

Project Connect Equity Tool Update

May 26, 2021



Agenda

1. Context
2. Challenge + Opportunity
3. Our Commitment
4. Ask / What We Need for Success

 **Context**

Equity & Mobility– Interrelated Policies



Successfully Fulfilling the Mandate

What we have

- \$277,000,000 of the Project Connect Tax Revenue for:
 - Acquiring real property
 - Anti-displacement strategies

What we are doing

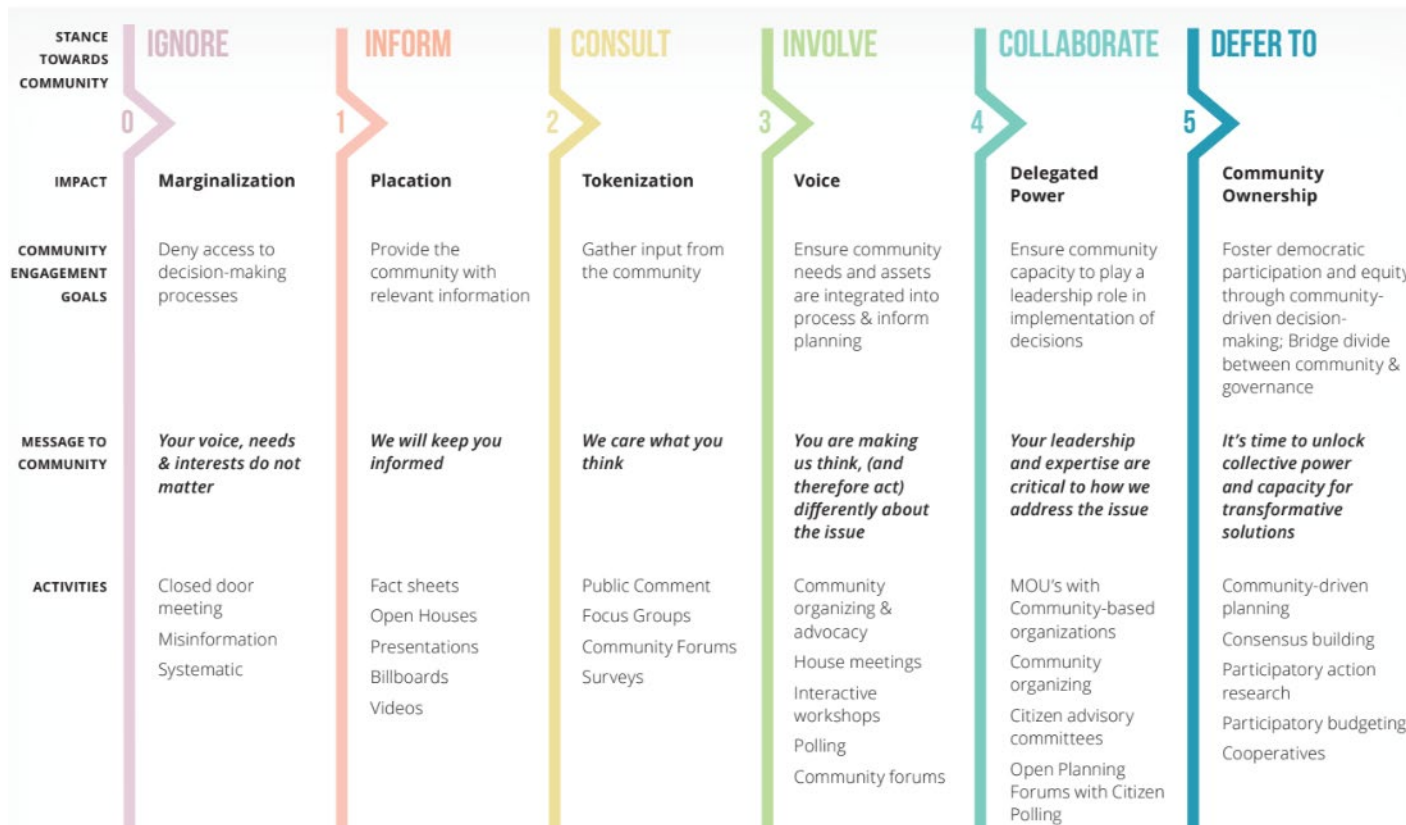
- Define environment to advance racial equity
- Consultant-led, resident-centered co-creation of the tool
- Implementation and assessment of the tool

What we need

- Centering on the values of and having a shared mandate for racial equity
- Rebalancing power and decision-making structures, and
- Accountability to those most directly impacted by displacement pressure

