



# Equity Office Update

*Presented by*

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*Chief Equity Officer*



## ***Vision***

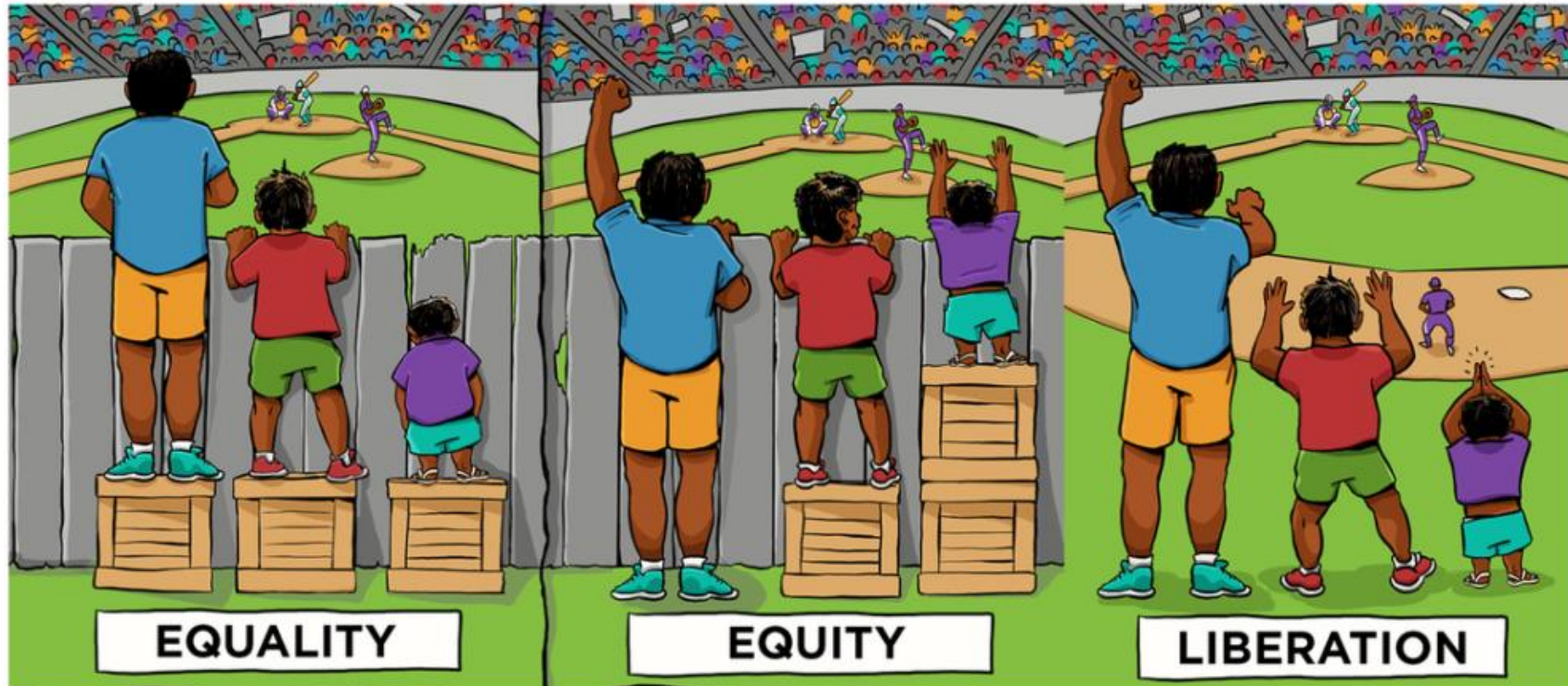
We want Austin to be the most livable city in the country

## ***Mission***

To provide leadership, guidance, and insight on equity to improve the quality of life for Austinites and achieve the vision of making Austin the most livable city in the country for ALL.

# What does equity look like to you?

*Don't just tell a different version of the same story.*  
**Change The Story!**



# PODER: HERSTORY/HISTORY

PODER was formed by a group of chicana/o East Austin activist and community leaders, regarding issues affecting our community.

