



REIMAGINING CODE ENFORCEMENT PUTTING EQUITY FRONT & CENTER

SCEMA SEMINAR
FEBRUARY 2021

HESTERST

HESTER ST

**WHERE THE
PEOPLE SHAPE
THEIR CITY**



**CAPACITY
BUILDING**



**PLANNING &
DESIGN**



DEVELOPMENT



**WHAT ISSUES ARE COMING UP
IN YOUR COMMUNITY & FOR YOUR
CODE ENFORCEMENT TEAM?**

CODE ENFORCEMENT'S MISSION IS TO KEEP HOMES AND NEIGHBORHOODS SAFE AND HEALTHY

RESTORE DISTRESSED PROPERTIES

KEEP LANDLORDS ACCOUNTABLE

PROTECT LOW-INCOME TENANTS & HOMEOWNERS



KEEP VACANT LOTS CLEAN

PRESERVE NEIGHBORHOODS

INCREASE NEIGHBORHOOD RESILIENCY

BUT CODE ENFORCEMENT CAN ALSO IMPACT LOW-INCOME COMMUNITIES OF COLOR DISPROPORTIONATELY



PRIORITY AREAS FOR ENFORCEMENT ARE OFTEN LOW-INCOME COMMUNITIES OF COLOR



FEAR OF EVICTION AND IMMIGRATION DETENTION PREVENTS CONTACT WITH CITY ENFORCEMENT



PEOPLE OF COLOR RECEIVE MORE VIOLATIONS IN GENTRIFYING NEIGHBORHOODS



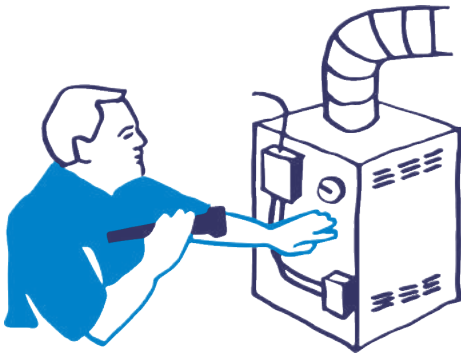
NO SOCIAL SUPPORT FOR RESIDENTS DISPLACED IN CONDEMNATION



HOUSING VOUCHER RECIPIENTS ARE PLACED IN LOW QUALITY HOUSING



LOW INCOME HOMEOWNERS CANNOT AFFORD TO ADDRESS CODE VIOLATIONS



LANDLORDS CAN PREFER TO PAY A FINE THAN ADDRESS VIOLATIONS. TENANTS ARE STUCK WITH BAD CONDITIONS

THIS DISPROPORTIONATE IMPACT IS NOT RANDOM

- **LOW INCOME NEIGHBORHOODS OF COLOR HAVE DETERIORATED DUE TO A HISTORY OF DISINVESTMENT, REDLINING AND MORE !**
- **DISPARATE IMPACT ON BLACK & BROWN COMMUNITIES: LESS ACCESS TO CREDIT, LOWER HOME APPRAISAL RATES, LOWER HOMEOWNERSHIP RATES COUPLED WITH HIGHER RATE OF CODE VIOLATIONS**
- **THESE ISSUES HAVE BEEN FUTURE EXACERBATED BY 2008 FORECLOSURE CRISIS AND NOW, CURRENT HOUSING INSTABILITY CAUSED BY ECONOMIC IMPACT OF COVID-19**

THIS DISPROPORTONATE IMPACT IS NOT RANDOM

- **ENFORCEMENT PROCESSES & POLICIES ARE DESIGNED BY UNEQUAL SYSTEMS**
- **THEY REFLECT THE IMPLICIT BIASES, VIEWPOINTS AND LIMITATIONS OF THE DESIGNER AND THE SYSTEMS IN WHICH THEY OPERATE**
- **IN THE CONTEXT OF INSTITUTIONAL AND SYSTEMIC RACISM, PROCESSES AND POLICIES MAY (AND MOST LIKELY DO!) REPRODUCE THESE NORMS IN WAYS THAT CAN DISPARATELY IMPACT THE MOST VULNERABLE**

