



Creating Thriving Communities in Colorado: An Equity Action Guide

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Department of Public Health & Environment

Learning objectives

- ✓ Understanding of diversity, inclusion, equality & equity
- ✓ Describe an innovative approach to communicating and sharing data
- ✓ More questions!



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Who we are

Colorado Office of Health Equity

Mission

Build partnerships to mobilize community power and transform systems to advance health equity and environmental justice.

Vision

Every Coloradan has equitable access and opportunity to thrive regardless of who they are or where they come from.



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WHAT IS EQUITY, ANYWAY?

A BRIEF INTRODUCTION



SOCIAL DETERMINANTS OF HEALTH



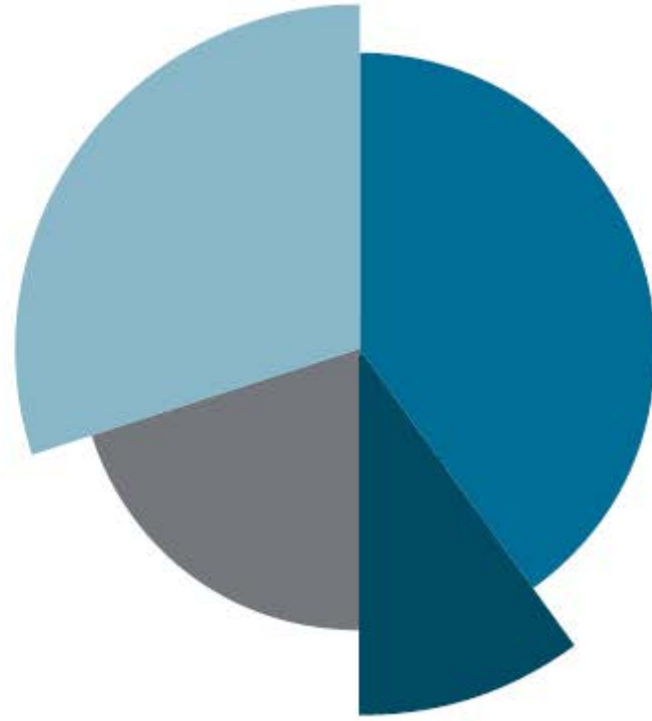
30%

BEHAVIORS



20%

CLINICAL CARE



40%



SOCIAL + ECONOMIC FACTORS

10%



PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT



HEALTH DISPARITY VS. HEALTH INEQUITY

Health Disparities

Differences in health status and mortality rates across populations

e.g. Cancer rates in the elderly vs children

Health Inequities

Differences in health status and mortality rates across population groups that are systemic, avoidable & unjust

e.g. Breast cancer mortality for black women vs white women

Equity is when everyone, regardless of who they are or where they come from, has the opportunity to thrive.

“ This requires eliminating barriers like poverty, and repairing injustices in systems such as education, health, criminal justice and transportation. ”

— Colorado Office of Health Equity



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AN EQUITY APPROACH:

EQUITY IS ABOUT

Meeting people's needs based on their unique circumstances to create success.

A process and results that are both fair and just.

Removing barriers so everyone can thrive.

What you do and how you do it.

EQUITY IS NOT ABOUT

Giving everyone the same. This is equality.

Having good intentions with no follow-through.

Helping people survive.

Doing something just to get the job done. Checking the box.

EQUITY VS EQUALITY

Equality



Equity



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EQUITY IS PART OF A COMPLEX CONTINUUM



Diversity



Inclusion



Equality



Equity



INGREDIENTS OF COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

HOW AND WHY ENGAGE OUR COMMUNITIES?





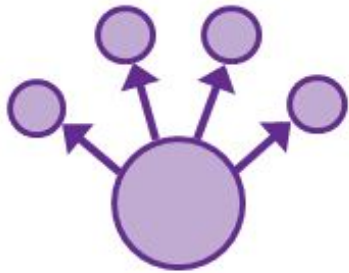
COMMUNITY ARE

People who are most impacted by inequities (such as, people of color, LGBTQIA, women, etc.) as a result of systems and policies that have created advantages for some while disadvantaging others. These communities have historically been left out of the decision making process.

Engaging systematically disenfranchised community recognizes their power and is grounded in the principles of equity & justice.

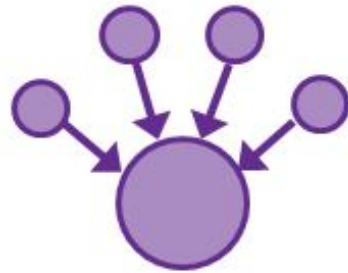
COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT SPECTRUM

Inform



Provide the public with balanced and objective information to assist them in understanding the problem, alternatives, opportunities and/or solutions

Consult



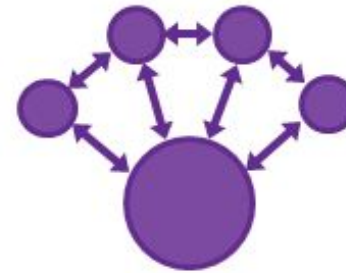
Obtain public feedback on analysis, alternatives and/or decisions

Involve



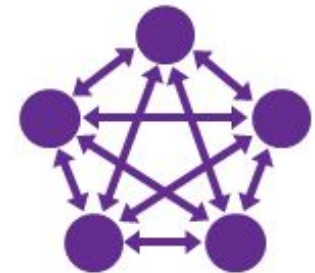
Work directly with community throughout the process to ensure that concerns and aspirations are consistently understood and considered

Collaborate



Partner with community in each aspect of the decision, including the development of alternatives and the identification of the preferred solution

Empower



Place final decision making in the hands of the community

THE SIX BASES OF SOCIAL POWER FRENCH & RAVEN, 1959

- **Legitimate Power:** title or rank
- **Expert Power:** based on skills & knowledge
- **Referent Power:** reciprocity & mutual respect
- **Reward Power:** ability to give or take away rewards
- **Coercive Power:** ability to punish
- **Informational Power:** ability to control & share information



