Linking Social Equity and Performance Measurement

A Practitioner's Roadmap

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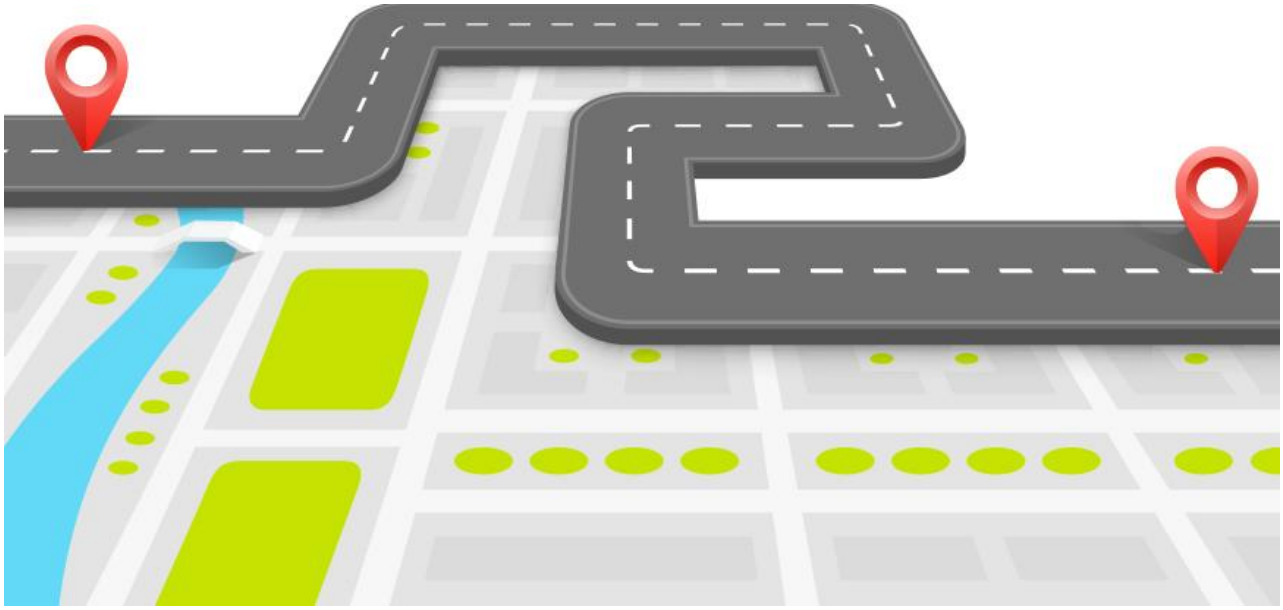
University of Colorado – Denver | School of Public Affairs | March 2017



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Introduction

This guide is meant for local government administrators – including managers, data analysts, and other professionals – who are working to advance social equity within their respective jurisdictions. Compared to the administrative values of efficiency and effectiveness, equity is more difficult to define and measure, which creates important challenges for assessing progress toward more equitable outcomes for traditionally disadvantaged citizen groups. The main goal of this report is to support practical applications of social equity efforts by providing an inventory of available equity tools and reports while also describing promising practices from other cities. This report, however, should not be read as a "how to manual" or even an overview of "best practices." Rather it offers the practitioner a roadmap through the extensive, and often disconnected approaches to adopting social equity as part of a robust system of program evaluation.

It is worth noting that our findings, presented in this report, are drawn from cities and organizations that have made a commitment to measuring equity. The insights we offer, then, presuppose that a great deal of work has already been undertaken to first, move the organization to valuing performance measurement, in general, and second, to see social equity as a key programmatic goal.

Our report is organized into four sections. Section I examines *why* measurement is important. It describes a framework composed of four operational equity measures: access, quality, procedural fairness, and outcomes. These measures are defined, and examples are provided in the context of health equity.

This section also reviews eight key reasons that public managers need to measure performance, including to: evaluate, control, budget, motivate, promote, celebrate, learn, and improve (Behn, 2003). More importantly, it discusses why public administrators should first consider the purpose for measurement before selecting indicators and/or collecting data.

Section II reviews *what* types of social equity measurement currently exist. We provide an inventory of more than 50 indicators, tools, and reports that have been developed and utilized by local, regional, and state-level administrators in public and nonprofit organizations. This inventory is a one-of-a-kind resource that can assist administrators and managers in search of specific types of equity measures.

Section III provides 3 case studies that illustrate *how* social equity indicators have been incorporated into performance measurement systems at the local and regional level. The cities include Seattle, WA; Louisville, KY; and Fort Collins, CO. These descriptive narratives show the process by which administrators have incorporated equity indicators to assess progress toward the ultimate outcome of advancing social equity for all.

Section IV provides a summary of the lessons learned. It is organized as a series of "next steps" – a roadmap – to the effective implementation of the social equity measures. In particular, we outline three steps that are critical in the implementation of equity measures as well as some of the challenges and promising practices that we have identified in the development of equity metrics.

I. Defining and Measuring Social Equity

Social equity is an elusive concept. For the purposes of this project, we define social equity as: "the active commitment to fairness, justice, and equality in the formation of policy, distribution of services, implementation of policy, and management of all institutions serving the public directly or by contract" (Johnson & Svara, 2011). This definition illustrates how social equity is a part of all phases of the policy process, and it is the responsibility of agencies that exist beyond the public sector alone. Furthermore, it is necessary to define a concept before seeking to measure it.

The Social Equity Framework

Members of the Standing Panel on Social Equity of the National Academy of Public Administration (NAPA) developed a framework comprised of operational measures of equity. It is divided into four overarching types: access, quality, procedural fairness, and outcomes. Each is described in greater detail below, and an example of each measure is provided in the healthcare context.

Access Measures

Access measures evaluate the extent to which public services and benefits are available to all. For instance, the proportion of Americans without health insurance indicates that access is not evenly distributed when taking race and ethnicity into account. As of 2014, 9% of White, Non-Hispanic residents were uninsured as compared to 13% of Black and 21% of Hispanics.

Quality Measures

Quality measures assess the level of consistency in public service delivery to different groups and individuals. An indicator that exemplifies how this can be quantified is the experience of patients in a healthcare setting. Hug (2011) analyzed patient surveys and found that 12.4% of White patients rated their overall care experience as less than 7 on a 10-point scale, compared 18.4% of Black patients.

Procedural Fairness Measures

Procedural fairness measures examine problems in due process, equal protection, and eligibility criteria for public policies and programs. The percentage of patients that are referred to a specialist serves as an indicator of unfair processes in healthcare. Again, Hug (2011) found 50% more African Americans and 60% more Hispanic and Latino adults reported greater difficulty in getting referrals to specialists compared to their White counterparts.

Outcome Measures

Outcomes assess the degree to which policies and programs have the same impact on groups and individuals. Mortality rates are one indicator. Heart disease is a leading cause of death for those aged 75 and older. However, the State of California (2016) reports stark racial and ethnic differences when accounting for those younger than 75. Figure 1 shows 50-60% of American Indian and Black residents under 75 succumb to heart disease, compared to less than 40% of their White and Asian counterparts.

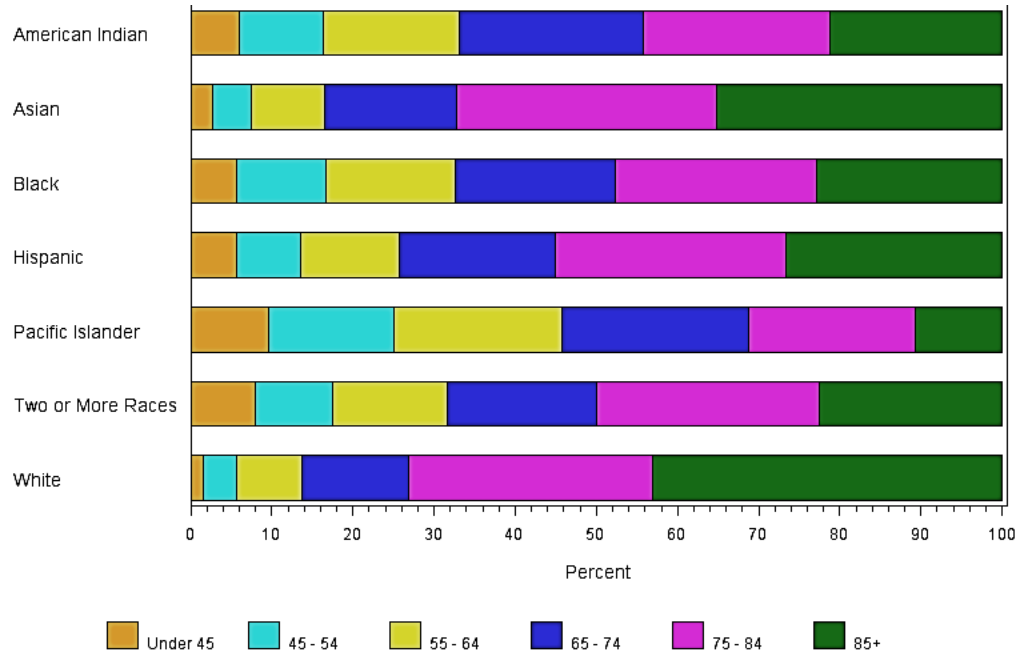

Figure 1 Age Distribution of Heart Disease Deaths by Race/Ethnicity in California (State of California, 2016)

Combining these four categories in context can help practitioners tell a social inequity story that makes sense. To summarize the measures above, if 4% fewer Black and African American people have *access* to health insurance, 6% report a lower *quality* of healthcare service, and 50% receive fewer referrals to specialists in provider *procedures*, it is understandable that 10-20% *more* Black and African Americans also die of complications like heart disease at younger age as compared to their White counterparts. The ability to provide indicators that support the argument that social inequity persists gives reason for measuring to improve performance around disproportionate results.

Why Measure Performance?

