
EQUITABLE DEVELOPMENT SCORECARD



WEST SIDE
community organization

DRAFT



INTRODUCTION

The Equitable Development Scorecard is a tool that will answer the question, **“Who benefits from any new development coming to the West Side?”**.

It ensures that the principles and practices of equitable development, environmental justice, and affordability are applied to our community and that plans for economic development and wealth creation benefit everyone.

The history of the West Side and the repetitive displacement of people of color, locally owned businesses and civic/cultural/religious institutions have shaped the development of the scorecard. The landscape is evolving once again as economic forces shift, new technologies emerge, and concerns about natural environment and climate change come to the fore. Unlike past transformations where those living on the West Side had little say about what happened and people were forced out, the community wants to help guide and shape economic development and work to ensure the traumas of the past are not repeated.

The West Side has a deep history of sheltering immigrants from around the world. It has been a place where people are able to start fresh and prosper. WSCO wants to build on this legacy by leveraging the mosaic of current economic opportunities to benefit our residents. We aim to achieve this through support of economic development and land use projects that build wealth and resiliency in our community, diversify and strengthen the local economy, respect our heritage and culture, and revitalize the natural environment.



HISTORY

The West Side is the only St. Paul neighborhood south of the Mississippi River. It has three distinct topographies: the bluffs, the terrace, and the flats. The West Side's identity pre-dates the City of St. Paul. When early merchant ships brought goods north to trade with the first peoples on this land, the Dakota and Lakota, traders were often told to unload their vessels on the West side of their ships for trading. This area would become Dakota County and St. Paul, in Ramsey County, was established across the river. However, through a settlement over tax trade crossing the bridge into Ramsey County, the City of St. Paul acquired the land from Dakota County, and this area was officially dubbed the "West Side".

The West Side was originally inhabited by the Dakota and Lakota peoples, who came to the area because of its diverse natural resources. The Native Americans were forcibly displaced from the Flats (the lowland area directly across the Mississippi River from downtown St. Paul) by northern Europeans in the mid-1800s. French Canadians and Yankees were the first non-native residents of the Flats, followed by Irish and Germans. A bridge from the West Side was built to connect to downtown in 1859. Due to political events in Russia, Russian Jews emigrated to the area and by 1915, more than 70% of the Flats residents were Jewish. In the twentieth century, non-Jews such as Christian Syrians and Mexican Americans, arrived to the Flats in significant numbers.

Every spring the Mississippi flooded, directly affecting the Flats. In 1952, the flood was severe, and showed the vulnerability of frame houses on a floodplain. In 1956, the city's Port Authority announced the creation of Riverview Industrial Park, which would consume all acreage of the Flats. As a result of this decision, life for those living on the Flats changed quickly and significantly. In 1961, the city began buying the houses, only to tear them down in 1962. By the end of 1963, all the residents had left the Flats. In 1964, a flood wall was built. While the flood wall was necessary to protect the Flats, it was built solely to benefit industries rather than restore the families to their homes. The life of the industrial park was short-lived, yet left behind toxic sites that have affected generations.

Currently, the West Side continues to be racially, ethnically and economically diverse. According to the Minnesota Compass report, "Planning District 3: West Side Neighborhood" (2018), about 55% of West Side residents are people of color. The Metropolitan Council reports 75% of the West Side is an "Area of Concentrated Poverty" which means 40% of the residents have incomes at or below 185% of the federal poverty threshold. The West Side continues the legacy of being a historic immigrant community even today, as one in five residents was born outside the United States and over a third (34%) speak a language other than English at home (ACS 2012-2016). The West Side thrives on its cultural diversity, yet struggles now as it has in the past with repeated instances of displacement by those in positions of power putting profit over people. Given the statistics above, it is easy to recognize the West Side's vulnerability, as prey for those interested in its rich natural resources.

PROJECT

Project/Plan Name:

Location of Project/Plan:

Is the project part of a bigger land use plan? (circle) Y / N

If yes, please attach plan

Public Investments(s):

- Public Subsidy Funding amount and source
- Tax abatement amount and source
- Public land sale and amount
- Zoning changes/variances
- Infrastructure improvements (sewer/water, street, sidewalk, etc.)
- Other: _____

Developer:

Developer Contact Info:

Public Agency:

Public Agency Contact Info:

Other Stakeholders:

Description of the Project:

Community Profile (demographics—please attach additional information to the Scorecard)

INSTRUCTIONS

Using the Scorecard

Step #1: Fill out the Project information on the previous page. Then turn to page 5.

Step #2: Customize each Equitable Development Principle's scoring criteria according to your community's priorities. Not all criteria may apply to your community or project. You should tailor this Scorecard to be relevant to your specific purpose(s) and area. Feel free to take notes in the empty space and add, change, or cross out criteria that do not apply to your community or project.

Step #3: Use the "Helpful Materials" section to clear up any questions of content or definition.

Step #4: Hold conversations with your group around each criterion, and give each one a score.

Step #5: Add up all of the scores below for the Final Score, and you have completed the Scorecard.