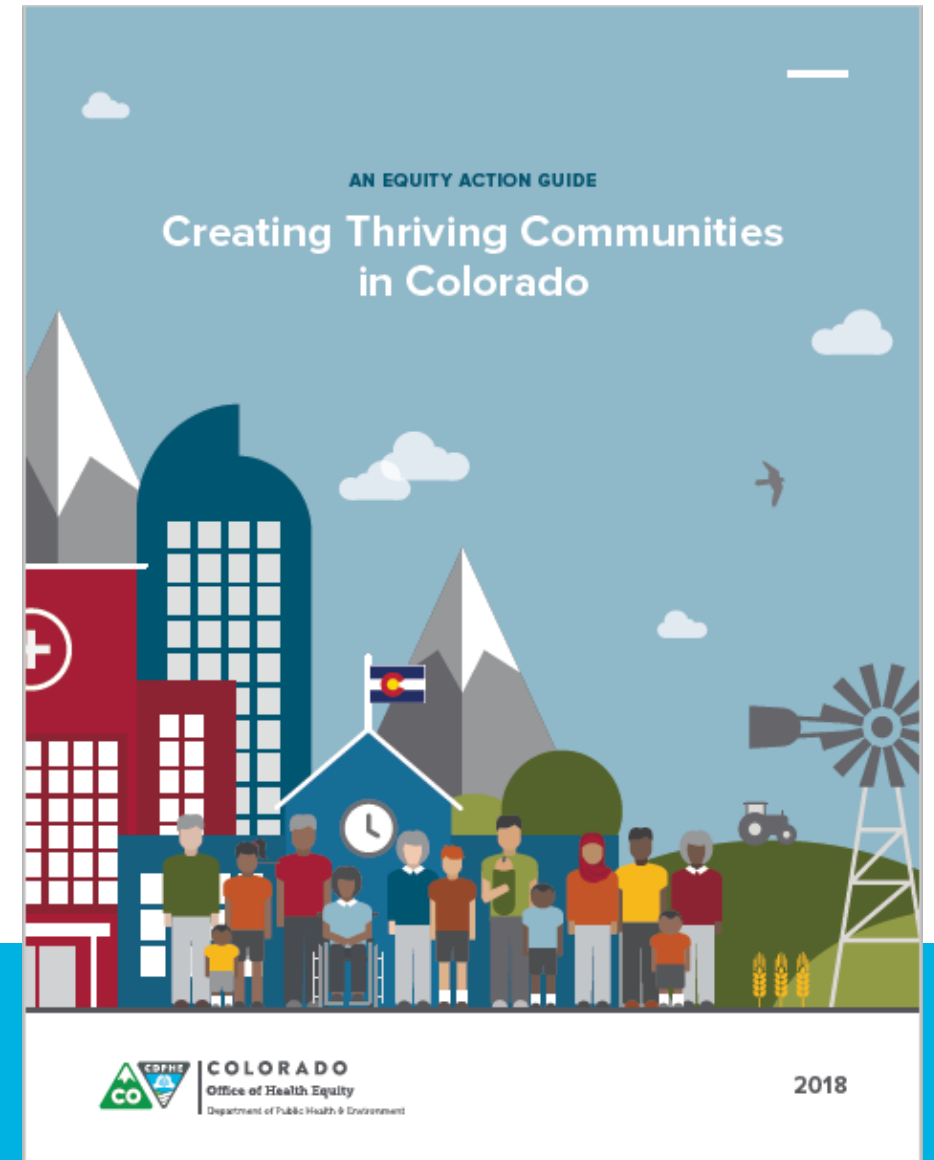
TURN TO THE PERSON NEXT TO YOU...

- Think about a project, program, or challenge you're facing in your work
 - How can you apply principles from each stage of the diversity-to-equity continuum to this project or challenge?
 - How can you use the community engagement spectrum to involve your community in addressing this challenge?

BACKGROUND

OUR STARTING POINT

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Why an Equity Action Guide?

- Prioritize community voice
- Collect data on relationships between social, physical & environmental health inequities
- Demonstrate the importance of factors outside traditional health in shaping community well-being
- Data democracy - share data with the community in a meaningful way
- Catalyze change



ACTION FOR GOVERNMENT

Lived experiences are data. Acknowledge community power and wisdom when designing policies, practices and programming, by incorporating community voice in decision-making. For ideas on how to do this, refer to The Colorado Office of Health Equity's *Authentic Community Engagement to Advance Equity*, found at <https://www.colorado.gov/pacific/cdphe/suite-of-tools>



ACTION FOR COMMUNITY ORGANIZERS

Use this Guide to mobilize community voice around what creates health and drives change.



