



The Alignment Process:

Generating Value for All Through
Community Benefit Design



Every time we build or renovate a building, we are changing the neighborhood – for better or worse. No single building can completely change the character of a neighborhood or its risk of flooding, air pollution, or exposure to temperature extremes.

But, if we pay attention to the opportunities offered by the building location and population it will serve, we can tailor the design to benefit long-term residents and businesses: their health, access to jobs, and protection from disasters.

The result is a building design that responds to neighborhood needs, reduces financial risk and increases returns, and contributes to local policy initiatives on climate change, health, and equity.

This playbook serves as a comprehensive guide, empowering individuals and organizations committed to building a world where the most financially successful real estate projects are the ones that create the greatest co-benefits to community and planetary health.

It introduces The Alignment Process, a novel approach to real estate development, that uses neighborhood data as the foundation for a transparent, equitable, and participatory stakeholder engagement process to help key stakeholders come

together around a common goal for a proposed real estate project.

The guidance, worksheets, and data sources included in this document have been refined through 30 hours of engagement with stakeholders from three communities: Albany, NY; Buffalo, NY; and, Waterford, VA.

The playbook provides a step-by-step guide for any individual or group interested in maximizing the co-benefits of a proposed real estate development.

Acknowledgements

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About

"The Alignment [Process] really does work. Perhaps in part because there is often more common ground than we realize and in part because of the structure of the meetings and materials...., which allowed the commonalities to emerge and for us to build on them and learn more from each other."

– *Community Participant*

Purpose

The goal of this playbook is to make it possible for any design/development team, community group, or local government to replicate the Alignment Process in their community.

It walks users through the process of:

1. Identifying the key environmental health characteristics of the property and surrounding neighborhood.
2. Selecting the most effective design strategies for those priorities.

3. Connecting design metrics to key performance indicators for the local climate action plan, community health needs assessment, and more.

A pilot in 2022-2023 of three proposed real estate developments in three communities in the U.S. found that **looking for areas of alignment across key stakeholder groups generated more value for everyone than each stakeholder group simply seeking to maximize value for themselves.**



Who Should Use This Playbook?

This playbook is designed to be used by anyone who sees value in streamlining the real estate development process so that it works better for all stakeholder groups.

It particularly emphasizes the role that three stakeholder groups play in moving a proposed development from the ideas stage to reality:



Community: The group who will experience the ripple effects of the project for the life of the building.



Design/development team: The group who finances and designs the project.



Local government: The group who regulates construction and considers how each project fits into community plans.

Background

This playbook synthesizes the collective knowledge generated by a 2022-2023 pilot of the Alignment Process in three communities in the U.S. **The pilot tested a proof of concept that an individual real estate project could generate new value for all stakeholder groups by centering the neighborhood's environmental health priorities** - as defined by data and validated through lived experience. **It targets the construction permit as the most effective moment** in the design and construction process for bringing key stakeholder groups together **to seek alignment around mutually beneficial goals.**



Construction Permit

The Alignment Process uses the process of obtaining a construction permit as a key leverage point for finding alignment across stakeholder groups.

The process begins with community planning and zoning discussions. The development team determines the property's highest and best use and submits a plan for review by local authorities. Entitlements negotiation leads to the issuance of a construction permit. Building codes enforcement and inspections ensure compliance. The process concludes with the issuance of the building occupancy permit.

Applying the Alignment Process throughout helps maximize the project's value and co-benefits to climate, health, and equity.



Pilot Projects

The Alignment Pilot demonstrated that this approach can improve outcomes for all stakeholder groups across building scales and project types.

The **Albany, NY project** was an affordable rental housing and mixed-use development. The **Buffalo, NY project** included a wellness center, urban farm, and affordable rental units. The **Waterford, VA project** proposed the adaptive reuse of a historic mill in a rural colonial village.

Each project was spearheaded by a different stakeholder group: a local official, a nonprofit owner/operator, and a community group. The pilot validated the Alignment Process' approach, which balances data analysis with stakeholder input, prioritizing community voices.



Benefits of Alignment

Alignment Pilot participant evaluations validated the process' effectiveness.



Community groups reported that the process generated greater value for them than the traditional community engagement process.



The **design/development team** reported increased awareness of the value that could be generated by linking neighborhood health priorities with design priorities.



Local officials pointed to the value that neighborhood data brings by helping align stakeholder interests.

All groups reported significant shifts in their willingness to contribute to the project's success.

Alignment Process At a Glance

The Alignment Process combines two very different methods to support stakeholders in co-creating a shared vision for a proposed real estate project.



First, a method called **health situation analysis (HSA)** is used to compile neighborhood-scale data into a framework that **paints a picture of the environmental, community health, and social equity context surrounding a proposed real estate development project.**

Second, **facilitation methods** drawn from community-based action research and negotiations research use the draft HSA to **engage three stakeholder groups** (community, design/development team, and local government) **in a data-informed, community-centered conversation** about the proposed project.

Results

- **Acknowledgement across all three stakeholder groups of overlapping and aligned interests**, culminating in a shared vision for the project.
- **Metrics** quantifying how the design will respond to **neighborhood environmental health needs** and contribute to **local policies** around climate change, public health, and social equity.

Evidence the Alignment Process Works

Pilot participants from every stakeholder group and all three locations (n=43, 89.6% response rate) reported that the **Alignment Process did a better job of producing a design that reflected all three stakeholder groups' views** than the traditional process.

They also reported that their own views evolved around **what their stakeholder group should contribute to support the aligned vision for the project.**

Change in Perceptions

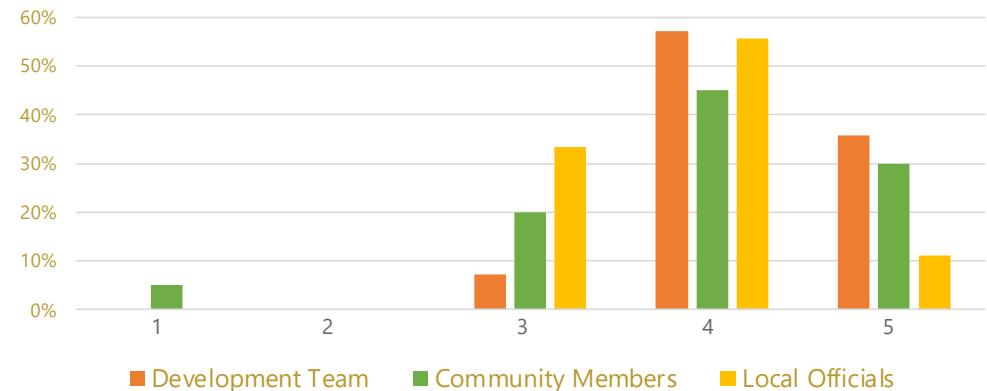
The summary project vision does a better job of balancing all stakeholder groups' priorities compared with a typical project in our location