BUT WE ALSO SEE THAT

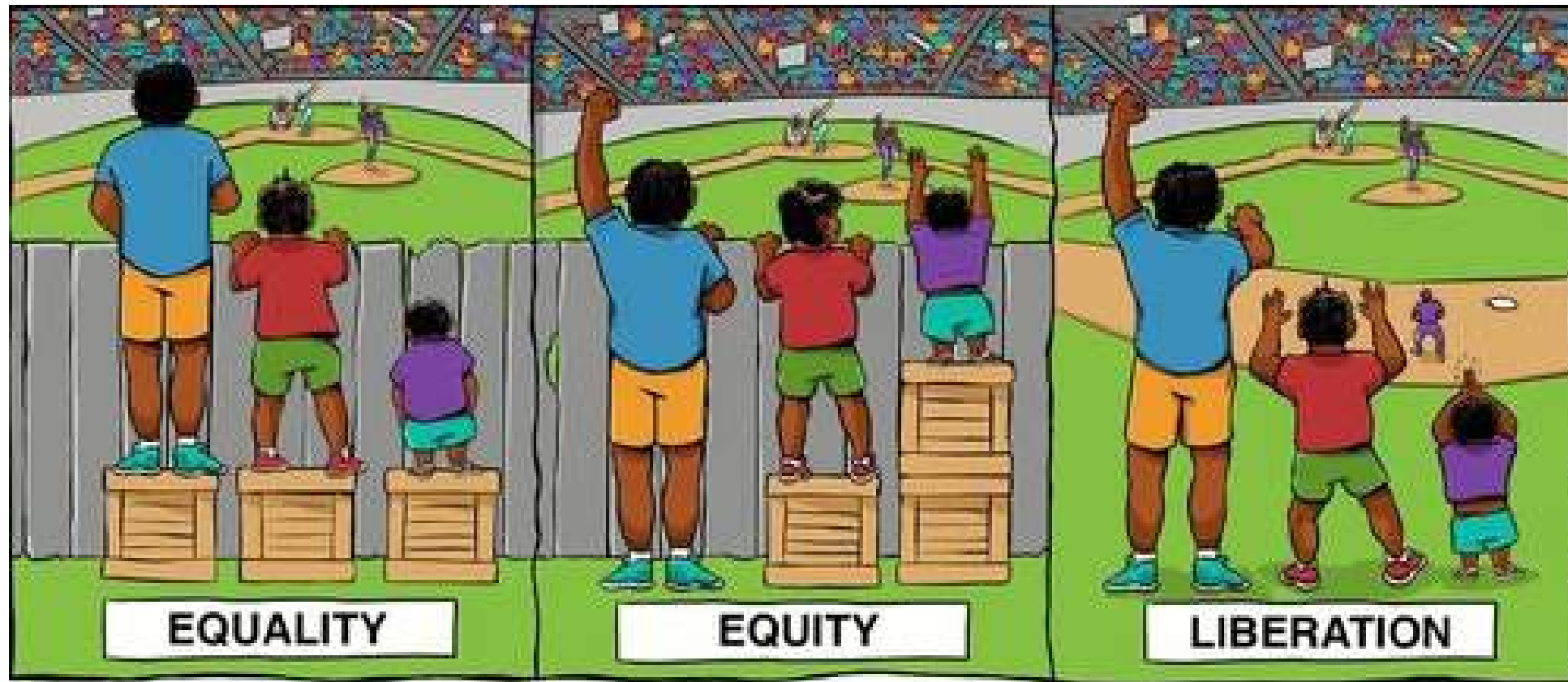
- **CODE OFFICERS HAVE A DEEP KNOWLEDGE, AND EAR TO THE GROUND ABOUT HOUSING CONDITIONS**
- **THEY ARE THE FIRST RESPONDERS OF THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT**
- **OFTEN THE TOOLS AT THE DISPOSAL OF THE CODE ENFORCEMENT TEAM (VIOLATIONS, FINES) ARE NOT THE RIGHT TOOLS TO DEAL WITH THE ROOT CAUSES OF THE VIOLATIONS**