Performance measurement studies have significantly grown in recent decades (Chan, 2004; Boyne, Meier, O'Toole, & Walker, 2006). However, the use of such information has been less successful as evidenced in scholarship (Melkers & Willoughby, 2004) and practice (Government Accountability Office, 2005). Findings suggest that measures are mainly applied in the budgetary phase of policy

development (Jordan & Hackbart, 1999; Melkers & Willoughby, 2005). Thus, although there is considerable focus on performance measurement systems, few understand how to take advantage of how to improve upon targeted outcomes.

Moynihan (2008) notes various reasons for this challenge. Performance information is often ambiguous, subjective, and not comprehensive. The production of such information does not guarantee that it will be used. Individual affiliation and beliefs of those involved in the process affect how performance information is perceived, presented, and what is – or is not – selected. Finally, the context of dialogue between actors affects the ability to use performance information to make decisions and develop solutions to local problems and disparities.

Thus, while advancing social equity measurement is important, increasing data definition and collection is not enough to advance social equity in practice. Usable information is needed (Lindblom & Cohen, 1979). As Moynihan (2008) explains, performance measures cannot provide the knowledge needed to make decisions to improve performance. They do not indicate why performance occurred, the context, how implementation took place, outside influences, or how to prioritize measures.

Due to this gap, it is critical to identify mechanisms to increase information use. Public managers must first determine the purpose for measurement and how it will be used in local operations. Behn (2003) proposes that managers consider how they intend to use measures based on eight possible actions, including to: budget, evaluate, control, motivate, promote, celebrate, learn, or improve (Figure 2).

Thus, developing social equity performance measures requires two vital steps. First, public managers must determine the purpose for measurement. Then, it is important to know what type of measure will help them achieve that purpose.

Purpose	Managerial Question	Measure Type	Prerequisite
Evaluate	How well is my public agency performing?	Outcomes, combined with inputs/outputs with effects of exogenous factors	Desired result with which to compare the data
Control	How can I ensure that my subordinates are doing the right thing?	Inputs that can be regulated	Establish behavioral or input standard from which to gauge individual/collective deviance
Budget	On what programs, people, or projects should my agency spend the public's money?	Efficiency measures (specifically outcomes or outputs divided by inputs)	Idea of what is good, acceptable, or poor level of efficiency
Motivate	How can I motivate staff, middle managers, stakeholders, and citizens to do what is necessary to improve performance?	Almost-real-time outputs compared with production targets	Sense of what are reasonable and significant targets
Promote	How can I convince political superiors, legislators, citizens, stakeholders, and journalists, that my agency is doing a good job?	Easily understood aspects of performance about which citizens really care	Understand what the public cares about
Celebrate	What accomplishments are worthy of the organizational ritual of celebrating success?	Periodic/significant targets that provide people with a sense of accomplishment	Discern achievements that employees and collaborators think are worth celebrating
Learn	Why is what working or not working?	Disaggregated data that can reveal deviances from the expected	Detect unexpected/significant developments and anticipate common organizational, human, and societal behaviors
Improve	What exactly should who do differently to improve performance?	Inside-the-black-box relationships that connect changes in operations to outputs and outcomes	Understand how actions affect inside-the-black-box behavior of people who contribute to outputs and outcomes

Figure 2. Eight Purposes for Performance Measurement (Behn, 2003)

II. Social Equity Measurement Inventory

We examined a purposive sample of metrics developed by public organizations, research centers, nonprofits, and municipalities in the U.S. and abroad. These represent the range of measures that have been adopted and utilized by local government officials, public administrators, and staff. A select group of academic and practitioner subject matter experts further informed our selection.

In total, 18 indicators, 20 tools, and 16 reports were reviewed. Our analysis included a grouping of all metrics into the four social equity framework categories. For example, the table below notes that the "Charlotte Regional Indicators" include metrics that assess access, quality, and outcomes. However, no procedural fairness measures are included in that specific group of indicators. Looking down the list, the Voting Landscape Profiles do have procedural fairness measures.

A short description and source for each indicator, tool, and report is provided in Appendices A-C. Those who are interested in further exploring or adopting any of these metrics can navigate to the proper online source for additional guidance.

Indicators

The first 18 indicators include metrics that can be used to identify and compare social inequity across populations. Table 1 provides our analysis of the measurement types included in each indicator. The indicators include a range of city, group, and individual level data. Some are available for all major American cities, while others are limited to one region. See Appendix A for descriptions and sources.

Table 1. Social Equity Indicators

Indicator	Access	Quality	Procedural Fairness	Outcomes
1. Charlotte Regional Indicators	X	X		X
2. County Health Rankings				X
3. Equitable Target Area Index	X			
4. Health Equity Index				X
5. Kids Count Data	X	X	X	X
6. Local Disability Data for Planners	X	X		X
7. Metro Boston Indicators Project	X			X
8. Minimum-to-median wage ratio				X
9. Municipal Equity Index	X		X	
10. Opportunity Index	X			X
11. Resilience Capacity Index (RCI)				X
12. Results Scorecard	X	X		X
13. San Francisco Indicator Project	X	X	X	X
14. Social Determinants of Health	X	X	X	X
15. STAR Community Index	X	X	X	X
16. Sustainable Communities Index	X	X		X
17. Voting Landscape Profiles			X	X
18. Walk Score	X			

Many indicators are related to access equity, which again focuses on the distribution of services to different citizen groups. For instance, the Local Disability Data for Planners provides household level data that includes whether residents have a disability, if they are in the labor force, if they own a vehicle, and their means of transportation to work. The measure can thus assess the extent to which neighborhoods have a higher number of disabled residents without sufficient transit access.

Outcome equity measures were also more common amongst the indicators reviewed. For instance, the Health Equity Index identifies several social, political, economic, and environmental conditions that are associated with specific health outcomes, like diabetes rates, childhood illness, perinatal care, etc. (Connecticut Association of Directors of Health, 2017). Measures are provided at the community level, and they can be used to learn who is experience and disproportionate burden of disease – and why.

Tools

The next 20 tools can be used to assess the degree of fairness as it relates to governance and evaluate the impact of more equitable policies and programs. Some are available at the national, state, and local level of analysis. Others focus on specific metropolitan areas like New York City. Further descriptions and sources are available in Appendix B.

Table 2. Social Equity Tools

Tool	Access	Quality	Procedural Fairness	Outcomes
1. Access to Jobs Map	X			
2. Access to Workforce Map	X			
3. Assets & Opportunity Scorecard	X	X	X	X
4. Equity and Empowerment Lens	X		X	X
5. Equity Atlas 2.0 Mapping Tool	X			X
6. Equity Impact Review Tool	X	X	X	X
7. Gateways to Opportunity	X	X		X
8. Gender Equality Explorer				X
9. Guide to Sustainable Transportation Performance Measures	X	X	X	X
10. Implicit Bias Tool			X	
11. Know Your Neighborhood Tool	X	X		X
12. Local Data Center Mapping Tool				X
13. Map the Meal Gap	X			
14. National Equity Atlas	X			X
15. Racial Equity Impact Assessment	X	X	X	X
16. Return on Educational Investment Tool				X
17. Status of Women in Your County: A Community Research Tool				X
18. The Sentencing Project Interactive Map			X	X
19. The State of Women in America				X
20. Toolkit for Assessing Potential Allegations of Environmental Injustice	X	X	X	X

Like the indicators above, most of these tools are used to measures access and outcome equity. However, valuable quality and procedural fairness measures were also discovered in our analysis.

King County, located in the State of Washington and home to the City of Seattle, utilizes the Equity Impact Review (EIR) Tool to identify, evaluate, and communicate the potential positive and negative impacts of policies and/or programs on equity. The EIR has been used to assess differences in the quality of parks across King County. The Department of Natural Resources and Parks decided to invest in improving parks in underserved neighborhoods based on that assessment (Office of Equity and Social Justice, 2015).

In addition, the Sentencing Project Interactive Map provides national and state statistics on incarceration rates, juveniles in custody, and total corrections population in jail, prison, on probation, on parole, etc. Data is meant to reveal disparities and advance fairness in the criminal justice system. Specifically, the discrepancies reflect injustice in the process by which individuals are tried and convicted based on their race and/or ethnicity.

Reports

The final 16 documents are professional reports that document the level of social equity – or inequity – in various cities and regions. Some also include indicators, tools, and methods utilized in the development of their studies. Further descriptions and sources are available in Appendix C.

Table 3. Social Equity Reports

Report	Access	Quality	Procedural Fairness	Outcomes
1. Alameda County Social and Health Equity Reports	X	X	X	X
2. Credit and Housing Equity	X	X	X	X
3. Environmental Justice Report	X		X	X
4. Equity Profile of the Kansas City Region	X	X	X	X
5. Houston/Harris County Health Equity Assessment	X	X	X	X
6. Housing Affordability and Economic Equity - Analysis	X	X	X	X
7. Just Growth Framework	X	X	X	X
8. Louisville Metro Health Equity Report 2014	X	X		X
9. Minnesota's Tomorrow: Equity is the Superior Growth Model	X	X	X	X
10. Quality of Life Survey	X	X	X	X
11. Racial Equity in Seattle	X	X	X	X
12. Social Sustainability Gaps Analysis	X	X	X	X
13. Structural Race Equity Analysis	X	X	X	X
14. Sustainable Raleigh Framework	X	X	X	
15. The Determinants of Equity	X	X	X	X
16. Welcome Dayton: Immigrant Friendly City Report	X	X	X	X

Because these reports are more comprehensive, many include access, quality, procedural fairness, and outcome measures. For instance, the Social Sustainability Gaps Analysis includes measures spanning several areas, including: housing, homelessness, poverty, health and wellness, education, diversity and equity (including racial/ethnic, religious and sexual orientation, etc.), and targeted populations (persons with disabilities, seniors, veterans, domestic violence survivors, LGBT residents, and at-risk youth). Therefore, local government administrators and personnel may find a wealth of information that can apply across various departments within these reports.