Average Score: 4.34

Stakeholder Contributions

Our conversations about neighborhood climate, health, and equity data changed my view of the kind of contributions that were acceptable for my stakeholder group to make in order to support the summary project vision



Average Score: 4.02

Source: Houghton A. *Priority Green for Community Benefit: A Framework for Tailoring Real Estate Entitlement Concessions to Neighborhood-Specific Priorities Around Climate, Health, and Equity*. 2023. Harvard University ProQuest Dissertations Publishing: Cambridge, MA. <https://www.proquest.com/docview/2813508755>

How to Use this Playbook

This playbook weaves together three organizing principles across four chapters, as shown in the diagram below. The central organizing principle, **Creating Conditions for Building Trust Across Stakeholder Groups**, acknowledges that low levels of trust amongst stakeholder groups is often longstanding and relevant to the project's success. So, the other two organizing principles - **Setting the Baseline** and **Using Structure and Transparency to Find Alignment** - support that goal by bringing data and stakeholder input together to create space for an aligned vision to emerge.

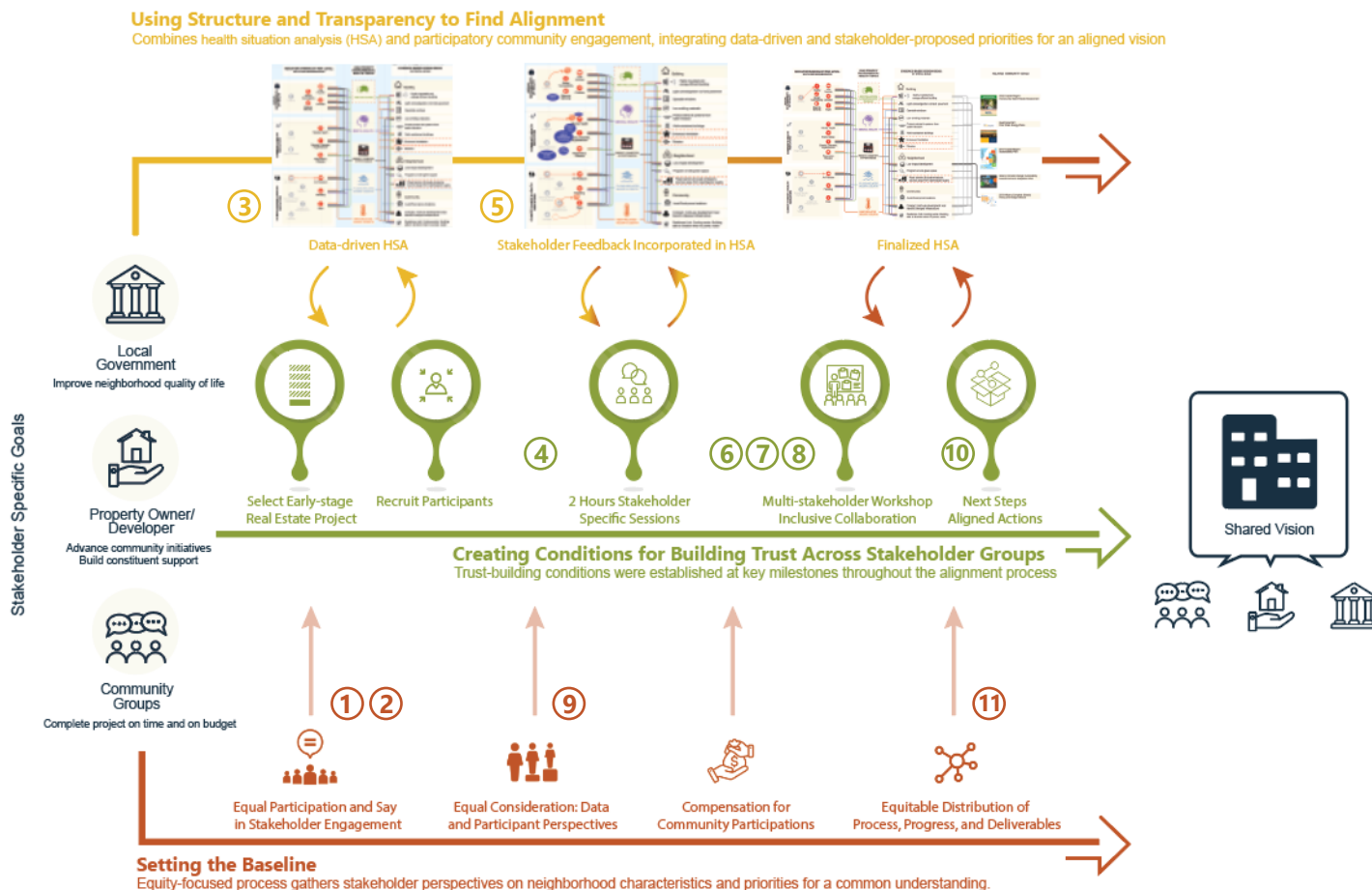


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Part 1:

Centering Equity



The three stakeholder groups who will engage in the Alignment Process bring a wide range of backgrounds, motivations, and goals to the project they will talk about. So, it is important to create a space where everyone feels their voice is heard.

Centering Equity in all aspects of the Alignment Process helps foster the level of trust needed to allow for collaboration to take place and new partnerships to form.

Goals:

1. Ensure a broad range of participation across stakeholder groups.
2. Create space for non-traditional collaboration and partnership.

Outcomes

1. Stakeholder Recruitment Centering equity in the participant recruitment process enhances the validity of the entire engagement. It is particularly important for Alignment organizers to ask themselves and people with local knowledge who is missing from the list of potential participants, and what kinds of power dynamics and misalignments across groups are relevant to the project under discussion.

2. Stakeholder Engagement The Alignment Pilot found that designing the engagement to minimize power differentials opened up new opportunities for participants to seek solutions that would bring co-benefits to all three stakeholder groups. It is not necessary for the three groups to find widespread agreement. Significant value can be created for everyone if all three groups coalesce around even one or two guiding principles.



*Alignment Pilot in Albany, NY.
Multi-stakeholder Workshop.*

How Does Centering Equity Bring Stakeholders Together?

Centering equity is key to successfully implementing the Alignment Process.



"The compensation for our time was appreciated. But, the most valuable part of this process was that we feel like our voices were heard."

– Community Participant



""[The Alignment Process] addressed the misconception that sustainability is a choice between 'the environment vs the economy,' when this workshop shows that climate solutions are community solutions. It really puts community and economy back into the framing of sustainability."

– Government Participant



"We didn't know the magnitude of what was needed in this neighborhood, and how amazingly this project addresses so many of those needs [until the Alignment Process]."

– Design/Development Participant

What does this mean in practice?