Local community activists realized the need to form an organization to address the social, economic and environmental impacts of industries and potential health hazards on East Austin's communities of color.

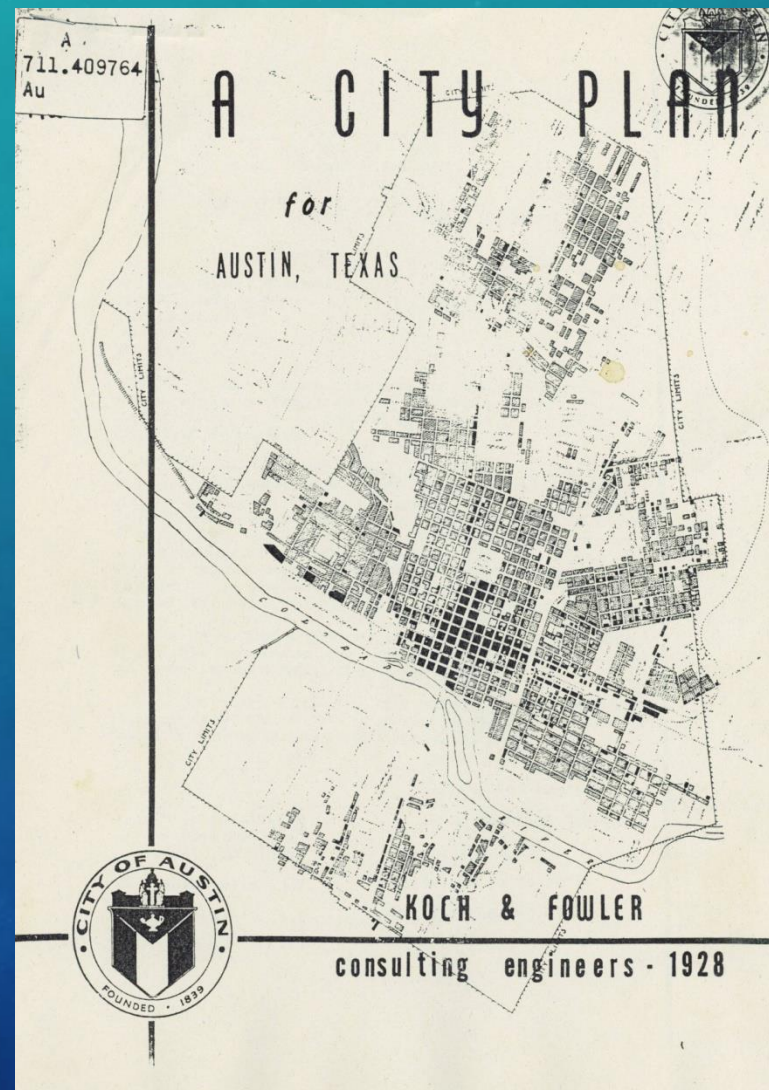
PODER's mission is to redefine environmental issues as social and economic justice issues, and to collectively set our own agenda to address these concerns as basic human rights. We seek to empower our communities through education, advocacy and action.



# ZONING/PLANNING

1928 City of Austin “Master Plan” relocated African Americans to a “Negro District” and Latinos to a “Mexican District”

Industrial properties are also designated to East Austin





# INDUSTRIAL ZONING IN EAST AUSTIN





## Holly Power Plant in Residential Area

















# INEQUITABLE EDUCATION

- 1955 Supreme Court decision of Brown v. Board of Education transition to a racially nondiscriminatory school system
- 1970 United States Government files suit to eliminate racial discrimination in A.I.S.D., 15 yrs after Brown v. Board of Education
- A.I.S.D. continues to appeal (spending more money and years than any other district in the U.S.)- 1978 Court of Appeals holds A.I.S.D. discriminatory
- During the transition, Anderson High School is closed and relocated to West Austin, going from an all African-American to almost entirely white student body.
- 1983 Court declares A.I.S.D. a unitary system and institutes busing, 29 years after Brown and after 13 years of litigation.