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- **OFTEN THE TOOLS AT THE DISPOSAL OF THE CODE ENFORCEMENT TEAM (VIOLATIONS, FINES) ARE NOT THE RIGHT TOOLS TO DEAL WITH THE ROOT CAUSES OF THE VIOLATIONS**
- **THERE IS AN OPPORTUNITY IN EVERY COMMUNITY TO DEVELOP A DIFFERENT APPROACH THAT IS PROACTIVE + EQUITABLE + WORKS WITH COMMUNITIES + PROVIDES SOCIAL SUPPORTS**

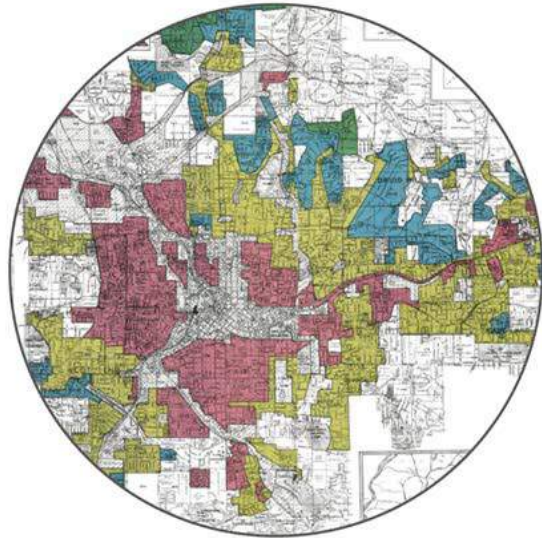
**HOW CAN WE REIMAGINE
CODE ENFORCEMENT?**

PUTTING EQUITY FRONT AND CENTER

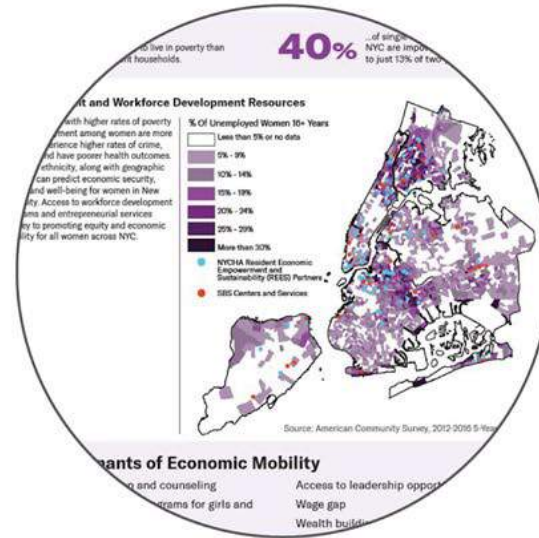


SOURCE: CENTER FOR STORY-BASED STRATEGY

PRINCIPLES OF AN EQUITABLE PROCESS



RESTORATIVE



EVIDENCE-BASED



COLLABORATIVE



COMMUNITY-CENTRIC



PROACTIVE

SO, WHAT CAN WE DO?



WORK WITH OTHERS



THINK ABOUT YOUR PROCESS



ENGAGE COMMUNITY



MAKING CHANGES TOWARDS EQUITY



WORK WITH OTHERS

WORK WITH OTHERS

- **CODE ENFORCEMENT ALONE CANNOT DEAL WITH THE LARGER EQUITY ISSUES AFFECTING OUR NEIGHBORHOODS**
- **BUILD OR DEEPEN PARTNERSHIPS WITH:**
 - **OTHER CITY AND COUNTY AGENCIES**
 - **CITY PLANNING**
 - **COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT**
 - **SOCIAL SERVICES**
 - **HEALTH**
 - **PUBLIC HOUSING AUTHORITY**
 - **NON-GOVERNMENT ENTITIES**
 - **COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS**
 - **SERVICE PROVIDERS**
 - **UTILITY COMPANIES**