Environment to Advance Equity

THE SPECTRUM OF COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT TO OWNERSHIP



The Process

FEBRUARY



Select paid residents most at risk of displacement to co-create the tool

MARCH



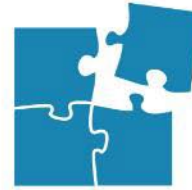
Develop a shared understanding of racial equity

APRIL



Catalysts co-create components of the tool in five policy workshops

MAY



JUNE ONWARD



Begin using the tool to ensure Project Connect investments benefit residents most at risk of displacement

We are here



The Co-creation Team

Community Catalysts

- **30 people** selected from a pool of **117 applicants**. They are being compensated for their time
- Participants were selected based on displacement risk

WHO'S IN THE CATALYST GROUP?

 **88%** **CURRENT OR FORMER RESIDENTS OF THE EASTERN CRESCENT**

 **100%** **EARN LESS THAN THE MEDIAN INCOME FOR AUSTIN**

 **50%** **NO PERSONAL VEHICLE OR DEPEND ON TRANSIT**

 **90%** **ARE PEOPLE OF COLOR**

57% African American

37% Hispanic, Latino/a, Latinx, Chicax

20% Indigenous

7% Asian American, Native Hawaiian, or Pacific Islander

13% White

Note: Some members identify as more than one racial or ethnic group

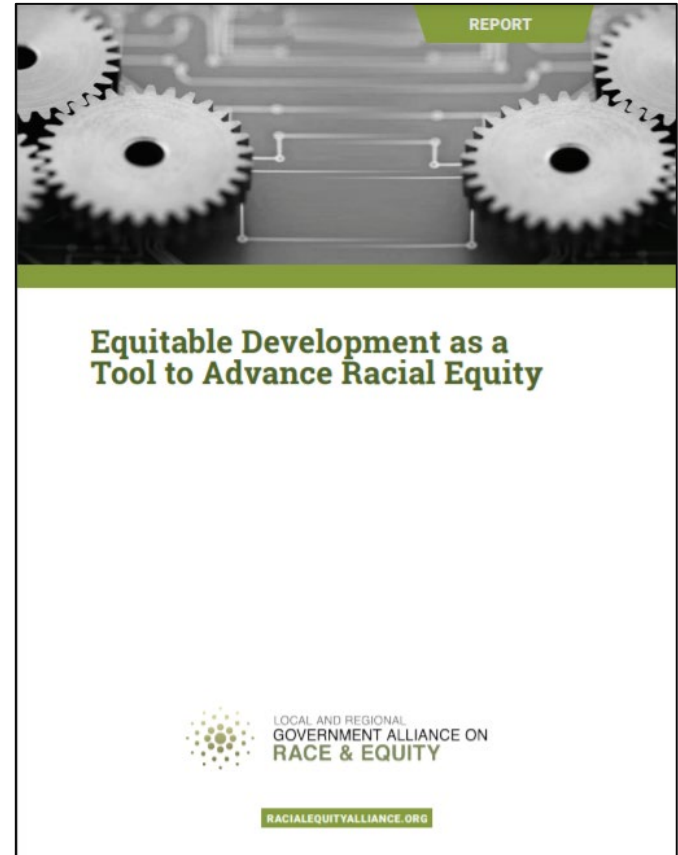
The Facilitators

Consultants:

Nora Liu & Ryan Curren

City of Austin Departments:

- City of Austin Equity and City of Austin Resilience
- Center for Excellence and Innovation
- Housing and Planning Department
- Austin Transportation Department
- Economic Development Department