# URBAN RENEWAL (“URBAN REMOVAL”)

- The first waves of Urban Renewal funding come to Austin in the 60s.
- Expansion of Austin’s downtown leads to displacement of communities of color from East downtown (businesses and neighborhoods) to East of I-35.
- Eminent domain is used to seize property owned by African-American families. Many properties are turned to rental properties and decay, untouched by Urban Renewal funding.
- The University of Texas expands East into Blackland neighborhood, bulldozing over 80 homes to build the baseball fields alone, in the early 80s.
- Juarez-Lincoln University, a Mexican American cultural and educational institution, is demolished by the City of Austin in 1991 for “best use” of the site, which to this day remains an IHOP.
- In 1990, City of Austin Smart Growth Initiative designates East Austin as the Desired Development Zone



# LAND USE ISSUES

- Zoning/ Land use
- Polluting Industries
- Housing Affordability
- Property Appraisals
- Taxation



# TANK FARM AIRPORT AND SPRINGDALE



Six Major Oil Companies located at Tank Farm Site



# BFI RECYCLING FACILITY BOLM AND GULLETT RD.



350,000 Household Recyclables sent to  
Gardens Neighborhood Association Area



# HOLLY ST. POWER PLANT



Largest Stationary Source of Nox Emissions



# MATHESON TRI - GAS COMPANY

3519 E. 5<sup>TH</sup> ST



# PURE CASTING FACILITY

2110 E. 4<sup>TH</sup> ST





# COMMUNITY ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Relocation of Tank Farm: Fuel storage tanks owned by 6 major oil companies (Chevron, Mobil, Exxon, Star Enterprise (Texaco), Citgo, and Coastal States.
- Relocation and city of Austin buyout of Browning Ferris Industries (BFI), a recycling center for over 350,000 households located in Gardens neighborhood.
- Historic Rezoning of over 600 properties, mostly industrial, located in the Govalle/Johnston Terrace planning area.
- Closure of the Holly Street Power Plant









# PURE CASTING INDUSTRIAL FACILITY

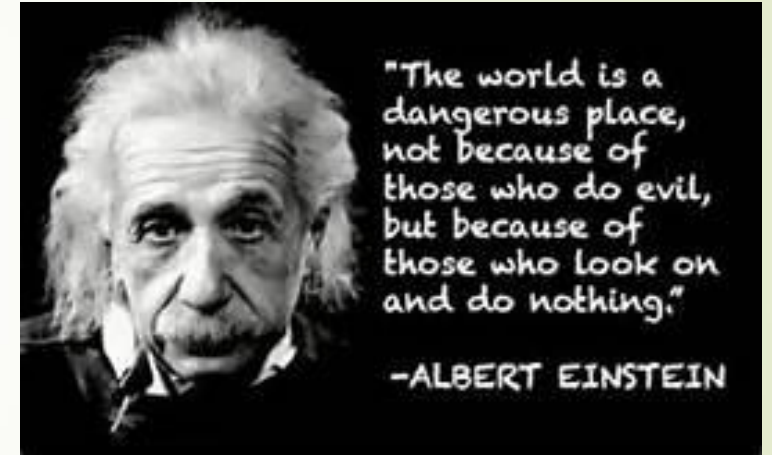


Location: 2110 E. 4<sup>th</sup> St. Across from Zavala Elementary,  
Pan American Recreation Center and hundreds of homes



# Why Government & Our City

- Government has the ability to
  - Create inequity
  - Create Equity
  - Improve overall quality of life for residents



"The world is a dangerous place, not because of those who do evil, but because of those who look on and do nothing."

-ALBERT EINSTEIN



# History of government and equity

Initially explicit



Government explicitly creates and maintains inequity.

Became implicit



Discrimination illegal, but "neutral" policies and practices perpetuate inequity.

Government for racial equity



Proactive policies, practices and procedures that advance equity.