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ADVISORY COMMITTEE

ADVISORY COMMITTEE



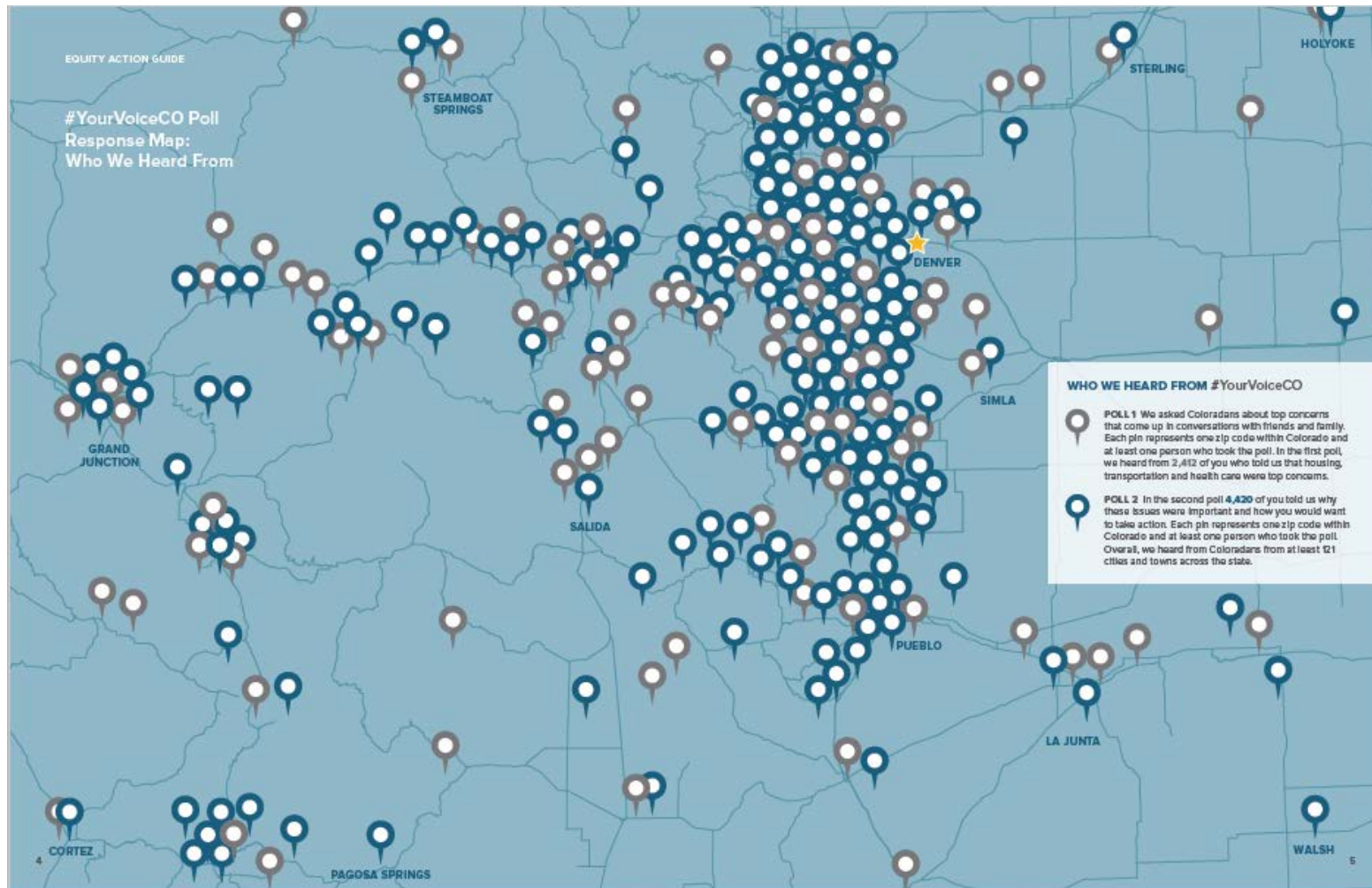


DATA GATHERING AND REVIEW

QUALITATIVE & QUANTITATIVE



INNOVATIVE DATA COLLECTION



SOCIAL MEDIA POLLING

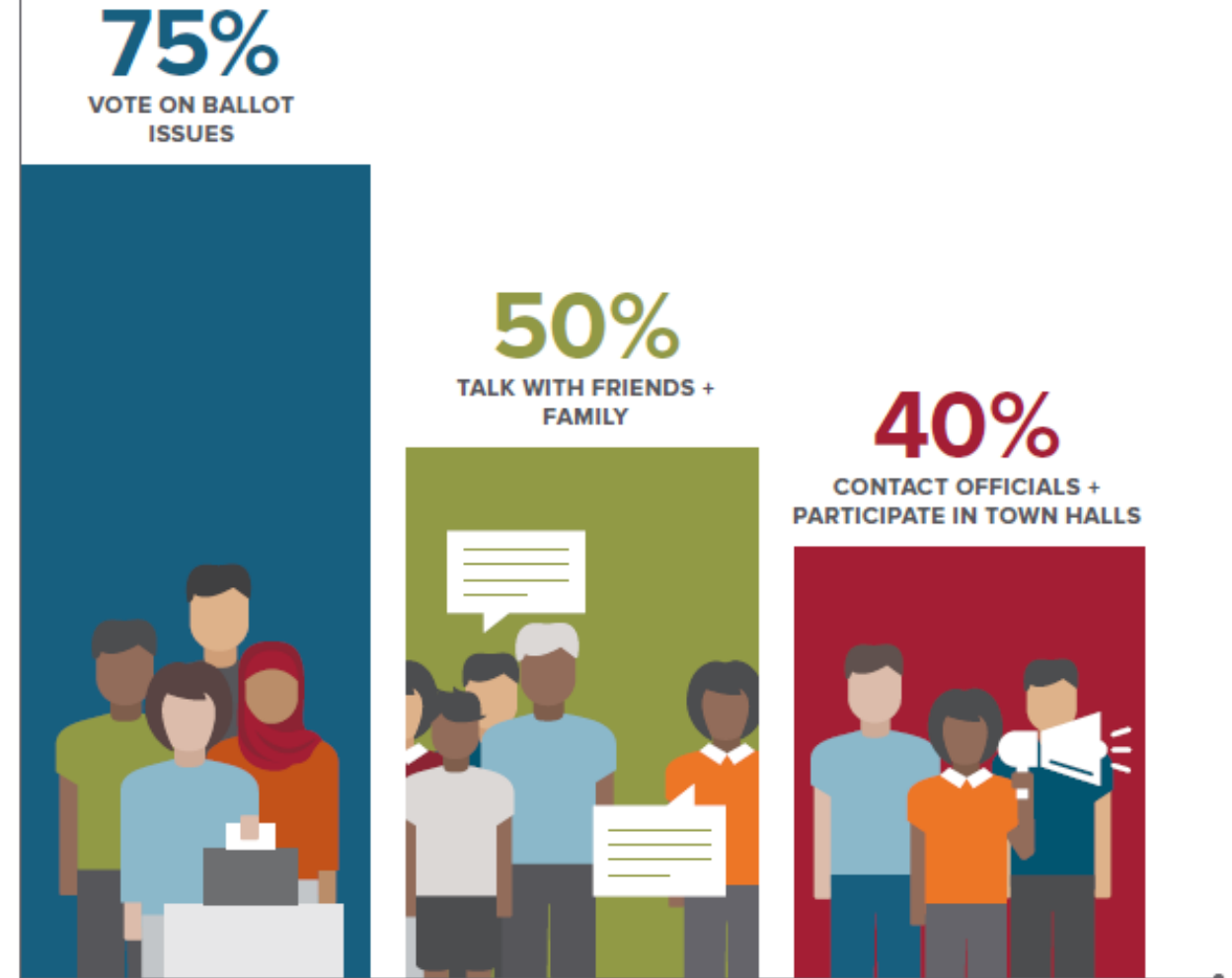
Poll 1: We asked Coloradans about top concerns that come up in conversations with friends and family. Each pin represents one zip code within Colorado and at least one person who took the poll. In the first poll, we heard from **2,412** of you who told us that housing, transportation and health care were top concerns.

Poll 2: In the second poll **4,420** of you told us why these issues were important and how you would want to take action. Each pin represents one zip code within Colorado and at least one person who took the poll. Overall, we heard from Coloradans from at least 121 cities and towns across the state.

Which aspects of housing, health, and transportation were most important to Coloradans?

- Cost of healthcare
- Cost of housing
- Infrastructure, such as roads

How would Coloradans choose to take action?