Scoring

1. Write the score from each section below, along with the maximum possible score for the section.
(Points Earned/Max Possible)

Equitable Community Engagement Score ____ / 40

Equitable Housing Score ____ / 35

Equitable Environment Score ____ / 40

Equitable Economic Development Score ____ / 35

Equitable Land Use Score ____ / 20

Equitable Transportation Score ____ / 35

2. Add up all of the above scores to get a Total.
____ / 205 Total (Points Earned/Max Possible)

3. Turn the Total into a Final Score.
Divide the total Points Earned by the Max Possible

Write the Final Score here: _____/100

Equitable Community Engagement practices require evidence that local community members most affected, especially low wealth people, people of color, neighborhood groups, community organizations, people living with disabilities, and new immigrants are involved in the development project.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

___ / 40 Add up scores below for Community Engagement

SCORE

Give Each criterion on a scale of 1 (low) to 5 (high)

| | |
|---------|---|
| ___ / 5 | Project was initiated by the community, or developers and planners partner with the community to develop their community engagement plan BEFORE the project starts. |
| ___ / 5 | Developers involve local community members within the first 30 days of the planning process. Earlier engagement scores higher. |
| ___ / 5 | Developers have completed a cultural and historical tour of West Side with a community member. |
| ___ / 5 | Throughout the project, developers and planners regularly use appropriate tools to ensure the project authentically engages community and responds to our priorities. Significant changes to the scope of the plan and/or project trigger more community engagement. |
| ___ / 5 | Community vision is established or reaffirmed by a group of residents that are reflective of the current demographics of the community. People with disabilities, indigenous people, people of color, low-income people, renters, people across multiple generations, etc., have decision-making authority. |
| ___ / 5 | Development connects to, highlights, and respects community characteristics, local history, points of interest, and key features. |
| ___ / 5 | Development promotes qualities of a vibrant community - social connections, education, health, arts and culture, and safety. |
| ___ / 5 | The plan and project include the community's goals, priorities, and criteria for growth and reinvestment. Reference in glossary: WSCO Ten-year plan. |

Equitable Housing practices require that families at all income levels have access to housing that costs no more than 30% of the household income. Equitable development makes affordable housing a priority, because of the intersections housing has with health, environmental injustices, income, and education. When families have an affordable, quality, and stable housing situation, they can make crucial choices about wholesome food, health care, child care, education and other economic decisions that impact their quality of life.

EQUITABLE HOUSING

___ / 35 Add up scores below for Equitable Housing Practices

SCORE Give Each criterion on a scale of 1 (low) to 5 (high)

| | |
|---------|--|
| ___ / 5 | Development offers rental housing options appropriate to a commercial corridor, incorporating options accessible to all income levels. (H1.1) |
| ___ / 5 | Development supports mixed income rental and ownership opportunities per the West Side Master Flats Plan. This includes proposed projects on the West Side outside of the original plan area. (H1.3) |
| ___ / 5 | Development increases the number of units affordable to people at 30 -80% of Area Median Income. (H1.4) |
| ___ / 5 | Development supports a range of household types, life stages and sizes. |
| ___ / 5 | Development includes at least 20% of units affordable to current West Side households at or below 50% Area Median Income. |
| ___ / 5 | Housing is dignified, safe and designed with durable materials. |
| ___ / 5 | Developer Lease Agreement define provisions for rent increases that assure the 20% of units of affordable housing are maintained (i.e residents who are at or below 50% of the area median income are not charged more than 30% of their income) |

We envision a West Side community where all residents can experience a healthy, sustainable environment, while honoring the interconnectedness of social, economic, racial, and environmental justice. Development and improvements should be made with the existing community in mind, and honor our community members and history. The river is one of the key features of our neighborhood; it creates a clear boundary, invites business, and offers recreation and opportunities to enjoy the world outdoors. It has also influenced housing and pollution issues related to flooding and industry. We are working towards a West Side where development and environmental justice go hand in hand, so all of our residents will reap the benefits of a healthy environment.

ENVIRONMENT

___ / 40 Add up scores below for Environment

SCORE Give Each criterion on a scale of 1 (low) to 5 (high)

| | |
|---------|--|
| ___ / 5 | There are plans in place to clean or repair any negative environmental impacts caused by the development. Impacts include but are not limited to pollution of air, water, or soil; waste removal; exposed soil will be planted to prevent erosion. |
| ___ / 5 | Development preserves public access to the river for all residents. Trail use will not be restricted. Does not disturb natural beauty of the riverfront or wetlands. |
| ___ / 5 | Development promotes or maintains access to green spaces across the West Side. Any green space disturbed by development is replaced or restored. |
| ___ / 5 | The designed environment uses native plants and grasses, removes and/or discourages invasive plant species. It uses plants that are friendly to bees and butterflies, captures rainwater, prevents soil erosion. |
| ___ / 5 | Both new building and retrofitting of existing structures use environmentally friendly materials and builds energy efficiency. |
| ___ / 5 | Development works towards a zero waste goal. Recycling and composting options made available. |
| ___ / 5 | The space is designed to make walking, biking, and the use of public transit simple and safe, and connected to the neighborhood. |
| ___ / 5 | Management of property will use environmentally friendly practices and maintenance. |