1 Identifying Common Goals Across Stakeholder Groups

Traditional stakeholder roles often erode trust between stakeholder groups, because they emphasize each group's different sources of power. The Alignment Process, on the other hand, compiles each group's goals and concerns separately and then shares them anonymously, so that all participants can see opportunities for consensus.

2 Professionalizing All Participants' Contributions

In the typical community engagement process, community members are the only participants who are not compensated for their time and effort. The Alignment Pilot found that compensating community members both reduced their financial burden and changed the way other stakeholder groups treated their contributions.

3 Democratizing the Data

On the one hand, neighborhood data underpins the Alignment Process. On the other hand, the Alignment Process emphasizes the importance of updating the first draft data analysis in response to feedback from all three stakeholder groups, so that the final version is tailored to the specific needs of an individual property within the larger environmental and social context of the neighborhood.



Action Plan: Centering Equity in the Alignment Process



Facilitator Positionality

*Organizing Principle:
Project Preconditions*



Project Selection

*Organizing Principle:
Project Preconditions*



Step 1: Recruitment

*Organizing Principle:
Setting the Baseline*



Step 2: Engagement

*Organizing Principle:
Setting the Baseline*

“**Positionality**” refers to the act of actively naming how one’s social, economic, racial, political, and other backgrounds relate to other individuals in a conversation, project, or movement. Given the range of backgrounds and interests represented in a robust Alignment Process, it is essential that the facilitator, and ideally, every participant, take actions to minimize unintentional harm and maximize opportunities for unconventional partnerships.

The ideal project for the Alignment Process is early in the design phase. The real estate development team has started conversations with local authorities related to the construction permit, but the permit has not been issued yet. And, representatives from the three key stakeholder groups (design/development team; community; local government) support the idea of a project that will have a positive ripple effect on the surrounding neighborhood.

Recruit a range of viewpoints from each stakeholder group. For the community group, it is particularly important to create space for the variety of goals and priorities within the neighborhood that will be affected most intimately and over the longest period of time of all stakeholder groups. Try to include municipal representation from zoning, planning, building codes enforcement, transportation, and public health. Representatives from the property owner side should include designers, developers, and financial backers.

Centering equity in engagement can pose logistical challenges, because participants may have conflicting schedules, external obligations, and/or technical difficulties with online options. As a result, Alignment Process organizers should work with participants to identify a day/time that works for most participants – particularly community members – and make additional facilities available, such as childcare. Every participant should be compensated, either through their place of work or by the engagement organizers. Finally, organizers should create a parallel pathway for capturing input from individuals who can not participate in person.

Step 1: Centering Equity in Stakeholder Recruitment



Setting the table so that a range of viewpoints from all three stakeholder groups feel welcomed and heard.



Alignment Pilot in Albany, NY. Community Mini-workshop.





Participation can make or break the Alignment Process. Even in communities with low levels of trust across stakeholder groups, it is possible to run a successful alignment engagement if: (1) every participant comes to the engagement with sincerity and an open mind; (2) roughly the same number of individuals are recruited from each stakeholder group (allowing for additional representation from the community to reflect the wide range of views).

Recruitment Tips

Think of participant recruitment as the first step in the Alignment Process.

Whose perspective needs to be represented in order for an aligned vision to take hold in the community? Who is missing from the first set of suggested participants? Who needs support (financial, childcare, or other) in order to participate? How can the act of inviting participation be crafted as a first step towards building bridges across stakeholder groups?



Tips	Details	Purpose
 <p>Introduce the Alignment Approach and Benefits</p>	<p>The Alignment Process may require some explanation; because, it is different from most real estate stakeholder engagement in that it is designed to elicit substantive conversation and coordination across stakeholder groups.</p>	<p>Start building trust by demonstrating that the process is transparent across all three groups.</p>
 <p>Objectives of Equity Safeguards</p>	<p>Explain to prospective participants that the equity safeguards built into the Alignment Process are designed to create space for stakeholders to discover areas of alignment that were previously hidden.</p>	<p>Demonstrate to participants that the equity safeguards benefit their own group, not just other groups.</p>
 <p>First Trust-Building Action - Recognition</p>	<p>Acknowledge the unique value that each stakeholder group brings to the Alignment conversation to start building trust with participants.</p>	<p>Set expectations that participants will acknowledge the value that others bring to the conversation.</p>
 <p>Tailored Compensation</p>	<p>Explain that compensation is tailored to the community's stated needs. For example, community members may request an hourly wage and a meal, or an evening session including childcare. Label community participants as local experts.</p>	<p>Use terms that mirror scheduling accommodations for other professionals in the group.</p>

Lessons Learned from the Alignment Pilot



Do not pursue the Alignment Process for a real estate project until representatives from all three stakeholder groups have agreed to participate.



The size of **stakeholder-specific mini-workshops** is only limited by the facilitator's comfort level in facilitating a large group discussion.



The **multi-stakeholder workshop** should include a similar number of representatives from each of the three stakeholder groups, so that no single group overwhelms the other two. The community stakeholder group may include several more representatives than the others, because it may need to represent a wider variety of viewpoints.

We Want to Hear From You!
Join us at a neighborhood community meeting
Let's talk about how the new Buffalo Go Green Wellness & Agricultural Education campus could be designed to support your family's health and quality of life.

WHEN & WHERE
Thursday, November 17, 2022
6-8pm
5:30pm Dinner

Delavan Grider Community Center
877 E Delavan Avenue
716-896-7021

Zoom
<https://zoom.us/join>
Meeting ID: 973 6834 1684
Password: 216161
One tap phone: 13462487799, 97368341684#
SIP: 97368341684.216161@zoomcrc.com

How could the new Buffalo Go Green Wellness Center and Urban Farm help the neighborhood?

Your Voice Matters
Open to All Community Members
Get Paid For Your Time \$10 + Bag of Fresh Fruits and Vegetables

For More Information Contact Adele at ahoughton@hsph.harvard.edu (713) 201-7592 | Harvard University and The American Institute of Architects

Alignment Pilot in Buffalo, NY.

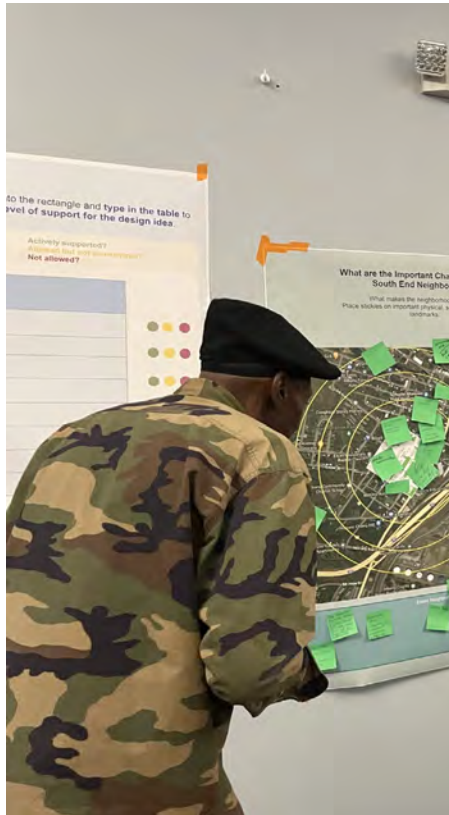
Recruitment flyer for community mini-workshop.