WORK WITH OTHERS

- **HOW CAN WE DEEPEN PARTNERSHIPS?**
 - **ESTABLISH OFFICIAL CHANNELS FOR SHARING DATA AND INFORMATION ABOUT PROPERTIES AND CASES**
 - **IDENTIFY PERSISTENT PROBLEMS THAT ARE TOUCHED BY DIFFERENT AGENCIES AND OTHER NON-GOVERNMENT ENTITIES**
 - **BRAINSTORM JOINT SOLUTIONS INSTEAD OF DEALING WITH ISSUES ON A CASE-BY-CASE BASIS**
 - **INSTITUTIONALIZE COLLABORATION, PARTICULARLY FOR COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS AND SERVICE PROVIDERS**

WORK WITH OTHERS

ELMIRA, NY

- **DEEP COLLABORATION BETWEEN DEPARTMENTS:**
 - **COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT**
 - **CODE ENFORCEMENT**
 - **LEGAL****DESPITE LEADERSHIP CHANGES**
- **INSTITUTIONALIZED COLLABORATION WITH COUNTY SOCIAL SERVICE DEPARTMENT TO SHARE INFORMATION ABOUT AND INSPECT APARTMENTS PAID WITH HOUSING VOUCHERS**

NEWBURGH, NY

- **DEEP COLLABORATION BETWEEN CITY PLANNING AND CODE ENFORCEMENT DEPARTMENT**
- **INFORMAL COLLABORATION WITH HOUSING AND SOCIAL SERVICE PROVIDERS TO REFER TENANTS FACING CONDEMNATION AND DISPLACEMENT**



EVALUATE YOUR PROCESS

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IDENTIFY EQUITY CHOICE POINTS: PARTICULAR STEPS IN THE PROCESS THAT HAVE AN IMPACT ON EQUITY

- **MAP CITY PROCESSES USING A HUMAN-CENTERED DESIGN LENS**
- **UNDERSTAND HOW DIFFERENT ACTORS EXPERIENCE AND/OR ARE IMPACTED BY THE SAME PROCESS**
- **IDENTIFY THE MOST EFFECTIVE PLACES TO MAKE ADJUSTMENTS, CHANGES OR TWEAKS IN ORDER TO MAKE PROCESSES MORE EQUITABLE**

EVALUATE YOUR PROCESS

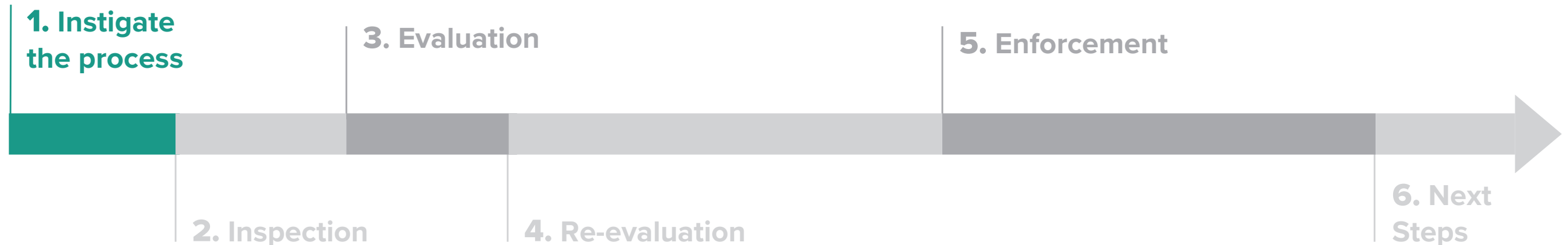
USE A PROCESS MAP TO IDENTIFY EQUITY PAIN POINTS



EVALUATE YOUR PROCESS



- **LOOKING AT THE PROCESS THROUGH DIFFERENT PERSPECTIVES: CODE TEAM, OTHER AGENCIES, OUTSIDE PARTNERS, AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**
- **A LACK OF ESTABLISHED PROCEDURES, COMMUNICATION GAPS OR EVEN THE RULES THEMSELVES!**