Part III. Case Studies

Logic of Case Selection

Three case studies were selected to describe how social equity and performance measurement are integrated in practice. Selection was based on cities that met the following criteria: 1) Adoption of a social equity initiative, and 2) Varying size of the Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA). Table 4 illustrates the three cities that fell into these dimensions:

Table 4. Case Study Demographics

MSA*	Total Population	% Non-White	% Below Poverty Line	% Bachelor's Degree or Higher
Seattle, WA	3.7 million	35%	10.2%	41.2%
Louisville, KY	1.3 million	23%	13.4%	28.7%
Fort Collins, CO	324,122	17%	13.2%	42.7%

* The size of MSAs is designated as: Large (1.6 million or more), Medium (625,000-1,599,999), and Small (624,999 or less) (Yadav, 1986).

Data Collection

The first phase of each case study began with review of public documents, such as social equity-related studies, assessments, and plans. Upon determining that social equity measures had been incorporated in each city, the directors of each initiative were contacted and asked to participate in an interview for this project.

Participants were notified that the American Society for Public Administration's Center for Accountability and Performance (CAP) sponsored this study. Snowball sampling was utilized to conduct additional interviews with key informants involved in both social equity initiatives and performance measurement operations in each metropolitan area.

Findings

Seattle, WA

Community Profile

- **MSA Population:** 3,733,580
- **Percent Non-White:** 35%
- **Population Living Below Poverty Line:** 10.2%
- **Median Household Income:** $75,331
- **Percent of Persons 25+ with Bachelor's Degree:** 41.2%
- **Performance Measurement System:** Performance Portal; Racial Equity Indicators Dashboard
- **Social Equity-Related Studies and Plans:**
    - Seattle 2035: A Comprehensive Plan for Managing Growth 2015-2035 – 2015
    - Race and social justice initiative: Vision & strategy 2015-2017 – 2015
    - Racial equity in Seattle: Race and social justice initiative three-year plan 2012-2014 – 2012
    - Disparities 2011: Impacts of Institutional Racism – 2011
    - Transit master plan: Final summary report – 2012
    - Final advisory committee recommendations to Mayor Edward B. Murray and the Seattle City Council – 2015

Overview

The Seattle-Tacoma-Bellevue metropolitan statistical area ("Seattle Metro") is in the state of Washington with a population of 3,733,580. The 2015 American Community Survey 1-year estimates (ACS, 2015) indicate that the largest racial groups in Seattle are White (65% of the city's population), followed by Asian (13%), Hispanic (10%), and Black or African American (6%). Seattle Metro has a household median income of $75,331, an estimated 10.2% of all people live below the poverty line, and 41.2% of residents 25 and older have a Bachelor's degree or higher.

Studies of equity in Seattle reveal major outcome disparities between racial groups. Seattle poverty rates are disproportionately higher for minority populations (ACS, n.d.). This has contributed to a housing affordability crisis that has disproportionately impacted African American families. While 15-20% of white families spend greater than 50% of their income on housing, that number grows to 30-35% for African American families (City of Seattle, Office of the Mayor, 2015).

In Seattle public schools, rates of high school completion are higher for white students than most students of color and rates of discipline are racially disproportionate—in 2005, 16% of African American students received short-term suspensions compared to 6% of white students (RSJI, 2008).

Inequities persist for those with diplomas. At each educational level, white and Asian males earn more than black, Latino, and native males (Gregory, 2013). Incarceration rates are also disproportional. In Washington State, African Americans account for little more than 3% of the population yet account for over 19% of those in prison (RSJI, 2008). Inequities also show up in the health sector—in King County, African Americans are 2.6 times more likely to be affected by diabetes than whites and have a death rate 3.3 times higher than whites.

Seattle established a formal social equity program in 2004 with the launch of the Race and Social Justice Initiative (RSJI). Led by the Seattle Office for Civil Rights, the goal of RSJI was to achieve racial equity in the community and the mission was to end institutionalized racism in City government (Coppersmith & Reading, 2011). RSJI began with an emphasis on Seattle's internal programs and operations (RSJI, 2015), and thus was initially focused on addressing administrative institutionalization of inequality. Since its inception, the initiative has garnered both internal and external support. In 2014 Seattle Mayor Edward Murray signed an executive order affirming and expanding RSJI. It requires City staff to use RSJI tools and to "assess racial equity progress in both work outcomes and internal practices" (RSJI, 2015, p. 2). In 2009, the Seattle City Council adopted a resolution endorsing RSJI (RSJI, 2012b). In addition, an RSJI Community Survey found "overwhelming support for government to prioritize addressing racial gaps in jobs, health, housing and other areas" (RSJI, 2015, p. 2).

The Seattle social equity initiative is embedded in a network of regional and national social equity programs. King County, which encompasses Seattle, has a history of working to improve equity and social justice including the renaming of the County after Martin Luther King, Jr. in the mid-2000s and the launching of the Equity and Social Justice Initiative in 2008 (Beatty & Foster, 2015). The County houses an Office of Equity and Social Justice which works with county leadership and departments to advance equity practices. The King County Office of Equity and Social Justice, working with the King County Office of Performance, Strategy and Budget, has been active in establishing equity measures including the development of a list of "determinants of social equity" and a set of indicators that can be measured as part of an "equity scorecard" (Beatty & Foster, 2015, p. 15).

There is a fair amount of alignment between the City of Seattle equity initiatives and the King County programs. In some cases, city departments are augmenting their performance measurement practices to account for the work being done at the county level. For example, the Seattle Department of Transportation (SDOT) Transit Master Plan suggests that local monitoring and evaluation should focus only on measures that are not already measured by the King County Metro Strategic Plan (City of Seattle Department of Transportation, 2012). Other regional equity programs that influence Seattle equity initiatives include the Governing for Racial Equity (GRE) Network, a northwest regional network of government jurisdictions working to achieve racial equity, and the Government Alliance on

Race and Equity, a national alliance to promote government's role in the racial justice movement (RSJI, 2015).

Application of Social Equity Performance Measures

The study found three primary sources of equity goals and indicators in Seattle: centralized stakeholders such as the Mayor's office and appointed commissions, city departments, and RSJI. Centralized stakeholders tend to focus on developing high level equity goals. These goals are then embedded in strategic plans. For example, the Seattle Comprehensive Plan is a central planning document that outlines recommended goals and policies, guided by a set of core values, which direct future spending and development (City of Seattle Department of Planning and Development, 2015). The core values include community building, economic opportunity, environmental stewardship, and social equity. Social equity has been "one of the core values guiding the Comprehensive Plan since its adoption in 1994" (City of Seattle Department of Planning and Development, 2015, p. 3). The Comprehensive Plan identifies a set of "key indicators" some of which relate to social equity. These include outcome measures such as income equity (the income gap between minorities and the overall population), high school graduation rates by race, and housing affordability—especially for cost-burdened renter households.

While many of the high-level equity goals originate from political commissions or the Mayor's office, the tendency is to rely on City departments to develop the actual quantitative measures. In so doing, measurement development is pushed to where there is greater domain expertise. The performance measurement structure thus consists of centralized stakeholders who give guidance by listing specific indicators and goals in their planning documents, departmental managers who are tasked with developing measures and delivering them for use in performance dashboards, budgeting documents, or levy requests, and a central performance measurement group, housed in the City Budget Office, that maintains a platform for disseminating performance measures,

Equity measures are developed and used internally by City departments as criteria for resource allocation and funding projects. For example, the Seattle Department of Transportation (SDOT) uses an equity score as part of a larger set of criteria when making decisions regarding which projects to fund (City of Seattle Department of Transportation, 2012). The SDOT equity indicators consist of access measures (e.g., the number of low income persons, youth, seniors, persons with disabilities, and minorities within a certain walking buffer), and outcome measures (e.g., the transportation costs for residents within specific transportation corridors). These same equity measures are also used to garner support for external funding, though they tend to be aggregated into higher-level goals when used for this purpose. For example, documents supporting the recent Seattle transportation levy—approved by voters in November 2015—justified specific projects because they promoted "geographical equity"—

the fair distribution of investment and benefits among different communities (City of Seattle Department of Transportation, 2015).

RSJI also drives the institutionalization of social equity and the development of social equity goals, though it too relies on the individual departments to develop quantitative measures. As part of the RSJI initiative, the City of Seattle's Budget Office requires departments to conduct a racial equity analysis of all budget requests. In addition, during strategic planning exercises or when allocating resources, City departments use a "racial equity toolkit" —a checklist that guides assessment of how policies, projects, initiatives and budget decisions benefit and burden communities (RSJI, n.d.). Measurement is a key component of the RSJI strategy. The RSJI Plan (RSJI, 2015) states the need to develop "clear measures for outcomes in our own programs, policies and initiatives" and to track these outcomes over time (p. 10). In support of this goal, RSJI recently launched a Racial Equity Indicators Web site (See http://rsji.org/indicators/index.html) to disseminate equity-specific measures from various departments. This Web site is independent of the Performance Seattle dashboard that monitors more general performance indicators. It holds racial measures for education (e.g., school discipline rates), development (e.g., housing cost burden), housing (e.g., home ownership rates), and criminal justice (e.g., prison population), among others.

Table 5 shows City of Seattle measures across the various measurement purpose and type categories. While access and outcome indicators used as criteria for budget allocations were the most prevalent measures, the study also found important measurement tools for improving decision making. The remainder of this section describes the measures and how they are used.

Table 5. Seattle Social Equity Performance Measures

Measure Purpose	Social Equity Measure Type			
	Access	**Quality**	**Procedural Fairness**	**Outcome**
Evaluation		Community confidence in police		
Budget	Transit corridor proximity			
Learn				Contracting and service procurement
Improve			Public engagement	

Evaluation

RSJI encourages community outreach and racially inclusive collaboration and civic engagement (RSJI, 2010). As part of that outreach RSJI conducted a wide-ranging community survey (RSJI, 2014). The

survey included various evaluation measures to understand how well public agencies are performing (Behn, 2003). For example, one measure tracked by the survey was *community confidence in police officers.* For example, when asked how much confidence they had in police officers to treat blacks and whites equally, less than a quarter of Seattle's African American residents felt confident (Racial equity indicators*,* n.d).