"I felt that everyone represented their opinions and purpose effectively. ... [Community members] arrived motivated and stayed that way."

– Community Participant

Step 2: Centering Equity in Stakeholder Engagement



Alignment Pilot in Albany, NY.



Community Mini-workshop.

Separate Stakeholder Engagement into Two Parts:

Part 1: Stakeholder-specific mini-workshops

Gather each group's views about the neighborhood and their initial reaction to the Health Situation Analysis (See Part 2) in a safe space where they can debate within their affinity group before engaging in a larger conversation.

Part 2: Multi-stakeholder workshop

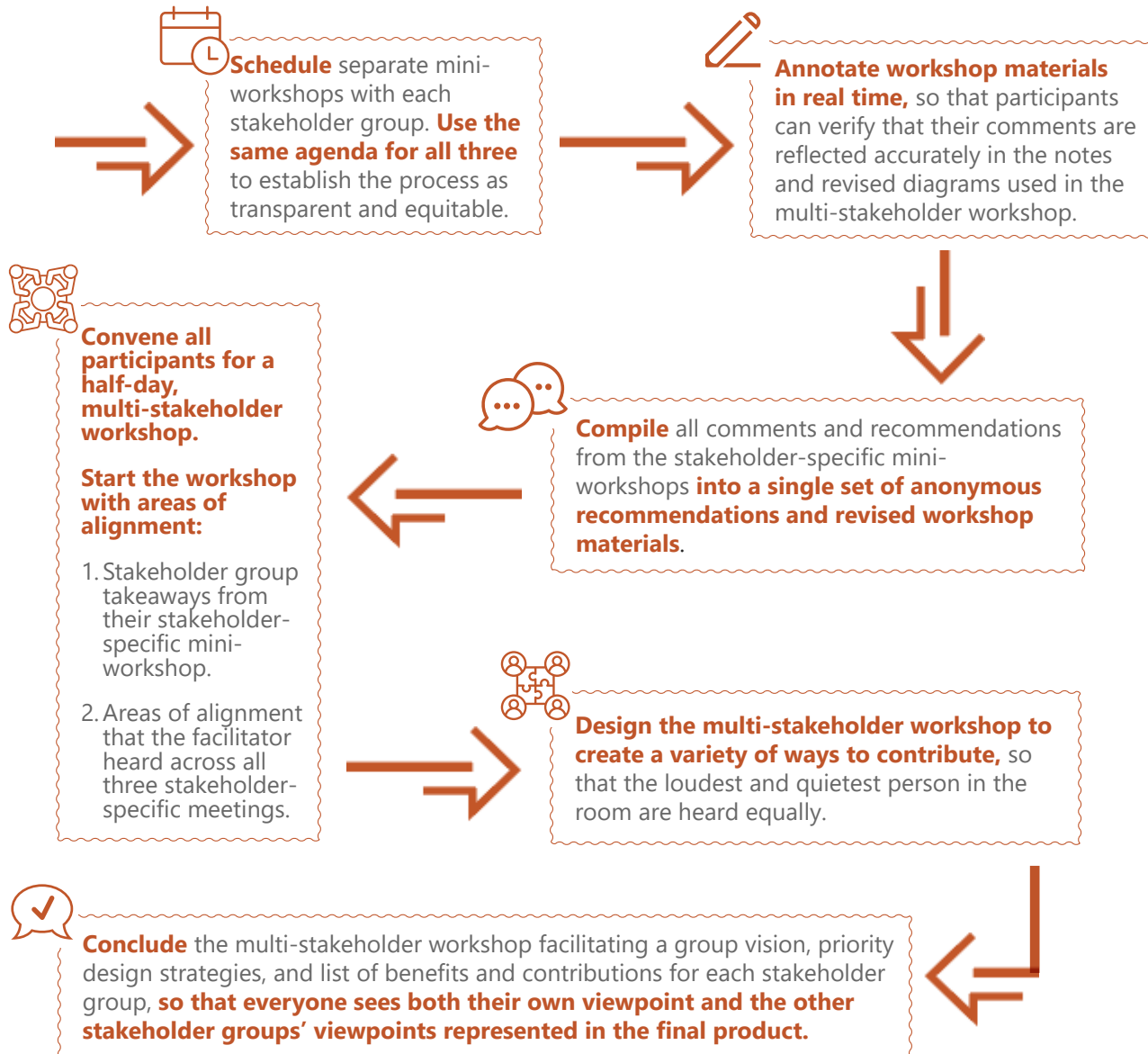
Bring all three stakeholder groups together to compare notes and co-create a shared vision for the project. Center equitable stakeholder engagement by starting the workshop with a summary of comments and preferences that repeated across all three stakeholder-specific mini-workshops. Further reinforce the equitable treatment of all voices by including participant annotations to the HSA without attribution. It is also important to set aside time during the multi-stakeholder meeting to allow each stakeholder group to share their thoughts with the larger group, so that all participants leave the engagement feeling like their voice was heard and that they heard the other stakeholders' voices directly, rather than through a mediator.

Creating a space where everyone's voice is heard and everyone contributes to the final vision.



Centering Equity in Alignment Workshops

Process



Facilitator's Role:

Use active listening to draw out hidden areas of overlap and agreement that could expand stakeholder groups' definition of the ideal outcome for the proposed real estate project under discussion. It is essential to **engage from a place of humility** and acknowledgement that the participants are the experts in the room.



1. Centering Equity in the workshop design: Gather information from each stakeholder group separately and share it with the larger group without attribution.