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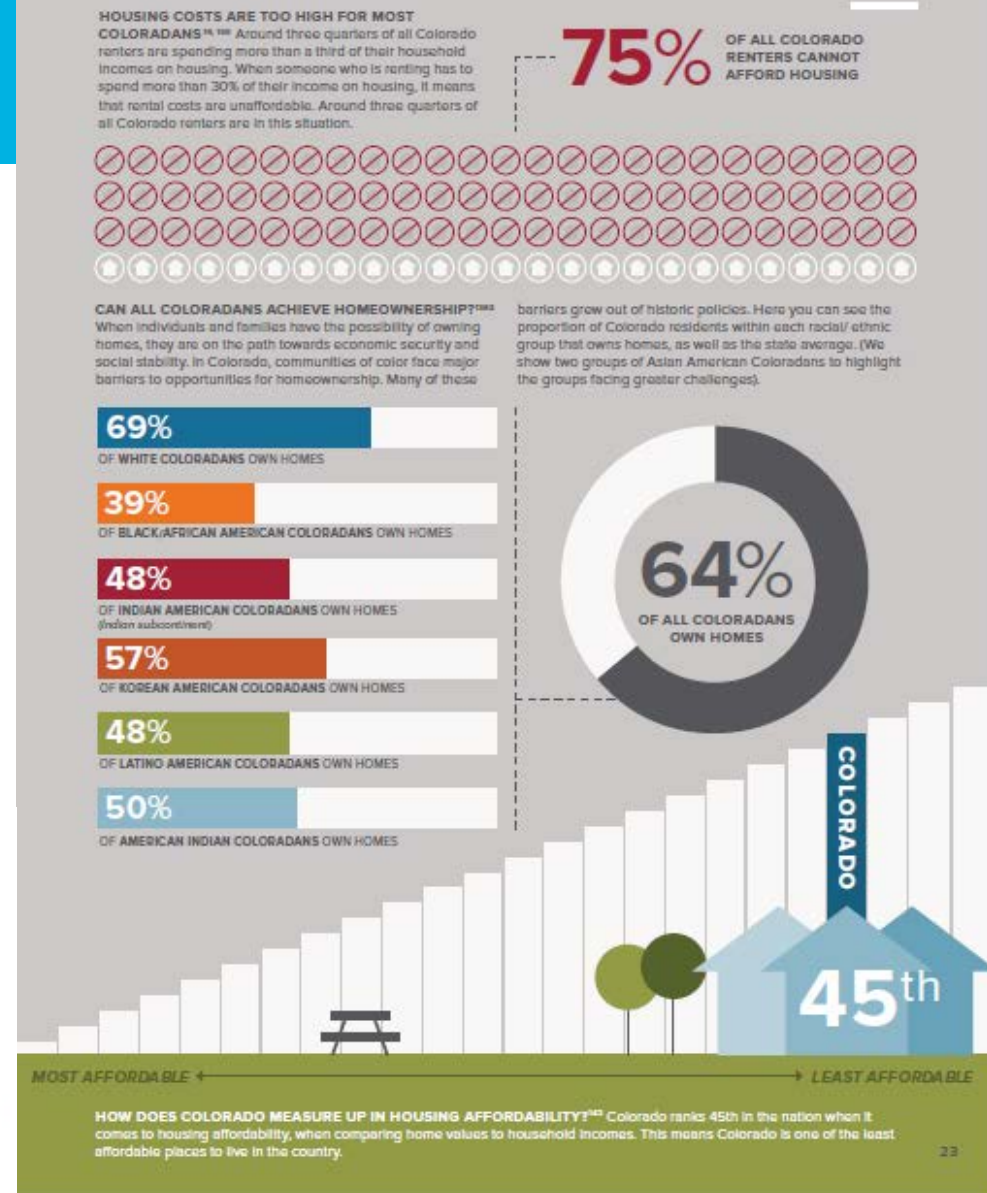
SECONDARY DATA REVIEW

- Historical, present-day and future time-points
- Inequities in health, housing and transportation
- Range of sources
- Mainly focused on CO level data, but also reviewed national data



ACTION FOR GOVERNMENT + FUNDERS

Invest in closing data gaps, including collecting data on inequities based on demographics such as gender, sexual identity, age, and others.



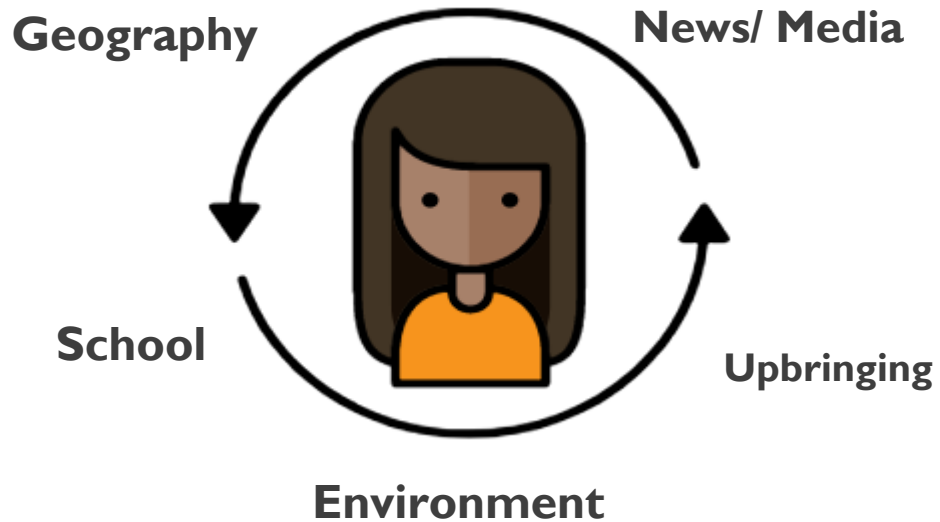


DESIGNING THE GUIDE

FRAMING THE DATA – NARRATIVE & VISUALS



WHY IS FRAMING DATA IMPORTANT?



Worldview

(lens thru which we see the world)

FRAMING DATA TO ADVANCE EQUITY

TIP #1: PROVIDE STRUCTURAL CONTEXT

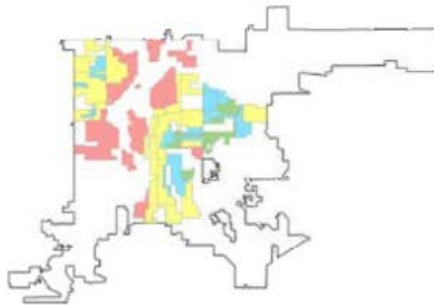
- Tie data to **systems**, not individuals: include data on structural, environmental and social conditions



TIP #1: PROVIDE STRUCTURAL CONTEXT PRESENT DAY IMPACT OF REDLINING

PRESENT-DAY IMPACT OF REDLINING Compare the historic map of redlined Denver to the current maps of Denver below. Do you notice any neighborhood trends with the Denver maps on these two pages? Do you notice certain Denver neighborhoods that consistently have darker shades across maps?⁹¹

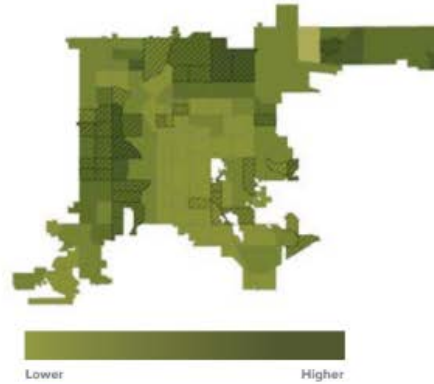
WHERE HISTORIC REDLINING TOOK PLACE IN TODAY'S DENVER



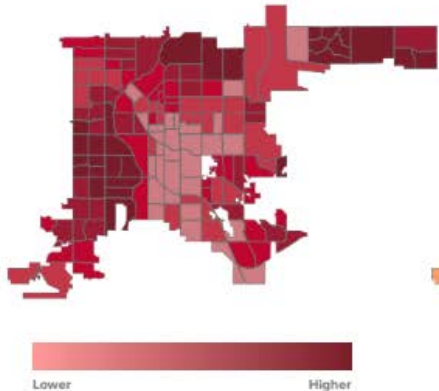
Terms used to designate neighborhoods on historic redlining map:

- "Best"
- "Still Desirable"
- "Definitely Declining"
- "Hazardous"

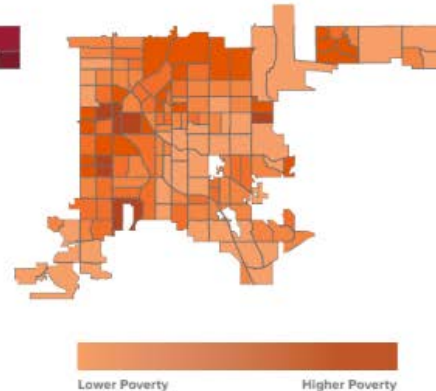
DENVER TODAY: % OF PEOPLE REPORTING POOR MENTAL HEALTH This map shows where Denverites who report not having good mental health over the last month are living. If a neighborhood has a diagonal line, it means the area is also low-income.⁹²



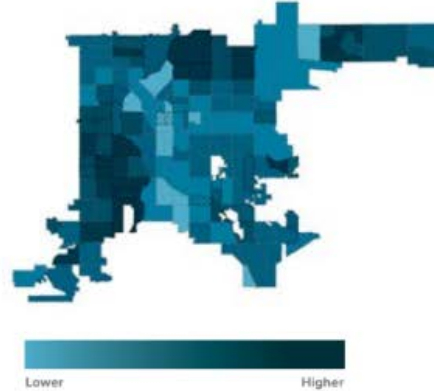
DENVER TODAY: % OF PEOPLE OF COLOR⁹³



DENVER TODAY: % OF PEOPLE BELOW THE FEDERAL POVERTY LINE⁹⁴



DENVER TODAY: % OF ADULTS WITH DIABETES This map shows the percentage of adults with diabetes. If a neighborhood has a diagonal line, it means the area is also low-income.⁹⁵



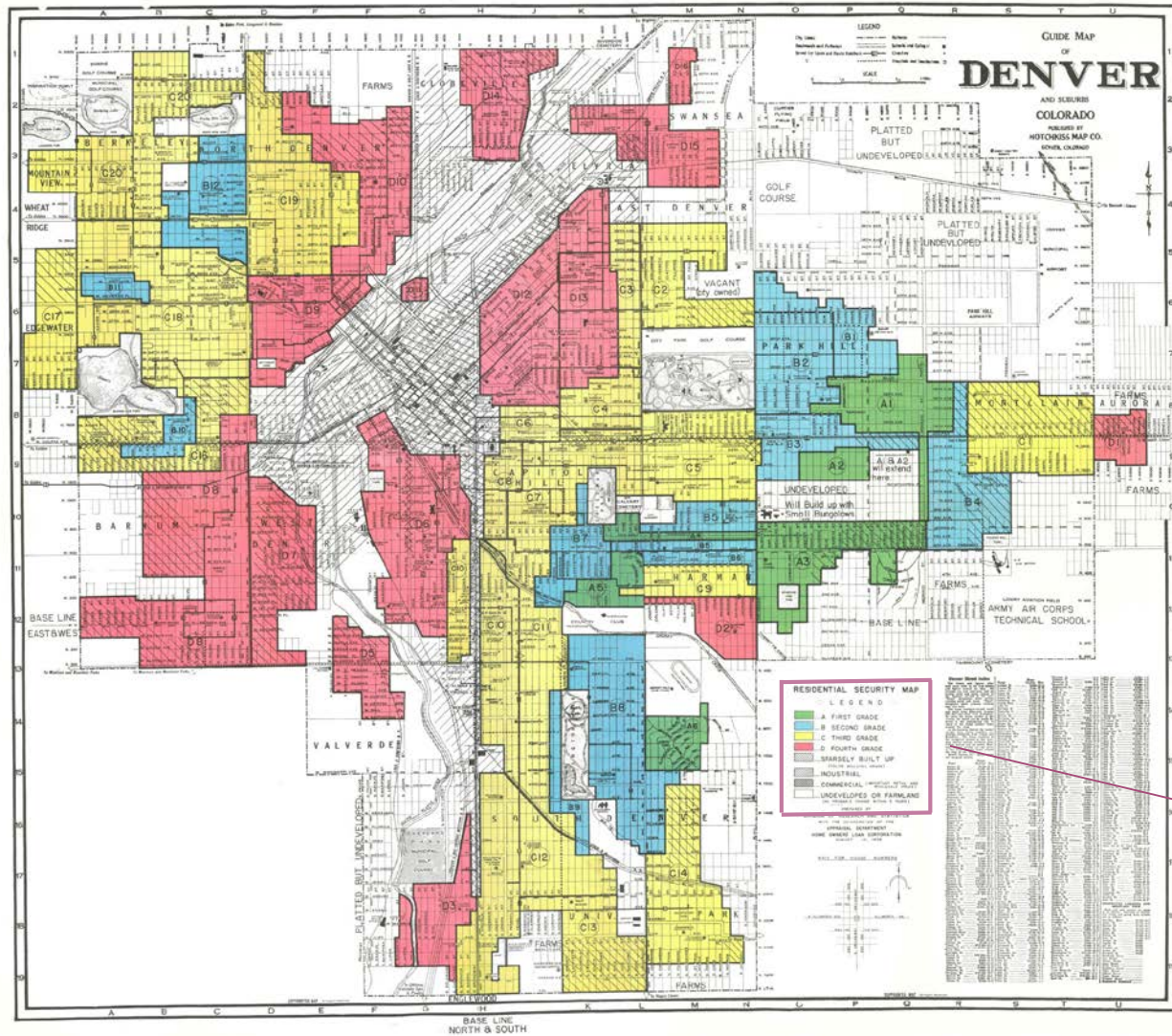
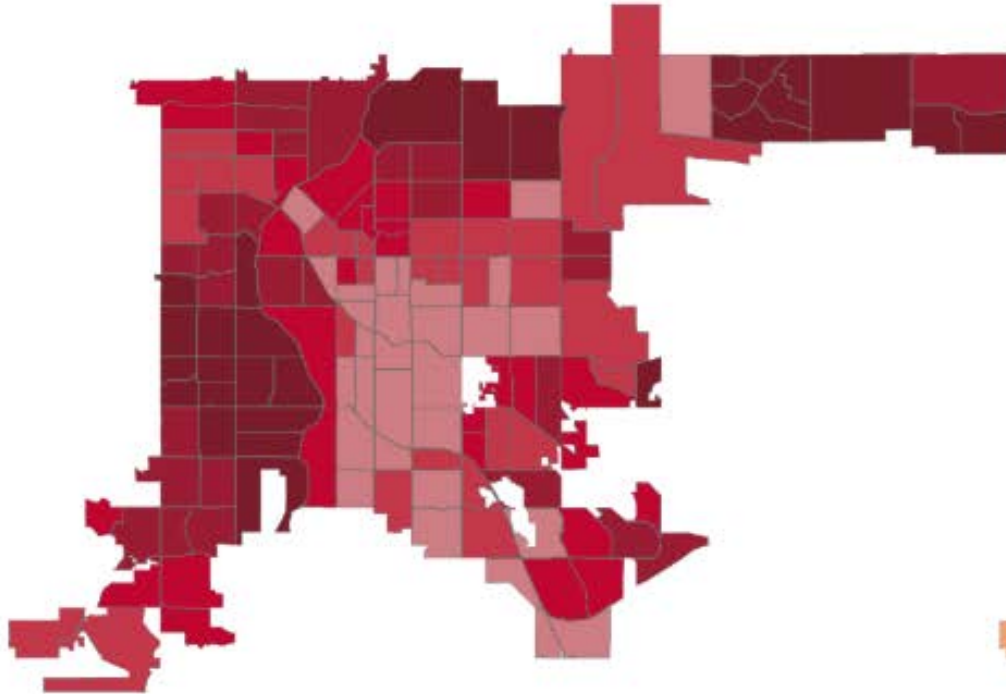


