.

Parks	14%
Streets and sidewalks	26%
NYC Public Realm	40%



Photo: ny.curbed.com



The sidewalk adjacent to the park
should be considered the outer park
- *Frederick Law Olmsted*

Rufus King Park, Queens



Bellrose Playground, Queens



Father Jerry Popieluszko Square, Brooklyn



Parks Without Borders

One New York

The Plan for a Strong
and Just City



The City of New York
Mayor Bill de Blasio

Anthony Shorris
First Deputy Mayor

NYC

OneNYC calls for greater access to parks for all New Yorkers. **Parks Without Borders** is a key strategy to achieve this goal.

Initiative 2

Improve open spaces through Parks Without Borders, a new strategy to enhance neighborhood access and connectivity



Father Demo Square

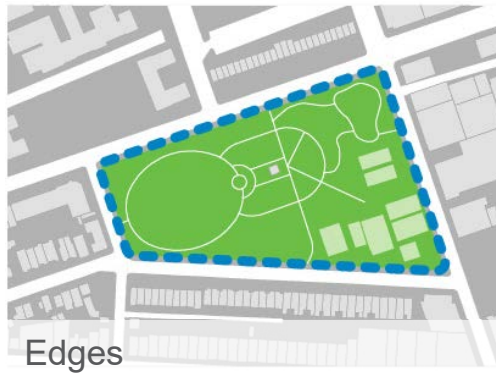
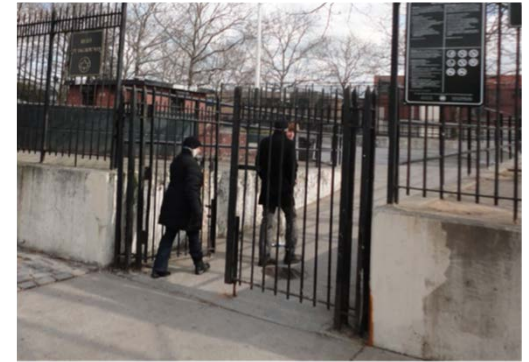
Parks Without Borders is a new effort to make our city's outdoor spaces more welcoming, accessible, and better connected to surrounding neighborhoods.

The quality of a city's outdoor space depends on an integrated system in which parks, sidewalks, pedestrian plazas, and other open spaces are connected to each other, improving access to neighborhood resources and promoting community interaction.

To make Parks Without Borders a reality, NYC Parks will take a new approach to park entrances and boundaries where they most directly interact with the surrounding community. NYC Parks will improve fences and gates and add other amenities, such as public art and landscaping, to make entrances more inviting. Along park boundaries, we

Excerpt from OneNYC Report

Parks Without Borders is a **new design approach** focusing on improving the areas where parks and neighborhoods meet: **entrances, edges, and park-adjacent spaces.**



Entrances

Opening sight lines, removing gates, and adding furnishings and amenities can draw more people into the park.



Before



After

Edges

Allowing better views into the park and making better use of the sidewalk can make neighborhoods more beautiful.



Before



After

Park-Adjacent Spaces

Rethinking underused spaces and adding amenities can create new centers of community activity.



Before



After

Travers Park

Queens

> United States • NY • Queens Co. • Jackson Heig



Capturing Park-Adjacent Spaces



NYC Parks



+



+



=



Travers Park

Existing Edge Condition



Travers Park

Transforming the Edge



Travers Park

Perimeter Amenities



Travers Park

Existing Adjacent Space



Travers Park

Old Street Bed Transformed



Travers Park

Extending the Beauty of the Park



Travers Park





Inclusion

Inclusion

- To be included and not excluded
- **For all people** in design process and community engagement
- Avoid designing **exclusive** public spaces
- Make the spaces and places that are welcoming and safe for all
- Create a sense of belonging. ***“I feel welcome here. I belong here.”***



Loitering – to stand or wait around idly or without an apparent purpose –
Oxford Dictionary

In 2017, NYC Parks removed
“loitering” as a park rule as part of
Criminal Justice Reform Act.



Arts in Parks

This booth was informed by the **“Yes Loitering” Project**.

A public space and safety youth initiative that sought:

- to **investigate how teens might be excluded from or targeted in public spaces** and
- develop ideas on **how to create more youth-powered spaces**.