2. Facilitation strategies to center equity: Active listening. Position participants as the experts in the room.

Stakeholder Workshops: Sample Materials and Introductory Agenda

Stakeholder-specific Mini-Workshops



- Sticker nametags - 30
- Wide tip markers - 12
- Pens - 40
- 3x3 Green Post-its - 100
- 3x3 Red Post-its - 100
- 3x3 Yellow Post-its - 100
- 3x3 Blue Post-its - 100
- 3x3 Neutral Post-its - 100
- Index cards - 100
- Roll of Painter's tape - 1
- Roll of Scotch tape - 1
- Sticker stars - 100



- Large scale maps of the neighborhood - 4 (See Step 4)
- Large scale HSA diagram - 1 (See Step 5)
- Sign in sheet and photograph authorization form - 1
- HSA and metadata participant packet - 1 per participant



- Meal, Fresh food to take away
- Hourly compensation (community members only)

Sample Agenda - Intro to Alignment Process

Time	Description	Materials
0:00 - 0:05	Request permission to record the meeting, so organizers have access to transcripts.	Powerpoint slides
	Short introduction to the Alignment Process: combining neighborhood data with stakeholder engagement.	Whiteboard/large post-it sheets on wall, markers
	Engagement in two steps: (1) private, stakeholder-specific mini-workshop; (2) multi-stakeholder half-day workshop.	
	Your stakeholder group's role and opportunities to benefit from the Alignment Process	
0:05 - 0:10	Quick introductions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Name, affiliation, connection with the project, goals for the project. 	
0:10 - 0:15	Set norms for the conversation. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The goal is to brainstorm together and gather a range of opinions and ideas within and across stakeholder groups. 	

Sample Introductory Slides



Community Groups

Role in Alignment Process

- Identify priority health topics.
- Design preferences.
- How could the project improve neighborhood quality of life?
- What is standing in the way?



Design/Development Team

Role in Alignment Process

- Identify priority health topics.
- Identify development goals for the project.
- What is standing in the way of achieving all of the project's goals?



Local Government

Role in Alignment Process

- Identify priority health topics.
- Link design to relevant regulations and incentive programs.
- Link project to community priorities around climate, health, and equity.

Stakeholder Workshops: Sample Materials and Introductory Agenda

Multi-stakeholder Half-day Workshop

OFFICE SUPPLIES



- Sticker nametags - 30
- Wide tip markers - 12
- Pens - 40
- 2x2 Post-its (3 colors) - 300
- Sticker stars - 100
- Index cards - 100
- Roll of Painter's tape - 1
- Roll of Scotch tape - 1

PRINTOUTS



- Large scale HSA diagram + benefits and contributions table - 1 (See Steps 6-9)
- Sign in sheet and photograph authorization form - 1
- Evaluation forms - 1 per participant

COMPENSATION



- 2 meals, Fresh food to take away
- Hourly compensation (community members only)

Sample Agenda - Workshop Kickoff

Time	Description	Materials
0:00 - 0:30	Sign in, pick up name tag. Breakfast, coffee	Sign in sheet Name tags, markers
0:30 - 0:35	Short introduction to the Alignment Process and reminder that the multi-stakeholder workshop is intended to identify areas of overlap and co-create an aligned vision for the proposed real estate development.	Powerpoint slides Whiteboard/large post-it sheets on wall, markers
0:35 - 0:45	Set norms for the conversation. Representative from each stakeholder group shares a summary of their group's takeaways from the stakeholder-specific mini-workshop.	
0:45 - 0:50	Facilitator shares summary of comments that repeated across all three mini-workshops.	

Note: If holding workshops on a videoconferencing platform, consider using a virtual whiteboard such as Miro or Mural to simulate post-it notes, stickers, and direct annotations.

Sample Introductory Slides



Community Groups

How Will Your Group Benefit?

- Share your preferences early in the design process.
- Contribute to an effort to improve the local development process.
- Compensation for sharing your knowledge and time.



Design/Development Team

How Will Your Group Benefit?

- Build support for the project in the community and local government.
- Identify opportunities to bridge funding gaps.
- Pioneer a new method for quantifying ESG in real estate.



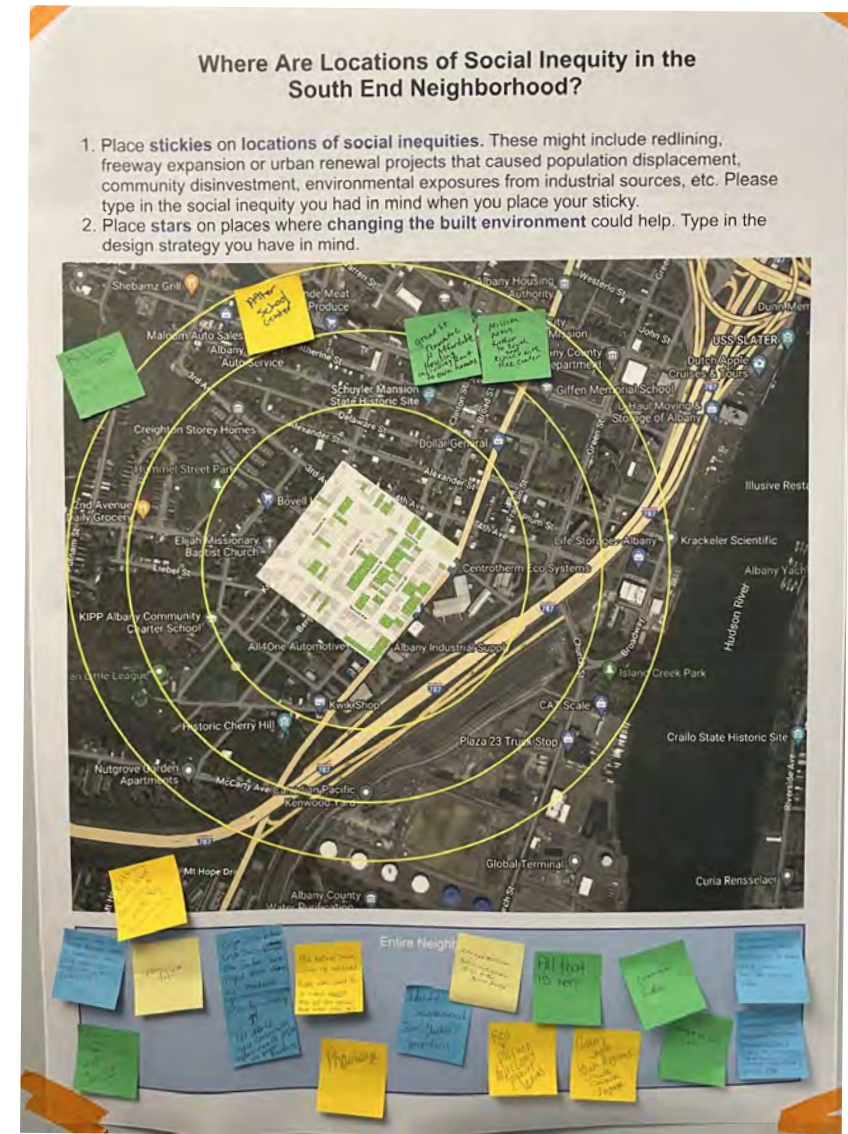
Local Government

How Will Your Group Benefit?

- Pilot test opportunities to accelerate progress in meeting community goals around climate change, public health, and social equity.
- Contribute to a nationwide effort to innovate the project approval process.
- Pioneer best practices in community engagement.

