Sustainable CT Equity Toolkit

This toolkit was developed by the Sustainable CT Equity Working Group drawing heavily from the Seattle Race & Social Justice Initiative's *Racial Equity Toolkit,* the City of Portland's *Racial Equity Toolkit,* and the Government Alliance on Race & Equity's *Racial Equity Toolkit.*

To satisfy the Optimize for Equity action:
1. Apply this toolkit to each Sustainable CT action that you are including in your Optimize for Equity action submission.
2. Start using this toolkit before you begin your Sustainable CT action. There are a series of questions to consider at three points of your action process: before (action planning), during (action implementation), and after (action evaluation).
3. Complete and submit one document that includes answers to each question listed below for each Sustainable CT action after you have completed the evaluation portion of the worksheet. The document you submit must be signed and dated by your elected official.

Action Planning: Complete this portion of the toolkit before you begin your action.

Title of Sustainable CT Action: _____

Step 1. Set Goals

1. What does your Sustainability Team define as the three most important equitable community outcomes related to the action (include possible community indicators that measure these outcomes)?

Step 2. Analyze Data

2a. Define diversity within your community: what are the demographics (for example, race, ethnicity, age, gender, physical disability, retired/working, vehicle/commuting needs, shift worker, dependents/not, homeowner/renter, income level, etc.) of the target groups for the action or those living, working, or socializing in the area(s) impacted by the action?

2b. Which geographic areas (including neighborhoods) in your municipality may be impacted by the action?

2c. What additional data would be helpful in analyzing the action and its impacts on equity and how can you obtain it?

Step 3. Determine the Benefit/Burden(s)

3a. How are your residents and businesses obtaining services related to this action now? What are the root causes or factors of current inequities or barriers related to this action?

3b. How will you engage those most impacted? Who is collecting and contributing feedback? Have you created accessible opportunities for these groups to engage? Public engagement should prioritize opportunities to collaborate and co-create.

3c. What did those engaged tell you about the potential benefits, burdens, and/or community priorities related to this action? What results and outcomes would they like to see? Did they identify ways to lessen any potential unintended consequences and/or to broaden any potential positive impacts?

Action Implementation: Complete this portion of the toolkit while you are performing your action.

Step 4. Engage, Advance Opportunity, & Minimize Harm

4a. Given what you have learned, what steps will you take to address any remaining barriers, impacts, or unintended consequences of this action on equity (include immediate and long-term impacts)?

4b. How will you include and benefit from diverse representation in implementing the action?

Action Evaluation: Complete this portion of the toolkit after your action is complete.

Step 5. Evaluate and Educate

5a. How will you document, evaluate, and report progress to increase equity and access to services as you implement this action?

5b. How will you continue to partner and deepen relationships with impacted segments of your community to make sure your action works for all in the long-term?

5c. What challenges did you encounter while completing the Optimize for Equity action, and how might you learn from them for future applications?

<u>**Tips**</u>

Holding a Meeting
- Make meetings accessible for inclusive participation:
  - Hold meetings at varied locations, on different days and at different times of day to encourage participation.
  - Ensure meetings are highly accessible to affected neighborhoods.
  - Include interpreters/translators for key languages represented in the local community.
  - Provide nourishment and child care services.
  - Hold meetings at venues accessible by public transportation.
- Ensure that all residents are able to obtain meeting information. Seek, and be adaptable to additional feedback on effectiveness of communication. Be sure to reach out to all stakeholders.

Education, Outreach, and Engagement
- Follow the "Hold a Meeting" tips above for your education, outreach, and engagement events.
- Set expectations early on the level of engagement for the action, and be thorough in any promised follow through. Place informational materials in schools, churches, businesses, and other community destinations; provide resources in multiple languages.
- Use opportunities to raise public awareness in the broader community about racial disparities, improving inclusion of low income residents, communities of color, and women-owned, minority-owned, and locally owned enterprises.
- Inventory existing communications channels (including digital channels and social media) and assess their effectiveness and their accessibility. What barriers may exist that prevent certain groups from accessing communication channels?

Planning
- Consider anti-displacement strategies regarding the potential for gentrification, and the well-being of and community assets desired in low-income communities and communities of color disproportionately affected by environmental hazards.
- Assess access, equity and diversity factors, including local demographics on participation (access to services should be universal without respect to economic circumstance, gender, age, race, ethnicity, or national origin).

Implementation
- Identify all relevant stakeholder groups/representatives that must be reached prior to implementing any actions and if possible, include those identified on action implementation teams. Build and strengthen relationships within the community.
- Adopt measures that directly support racial equity and prioritize or set aspirational goals for the inclusion of marginalized and disadvantaged groups, including low-income individuals and those facing high barriers to participation, such as at-risk youth, formerly incarcerated people, and those from high unemployment neighborhoods.

Evaluation

- Strengthen the transparency of implementation outcomes.
- Evaluate outcomes open and honestly, with those involved in the planning as well as those segments of the population impacted by the action.
- In an open and inclusive process, engage with stakeholders to address any lessons learned and/or enhance beneficial outcomes.