Budget

The Seattle Department of Transportation (SDOT) uses equity and other measures to guide budgeting decisions. One interviewee described social equity as a "first tier" criterion for determining investment levels in various transportation corridors. Social equity criteria are detailed in the Seattle Transit Master Plan and include *transit corridor proximity* measures such as the number of low income persons, youths, seniors, persons with disabilities, and minorities within ¼ mile walking buffer (City of Seattle Department of Transportation, 2012).

In this case, the transit corridor proximity measure is used to ensure that income and race, among other factors, are considered when deciding on investment priorities. This is an a priori use of an equity measure to determine which citizens will receive budget dollars. Post hoc evaluation of investment impact on equity outcomes is more difficult and less common. In the case of transportation, one reason it is difficult to evaluate the equity impact of corridor investment is because the target neighborhoods may be undergoing demographic shifts. Interestingly, investment by the City itself may contribute to the demographic shifts. One interviewee describes this dynamic:

> Southeast Seattle is a sector composed of quite a few individual neighborhoods. It's where we have the greatest racial, ethnic, linguistic, income diversity. But that neighborhood is changing over time as housing pressures in other parts of the city cause more affluent people to look for cheaper housing. And one of the reasons that Southeast Seattle is becoming more attractive is because it has really excellent transit service, both rail and bus. So, after you have evaluated the new riders in the corridor, you may see that there is more growth among affluent people than you thought. But the reasons have to do with things that you don't really control. You could build a good transit service and you can put it in a place where you think there are a lot of people who need the transit, but then the outcomes might be different than you had anticipated because of changing demographics based on housing costs, not based on transit.

In Seattle, the inclusion of social equity as a criterion for budgeting is largely driven by the required use of the "racial equity toolkit"—a checklist that guides assessment of how policies, projects, initiatives and budget decisions benefit and burden communities (RSJI, n.d.). The racial equity toolkit requires public managers to do racial equity impact analyses for their projects and programs. This includes the

collection of demographic data, the setting of measurable equity targets, and the reporting of results (RSJI, 2010).

Learn

In 2015, Mayor Murray signed a new priority hire ordinance passed by Seattle City Council. This ordinance requires City construction projects of $5 million or more to have a percentage of project hours performed by workers living in economically distressed areas. In addition, City projects are required to meet women and people of color aspirational goals (Seattle Finance & Administrative Services Department, 2016a). City *contracting and service procurement* data is collected, both internally and from the contractors themselves, to measures progress towards these hiring and aspirational goals.

Contracting and service procurement indicators measure employment outcomes for specific groups. These outcome measures are then used to learn about equity within the city contracting process and, when necessary, to target new initiatives to improve those outcomes. One interviewee described the measurement and learning process:

> We have to comply with Washington State law, but at the same time we want to ensure as wide a participation as possible in terms of the people who provide the city with goods and services and work… If we set a goal for women and minority businesses in terms of the vendors who supply my department with goods, whether it's paper or whatever, we can go back and say we exceeded that, or we can say no we didn't. In that way we've been pretty aggressive in checking those numbers quarterly—so that we can see whether the trend is heading in the right direction. If it's heading in the wrong direction, what more can we do while at the same time staying compliant with the law? We do things like host getting to know your luncheons where minority contractors come in—they usually are small to mid-sized firms—and we introduce them to larger engineering and construction firms and try to help build relationships so that when the primes are looking for subs they have a connection already to a woman or minority owned business.

Seattle's Labor Equity Program evaluates its priority hire progress annually via reports to the Mayor and City Council. One priority hire pilot program reported nearly 100,000 hours of apprentice work with 34 percent of apprentice those hours being performed by women and 50 percent being performed by people of color goals (Seattle Finance & Administrative Services Department, 2016b). The program, referencing measures of equity-based wage outcomes, notes that "workers living in economically distressed neighborhoods have collectively earned nearly $5.8 million in direct wages" (Seattle Finance & Administrative Services Department, 2016b, p. 1).

Improve

In 2008 Mayor Nickels released an executive order that committed all City departments to develop and implement outreach and public engagement processes inclusive of people of diverse races, cultures, gender identities, sexual orientations and socio-economic status. The goal was to increase access to information, resources and civic processes by people of color through the implementation of racially and culturally inclusive outreach and public engagement processes (RSJI, 2012c). As part of the engagement process, City departments are tasked with tracking and recording participation in the process by communities of color. (RSJI, 2012c).

Collecting demographic measures of *public engagement* helps City departments understand whose opinions are being considered as programs are developed and funded. Procedural fairness not only considers whether eligibility criteria for public policies and programs are equitable, but also whether the processes that establish those criteria are equitable. That is, are minorities and the economically disadvantaged given equal access to promote their agendas and express their opinions regarding the priorities of city departments?

Barriers

Interviews with stakeholders reveal several factors that inhibit efforts to pursue social equity goals in general, and social equity *measures* in particular. Many groups have successfully integrated racial equity measures into departmental plans, but find it difficult to understand how these measures tie to meaningful outcomes (RSJI, 2015). At a more operational level, several stakeholders mention that while the RSJI toolkit is an effective tool for encouraging the use of equity measures, actual use of the toolkit is inconsistent and staff often struggle to understand how to apply it. In other words, while there has been some success at the strategic level with incorporating social equity goals into high-level plans, operationalizing these goals into actions that can then be mapped to specific outcomes has proven to be much more difficult.

Promising Practices

The efforts of RSJI were often cited as the main reason for the successful dissemination of equity requirements and the use of social equity measures across city departments. Specifically, RSJI is dedicated to creating "change teams" within various departments who are trained on racial and social equity issues and how to apply the racial equity toolkit. In addition, responsibility for performance measurement is decentralized. While there is a central group dedicated to the maintenance and dissemination of measures (Performance Seattle, n.d.), it is clear that the departments are responsible for the development of measures. This has created a sense of ownership by departments. While this lack of enforcement from above means that some departments are lagging in performance

measurement, it also means that those that are utilizing performance measurement tend to be fully invested. An example of the decentralized structure of performance measurement is found with RSJI which has created an equity dashboard (Racial equity indicators, n.d) separate from the centralized Seattle performance dashboard (Performance Seattle, n.d.).

Louisville, KY

Community Profile

- **MSA Population:** 1,279,335
- **Percent Non-White:** 23%
- **Population Living Below Poverty Line:** 13.4%
- **Median Household Income:** $52,898
- **Percent of Persons 25+ with Bachelor's Degree:** 28.7%
- **Performance Measurement System:** Louisville Statistics (LouieStat)
- **Social Equity-Related Studies and Plans:**
    - Cornerstone 2020 Comprehensive Plan
    - Louisville Metro Health Equity Report 2014: The Social Determinants of Health in Louisville Metro Neighborhoods
    - Healthy Louisville 2020
    - Making Louisville Home for Us All: A 20-Year Action Plan for Fair Housing

Overview

Louisville-Jefferson County Metro Government ("Louisville Metro") is the largest MSA in Kentucky with a population of 1,279,335. The largest racial group is White (77% of the population), followed by Black or African American (14%), Hispanic or Latino (4%), and Asian (2%). Louisville Metro has a household median income of $52,898, an estimated 28.7% of all people live below the poverty line, and 28.7% of residents 25 and older have a Bachelor's degree or higher (Census Reporter, 2014).

Studies of equity in Louisville Metro reveal racial disparities exist in housing conditions (Fosl, 2013), income (Arno & Rock, 2014), and health outcomes (Harris & Saad, 2014). Housing disparities are rooted in decades old segregation practices that persist today in the form of biased zoning codes that maintain historic patterns (Fosl, 2013). As a result, 45% of Louisville residents live in extreme racial segregation, with life expectancies being lower for those living in the poorest neighborhoods (Fosl, 2013). Disparities in lung and breast cancer death rates exist among racial and ethnic populations (Harris & Saad, 2014), with one of the largest contributors to health disparities being inequitable access to financial resources (Arno & Rock, 2014).

In recent years, Louisville Metro has demonstrated a commitment to analyzing and addressing equity issues. It was one of five cities selected by the Government Alliance on Race and Equity (GARE) to participate in Racial Equity Here, a program focused on improving racial equity in America's cities (Louisville Metro Government City News, 2016a). In addition, Louisville was one of seven winners of the prestigious 2016 Robert Wood Johnson Foundation Culture of Health Prize for its commitment to health equity and data-driven decision making (Louisville Metro Government City News, 2016b). Equity is also one of the primary pillars of a broader sustainability effort that was formalized in 2013

with the release of Sustain Louisville (Louisville Metro Government, Office of Sustainability, 2013), the city's first sustainability plan. Sustain Louisville sets environmental, transportation, economic, community, land use, and health sustainability goals for city departments.

Louisville Metro is in the process of developing equity indicators to better understand where disparities exist and to track progress as they attempt to address these disparities. These efforts build upon a strong foundation of performance measurement that has been developed under the leadership of Mayor Greg Fischer. In recent years Louisville Metro has dedicated substantial resources to the development and use of performance measurement to improve departmental efficiency and city services. One of the key strategic objectives of the department of Performance Improvement & Innovation, established in 2012, is the tracking and analysis of key performance indicators for each department and the creation of a culture of data-driven decision making (Louisville Metro Government, Office of Performance Improvement, 2015). The use of performance measurement is part of broader set of process changes focused on performance improvement. These include the Louisville Metro Planning Cycle, a continuous improvement process that tracks the Mayor's strategies and goals through the cycle of departmental planning, budgeting, resourcing, and implementation (Louisville Metro Government, Office of Performance Improvement, 2015).

The Department of Performance Improvement & Innovation administers the Louisville Statistics (LouieStat) program that uses metrics tracking and data analysis to improve departmental efficiency and city services (About LouisStat, n.d.). LouieStat is a collaborative program that brings together departmental managers and the Mayor's senior leadership team to identify and review departmental key performance indicators and support data-driven decision making within departments. There is evidence that these initiatives are becoming embedded in the culture and processes of individual departments. For example, Louisville Metro's Department of Public Health and Wellness' Center for Health Equity has taken a strong data-centric approach to understanding and addressing health inequities (Arno & Rock, 2014). Louisville is attracting national attention for their technical innovations: the city placed ninth in the Center for Digital Government's Digital Cities Survey (Louisville Metro Government City News, 2016c).