Chat Travieso, *The Boogie Down (Youth) Booth*
June 1, 2019 to May 31, 2020
Keltch Park, Bronx

**No adults except
in the company
of a child**



www.nyc.gov/parks



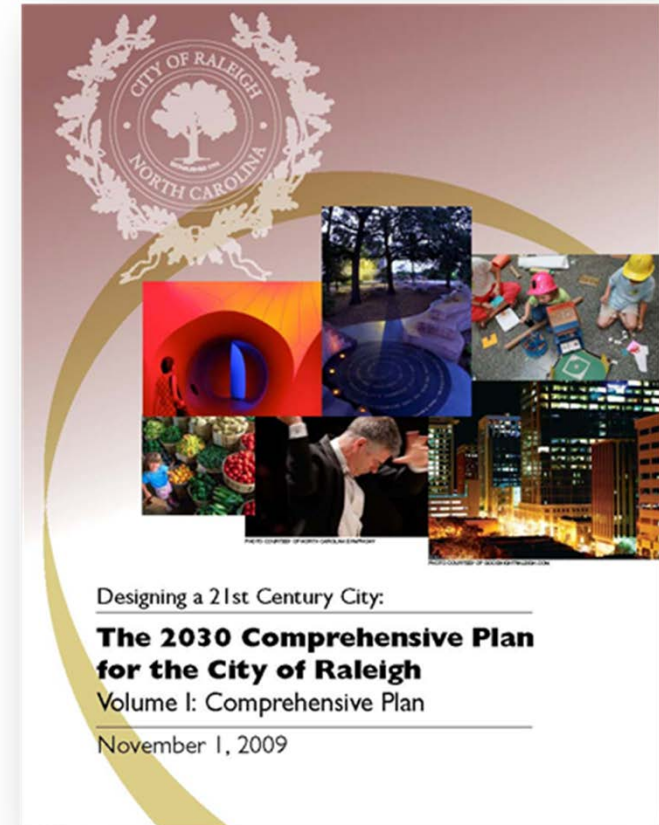






Role of Public Agencies

- Long-Range Planning (**fairness**)
- Capital Improvement Plan (**fairness**)
- Zoning (**fairness, remove barriers**)
- Hiring/promoting (**fairness and welcoming**)
- Workplace & organizational culture (**welcoming**)
- Design Guidelines (**fairness**)
- Enforcement (**fairness**)
- Public Engagement (**fairness, welcoming, remove barriers**)