Image source: Mapping Inequality Project

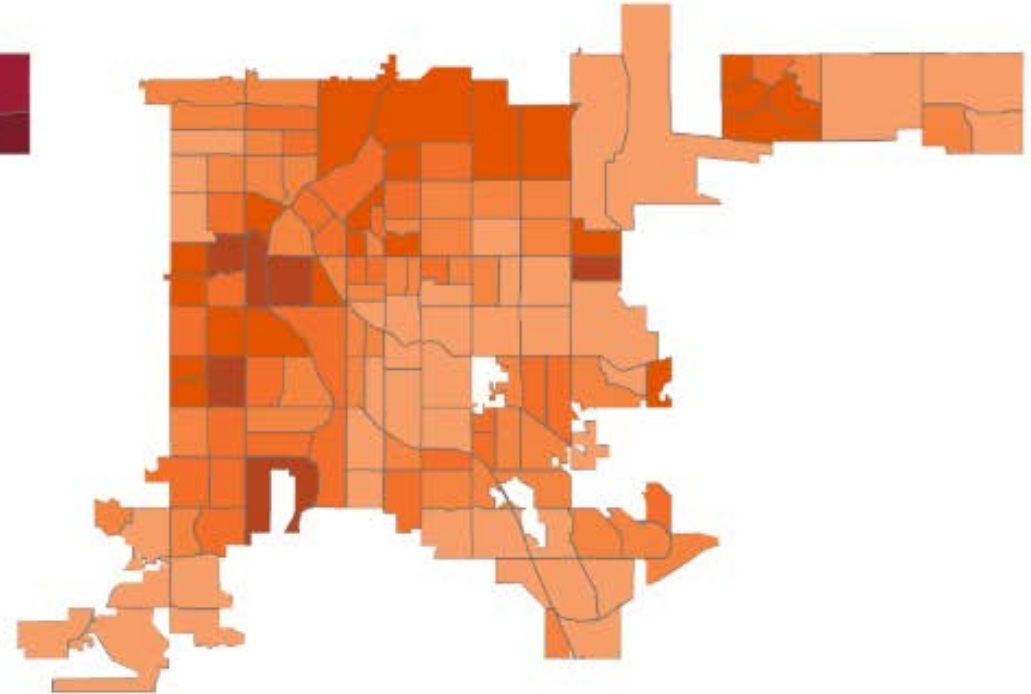
DENVER TODAY: % OF PEOPLE OF COLOR¹⁸²



Lower

Higher

DENVER TODAY: % OF PEOPLE BELOW THE FEDERAL POVERTY LINE¹⁸¹



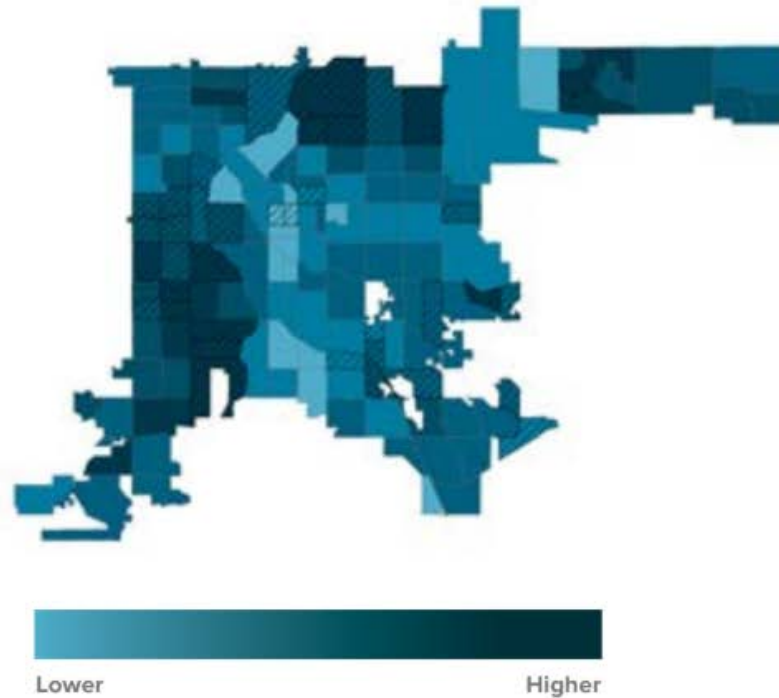
Lower Poverty

Higher Poverty

DENVER TODAY: % OF PEOPLE REPORTING POOR MENTAL HEALTH This map shows where Denverites who report not having good mental health over the last month are living. If a neighborhood has a diagonal line, it means the area is also low-income.¹⁸⁷



DENVER TODAY: % OF ADULTS WITH DIABETES This map shows the percentage of adults with diabetes. If a neighborhood has a diagonal line, it means the area is also low-income.¹⁸⁶



FRAMING DATA TO ADVANCE EQUITY

TIP #2: INCLUDE CROSS-SECTOR DATA

BLACK/AFRICAN AMERICAN COLORADANS ARE 3X MORE LIKELY TO NOT OWN A CAR THAN WHITE COLORADANS²⁰¹⁹. Reliable and affordable transportation is critical for meeting daily needs and accessing educational and employment opportunities. For households living in regions without robust public transit systems, access to a car is critical, but lower-income people and people of color are less likely to own a car.

How does transportation affect health and opportunity?

Better transportation options mean better access to opportunity. When transit options are built with accessibility and affordability in mind, the benefits ripple far and wide through increased jobs, stimulating the economy, and connecting communities to schools, business and services.