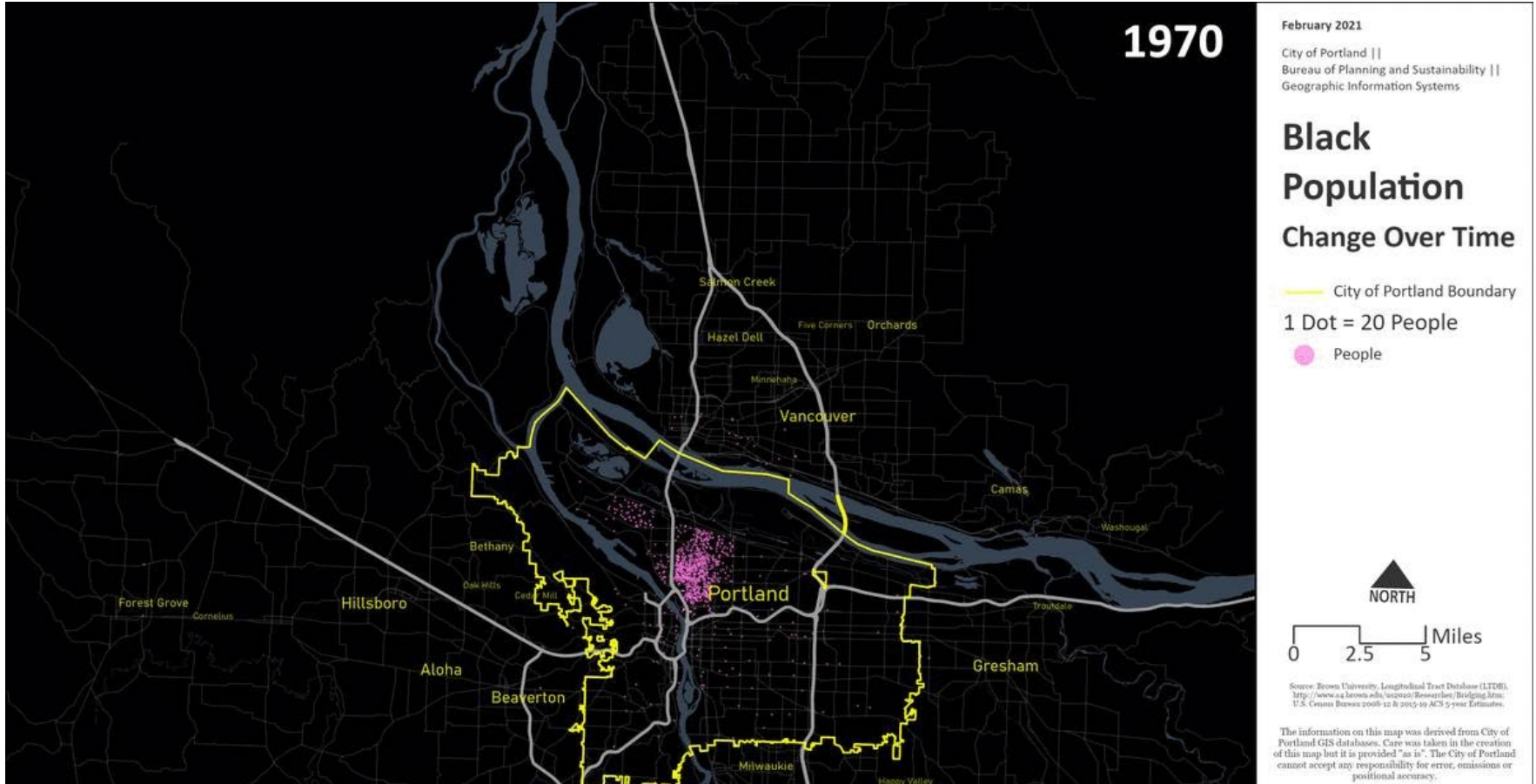


 **Challenge + Opportunity**

Transit Investment Equity Considerations

- Impacts to BIPOC organizations, homeowners and cultural anchors
- Impacts to fares and services
- Impacts to BIPOC owned businesses
- Fair wage employment
- Affordable housing near transit
- Tenant rights
- Affordable transit
- Rent and property tax increases
- Distance between stations in BIPOC communities
- Right of Way acquisition along routes
- Construction impacts

Evidence of Transit Oriented Displacement: Portland, OR



Evidence of Equitable Development: St. Paul, MN



Community organized together across identities and interests -- very early
Transit learned it has to improve the lives of those who live and work along the alignment
City explicitly countered anti-gentrification forces for residents and businesses
Philanthropy formed a collaborative to focus funding along the alignment
Community-based organizations built affordable housing and cultural and commercial space in advance

Equitable Development Initiative: Seattle, WA



Community's vision, strategies, priorities

Community on the Advisory Board and informs funding decisions

City holds the funds and has increased fund size

Community-based organizations to build capacity and power

Community-based organizations to build cultural space, jobs centers, affordable housing

Funded Projects: (3 of 22 excerpted below)

Little Saigon Landmark Project

Friends of Little Saigon, Chinatown International District

A gathering place for the regional Vietnamese community in the Little Saigon business district... cultural, shopping, and culinary ...anchor.

Rainier Beach Food Innovation District

Rainier Beach Action Coalition, Rainier Beach

An employment, education and entrepreneurship project prioritized and driven by the community with a new model of transit oriented development (TOD) that is based on production and decent quality jobs rather than consumption and low-wage jobs. This new model is in contrast to the more common model of "high cost housing over low-wage jobs."