KEY THEMES FOR THE PLAN



Economic Prosperity & Equity



Expanding Housing Choices



Managing Our Growth



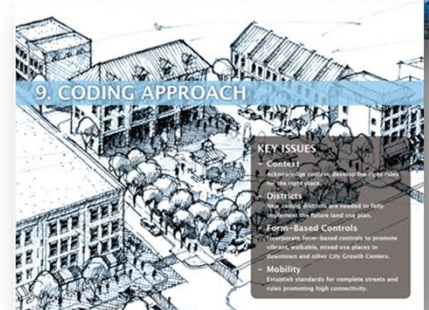
Coordinating Land Use & Transportation



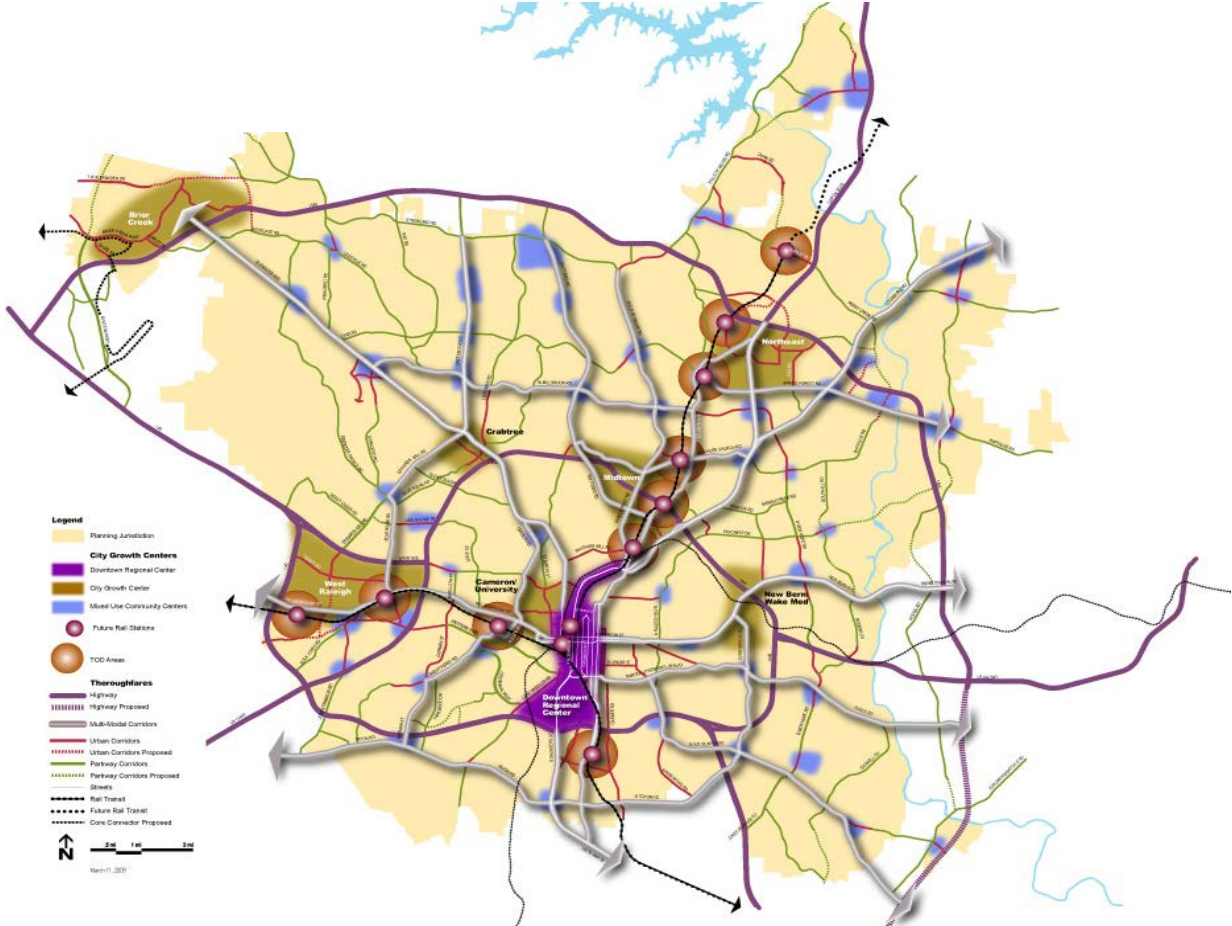
Greenprint Raleigh—Sustainable Development



Growing Successful Neighborhoods & Communities



BLUEPRINT - GROWTH FRAMEWORK MAP



Source: City of Raleigh



Photo credit: wbsm.com

Unjust Planning Practices (Past & Present)

- Redlining
- Segregation
- Urban Renewal Plans and the use of Eminent Domain to build infrastructure such as highways
- Destruction of neighborhoods for transportation projects
- Restrictive Covenants
- Exclusive single-family zoning or anti-density
- Rules, policies, regulations, laws and ordinances
- Uneven code enforcement
- **The unjust practices still have implications today**

Closer Look at Aspirational Principles #3

People who participate in the planning process shall work to achieve economic, social and racial equity.

- a. Create plans that ensure equitable access to resources and opportunities which, in turn, structure prospects for upward economic mobility, a sense of belonging, and an enhanced quality of life. **Recognize our unique responsibility to eliminate historic patterns of inequity tied to planning decisions represented in documents such as zoning ordinances and land use plans.**

- b. **Recognize and work to mitigate the impacts of existing plans and procedures that result in patterns of discrimination, displacement, or environmental injustice.** Plan for anticipated public and private sector investment in historically low-income neighborhoods to ensure benefits defined by the local community. Promote an increase in the supply and quality of affordable housing and improved services and facilities with equal access for all residents, including people with disabilities.