Application of Social Equity Performance Measures

Interviews and city documents reveal some progress towards the development of equity-related measures. Though the focus on equity is still relatively new, measurement development has benefitted from Louisville Metro's culture of performance measurement and a strong network of local nonprofits that are concerned with equity. Table 6 illustrates a matrix that captures several different types of equity measures utilized by Louisville Metro.

Table 6. Louisville Social Equity Performance Measures

Measure Purpose	Social Equity Measure Type			
	Access	**Quality**	**Procedural Fairness**	**Outcome**
Evaluation	Concentration of subsidized housing			
Budget		Cancer death rates by race/ethnicity		
Learn				Diabetes rates
Improve			Board representation	

Evaluation

Louisville's nonprofit sector provides an important economic impact to the region and serves as an important source of collaboration and information exchange for Louisville Metro government agencies (Nonprofit sector survey report, 2013). Local nonprofits also serve as an important source of social equity measures for city agencies attempting to develop their social equity programs. For example, the *concentration of subsidized housing* measure, used by Louisville Metro, is sourced from a yearly report produced by the Metropolitan Housing Coalition, a local nonprofit focused on providing equitable, accessible housing opportunities (State of metropolitan housing, 2015). One interviewee described the performance measurement relationship with external groups:

> We have been compiling what our current data tell us, and a lot of it is going to be sourced from reports. For example, the Metropolitan Housing Coalition has a 2015 "state of housing" report online that we have used. They are a local nonprofit that does fair housing advocacy and programming. They have maps that show our city is really segregated when you look at availability of affordable housing. When you look at Section 8 housing, there are not a whole lot of options in certain sectors. I would say those are equity KPIs but [the data collection] has already been done by an external organization, so we are not going to re-create that wheel.

Louisville is using a third-party assessment of affordable housing to evaluate how well existing programs are working. This evaluation measure serves two purposes. First, it establishes that further effort is required to achieve an equitable distribution of affordable housing. Second, the measure serves as an outcome benchmark against which future housing initiatives can be evaluated.

Budget

Health equity has been a fundamental priority for the City of Louisville in recent years. Two metro healthy equity reports were conducted and published in 2011 and 2014 with the sole purpose of

comprehensively documenting the social and racial disparities evident throughout the region when examining public health and wellness. These initial assessments led to the development and publication of *Healthy Louisville 2020*, which is a plan with objectives to increase overall health through ongoing assessment of performance indicators. Mayor Greg Fischer notes in the opening of the plan:

> The Mayor's Healthy Hometown Movement Community Coalition was restructured in 2012 and is dedicated to transforming community and public health across Louisville. It embraces a focus on prevention through a health-in-all-policies perspective, facilitates active community engagement, and prioritizes equity. With approximately 70 members representing more than 50 community-based organizations, faith-based groups, and large employers, the Community Coalition developed a strategic plan that includes evidence-based approaches to improving the health of our community.

Many of the indicators within this plan are tied to funding and budget priorities of the city. For instance, Louisville is focusing on Cancer Prevention and Screening programs. They have set the goal to decrease the incidence of death rates for all cancers in Louisville. But they report significant disparities among racial and ethnic populations for deaths from breast cancer (31% blacks, 20% whites), cervical cancer (5% blacks, 2% whites), prostate cancer (49% blacks, 21% whites), colorectal cancer (25% blacks, 18% whites). The *cancer death rates* therefore suggest a gap in the quality of healthcare, including a lack of screening and prevention opportunities based on race. There are several targets to reduce the death rates across the entire population of Louisville.

This information is being used to advocate for the maintenance of state funding to provide budget appropriations for cancer screening programs. It specifically aims to benefit minorities and low-income people in Louisville that remain uninsured. The data will also be used to advocate for increasing reimbursement to increase physician participation in the Medicaid program for minorities and low-income people. Assessment of progress toward the goals of cancer reduction and screening will be used to re-evaluate budgetary needs in the future.

Learn

Louisville is grappling with the difficulty of developing coherent indicators of equity. In many cases, to truly understand program impact, several disparate indicators must be used. One interviewee states the problem as follows:

> [Our department] may focus on a particular neighborhood in Louisville and invest a lot of money into that neighborhood. This investment may be through housing rehabilitation, like lead abatement, weatherization, or façade improvement. We are investing in the neighborhood, but how do we know we've succeeded? Where equity comes into the picture is we want to create a measure of neighborhood health. That includes things like safety, litter,

> and how many vacant and abandoned properties there are. But, it also includes health measures like how many people have diabetes in the neighborhood. Did that decrease because of our investment—because we improved the built environment? That connection between health and the built environment: how do we capture that to know whether we've succeeded or not?

The goal is to understand the return on investment for specific programs. The problem is defining which returns are the most meaningful—an especially difficult endeavor when measuring equity, a concept several interviewees described as a "nebulous." Louisville Metro addresses this problem by focusing on health outcomes as a primary equity goal across all departments. As a result, many departmental indicators tend to focus on health even when the program or initiative is not directly concerned with health, such as housing or transportation. The quote above provides an example of how Louisville Metro is aggregating health and other indicators to measure equity. In this case, they are employing *diabetes rates* as an indicator of performance to measure return on investment in neighborhood rehabilitation.

Improve

A concerted effort to improve performance is outlined in the report: *Making Louisville Home for Us All: A 20-Year Action Plan for Fair Housing*. Five categories of action our described, including government commitment, community education and engagement, built environment, funding and economic development opportunities, and legislative changes to further fair housing. Each has measureable goals that are geared toward the improvement of more equitable housing outcomes.

The Government Commitment to Further Fair Housing area emphasizes the role of public and nonprofit agencies and their responsibility to implement policies and programs that do not continue segregation. An action step within this category includes an assessment of *board representation*. The goal is to: "Continue to assess all boards appointed by government to ensure that people in protected classes are represented through the appointments process and take affirmative steps to ensure such appointments when they are not present" (Fosl, 2013, p. 47).

The board representation indicator is a procedural fairness measure. It examines the process by which government appointees are disproportionately from more privileged groups. It is important to examine this indicator to provide a more equitable voice for all constituents in the decision-making process for a wide variety of additional action steps to address segregation in the city. Furthermore, there are a wide variety of additional action steps that will contribute to advancing procedural fairness for board representation. Some of these include educating other government officials to illustrate how decisions can have negative consequences for racial minorities and low-income people in Louisville.

Barriers

One of the key barriers to the development and use of social equity measures is time. While most departmental employees understand the value of data analysis and performance measurement, it is of secondary importance when compared to putting out the day-to-day fires that consume the average day of a public employee. While Louisville has some resources dedicated to performance measurement, the bulk of these resources are in the Mayor's office. At more operational levels performance measurement responsibilities tend to be given to individuals as an additional requirement on top of their formal job function.

The adoption of a strategic lens also presents a barrier to the development and use of performance measures in general. In Louisville, while there is a centralized team dedicated to performance measurement and improvement, the stated goal is to push responsibility to all levels of the department. This means that employees who are not formally trained in data analysis and who have previously not been directly concerned with strategy will be expected to understand their departmental strategy, how they fit into that strategy, and how data can be used to connect their actions to the strategy. The connection between strategy and action is not obvious. In addition, front line workers are often confronted with the brunt of data collection, while data aggregation and analysis are often performed at more senior levels. This temporal and spatial disconnect between strategy and action for front line workers can increase skepticism and decrease commitment to performance measurement initiatives.

Promising Practices

The dedication of Mayor Fischer to performance measurement and the processes put in place to define goals and report measures associated with those goals were cited by several stakeholders as the primary reason for the successful use of data and measurement. These processes include periodic "Louistat" meetings where departments meet with members of the Department of Performance Improvement & Innovation to present data demonstrating progress against goals. It is also beneficial that Louisville has a strong pre-existing culture of performance measurement. While the focus on social equity is still in its infancy, the hope is that employees will be able to apply the performance measurement skills they have acquired over the past several years to the development and use of equity measures.

Fort Collins, CO

Community Profile

- **MSA Population:** 324,122
- **Percent Non-White:** 17%
- **Population Living Below Poverty Line:** 13.2%
- **Median Household Income:** $56,575
- **Percent of Persons 25+ with Bachelor's Degree:** 42.7%
- **Performance Measurement System:** Community Dashboard
- **Social Equity-Related Studies and Plans:**
    - 2013-2017 Fort Collins Housing Authority Strategic Business Plan – 2013
    - Social Sustainability Gap Analysis – April 30, 2014
    - Housing Affordability Policy Study (HAPS) – September 5, 2014
    - Social Sustainability Department Draft Strategic Plan – June 14, 2015
    - Land Bank Property Disposition Study – July 14, 2015
    - 2015-2019 Affordable Housing Strategic Plan – October 6, 2015

Overview

The City of Fort Collins is the most populous municipality of Larimer County. Situated on the Cache La Poudre River and at the foothills of the Rocky Mountains, Fort Collins is located 65 miles north of Denver, the capital of Colorado. The estimated population was 156,480 as of 2014. Fort Collins is a midsize college city, home to Colorado State University, and 42.7% of residents 25 and older have a Bachelor's degree or higher. It was named Money magazine's Best Place to Live in the U.S. in 2006, No. 2 in 2008, and No. 6 in 2010. Since 2010, the population has increased by 8.6%.

Fort Collins has also gained much national attention in recent years. The International City/County Management Association (ICMA) has recognized the City with several distinctions. It was awarded the Certificate of Excellence from the ICMA Center for Performance Analytics in 2012. The Community Dashboard performance measurement tool was recognized as an innovative, best practice when it launched in 2013. ICMA's Case Study Series on social equity and sustainability also featured Fort Collins due to its high level of social equity-related activity. Various challenges have also emerged alongside this growth, and the city has taken a proactive course to address immediate needs.