EVALUATE YOUR PROCESS



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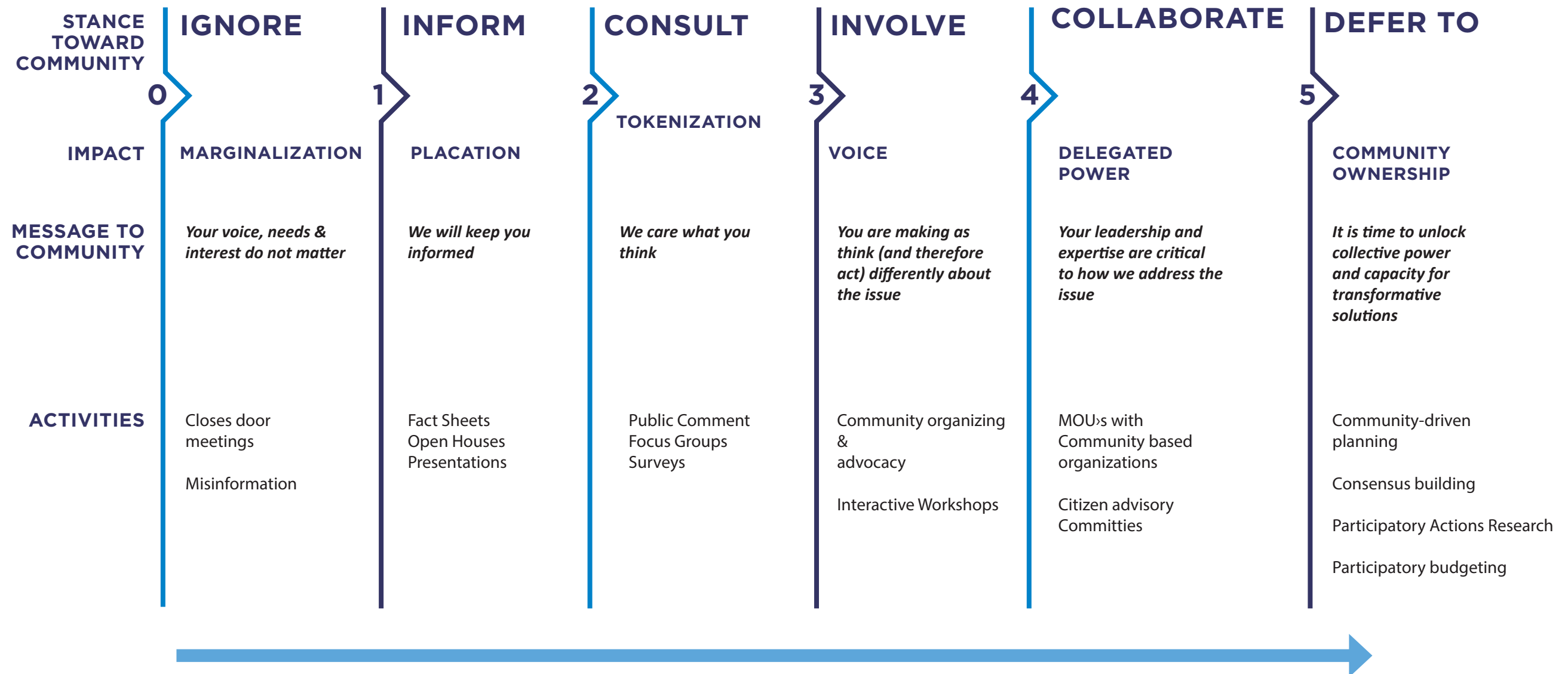
- IDEAS FROM DIFFERENT ACTORS ABOUT HOW THE PROCESS CAN BE IMPROVED
- HOW CAN WE LEVERAGE CURRENT CONDITION FOR IMPROVEMENT?