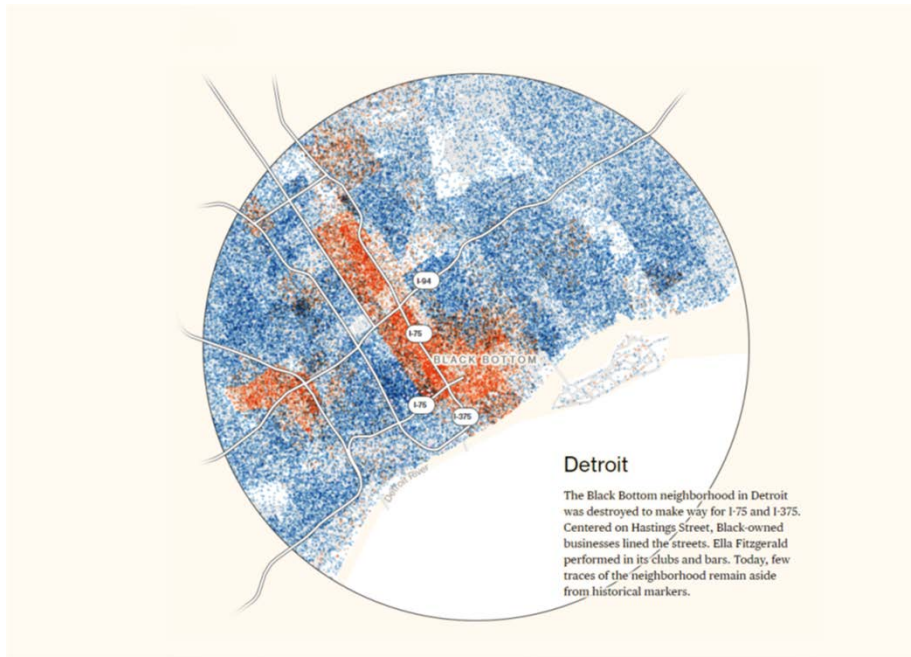
Examples of past harm

Toxicity is not just caused by hazardous waste, but from centuries of unjust practices.



Natural Reactions to Stress

PHYSICAL	EMOTIONAL	BEHAVIORAL	COGNITIVE	SPIRITUAL
Exhaustion	Shock and disbelief	Not acting like yourself	Trouble concentrating	Feelings of emptiness or loss of purpose
Headache	Denial	Emotional outbursts	Memory problems	Questioning basic values and beliefs
Dizziness	Sorrow	Argumentativeness	Trouble making decisions	Withdrawing from or suddenly turning to spirituality
Low Energy	Numbness	Hyperactivity	Raised or lowered alertness	Cynicism
Nausea	Fear	Social withdrawal	Trouble identifying familiar objects	Alienation or loss of connection from others
Sweating, chills	Agitation	Restlessness	Flashbacks or intrusive images	
Rapid Heart Rate	Irritability and anger	Changes in appetite, sex drive or sleep patterns	Confusion	
Trouble Sleeping	Grief and guilt	Smoking or using drugs or alcohol		
Trouble Breathing				Source: NYC Department of Mental Health and Hygiene



Source: Detriotography.com



Source: Crainsdetroit.com

Black Bottom in Detroit neighborhood was destroyed to make way for I-75 and I-375



Construction of the Cross Bronx Expressway

Photo credit: Lehman College Library (CUNY)



Aspirational Principle 3.2

Seek social justice by identifying and working to expand choice and opportunity for all persons, emphasizing our special responsibility to plan with those who have been marginalized or disadvantaged and to promote racial and economic equity. **We shall urge the alteration of policies, institutions, and decisions that do not help meet their such needs.**



Source: Indy Week

Urban Renewal Act (North Carolina)

160A-501. Findings and declaration of policy.

That such areas are:

- economic or social liabilities, inimical and injurious to the **public health, safety, morals and welfare** of the residents of the State,
- **harmful to the social and economic well-being of the entire communities in which they exist,**
- depreciating values therein, reducing tax revenues, and thereby depreciating further the general community-wide values.