Establishing a formal Social Sustainability Department in 2011 was a foundational action. Their mission is to "ensure Fort Collins is a diverse and equitable community that successfully meets the basic needs of all residents" (City of Fort Collins Sustainability Services, 2014). This is accomplished through support of programs, policies, and partnerships that provide equity and opportunity for all, allocating funding to affordable housing and human service agencies, and implementing policies that promote and support self-sufficiency.

One of the first major actions of the department included a Social Sustainability Gap Analysis to determine what steps are necessary to "move from a current state to a desired future state of community- and organization-wide social sustainability" (Sustainability Services Area, 2014). An external consulting firm was hired to collect secondary population, housing, and program data; interview providers on client needs, organizational needs, service demand, and wait lists; provide comparative analysis of existing resources, capacity levels, and community needs; and prepare a final report documenting all research findings. The final report was released in April of 2014.

Common themes for all target populations emerged from the Gap Analysis. They focused on four key problem areas: affordable, accessible, and appropriate housing; emergency support and rapid access to services; ongoing and enhanced services and support; and need for more transportation options. The information gathered in the document was used in several subsequent actions. The study was meant to complement the City Strategic Plan for Social Sustainability, so findings are being integrated. The Gap Analysis also supported the Social Sustainability Strategic Plan, which will be released in the next few months. More specific actions have also been directed based on the four themes of housing across the spectrum of needs, maintaining a healthy community, transportation options, and income disparity.

Housing has potentially been the most acted upon finding due to the immediate need. Several additional assessments were conducted following the Gaps Analysis. The Housing Affordability Policy Study was released in September of 2014. It focused on concerns over the lack of rental inventory, rental affordability, and public perception of escalating housing prices. A related Land Bank Property Disposition Study was released in July of 2015. It reviewed the status of a program designed to acquire, hold, and sell property to affordable housing develops to build low-income housing. Most recently, the 2015-2019 Affordable Housing Strategic Plan was released. It is a routine document that assesses community need and makes policy recommendations that drive city funding decisions. Contributors included city staff from the Social Sustainability and Planning Departments, residents, affordable housing service providers, and other human service agencies.

Application of Social Equity Performance Measures

Interviews with the city and quasi-governmental stakeholders previously mentioned revealed several equity-related measures that were used for specific purposes. Table 7 illustrates a matrix that captures the type of equity measures utilized and the purpose for which it applies. This section describes those specific metrics and describes how they are beginning to be utilized in Fort Collins to address housing affordability.

Table 7. Fort Collins Social Equity Performance Measures

Measure Purpose	Social Equity Measure Type			
	Access	**Quality**	**Procedural Fairness**	**Outcome**
Evaluation				Total number of affordable housing units
Budget	Location of affordable housing units compared to transit			
Learn		Health services and emergency room ambulance usage		
Improve			Criminal background convictions	

Evaluation

The purpose of evaluation measurement is to understand how well public agencies are performing. Behn (2003) notes that the ideal measure types are outcomes. Agencies should also define a desired result to compare to before measurement begins.

The interviews revealed that the *total number of affordable ho*using units is an outcome measure utilized by those in charge of advancing housing equity in the City. The Housing and Urban Development Authority defines affordable housing that "which the occupant(s) is/are paying no more than 30 percent of his or her income for gross housing costs, including utilities" (U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, n.d). One employee described the process that lead to the integration of this metric as follows:

> I was a really big proponent of the metrics idea. Then we went to a work session with City Council and talked about it, and they were really keen on the idea. So once we got that feedback, it was about thinking, okay, what's the ultimate goal? That was the biggest change from previous iterations of the Plan to this one: having an overarching goal for the future of affordable housing in Fort Collins. We would increase the percentage of affordable housing as part of the overall building stock to 6% over the next 5 years, and then to 10% by 2040. That let us make some more tangible targets in the metrics; [i.e.] here's how many units we need to bring online per year to make that happen.

In other words, the number of affordable housing units is an outcome that can be used to assess if all of the planning is leading to better outcomes. This data is collected and updated by the Social Sustainability Department on a quarterly basis. It is also made publicly available online through the

Community Dashboard, which shows the Affordable Housing Inventory (number of units) and the growth on a quarterly basis.

Budget

Measurement can enhance the budgeting process by informing which projects should receive funding as opposed to – or in addition to – others. Such measures focus on determining what is most efficient. Behn (2003) suggests that administrators should have some idea of how to delineate between what is good, acceptable, or poor service delivery given key inputs and outputs.

The importance of developing *affordable housing units located close to public transit services* was mentioned by several interviewees as a key component of access equity. The City measures proximity to public transit by geo-referencing locations with Geographic Information Systems (GIS) to locate all affordable housing locations in relation to all transit lines. Staff that work with both public transportation and planning manage the data and have utilized it to justify funding requests for recent transit-oriented housing development projects. The lack of transit access was noted in another interview:

> That's an ongoing dialogue that we have because we don't have seven days a week operations. So there is part of the community that really needs [public transit during the evenings and weekends], but there's a cost associated with that. So the city has to weigh off other needs and priorities with that very important need. But if you look at transit services itself in the 2015-2016 budget, their total budget increased 50%...So efforts were definitely made in the right direction…

This suggests that administrators are attuned to measuring the costs and benefits of increasing the number of transit lines versus expanding services to weekends and evenings. In other words, this course of action was warranted as the most efficient, and therefore received a significant budget increase.

Learn

Measurement can also be used to help administrators determine what is working or not – and why. This typically requires metrics that are disaggregated to an individual level. They can therefore provide a more personal vignette of the experience of citizens, which can lead to surprising or unexpected findings that may not have been intended by the program or plan.

Interviews with affordable housing service providers revealed equity metrics that assessed more refined characteristics of specific people they served. A data analyst described how their measures focus on related factors that are affected because of their clients gaining housing, especially those that

have been homeless. For instance, they have learned that the quality and level of health services received increase due to a more stable living situation. She described the learning process as follows:

> One interesting thing that's happened in permanent supportive housing (PSH) is the improved health. We would think that the usage of emergency services and emergency room ambulance would go down. It's actually gone up. Because people are getting surgeries and things that they couldn't get before. So they're actually in the hospital more, and sometimes that results in - if something isn't going right – calling an ambulance. Some of it has been for mental healthcare. Which, if they were on the street, the probably would have ended up in jail. But because they're now housed, we can kind of help facilitate treatment versus jail.

Thus, the quality of services is more care-centered. Economically disadvantaged citizens are more likely to receive treatment that they need versus incarceration, which ultimately leads to improved health. As described above, this level of granular data allowed the administrators to realize a surprising finding that focuses on what works. They can observe how residents are positively affected in many aspects resulting from their services.

Improve

The overarching purpose of measurement is to use data to determine what should be done by whom to improve an organization's performance. Behn (2003) notes that metrics must be able to help public servants understand how specific programmatic actions affect the behavior of people who ultimately contribute to certain outputs or outcomes. Measures assess relationships that exist within the black box of organizational processes and procedures that can be directly connected to results.

The housing service provider also shared a story in which they improved the placement of citizens that needed housing by changing their internal procedures related to criminal background checks. Specifically, the intake process served as a check for eligibility, and clients were deemed ineligible if they had been arrested by police. The staff saw this as an unfair to people who were chronically homeless, stating:

> When you pull somebody's criminal background, you typically get all the arrests - like a whole arrest record. And so we said, you know, this is kind of silly. Most of those charges get dropped, are plead down, and so we started going to just convictions instead of arrest records. Especially because people experiencing homelessness will have a long list…We are, I think, more in line with that than many [service providers] who are like, 'Oh, nope. You have 1 thing on your record in the past 10 years. You're not eligible.' I would say with the criminal backgrounds, again, we just look at convictions, not at arrests. We started doing that, and now HUD has come out and that's a recommendation by HUD to do it that way. And sometimes we're ahead of the game.

Therefore, by recognizing the number of arrests reduced procedural fairness in the application process, staff enhanced placement and offered a more equitable application process by collecting conviction data alone.

Barriers to Measurement

Several barriers to social equity performance measurement exist across the City of Fort Collins. Interviewees noted that they must rely on existing data and use such information as proxies for specific metrics of interest. They also develop metrics before knowing if secondary data exists or is available. Relatedly, there are data sources available that performance measurement analysts may not be aware of, and therefore the best measures may not be considered.

Another important barrier to measurement is the notion that "quantitative data has limits," as one interviewee noted. There is a need for stories, which are seen to have a significant impact on decision-making, sometimes more than evidence-based data. Furthermore, causality is difficult to determine regardless of how much data is available. This means that there are many confounding factors beyond a specific public program or service that may contribute to the advancement of equity.

Promising Practices

Several practices and processes have led to a formal initiative to improve social equity in the City of Fort Collins. Four key areas are worthy of note for other local government practitioners that are interested in pursuing similar work. First, support from decision-makers was critical to the advancement of equity in Fort Collins. The Mayor, City Council, and the City Manager ensured that the four key areas of the Social Sustainability Plan were aligned with the City's Strategic Plan. Second, staff gathered a large degree of baseline data from the Gap Analysis, Strategic Plan, and Housing Affordability Study. This provides a means by which to assess progress in the future.

The Fort Collins Community Performance Measurement Dashboard is also an important tool for advancing social equity. The shared platform provides real-time information that is pertinent to city operations, and the quarterly updates provide a means by which to assess progress on a routine basis. The implementation of the dashboard has created a knowledge-drive culture that values and understand the importance of evidence-based programs for all performance outcomes, including social equity.

Furthermore, understanding the limits of quantitative indicators is an important practice as well. Staff have partnered with others, such as the Human Services Department, to produce mixed-methods reports that include statistics and interview data, providing a more holistic view of program impacts.

PART IV: SUMMARY

In this report, we highlight our findings from an exploration of the state of affairs of social equity measurement, particularly in the context of American local governments. We began the report with an overview of the different ways to define, and subsequently measure, social equity. We then offered a summary of several of the existing equity tools and reports that define the current state of affairs in equity measurement. We then provided a description of some of the challenges and promising practices we found in three case studies.