Economic development practices require evidence that policies and programs work to prioritize community based financial intelligence, sustainable wealth creation, and high quality job opportunities that prevent unwanted displacement of residents and small businesses from low-income communities and communities of color.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

___ / 35 Add up scores below for Economic Development Practices

SCORE Give Each criterion on a scale of 1 (low) to 5 (high)

| | |
|---------|---|
| ___ / 5 | New capital and investment opportunities are created to promote local small business development, arts/cultural-based businesses, and entrepreneurial opportunities, especially for women and people of color. |
| ___ / 5 | High quality, diversified, and employee-intensive businesses owned by people of color are created to sustain a strong economic base and provide job opportunities for the full employment of a diverse set of skills. |
| ___ / 5 | Lease agreements prioritize neighborhood business opportunities. |
| ___ / 5 | Developers use workforce/education programs, such as HUD Section 3, to connect residents to jobs and long-term employment and offers West Side residents first chance at these opportunities. |
| ___ / 5 | Developers give local community preference when hiring consultants, contractors, and developers as a strategy to address disparities. |
| ___ / 5 | Public funding criteria rewards applicants who ensure that workers have living wage jobs with benefits and the right to organize for labor agreements without fear of retaliation. |
| ___ / 5 | Project will ensure that there is a community-supported plan to maintain neighborhood affordability and avoid cultural and physical displacement. |

The West Side Community Organization is committed to impacting livability on the West Side. We work to influence development and land use decisions on the West Side, ensuring it benefits all peoples living in our community. From sidewalk crossings to local businesses expansions, to the stewardship of the Mississippi River Valley, where we make our home.

LAND USE

___ / 20 Add up scores below for Land Use

SCORE Give Each criterion on a scale of 1 (low) to 5 (high)

| | |
|---------|--|
| ___ / 5 | Developers invest resources (public or private) in West Side commercial and/or industrial areas, such as Cesar Chavez/District del Sol, Smith Avenue, Stryker/George, Robert Street, Barge Channel Road, West Side Flats, and area adjacent to Harriet Island. |
| ___ / 5 | Project creates opportunities for green industry to thrive on the West Side. [Green industry does not harm the environment and provides products or services related to renewable energy, increased energy efficiency, clean transportation and fuels, agriculture and natural (water) resource conservation, and pollution prevention or environmental cleanup. Based on definition by Indiana Business Review] |
| ___ / 5 | Design contributes to distinct identities of local cultural heritage through the presence, |
| ___ / 5 | Design includes environmentally responsible, resource efficient materials and processes throughout the project's life span. |

TRANSPORTATION

Equitable Transportation policy will require walkable, livable, and affordable land use practices to enhance healthy living and upward mobility for the low-income residents and residents of color in the West Side. With its unique land patterns, traveling through the West Side can be a challenge, regardless of transportation mode. Connections to other parts of the city and access to regional transportation systems is limited due to the neighborhood's physical location, lack of public transit, and the overall transit infrastructure.

____ / 35 Add up scores below for Transportation

SCORE

Give Each criterion on a scale of 1 (low) to 5 (high)

| | |
|----------|--|
| ____ / 5 | Infrastructure connects and enhances what is already in place as part of a regional system. The project maximizes connections to all modes of public transit and makes walking, biking, and use of public transit an easy choice. The project prioritizes the routes and paths that pedestrians and bicyclists naturally and easily use. |
| ____ / 5 | Project improves the public transportation infrastructure. Development includes transit benefits such as shade trees and other shade options, trash cans, places to sit, appropriate lighting etc. |
| ____ / 5 | Development promotes traffic calming and pedestrian safety, with some consideration of ,but not limited to, "Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design" best practices. |

West Side residents' car use is significantly higher than residents in the rest of Saint Paul and only 4.3% of our residents use public transportation to get to work, compared to 8.5% citywide. This is due to the limited investment in environmental benefits and decreased access to public transportation on the West Side. Priority must given to creating a more connected West Side, including but not limited to, increases in bus service in the community.

TRANSPORTATION CONTINUED

SCORE Give Each criterion on a scale of 1 (low) to 5 (high)

| | |
|---------|--|
| ___ / 5 | Development is recommended to be within a quarter mile of transit lines, promoting multi-modal access to green and other community spaces. |
| ___ / 5 | Parking facilities accommodate bicycle use and storage and do not limit access or passage to pedestrians and people with disabilities. Parking management plan encourages people to walk, bike, and/or use public transit. |
| ___ / 5 | Presence of GPS and other wayfinding systems and other mapping information for pedestrians, bicyclists, and transit uses is provided. Transit information must be available in the predominant languages used on the West Side, with multi-language signage. |
| ___ / 5 | As part of normal property maintenance plan, developers commit to long term maintenance of transit stops and corners, such snow clearance, tree trimming, clearing access to transit for people with disabilities. |