ENGAGE COMMUNITY

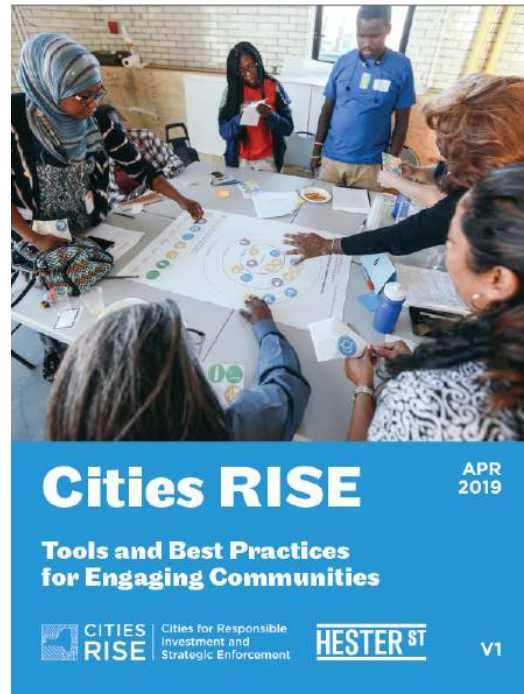
COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT SPECTRUM



SOURCE: THE MOVEMENT CENTER

ENGAGE COMMUNITY

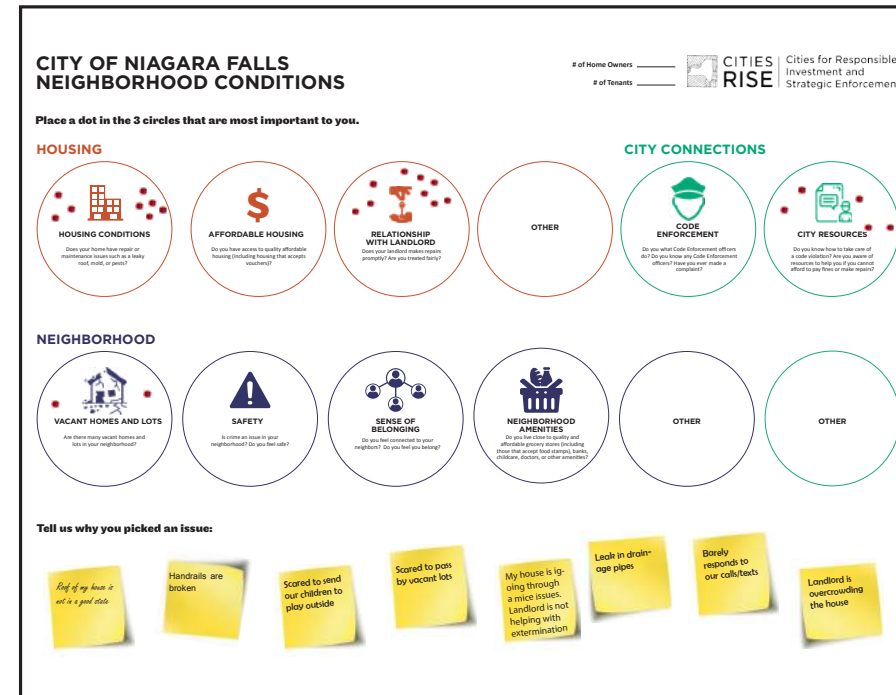
BUILDING CAPACITY FOR COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT TO INFORM MORE EQUITABLE AND EFFECTIVE POLICY AND PRACTICE