William Grose Center for Cultural Innovation

Africatown, Central Area

Create a space that supports small businesses, creative entrepreneurs and creating pathways to the knowledge-based economy... support entrepreneurship, innovation, and economic development located in the ... serve Seattle's historically Black community that has been and continues to face high risk of displacement...

Challenge: displacement is layered

**Broader City as a System
and outside forces**

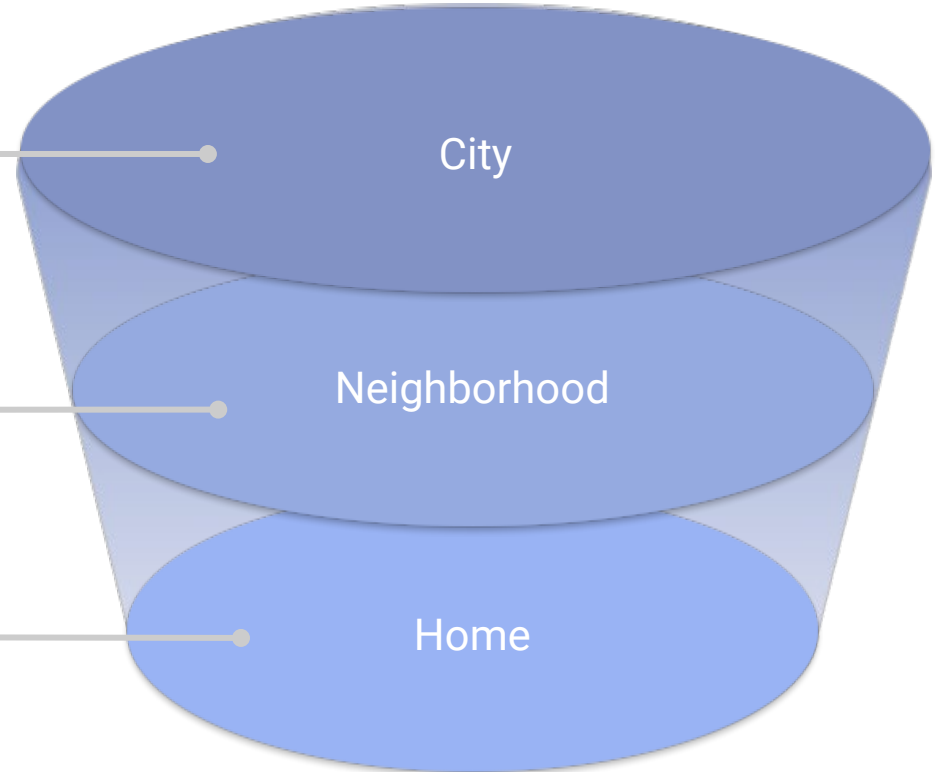
City

**Multi-family properties,
Community, Churches,
Schools**

Neighborhood

**Individuals &
Families**

Home



Opportunity: evaluate impact on multiple scales

Purpose: Priority Uses

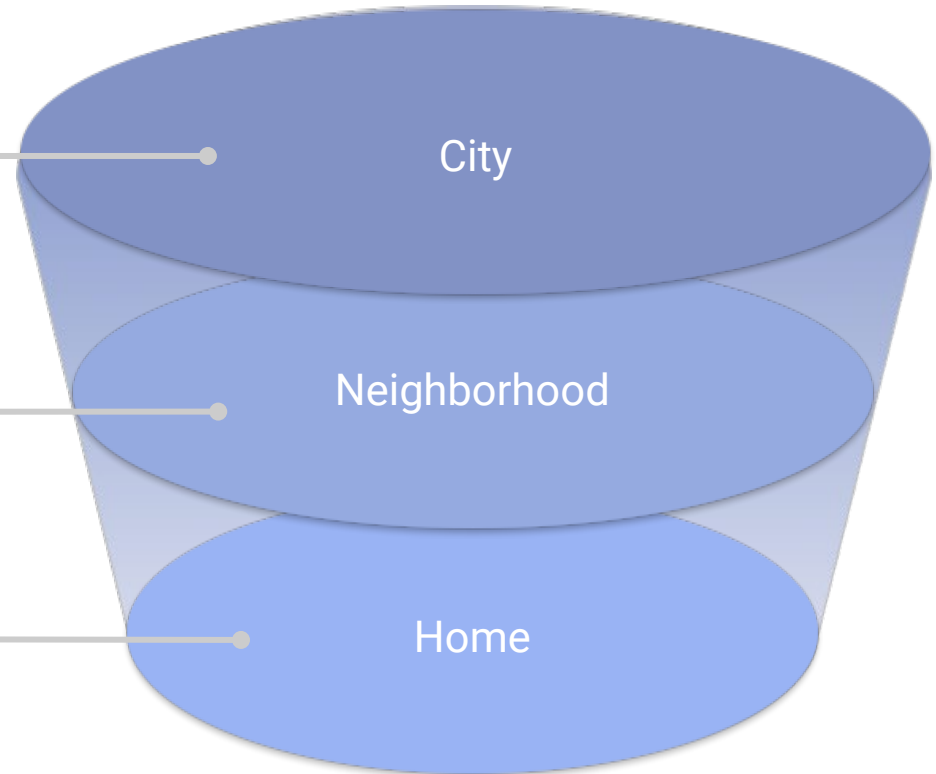
What uses will make the greatest impact?