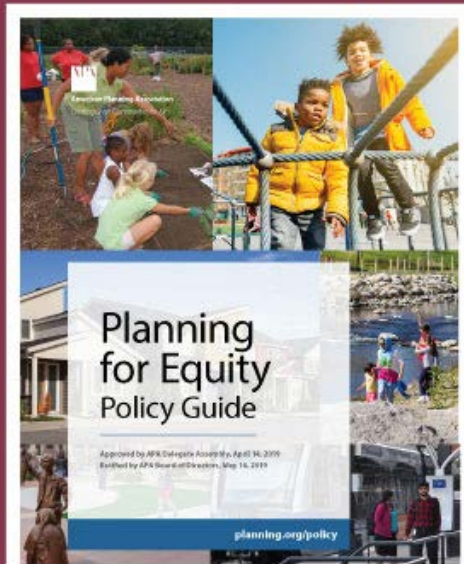
The existence of such areas contributes substantially and increasingly to the:

- **spread of disease and crime,**
- **necessitating excessive and disproportionate expenditures of public funds for the preservation of the public health and safety, for crime prevention, correction, prosecution, punishment and the treatment of juvenile delinquency and**
- **for the maintenance of adequate police, fire and accident protection and other public services and facilities,**
- constitutes an **economic and social liability**, substantially impairs or arrests the sound growth of communities.

Approaches and tools to address past harm

- Apologize at the beginning of public engagement process for harm created by the planning profession
- Ensure public meetings are welcoming to all
- Conduct a study to understand the implications of past harm
- **Undertake an equity audit or assessment**
- Undertake an audit of the zoning code and planning documents and ordinances
- Allow urban renewal plans to sunset
- **Suggest a new methodology for selecting capital projects**
- **Repair the urban renewal scars from clearance for highways, infrastructure and large-scale projects**
- **Examine the name of streets, public buildings and public spaces and monuments installed**
- **Identify scared sites and buildings**
- Recommend a racial or social equity fund

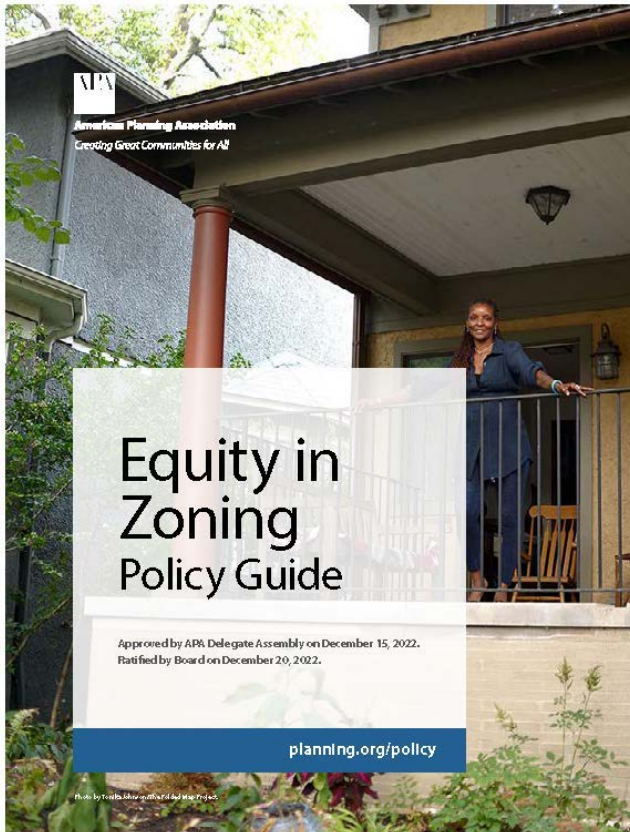
APA's Planning for Equity Policy Guide (2019)



Planning for Equity Policy Guide

- Planners should use and "equity lens"
- Ethical Responsibility to challenge practices that result in policies that have disproportional impacts
- Diversity in the planning profession is important
- Cross-Cutting Equity Issues
- Equity in All Policies in Practice

APA's Equity in Zoning Policy Guide (2023)



- What is equity in zoning
- The Rules – Equity in substantive zoning regulations
- The People – Equity in Zoning Procedures
- The Map – Equity in Zoning Maps



- Bridges
- Roads
- Sidewalks
- Water supply
- Water resource management
- Flood management
- Sewage and drainage systems