In this concluding section, we offer a quick synthesis of our various findings. At the risk of presenting a cookbook approach to social equity measurement, we present the synthesis as a series of sequential steps. As noted in the introduction, these 'steps' presuppose, and subsequently should follow, a commitment to performance measurement and social equity. Only after the messy work of making these an organizational and programmatic priority, can these 'next steps' be effectively undertaken.

STEP 1: Properly conceptualize Equity

Members of the Standing Panel on Social Equity of the National Academy of Public Administration (NAPA) developed a framework comprised of operational measures of equity. This framework is useful in identifying how equity will be defined within one's organization and which programmatic components are most likely in concert with equity measurement. The framework is divided into four overarching types: access, quality, procedural fairness, and outcomes.

Access measures evaluate the extent to which public services and benefits are available to all. For instance, the proportion of Americans without health insurance indicates that access is not evenly distributed when taking race and ethnicity into account. As of 2014, 9% of White, Non-Hispanic residents were uninsured as compared to 13% of Black and 21% of Hispanics.

Quality measures assess the level of consistency in public service delivery to different groups and individuals. An indicator that exemplifies how this can be quantified is the experience of patients in a healthcare setting. Hug (2011) analyzed patient surveys and found that 12.4% of White patients rated their overall care experience as less than 7 on a 10-point scale, compared 18.4% of Black patients.

Procedural fairness measures examine problems in due process, equal protection, and eligibility criteria for public policies and programs. The percentage of patients that are referred to a specialist serves as an indicator of unfair processes in healthcare. Again, Hug (2011) found 50% more African Americans and 60% more Hispanic and Latino adults reported greater difficulty in getting referrals to specialists compared to their White counterparts.

Outcomes assess the degree to which policies and programs have the same impact on groups and individuals. Mortality rates are one indicator. Heart disease is a leading cause of death for those aged 75 and older. However, the State of California (2016) reports stark racial and ethnic differences when accounting for those younger than 75.

STEP 2: Connect the measure to a programmatic purpose

Having identified different types or components of equity, administrators must consider how those connect to specific actions. The question here is: where within the organization or program will equity metric be used as part of programmatic decisions. In particular, will measures be used to support one, or more, of the following actions: budget, evaluate, control, motivate, promote, celebrate, learn, or improve (see Figure 2 page 6).

STEP 3: Develop and implement measures to improve decisions

This 'step' involves the underlying data collection, management and actual decision-making. Thus, it actually involves several smaller steps. However, these issues are somewhat context specific. So, for this 'step' offer some insights on potential challenges as well as promising practices that administrators will want to consider.

First, through our case studies we identified several key challenges in the implementation of social equity measurement. Each is summarized briefly below.

1) It was unclear how the measures were connected to the broader organizational/departmental strategic. This point highlights the importance of step 2 (above). Connecting the equity measure as clearly as possible to a programmatic action *before* the data is collected is critical.

2) Use of measures is inconsistent. Again, this highlights the need to be clear at the outset of the program on how the measure will, and should be, employed.

3) Time to develop and then use equity measures is too high. This suggests, not surprisingly, that administrators need to be honest about the resources required for the successful implementation of an equity program. It may be unreasonable to expect staff to simply 'add equity' as another task to be completed.

Despite these challenges there are also several promising practices that administrators should consider.

1) Decentralize measurement. By 'decentralizing' measurement to the department level can lead to more ownership over the process. This seems to also support more effective use of the measure and re-evaluation, thereof.

2) Leadership matters. Even though there are clear benefits to decentralizing process of measurement, organizational leadership still matters. Staff need to clearly see that their efforts at measurement are part of a broader organizational approach and culture.

3) Understanding limits of data. This is an important insight. While data, measurement, and evidence are at the heart of our report, there is some evidence, from our case studies, that a mixed methods approach to equity can provide a more holistic view of program impacts. In an article for the National Civic Review (2005) George Fredrickson noted: "I respect those who are working on social equity indicators, social equity benchmarks, and other forms of statistics, but…statistics and data lack passion and smother indignation….stories, films, videos, essays and personal descriptions…have the power to move people, and also move policy makers." In short, our data and measurement is important, but we should supplement those with case studies and descriptive anecdotal evidence.

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Appendix A: Social Equity Indicators

1. Charlotte Regional Indicators

Framework Measurement Type(s): Access, Quality, Outcomes

Description: Tracks and assesses key indicators of quality of life for the 14-county Charlotte region

Source: http://ui.uncc.edu/programs/ri

2. County Health Ratings

Framework Measurement Type(s): Outcomes

Description: Compiled using county-level measures from a variety of national and state data sources Source: http://www.countyhealthrankings.org/app/wisconsin/2016/overview

3. Equitable Target Area Index

Framework Measurement Type(s): Access

Description: Identify environmental justice communities in the Atlanta region; Based on 5 demographic and socioeconomic parameters; Utilized to measure the impacts of PLAN 2040 programs on communities

Source: http://www.atlantaregional.com/transportation/community-engagement/social-equity

4. Health Equity Index

Framework Measurement Type(s): Outcomes

Description: Identifies social, political, economic, and environmental conditions that are most strongly correlated with specific health outcomes

Source: https://www.sdoh.org

5. Kids Count Data

Framework Measurement Type(s): All

Description: Maintains data and statistics on educational, social, economic and physical well-being of children; Features hundreds of indicators; Many examine effects of poverty and race on child outcomes

Source: http://datacenter.kidscount.org

6. Local Disability Data for Planners

Framework Measurement Type(s): Access, Quality, Outcomes

Description: Summary statistics for households with and without members with disabilities regarding size of household, building type, household ownership and number of household vehicles; Summary statistics by disability status regarding: age, race, gender, ethnicity, education, labor force participation, transportation to work, and poverty

Source: http://disabilityplanningdata.com/site/pick_a_state.php

7. Metro Boston Indicators Project

Framework Measurement Type(s): Access, Outcomes

Description: Establishes a baseline for the equity related measures focused on: Economy, Education, Environment, Housing, Public Health, Public Safety and Transportation

Source: http://www.bostonindicators.org

8. Minimum-to-Median Wage Ratio

Framework Measurement Type(s): Outcomes

Description: Measure of how much a given minimum wage will affect a specific state's labor market. The higher a state's minimum-to-median wage ratio, the more workers will be affected by an increase
Source: http://equitablegrowth.org/labor-markets/where-does-your-states-minimum-wage-rank-against-the-median-wage/

9. Municipal Equality Index

Framework Measurement Type(s): Access, Procedural Fairness
Description: Examines the laws, policies, and services of municipalities and rates them on the basis of their inclusivity of LGBT people who live and work there
Source: http://www.hrc.org/mei

10. Opportunity Index

Framework Measurement Type(s): Access, Outcomes
Description: Provides snapshot of what opportunity looks like at the state and county levels. Indicators grouped into three dimensions, Jobs and Local Economy, Education and Community Health and Civic Life
Source: http://www.measureofamerica.org/opportunity-index/

11. Resilience Capacity Index

Framework Measurement Type(s): Outcomes
Description: Single statistic summarizing a region status on twelve factors hypothesized to influence the ability of a region to bounce back from a future unknown stress
Source: http://brr.berkeley.edu/rci/

12. San Francisco Indicator Project

Framework Measurement Type(s): All
Description: Scorecards include programs, departments, goals, metrics, budgets, projects, or actions. Library includes commonly used government, funder, and non-profit performance measure collections
Source: http://www.sfindicatorproject.org

13. Social Determinants of Health

Framework Measurement Type(s): All
Description: Data sets are organized according to 12 dimensions of the social environment: economy, employment, education, political, environmental, housing, medical, governmental, public health, psychosocial, behavioral, and transport
Source: http://www.phdmc.org/DCHE

14. STAR Community Index

Framework Measurement Type(s): All
Description: Encompasses economic, environmental, and social performance measures. Rating System is divided into: built environment, climate & energy, economy & jobs, education, arts & community, equity & empowerment, health & safety, and natural systems
Source: http://www.starcommunities.org

15. Voting Landscape Profiles

Framework Measurement Type(s): Procedural Fairness, Outcomes
Description: A state-by-state overview of voting and registration data, minority elected officials numbers and a comprehensive catalogue of voting discrimination court cases and Department of Justice objections

Source: http://votingrightstoday.org/ncvr/resources/state-pages

16. Walk Score

Framework Measurement Type(s): Access

Description: Available for any address in the U.S., Canada, and Australia; Largest 3,000 cities and 10,000+ neighborhoods; Scores neighborhoods based on access to transit, better commutes, and proximity to places of interest to foster happier, healthier and more sustainable lifestyles for residents

Source: https://www.walkscore.com/cities-and-neighborhoods

Appendix B: Social Equity Tools

1. Access to Jobs Map

Framework Measurement Type(s): Access

Description: Shows divergence in job opportunities available to people living in the New York metro

Source: http://fragile-success.rpa.org/maps/jobs.html

2. Access to Workforce Map

Framework Measurement Type(s): Access

Description: Explores how employers' access to workers varies throughout the New York metro

Source: http://www.rpa.org/article/uneven-access-connecting-employers-to-labor-pool-in-new-york-metropolitan-area

3. Assets & Opportunity Scorecard

Framework Measurement Type(s): All

Description: Comprehensive look at Americans' financial security today and their opportunities to create a more prosperous future

Source: http://assetsandopportunity.org/scorecard/

4. Equity and Empowerment Lens

Framework Measurement Type(s): Access, Procedural Fairness, Outcomes

Description: Transformative quality improvement tool used to improve planning, decision-making, and resource allocation leading to more racially equitable policies and programs

Source: https://multco.us/diversity-equity/equity-and-empowerment-lens

5. Equity Atlas 2.0 Mapping Tool

Framework Measurement Type(s): Access, Outcomes

Description: Evaluates how different neighborhoods and populations are able to access the resources and opportunities necessary for meeting their basic needs and advancing health and wellbeing

Source: http://regionalequityatlas.org/programs/regional-equity-atlas/equity-atlas-20-mapping-tool