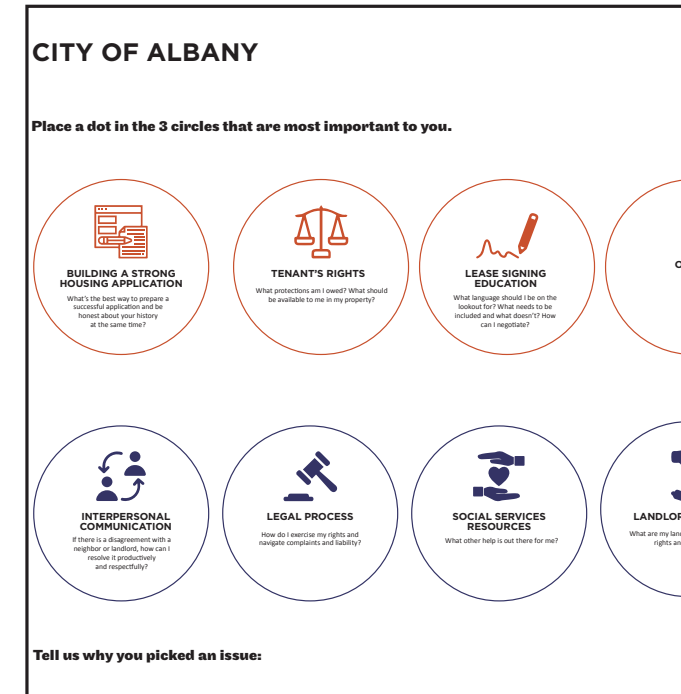
Community Engagement Guide



Public education brochure



Engagement tools



ENGAGE COMMUNITY

- **CREATE USER FRIENDLY MATERIALS**
- **PARTNER WITH TRUSTED LOCAL ORGANIZATIONS**
- **GO WHERE PEOPLE ARE AT**
- **LEVERAGE EVENTS TO PROVIDE INFORMATION & RESOURCES**
- **CREATE INCLUSIVE SPACES: TRANSLATION, FOOD, CHILDCARE & TRUSTED LEADERS**
- **ESTABLISH A FEEDBACK LOOP TO BUILD TRUST & COMMUNICATION**



ENGAGE COMMUNITY

ROCHESTER, NY

- **PARTNERSHIP WITH 3 LOCAL REFUGEE ORGANIZATIONS**
- **SMALL MEETINGS WITH TRUSTED LOCAL INTERPRETERS (5 LANGUAGES)**
- **SENSITIVE TO CULTURAL NORMS**
- **CONNECT CITIZENS TO CITY RESOURCES**
- **ESTABLISHED ONGOING DIALOGUE**



ENGAGE COMMUNITY

ELMIRA, NY

- **BUILDING TRUST AND LONG-LASTING RELATIONSHIPS WITH COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS**
- **LEVERAGE PARTNERSHIPS TO REACH VULNERABLE POPULATIONS**
- **BROAD AND DEEP ENGAGEMENT:**
 - **TABLING AT COMMUNITY EVENTS**
 - **FOCUS GROUPS**
 - **COMMUNITY HOME REPAIRS**
 - **COMMUNITY CLEAN UP DAYS**





MAKING CHANGE TOWARDS EQUITY

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- **REVISE RULES, STRUCTURES AND PROCEDURES TO ADDRESS EQUITY PAIN POINTS IDENTIFIED BY CITY, ORGANIZATIONS AND COMMUNITY**
- **CREATE INNOVATIVE SOLUTIONS AND INVESTMENTS TO ADDRESS THE ROOT CAUSES OF EQUITY ISSUES, NOT JUST THE SYMPTOMS**
- **REVIEW RECRUITMENT AND TRAINING PRACTICES TO EMBED EQUITY IN THESE PROCESSES**
- **INSTITUTIONALIZE COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AS CONSTANT PRACTICE**
- **INSITUTIONALIZE CROSS-DEPARTMENTAL COLLABORATIONS**

MAKING CHANGE TOWARDS EQUITY



EDUCATION MATERIALS

- **HEALTHY HOUSING GUIDEBOOK**
ROCHESTER
- **EDUCATION MATERIALS FOR HOMEOWNERS AND TENANTS**
WHITE PLAINS



TRAINING

- **GOOD NEIGHBOR SCHOOL** *ALBANY*
- **MENTAL HEALTH FIRST AID TRAINING FOR OFFICERS** *ELMIRA*
- **CONFLICT RESOLUTION FOR CODE OFFICERS**
BINGHAMTON



COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

- **REGULAR MEETINGS WITH COMMUNITY**
ELMIRA + BUFFALO
- **PUBLIC CODE DATA + KIOSKS**
NEWBURGH + MT. VERNON
- **OUTREACH WHEN CODE POSITIONS ARE AVAILABLE**
ROCHESTER

MAKING CHANGE TOWARDS EQUITY



STAFF ROLES

- **COMMUNITY AMBASSADOR PROGRAM**
SYRACUSE
- **HOUSING SERVICES CASEWORKER**
ALBANY + BINGHAMTON
- **EVICTON PREVENTION COUNSELOR**
ROCHESTER