# City of Austin's Opportunity to Drive Equity

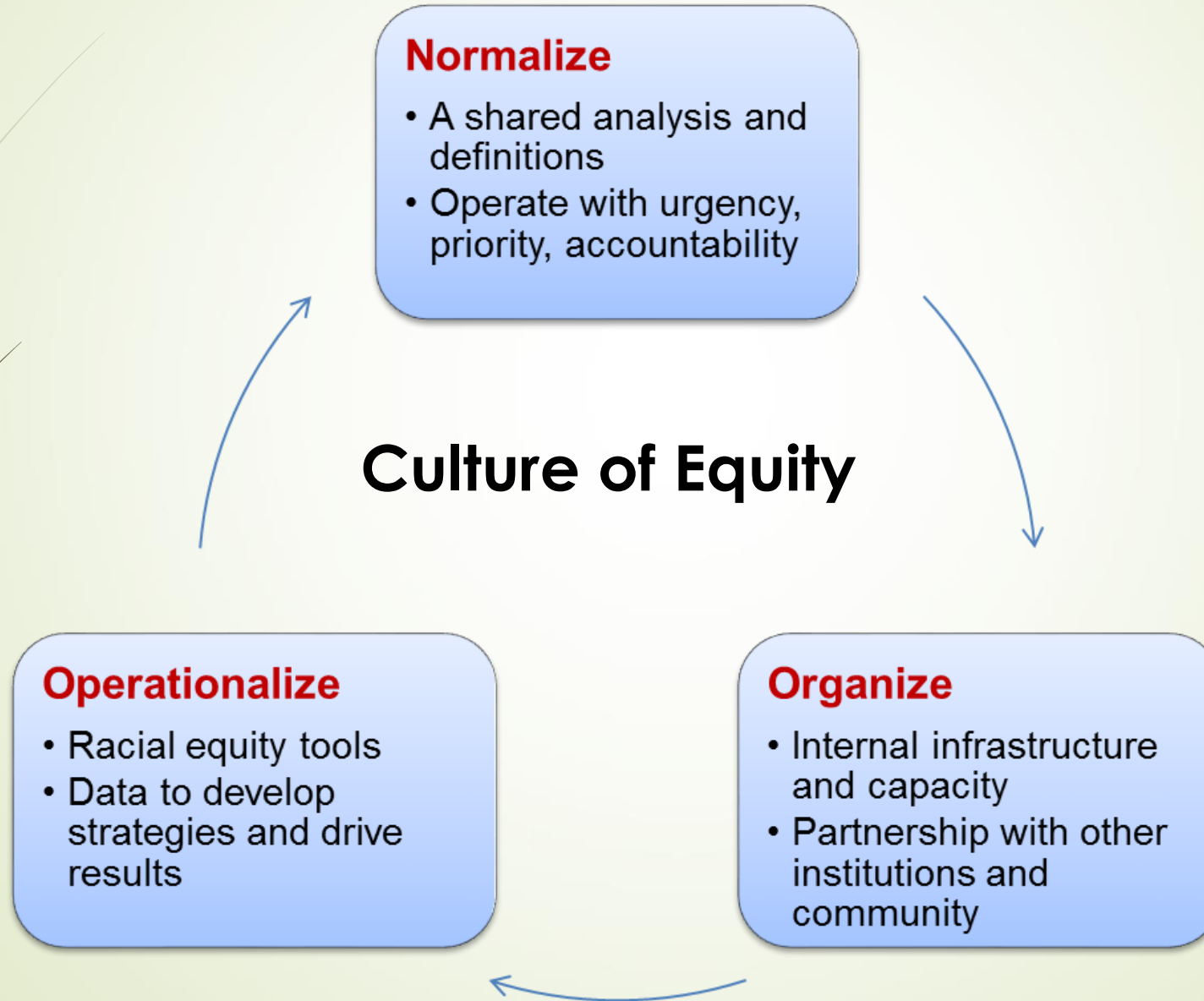
## It's all about **CHOICE POINTS**

- Choice Points are decision-making opportunities that influence outcomes
- The cumulative impacts of small choices can lead to BIG influence on outcomes and equity
- When we are conscious of choice points and the related impact, we're less likely to replicate implicit bias and the status quo, and we open new possibilities for equitable change.