SOCIAL EFFECTS



ACCESS TO BETTER JOBS



ACCESS TO SCHOOLS FOR KIDS



ACCESS TO A LARGER VARIETY OF FOODS

AFFORDABLE TRANSIT OPTIONS



PHYSICAL EFFECTS

ACCIDENT-PRONE ROADS

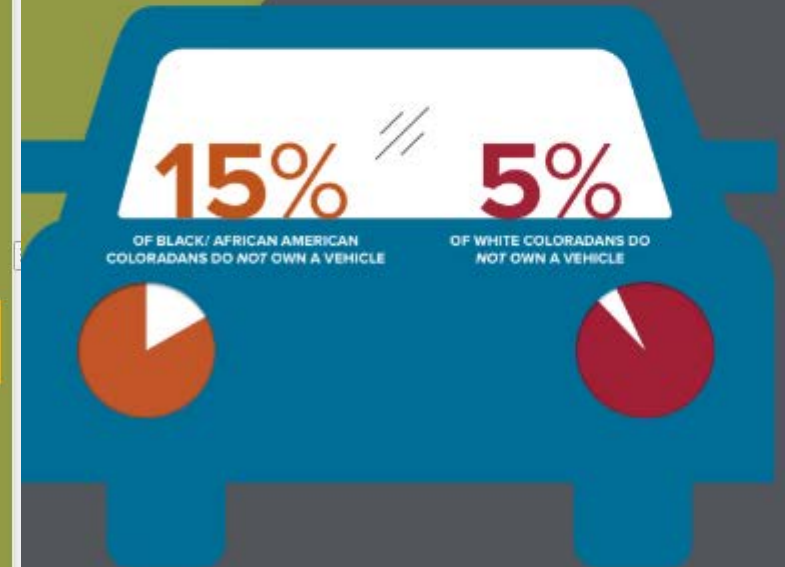
AIR POLLUTION



NOISE POLLUTION



AFFORDABLE + ACCESSIBLE TRANSIT OPTION



FRAMING DATA TO ADVANCE EQUITY

TIP #3: INCLUDE THE VOICE OF PEOPLE FACING INEQUITIES

"NOT ENOUGH HOUSING AND COST OF HOUSING ARE EQUALLY IMPORTANT AND REALLY DESPERATE ISSUES IN FORT COLLINS."

"SHELTER IS ANOTHER MAJOR PROBLEM—THERE IS NO SAFETY NET FOR TRANSGENDER WOMEN."

"WE NEED AFFORDABLE QUALITY HOUSING FOR DIFFERENT ECONOMIC GROUPS, INCLUDING THE HOMELESS."

—COLORADANS

"CONSIDER THE LOCATION AND ARRANGEMENT OF HOUSING IN RELATION TO SHOPS, BUSINESSES, FRIENDS, PARKS, ROADS ETC. SO THAT PEOPLE CAN NATURALLY BE MORE PHYSICALLY ACTIVE AND LESS SOCIALLY ISOLATED. KIDS HAVE MORE FREEDOM TO GO PLACES, AND THE ELDERLY CAN GET OUT TOO; THIS ALSO LENDS ITSELF TO AFFORDABILITY."

—COLORADAN

"MY FAMILY AND FRIENDS ARE CONCERNED WITH GENTRIFICATION, DISREGARD FOR THE HOMELESS, HAVING NO REGULATIONS FOR PREDATORY/DISCRIMINATORY DEVELOPMENT AND RENTALS."

—COLORADAN

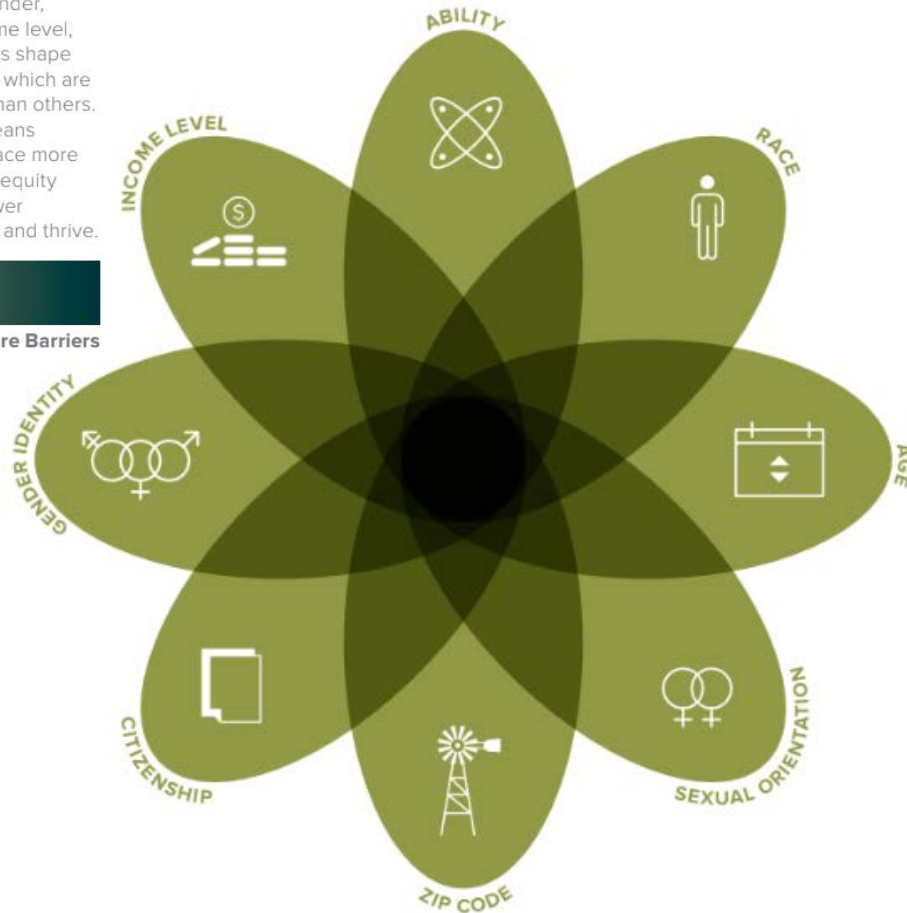
"THERE IS LIMITED DIVERSITY OF VOICES IN PUBLIC DECISION MAKING THAT REFLECTS THE ACTUAL DIVERSITY OF CULTURAL BACKGROUNDS THAT EXIST IN TOWN."

—COLORADAN

FRAMING DATA TO ADVANCE EQUITY

TIP #4: KNOW YOUR AUDIENCE

INTERSECTIONALITY OF IDENTITIES AND INEQUITIES Each of us has a unique life experience based on where we were born, where we live, what language we speak, how old we are, and our gender, sexual identity, religion, race, income level, and so forth. These life experiences shape our many social identities, some of which are more often discriminated against than others. Having more of these identities means facing greater barriers. When we face more systemic barriers, the impacts of inequity are compounded, and we have fewer opportunities available to succeed and thrive.