PARTNERSHIPS

- **FUNDING FOR OUTREACH BY COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS**
ALBANY + BUFFALO + MT. VERNON
- **COLLABORATE WITH AND FUND LEGAL AID SERVICES**
ELMIRA + NEWBURGH + NIAGARA FALLS



DIRECT SUPPORT FOR RESIDENTS

- **REVOLVING LOAN FUND FOR REPAIRS**
BUFFALO + ELMIRA +
- **TENANT SUPPORT DISPLACEMENT FUND**
WHITE PLAINS

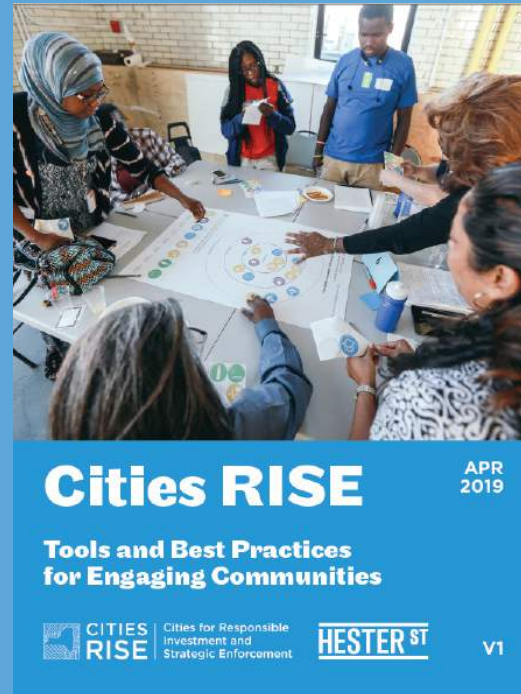
MAKING CHANGE TOWARDS EQUITY



DIRECT INVESTMENT

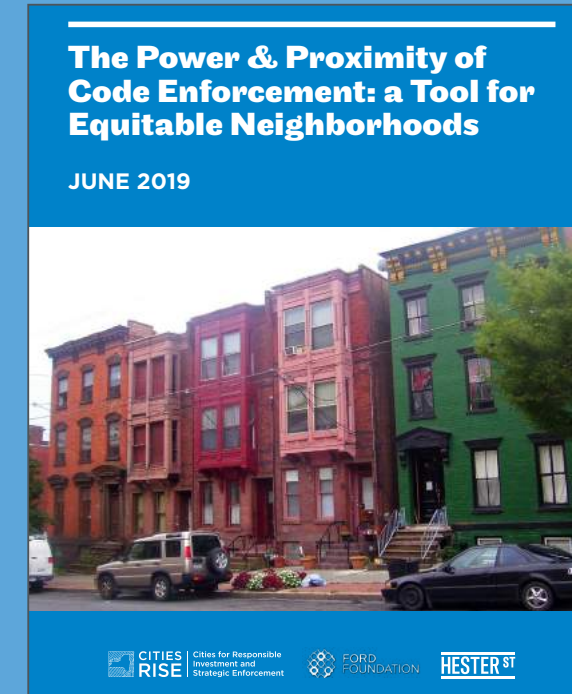
- **EMERGENCY ABATEMENT FUND**
ROCHESTER
- **COMMUNITY CLEANUPS**
ELMIRA + BUFFALO
- **DEEP DIVE BLOCK PROGRAM (TREE, SIDEWALK + LIGHT IMPROVEMENTS)**
ALBANY
- **STABILIZATION FUND FOR DILAPIDATED HOMES**
BINGHAMTON
- **IMMEDIATE EMERGENCY HOUSING FOR DISPLACED TENANTS**
NEWBURGH
- **DESIGN AND PREDEVELOPMENT OF SUPPORTIVE HOUSING**
NEWBURGH

DOWNLOADABLE RESOURCES



COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT GUIDE

[Download here](#)



THE POWER AND PROXIMITY OF CODE ENFORCEMENT

[Download here](#)

CONTACT US

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