Lessons Learned from the Alignment Pilot

- ☑ Holding the first set of mini-workshops privately with each stakeholder group starts the process of creating a space supportive of creativity and cooperation that continues into the multi-stakeholder engagement.
- ☑ Running identical mini-workshops for each stakeholder group contributes to the participants' experience of the process as equitable and transparent.
- ☑ Presenting the stakeholder-specific comments and recommendations to the multi-stakeholder group without attribution makes it possible for the larger group to consider them without preconceptions and based only on their merit.
- ☑ Starting the multi-stakeholder meeting with a review of areas of alignment across all three groups shifts the stakeholder dynamic from their traditional oppositional roles to a conversation about how the project could help all three groups.
- ☑ Using strategies like active listening, participatory note-taking, and real-time revisions to the health situation analysis can be a powerful way to spark problem-solving conversations, because these strategies position participants (not the facilitator) as subject matter experts and the ultimate source of solutions.



Alignment Pilot in Albany, NY. Stakeholder-specific Mini-workshop.



Part 2:

Combining Neighborhood Data and Lived Experience to Inform Design



Health Situation Analysis (HSA) is a public health method that uses data to define a situation in need of improvement; measure its extent, severity, and root causes; and, design an intervention that maximizes co-benefits across sectors, while minimizing co-harms.

The Alignment Process uses HSA as an evidence-based framework for multi-stakeholder conversations about a proposed real estate development project. The result is a design that creates a positive ripple effect in the surrounding neighborhood, particularly related to climate, health, and equity.

Goals:

1. Use neighborhood-scale data as a framework for understanding stakeholder lived experience of the site and its surroundings.
2. Connect the dots between social determinants of health, community health needs, and the health effects of climate change.

Outcomes

1. Develop HSA Diagram

Comparing the project neighborhood with community, state, and national averages across an array of social, environmental, and health metrics creates a framework for the conversation about design co-benefits.

2. Learn from Lived Experience

Participants share observations about neighborhood characteristics, common community health challenges, examples of social inequities reinforced by the built environment, and how the neighborhood experiences climate change.

3. Interrogate the Data

Stakeholders use their lived experience of the site to revise the HSA diagram, converting it from a neighborhood estimate into a living framework for maximizing the positive ripple effect of a specific real estate project.



*Alignment Pilot in Waterford, VA.
Annotated HSA diagram at multi-stakeholder workshop.*



Action Plan: Combining Neighborhood Data and Lived Experience



Step 3: HSA Diagram

*Organizing Principle:
Structure & Transparency*

Compile data describing the proposed real estate project's census tract (political boundary roughly equivalent to the neighborhood).

Organize the data into three categories:

1. Social determinants of health (i.e., socioeconomic and demographic characteristics of the neighborhood that influence environmental health outcomes)
2. Community health status
3. Climate change-related environmental exposures

Add reference geographies, such as the community, county, state, and national estimates.

Identify the **3-5 environmental health priorities** that the project could influence through its design.

Link those priorities to evidence-based design and operations strategies drawn from green and healthy building toolkits.

Finally, **link the design strategy metrics to local community plan key performance indicators (KPIs).**



Step 4: Lived Experience

*Organizing Principle:
Creating Conditions for Trust*

Start the stakeholder-specific mini-workshops (See Step 2) by **asking participants** to use Post-its and direct annotations on a neighborhood map **to identify:**

1. Important characteristics of the neighborhood
2. Community health challenges
3. Locations where the built environment perpetuates social inequities
4. Places where residents experience climate change

Facilitate a conversation about **how these neighborhood characteristics overlap and influence each other.**

Talk about ways the proposed real estate project could have the greatest positive impact on future occupants and the surrounding neighborhood.



Step 5: Interrogate Data

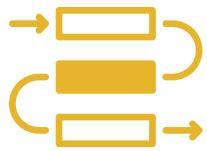
*Organizing Principle:
Structure & Transparency*

During the second half of the stakeholder-specific mini-workshop, **present the draft HSA diagram step-by-step.**

Explain where the data came from and its limitations (for example, the HSA uses neighborhood-scale estimates, so it may not perfectly reflect the portion of the neighborhood where the proposed project is located).

After each section, **ask participants to critique, revise, and comment on the draft diagram.**

Update the diagram to reflect participant improvements – including changing the priority environmental health topics, if necessary.



Step 3: Developing a Health Situation Analysis (HSA) Diagram for the Proposed Development

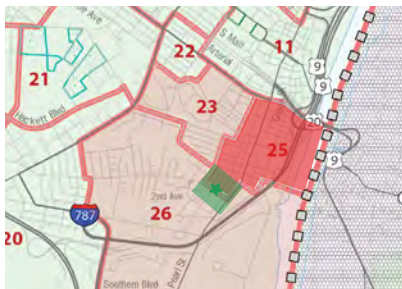
Preparation Time: 10-20 hours

1. Map the project location and consider the surrounding neighborhood.

Define the Census Tract(s) that will be used in the HSA.

Decide how many census tracts should be tracked in order to develop a clear understanding of the project's context. If the project is located in the middle of a census tract, in a census tract that is similar to the tracts around it, or in a census tract that is relatively contained compared with surrounding neighborhoods, then it may be sufficient to gather data for only one census tract. However, it may be useful to compare the census tract where the project is located with other tracts – either surrounding tracts or tracts in other parts of the city, if more data is available in a comparison neighborhood, for example.

Alignment Pilot Example: Albany, NY



Primary Census Tract: 36001002500
Secondary Tract: 36001002600
Adjacent Tract: 36001002300

The Alignment Pilot project in Albany, NY was located on several sites straddling Census Tracts 25 and 26. (See green highlight on map.) Most of the site was located in Census Tract 25, so that tract was identified as the primary data source for the HSA. However, data in Census Tracts 26 and 23 were also collected and considered in the final analysis.

Data Categories, Explained

The **goal of the health situation analysis** is to help stakeholders identify a **short list of key design strategies that will bring the greatest co-benefits and fewest co-harms to the built, natural, social, and economic environment** both within the project boundaries and in the surrounding neighborhood.

To achieve that goal, **we need to understand the environmental and social context that could be influenced by the building design, landscaping, and connection to transportation networks.**

This playbook organizes those topics into three categories that can be assessed at the census tract level (a political boundary defined by the U.S. Census Bureau that is roughly equivalent in size to a neighborhood):

Social Determinants of Health (SDOH): The social, economic, and environmental factors that influence an individual's health outcomes and well-being. These factors increase or decrease the health risks posed by the other two categories.

Community Health: The overall well-being and health status of a specific community or population. The Alignment Process focuses on community health indicators that can be influenced by building design, landscaping, and land use decisions.

Climate Change and Health: Aspects of the built and natural environment that increase or decrease exposure to environmental health hazards influenced by climate change.