6. Equity Impact Review Tool

Framework Measurement Type(s): All

Description: Serves as a process and a tool to identify, evaluate, and communicate the potential impact - both positive and negative - of a policy or program on equity

Source: http://www.kingcounty.gov/~/media/elected/executive/equity-social-justice/documents/KingCountyEIRTool2010.ashx?la=en

7. Gateways to Opportunity

Framework Measurement Type(s): Access, Quality, Outcomes

Description: Provides a means to understand equity from birth to end of life in Colorado through focusing on 9 critical gateways to opportunity and equity

Source: http://www.bellpolicy.org/basic/gateways-opportunity

8. Gender Equality Explorer

Framework Measurement Type(s): Outcomes

Description: Provides data disaggregated by gender from the Census. Enables creation of tables, maps and reports to illustrate, analyze and understand the status of women and girls in your community

Source: http://www.wfmn.org/gender-equality-explorer/

9. Guide to Sustainable Transportation Performance Measures

Framework Measurement Type(s): All

Description: Describes opportunities to incorporate environmental, economic, and social sustainability into transportation decision-making through the use of performance measures

Source: https://www.epa.gov/smartgrowth/guide-sustainable-transportation-performance-measures

10. Implicit Bias Tool

Framework Measurement Type(s):

Description: Psychologists at Harvard, the University of Virginia and the University of Washington created "Project Implicit" to develop Hidden Bias Tests to measure unconscious bias

Source: www.tolerance.org/activity/test-yourself-hidden-bias

11. Local Data Center Mapping Tool

Framework Measurement Type(s): Outcomes

Description: Provides percentages of unbanked and underbanked households and estimates of household asset poverty and liquid asset poverty for each city, county and metropolitan area with 1,000+ households

Source: http://localdata.assetsandopportunity.org/map

12. Map the Meal Gap

Framework Measurement Type(s): Access

Description: Generates two types of community-level data: 1) County-level food insecurity and child food insecurity estimates by income categories and 2) An estimate of the food budget shortfall that food insecure individuals report they experience

Source: http://www.feedingamerica.org/hunger-in-america/our-research/map-the-meal-gap/

13. National Equity Atlas

Framework Measurement Type(s): Access, Outcomes

Description: Developed as a tool for growing movement to create a more equitable, sustainable, and resilient economy. It is a comprehensive resource for data to track, measure, and make the case for inclusive growth in America's regions, and states, and nationwide

Source: http://nationalequityatlas.org

14. Racial Equity Impact Assessment

Framework Measurement Type(s): All

Description: Systematic examination of how different racial and ethnic groups will likely be affected by a proposed action or decision

Source: https://www.raceforward.org/practice/tools/racial-equity-impact-assessment-toolkit

15. Racial Equity Toolkit

Framework Measurement Type(s): All

Description: Designed to integrate consideration of racial equity in decisions, including policies, practices, programs, and budgets. Use of tool can help to develop strategies and actions that reduce racial inequities and improve success for all groups

Source: http://www.racialequityalliance.org/tools-resources/

16. Return on Educational Investment Tool

Framework Measurement Type(s): Outcomes

Description: Evaluates ROI of almost every major school district. Productivity measured by how much learning a district produces for every dollar spent, after controlling for cost of living and poverty

Source: https://cdn.americanprogress.org/wp-content/uploads/issues/2011/01/pdf/dwwroi.pdf

17. Status of Women in Your County: A Community Research Tool

Framework Measurement Type(s): Outcomes

Description: Provides instructions for finding info on the status of women in your county; Indicators can inform local policy by identifying areas of need and providing a context for local policy agendas

Source: http://www.iwpr.org/publications/pubs/the-status-of-women-in-your-county-a-community-research-tool

18. The Sentencing Project Interactive Map

Framework Measurement Type(s): Procedural Fairness, Outcomes

Description: Provides statewide statistics on justice and incarceration rates, juveniles in custody, and total corrections population in jail, prison, on probation, on parole, etc. Statistics available on national and state level and can be compared across states

Source: http://www.sentencingproject.org/map/map.cfm

19. The State of Women in America

Framework Measurement Type(s): Outcomes

Description: Uses 36 health, economic, and leadership factors to measure disparities between states and rank best and worst states for women; Researchers can map data using an online tool

Source: https://www.americanprogress.org/issues/women/reports/2013/09/25/74836/the-state-of-women-in-america/

20. Toolkit for Assessing Potential Allegations of Environmental Injustice

Framework Measurement Type(s): All

Description: Provides research tools and systematic approach for gathering and analyzing data related to environmental, social, economic, and health-related technical info to determine whether or not an environmental injustice situation appears to exist or may be avoided

Source: https://www.epa.gov/communityhealth/toolkit-assessing-potential-allegations-environmental-justice

Appendix C: Social Equity Reports

1. Alameda County Social and Health Equity Reports

Framework Measurement Type(s): All

Description: Work is guided by "Framework for Achieving Health Equity," adapted from the Bay Area Regional Health Inequities Initiative; "Life and Death from Unnatural Causes: Health and Social Inequity in Alameda County," provides additional information

Source: http://www.acphd.org/data-reports/reports-by-topic/social-and-health-equity.aspx

2. Credit and Housing Equity

Framework Measurement Type(s): All

Description: Framework for understanding disparate impact of subprime lending/foreclosure crisis, creating equitable policy, and building stable communities

Source: http://www.cincyfairhousing.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/05/Opportunity-Neighborhood-Report-of-john-a.-powell.pdf

3. Environmental Justice Report

Framework Measurement Type(s): Access, Procedural Fairness, Outcomes

Description: Measures the benefits and burdens associated with the transportation investment alternatives included in the 2040 Regional Transportation Plan

Source: http://www.fresnocog.org/environmental-justice

4. Equity Profile of the Kansas City Region

Framework Measurement Type(s): All

Description: Used to help the Equity Network set its agenda; Encourages organizations to use the profile to inform their policy decisions and spark discussions about social equity

Source: http://www.marc.org/Regional-Planning/Creating-Sustainable-Places/Plans/Social-Equity

5. Houston/Harris County Health Equity Assessment

Framework Measurement Type(s): All

Description: Brings together findings from existing health data, an extensive community engagement process, and recommendations of a policy scan relevant to the four strategic directions

Source: https://www.houstontx.gov/health/communitytransformation/HE_Assessmentt_Final.pdf

6. Housing Affordability and Economic Equity - Analysis

Framework Measurement Type(s): All

Description: Assesses housing market conditions and goals to improve affordability across spectrum of households; Identifies tools to guide allocation of resources and policy decisions toward regionally balanced market to maximize opportunity for lower and middle class households

Source: www.ewashtenaw.org/government/departments/community-and-economic-development/plans-reports-data/housing-and-infrastructure/2015/washtenaw-county-affordability-and-economic-equity.pdf

7. Just Growth Framework

Framework Measurement Type(s): All

Description: Examine how inequality stunts economic growth. Offers prescription for our national challenges of slow job growth, rising economic inequality, and sharp political polarization

Source: http://growingtogethermetro.org/

8. Louisville Metro Health Equity Report

Framework Measurement Type(s): Access, Quality, Outcomes

Description: This builds upon the inaugural report and highlights comparisons with national trends, including embrace of a health-in-all policies approach critical to achieving meaningful change

Source: https://louisvilleky.gov/government/center-health-equity/health-equity-report

9. Minnesota's Tomorrow: Equity is the Superior Growth Model

Framework Measurement Type(s): All

Description: This report aims to spark action by presenting an equitable growth policy agenda focused on growing good jobs, preparing workers for the jobs of tomorrow, and dismantling racial barriers while expanding economic opportunities in Minnesota

Source: http://www.policylink.org/sites/default/files/MNT_032514.pdf

10. Quality of Life Survey

Framework Measurement Type(s): All

Description: Topics covered include: Quality of Life, Health and Well-being, Crime and safety, Community/Culture/Social Networks, Council Processes, Built Environment, Transport, and Economic Wellbeing

Source: http://www.qualityoflifeproject.govt.nz/

11. Racial Equity in Seattle

Framework Measurement Type(s): All

Description: The Race and Social Justice Initiative completed its three-year plan for 2009-2011. This report provides an assessment accomplishments and challenges and presents three-year plan to focus efforts on achieving racial equity in Seattle

Source: www.seattle.gov/Documents/Departments/RSJI/RacialEquityinSeattleReport2012-14.pdf

12. Social Sustainability Gaps Analysis

Framework Measurement Type(s): All

Description: Fort Collins study consisting of: 1) Data collection on housing, and program inventories; 2) Interviews with providers on client and organizational needs, service demand, and wait lists; 3) Comparison of resources and capacity levels with needs

Source: http://www.fcgov.com/socialsustainability/pdf/gapsdraftreport010814.pdf

13. Structural Race Equity Analysis

Framework Measurement Type(s): All

Description: Uses stories of two children to apply a structural analysis to the food system; Offers tools for conducting similar assessments

Source: www.centerforsocialinclusion.org/building-the-case-for-racial-equity-in-the-food-system/

14. Sustainable Raleigh Framework

Framework Measurement Type(s): Access, Quality, Procedural Fairness

Description: Provides guidance for policy development and goal setting for the City based on the three fundamental principles of environmental stewardship, economic strength, and social equity

Source: www.raleighnc.gov/content/AdminServSustain/Documents/Sustainability_Initiatives.pdf

15. The Determinants of Equity

Framework Measurement Type(s): All

Description: Reviews 67 community-level indicators and highlights that work to reduce disparities needs to be strengthened by additional strategies and coordination across the community

Source: www.kingcounty.gov/~/media/elected/executive/equity-social-justice/2015/The_Determinants_of_Equity_Report.ashx?la=en

16. Welcome Dayton: Immigrant Friendly City Report

Framework Measurement Type(s): All

Description: Consensus of the goals and recommendations of a wide array of immigrant, public, and private groups who discussed how to engage new residents in revitalizing neighborhoods, building population, and strengthening economic base

Source: www.welcomedayton.org/about/implementation-plan/