Place: Priority Neighborhoods

What strategies make sense for different neighborhoods?

People: Priority Populations

Who benefits?
Who is burdened?



Opportunity: trigger important conversations

Process

Who is making decisions?

Time

Preventive or responsive?

Leverage

What's the most effective play?

Accountability

What are the outcomes?

Our Commitment

DELIVERABLES

	AREAS OF INFLUENCE	INFORMED BY	PROJECTED COMPLETION DATE
Project Connect Equity Tool (framework)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Evaluate Project Connect elements benefits and burdens• Frame neighborhood level plans• Inform equitable development policies• Other City investments	City Staff & Catalysts	June 2021
Anti-Displacement Funds Scorecard (evaluation)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• \$300,000,000 Anti-Displacement Funds	Catalysts	June 2021
Key Performance Indicator (dashboard)	All of the above (Online dashboard, Annual Council report, Council discussions)		Recommended Future work



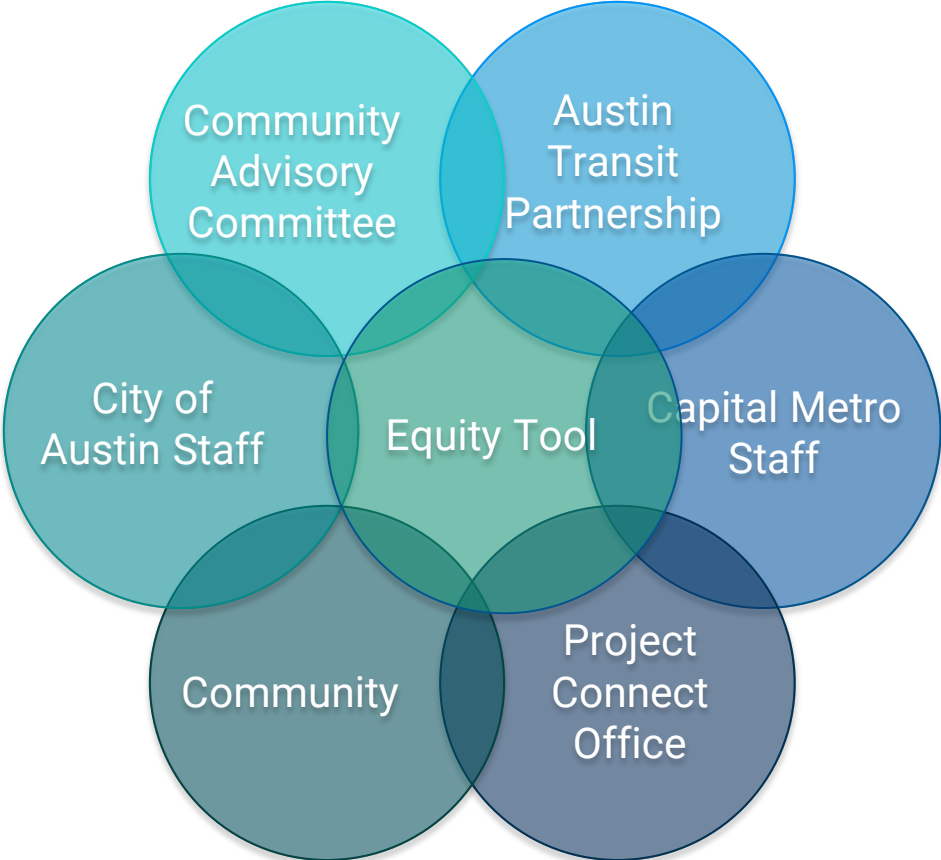
Ask

Environment to Advance Equity

For an equity scorecard or tool to be effective, it needs an environment conducive to receiving and using the data and information it yields, including:

- 1) Centering on the values of and having a shared mandate for racial equity,
- 2) Identify and correct imbalances to power and decision-making structures,
and
- 3) Accountability to those most directly impacted by displacement pressures

Environment to Advance Equity



Thank you!