EQUITY ACTION GUIDE WHERE YOU LIVE SHOULDN'T DETERMINE HOW LONG YOU LIVE

What Makes A Thriving Community?^{19, 104}

For Colorado communities to thrive, we must work together to create economic, social and environmental conditions that are just.

HEALTHY LIVING CONDITIONS

Where we live matters. A flourishing community is one that preserves the natural beauty of its physical environment, provides connections to good jobs, schools, and mental health care, has safe and stable housing, and is pollution free.

STRONG SOCIAL CONNECTIONS

We need each other to survive and to thrive. Where we live, work, learn and play determines how we connect with our families, co-workers, friends, and neighbors.

EQUITABLE SYSTEMS

When institutions create circumstances that allow those who have been left behind to participate and contribute fully, then everyone wins. This also means when we ignore the challenges faced by the most vulnerable Coloradans, those challenges become bad for the economy, prosperity and well-being of all Coloradans.

SENSE OF BELONGING

When we feel a sense of belonging to places, we feel safe and stable, which is important for our mental health.

AFFORDABILITY

To achieve healthy living environments, we must eliminate residential segregation and ensure that each of us can afford to live in clean and safe places.

28 29



TAKING ACTION

WHAT'S NEXT?



WHAT ACTION STEPS CAN YOU TAKE?

Use your power, use your voice!

The action items below are intended to be steps you can take today to reduce inequities and make changes in your community and beyond. Multi-sector partnerships at all levels are an important step to creating change. If you work for a

government organization, think about how you could partner with community organizers. If you're an individual, there may be ways for you to partner with community organizers, and so on.

FOR INDIVIDUALS + FAMILIES

- Talk to your neighbors: ask them what they think about the impacts of housing, transportation, development, etc. on health to get the conversations going.
- How does this connect to **your** story? Share your story with neighbors and elected officials at community events, city council meetings, public forums, etc. to influence change in zoning and development. How is your neighborhood thriving in spite of difficult conditions?
- Connect with community organizers at trainings, community events, public forums, etc. Community organizers can provide you with skills-based training to help you mobilize and leverage your power and voice to create change.

- Seek out resources such as **webinars** and community organizing trainings to learn how policies are made and to gather tools for creating a healthy community for all Coloradans.
- Check out the "Calls to Action" in the **Colorado Civic Health Index** (see page 5).
- Contribute to large, "crowd-sourcing" sets of data, such as using the **Streetwyze** app.

FOR COMMUNITY ORGANIZERS

- Use this narrative to mobilize community voice around what creates health and drives change.
 - Train other organizers, community residents and elected officials on the data behind connections between housing, transportation and health. Help these groups understand how this information can be used during town hall meetings, public forums, and hearings, and in campaigns to advocate for equitable change.
 - Educate elected officials to understand the importance of using an equity lens, acknowledge that lived experiences are data, and recognize community power and wisdom when designing policies, practices and programming.

- Partner with government organizations to build community capacity around using data. This could include:
 - Guiding community groups in creating, implementing, analyzing, and reporting on a community survey, focus group, or other research tool to gather information on local issues.
 - Training community groups about what relevant public data are available, how to use it, and how to request data and information from public agencies.
- Work with funders and residents to close data gaps and collect more neighborhood level data.

Note: Certain resources are hyperlinked. For the full hyperlink, please reference the electronic copy of this report, located at: <https://www.colorado.gov/pacific/cdphe/equity-action-guide>.

FOR GOVERNMENT ORGANIZATIONS

- Ask questions by using an equity impact assessment. For a list of suggestions, refer to The Colorado Office of Health Equity's **Checking Assumptions to Advance Equity**, found at www.colorado.gov/pacific/cdphe/equity-action-guide.
- Lived experiences are data. Acknowledge community power and wisdom when designing policies, practices and programming, by incorporating community voice in decision-making. For ideas on how to do this, refer to The Colorado Office of Health Equity's **Authentic Community Engagement to Advance Equity**, found at www.colorado.gov/pacific/cdphe/equity-action-guide.
- Partner with organizers to build community capacity around using data. This could include:
 - Guiding community groups in creating, implementing, analyzing, and reporting on a community survey, focus group, or other research tool to gather information on local issues.
- Training community groups about what relevant public data are available, how to use it, and how to request data and information from public agencies.
- Invest in workforce development (e.g. trainings) so staff are familiar with how to use an equity lens and take about the connections between health, land use, transportation and housing.
- Encourage multi-sector partnerships to break down silos and spur innovation. Convene cross-disciplinary groups to build relationships and incorporate diverse perspectives.
- Invest in research tools such as **Environmental Impact Assessments (EIA)** or **Health Impact Assessments (HIA)** on proposed land use or transportation plans. These efforts should include significant community outreach and engagement to help tell the story of those impacted by the policy or plan.

FOR FUNDERS

- Invest in information gathering and closing data gaps, including collecting neighborhood level data and data on inequities based on demographics such as gender, sexual identity, age, and others.
- Ensure funding flexibility. This could include distributing funding for:
 - General operating expenses, especially to small, grassroots organizations. Consider organizations that are led by the people most impacted by inequities, i.e. "By us and for us." Remember that only funding "evidence-based" strategies can easily perpetuate inequities, so consider changing the way "evidence" is defined, e.g. lived experiences are data and community power and wisdom should be considered when designing programming.
 - Policy change can take a long time. Provide long-term funding to 501(c)(3) groups who can play a role in shaping policies that affect those most impacted by inequity.
- Projects that have long-term impacts on systems and policies that promote thriving communities. Tackling inequities don't always have traditionally "measurable" impacts in the short term, so multi-year funding commitments are important.
- Multi-sector collaborations.
- Promote equity through community engagement. Read more at http://www.nfg.org/equity_community_engagement.
- Consider strategically addressing gentrification and displacement through community stabilization efforts, community-led planning, and community control and ownership. Refer to the **Democratic Development for Thriving Communities** framework.

FOR EVERYONE

- For more information on how community developers are partnering with people on health, transportation and housing, subscribe to the **Build Healthy Places Network** newsletter.
- Tweet & share data from the Office of Health Equity's **Facebook**, **Twitter** and **Instagram** pages.
- Take the evaluation and use **#YourVoiceCO** to show us what makes your community thrive!

WHAT TYPES OF COMMUNITIES YOU WANT TO LEAVE FOR THE NEXT GENERATION?



Discussion Questions:

What strategies/steps from the action steps handout can you apply to your work?

How can you use the information provided in the ***Equity Action Guide*** to partner with individuals outside of your sector to create thriving communities?

TELL US WHAT YOU THINK!

<https://www.colorado.gov/pacific/cdphe/equity-action-guide>



<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/6NXH9PH>



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