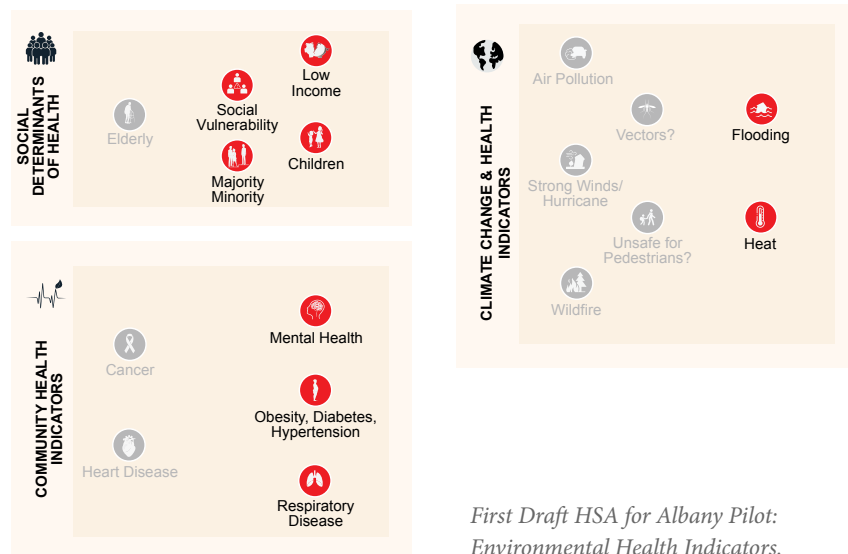
2. Compile and rank indicators for three environmental health categories.

Note the value for the census tracts relevant to the project, as well as at least two reference geographies (such as community, county, state, national).

Use the HSA Indicators Table on the next page to download census tract data from federal open source databases. Seek local data from Open Data portals (if available); state data portals; and, local and regional climate, public health, and social equity reports. Examples: climate action, resilience, and/or equity plan; community health needs assessment; transportation plan; sustainability plan.

Albany Pilot Example (cont.)

The first draft HSA developed for the Albany Pilot relied almost exclusively on federal datasets that were estimated down to the census tract level. Indicators highlighted in red were either designated as “high risk” in an index or were percentage estimates with significantly higher values than reference geographies.



3. Map out ways high-risk indicators overlap or influence each other.

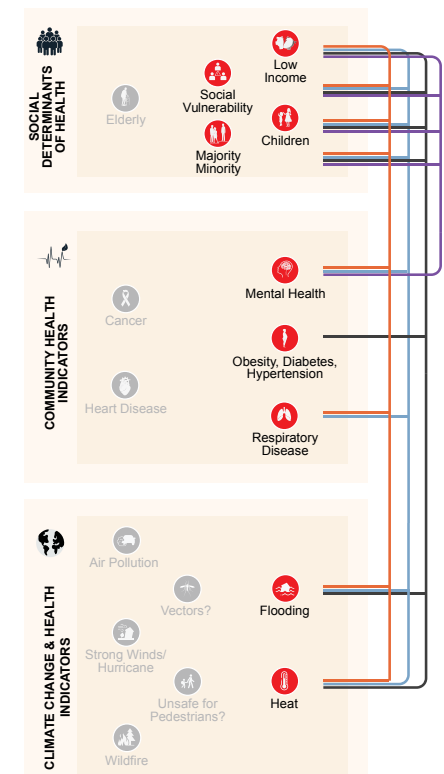
Remember that the social determinants of health (SDOH) influence the population’s vulnerability to many of the indicators in the other two categories.

For example, traffic-related air pollution, urban heat islands, flood risk, and bike/pedestrian injuries often overlap, because they all involve paved surfaces. And, the same SDOHs increase the risk of poor health outcomes for all of them. For example:

- Children <5 and adults >65 are at higher risk of injury in dangerous intersections, because they walk more slowly than working age adults and may rely on caregivers to help them cross the street.
- They are also at higher risk from extreme heat and cold, because their bodies are less efficient at regulating their internal temperature.
- Individuals with low incomes and historically marginalized groups often have lower access to health care, increasing their risk of underlying conditions that increase sensitivity to air pollution, extreme heat, and flooding.

Albany Pilot Example (cont.)

The lefthand column of the HSA diagram uses colored lines to visually represent which groups of high risk indicators might respond positively to a targeted co-benefit design strategy.



Federal Data Sources for HSA Indicators: Census Tract Estimates

Social Determinants of Health

Focus Area	Description	Data Source
Social Vulnerability	Overall SVI Score.	U.S. CDC, 2018 Social Vulnerability Index, https://svi.cdc.gov/map.html
Race/ethnicity	African American, Asian, Other, White, Hispanic/Latinx, Non-Hispanic/Latinx.	U.S. Census American Community Survey, DP-05, https://data.census.gov/cedsci/
Median Household Income	Median household income in the past 12 months.	U.S. Census American Community Survey, S1901, https://data.census.gov/cedsci/
Poverty Status	Percent individuals <poverty level over the past 12 months.	U.S. Census American Community Survey, S1701, https://data.census.gov/cedsci/
Children <5 years	Percent children <5 years old.	U.S. Census American Community Survey, DP-05, https://data.census.gov/cedsci/
Adults >65 years	Adults >65 years.	U.S. Census American Community Survey, DP-05, https://data.census.gov/cedsci/

Community Health

Focus Area	Description	Data Source
Bike/Ped Injuries, Death	Number and locations of bike/ped crashes.	State Department of Transportation; local sources
Cancer	Adult cancer prevalence.	CDC PLACES, https://www.cdc.gov/places
Heart Disease	Adult coronary heart disease.	CDC PLACES, https://www.cdc.gov/places
Mental Health – Depression	Adult depression prevalence.	CDC PLACES, https://www.cdc.gov/places
Mental Health – Poor	Adult poor mental health over past 14 days.	CDC PLACES, https://www.cdc.gov/places
Obesity, Diabetes, Hypertension - Food Desert	Located in a food desert.	USDA Food Access Research Atlas, https://www.ers.usda.gov/data-products/food-access-research-atlas/
ODH - Commuting	Commute using public transit, walking, or cycling.	U.S. Census American Community Survey, S0801, https://data.census.gov/cedsci/
ODH - Blood Pressure	Adult high blood pressure.	CDC PLACES, https://www.cdc.gov/places
ODH - Diabetes	Adult diabetes.	CDC PLACES, https://www.cdc.gov/places
ODH - Obesity	Adult obesity.	CDC PLACES, https://www.cdc.gov/places
ODH - Physical Inactivity	Adult physical inactivity.	CDC PLACES, https://www.cdc.gov/places
Asthma	Adult Asthma.	CDC PLACES, https://www.cdc.gov/places