## Key Areas of Departmental **CHOICE**

- **Planning:** What to change and prioritize in programs?
- **Budgeting:** what items do we add or cut and what initiatives get the funding?
- **Personnel:** who to hire, retain, promote, or develop as leaders
- **Policy Development:** what to propose or modify?
- **Practices:** routines/habits and or expectations to set

# Building a Framework for Equity





# Building Capacity for Equity

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## Organize

- Internal infrastructure and capacity
- Partnership with other institutions and community



## Equity Action Team

- Over 100 stakeholders
- Diverse & inclusive
- Community leaders and City staff
- Committed to co-creative process

## Lead Priority: Development of an Equity Assessment Tool

### Operationalize

- Racial equity tools
- Data to develop strategies and drive results

- ☐ Equity Assessment Tool – is a protocol or equity primer that will systematically integrate deliberate consideration and consciousness of how our decisions as city government within choice points can have a positive or negative impact on equity in our community.
- ☐ Utilizing Strategic Co-creation Process
- ☐ Engage community stakeholders
- ☐ Goal to pilot with 5 or more Departments and secured 8
- ☐ Pair assessments with budget requests



## Equity Assessment Tool Pilot Departments

### Operationalize

- Racial equity tools
- Data to develop strategies and drive results

- ☐ Austin Water
- ☐ Economic Development
- ☐ Human Resources
- ☐ Parks and Recreation
- ☐ Public Health
- ☐ Public Library
- ☐ Public Works
- ☐ Transportation



**COURAGE...**  
...is contagious

# Equity Action Team Visioning

**Operationalize**

- Racial equity tools
- Data to develop strategies and drive results

## Core Elements of an Equity Assessment tool:

- Lead with Race/Ethnicity
- Focus on human centered design and institutional empathy
- Engage residents in decision-making, especially those adversely affected by the current condition
- Bring conscious attention to racial inequities and impact before decisions get made
- Help us avoid or minimize adverse impacts and unintended consequences
- Prevent racism from occurring in the first place and to get ahead of the curve
- Affirm our commitment to equity, inclusion, and diversity.
- Continue to evolve organically



## Outline of Equity Assessment Tool

- ❑ Introduction – Brief historical account and Council Resolution for context
- ❑ Departmental Analysis – A look at the department's cultural and commitment to principles that drive equity
- ❑ Budget – A scan of potential for realignments and insight on how community is included in budget planning
- ❑ Community Engagement – Gauges your practices and quality of interaction with the community
- ❑ Alignment – Evaluates opportunities to drive addressing disparities within Council's six priority outcomes

[https://docs.google.com/document/d/12\\_boHTxystzcauPM7\\_pfcHGjr-r9elXrb5BdKiTbTk8/edit?usp=drive\\_web](https://docs.google.com/document/d/12_boHTxystzcauPM7_pfcHGjr-r9elXrb5BdKiTbTk8/edit?usp=drive_web)

## The Journey Forward

- Timeline
  - Assessments completed
  - Provide Council Report November 2017
- Community Engagement
  - Raise awareness & collect data
  - Reach marginalized communities
- Equity Academy
  - Comprehensive and continuous
  - Engage leadership
- Evaluation
  - Quality control for assessments
  - Review the assessment process
- Definitions





# Equity Office Partnership

**Operationalize**

- Racial equity tools
- Data to develop strategies and drive results

**Consider overlaying an equity lens to your plan:**

- 1. Know the History:** Consider historical context of projects. Does the project address events that have negatively impacted communities of color? Acknowledge them and create space for communities to share as to not repeat the same mistakes.
- 2. Review & Monitor the Data:** What are the data and projected impact of the project? What do the data tell us? Are they disaggregated by race/ethnicity?
- 3. Engage the Community:** How have communities been engaged? Are there opportunities to expand engagement and what were the efforts to reach most marginalized populations and bring those voices into consideration?
- 5. Advance Racial Equity:** Does this project have an opportunity to advance equity within Council Six Outcome Priorities and reduce/eliminate a disparity?
- 6. Analyze Unintended Consequences:** Are there any possible unintended outcomes for this project? Could the project have a negative impact on communities of color and/or other marginalized populations?