U.S. Department of Transportation



Equity Action Plan

January 2022

Executive Summary

The U.S. Department of Transportation (USDOT or Department) is committed to pursuing a comprehensive approach to advancing equity for all. In response to Executive Order 13985, [Advancing Racial and Social Support for Underserved Communities Through the Federal Government](#), this Equity Action Plan highlights key actions USDOT will undertake to expand access and opportunity to all Americans while focusing on underserved, overburdened, and disadvantaged communities. The actions described here fall under four areas: wealth creation, power of community, interventions, and expanding access. Actions include providing technical assistance to disadvantaged businesses, reinvigorating USDOT's programmatic commitment of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act, launching a national local assistance center, and developing a national transportation career measure. These actions were developed through an inclusive effort, combining knowledge, experience, viewpoints, and data from the public, experts, and USDOT staff.

- Wealth Creation
- Power of Community
- Interventions
- Expanding Access

Developed by the Equity Leadership Team, a group of 30+ senior leaders from across the Department, and supported by a task force with over 150 members, USDOT has already taken important steps to address historic inequities in the transportation system, but more needs to be done. The actions outlined in this plan represent the next steps of USDOT's efforts to advance equity and fulfill the mission of USDOT.



- Wealth Creation
- Power of Community
- Interventions
- Expanding Access

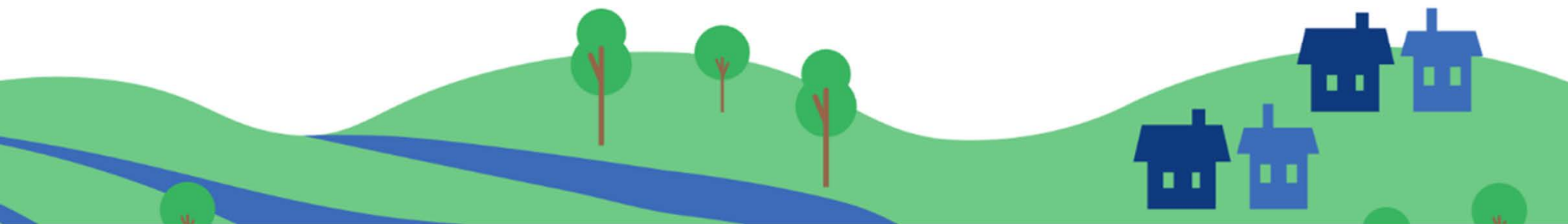
Coming Together for Equity



U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Highway Administration / Federal Transit Administration

- Fairness in mobility and accessibility
- Equitable levels of access to affordable and reliable transportation options
- Serve populations that are traditionally underserved
- Environmental justice considerations and mitigation
- Understand the benefits and burdens of projects

Coming Together for Equity



Executive Order 12898

Directs Federal agencies to **identify and address, as appropriate, disproportionately high and adverse human health or environmental effects**, including interrelated social and economic effects, on low-income or minority populations resulting from their programs, policies, and activities.

Executive Order 13985

The Federal Government should **pursue a comprehensive approach to advancing equity for all, including people of color and others who have been historically underserved, marginalized, and adversely affected by persistent poverty and inequality.**



Federal Grants Aim to Reconnect Communities Divided by Highways

The US Department of Transportation is giving \$185 million to 45 projects that redesign or remove 1960s-era freeways — and repair the neighborhoods they displaced.

Source: Bloomberg News, CityLab



- **American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA)**
- **Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL)**
- **Infrastructure Investment Jobs Act (IIJA)**

Source: City of Raleigh

When it comes to your professional obligation to protect the public welfare, is your approach:

Intentional or incidental?

Explicit or implicit?



Source: Microsoft Stock Image

Now more than ever, we must understand our **professional obligation to serve the public interest and protect the public health, safety and welfare**

Embrace your sense or purpose, code and values as planners, engineers, and public works professionals to plan for the future, **but to also acknowledge and address past harm.**

American Rescue Plan Act, Bipartisan Infrastructure Law and Infrastructure Investment Jobs Act offer enormous opportunities for our communities.

Let us draw inspiration from USDOT, FHA, FTA and the Executive Orders as we rebuild our towns, cities and regions.

Let us pledge to think differently as design, plan and build for the future.



Thank you