Health Effects of Climate Change

Focus Area	Description	Data Source
Overall Climate Risk	Potential for negative impacts resulting from natural hazards.	FEMA National Risk Index, https://hazards.fema.gov/nri/
Expected Annual Loss	Average economic loss in dollars resulting from natural hazards each year.	FEMA National Risk Index, https://hazards.fema.gov/nri/
Social Vulnerability	Susceptibility of social groups to the adverse im-pacts of natural hazards.	FEMA National Risk Index, https://hazards.fema.gov/nri/
Community Resilience	Ability of a community to prepare for anticipated natural hazards, adapt and recover.	FEMA National Risk Index, https://hazards.fema.gov/nri/
Air Quality (AQ) - Pop near road	Population near major road-way with little to tree buffer.	EPA EnviroAtlas, https://enviroatlas.epa.gov/
AQ Hazard Index	Respiratory risk (hazard index) due to cumulative air toxics.	EPA EnviroAtlas, https://enviroatlas.epa.gov/
Drought	Community's relative risk for drought compared to US ave.	FEMA National Risk Index, https://hazards.fema.gov/nri/
Earthquake	Community's relative risk for earthquake compared to US.	FEMA National Risk Index, https://hazards.fema.gov/nri/
Flood - FEMA NRI	Community's relative risk for flooding compared to US ave.	FEMA National Risk Index, https://hazards.fema.gov/nri/
Flood - FEMA Flood Map	Located in 100-year or 500-year floodplain.	FEMA Flood Map Service Center, https://msc.fema.gov/portal/
Flood - Imper-vious Surface	Percent impervious surface.	NLCD Impervious Surface 2019 CONUS, https://www.mrlc.gov/viewer/
Heat - Overall Vulnerability	Overlay NOAA projected heat events and CDC's Social Vulnerability Index (SVI).	Extreme Heat Vulnerability Mapping Tool, https://www.heat.gov/
Heat - Tree Canopy	Percent average tree canopy.	EPA EnviroAtlas, https://enviroatlas.epa.gov/
Hurricane	Community's relative risk for hurricane compared to US.	FEMA National Risk Index, https://hazards.fema.gov/nri/
Strong Wind	Community's relative risk for wind compared to US ave.	FEMA National Risk Index, https://hazards.fema.gov/nri/
Tornado	Community's relative risk for tornado compared to US ave.	FEMA National Risk Index, https://hazards.fema.gov/nri/
Wildfire Risk – Community	Wildfire likelihood compared with other communities.	USGDA Forest Service, Wildfire Risk, https://wildfirerisk.org/explore
Wildfire Risk – Homes	Wildfire risk to homes compared with others.	USGDA Forest Service, Wildfire Risk, https://wildfirerisk.org/explore
Winter Weather	Community relative risk for winter weather.	FEMA National Risk Index, https://hazards.fema.gov/nri/

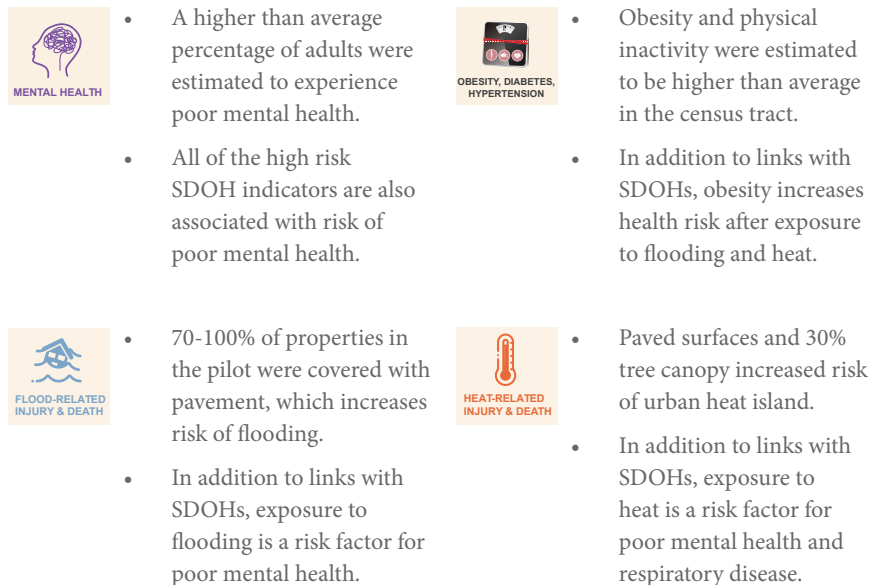
4. Develop a short list of environmental health priorities covering the primary relationships across indicators.

There are often commonalities linking high risk environmental health indicators.

If the same environmental conditions contribute to more than one health outcome, it makes sense to use co-benefit design principles to develop strategies targeting the highest risk or most noticeable environmental health topics, rather than attempting to mitigate each high risk environmental health topic separately.

Albany Pilot Example (cont.)

The first draft HSA developed for the Albany Pilot condensed nine high risk indicators for the census tract into the four priority environmental health topics that the project would have the greatest possibility of influencing in a positive way – based on an analysis of the data and the interrelationships between high risk indicators.



5. Use a co-benefits approach to identify a short list of priority design strategies.

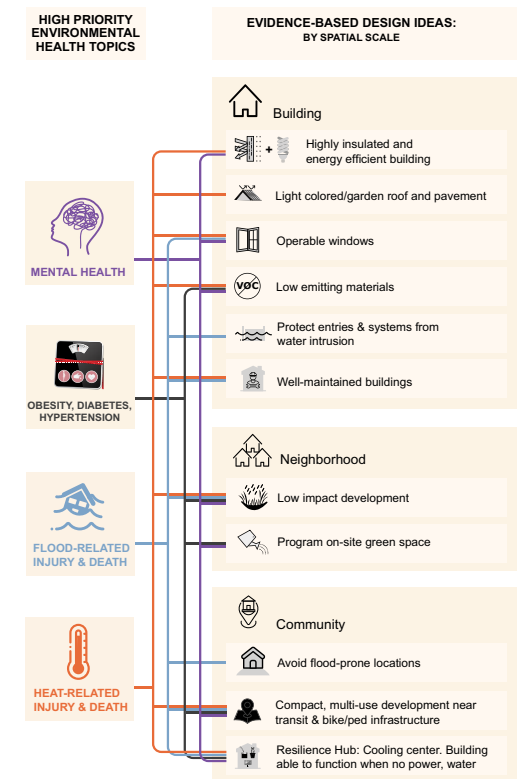
Co-benefits design prioritizes strategies that meet multiple project objectives, including: programming, revenue generation, climate/sustainability, and social equity.

- Use a co-benefits approach to link neighborhood environmental health priorities with evidence-based design strategies tailored to the project location, site activities, and future occupants.
- Select strategies bringing the greatest co-benefits to neighborhood needs around climate change, community health, and social equity.
- Organize strategies by geographic scale: building, site/campus, neighborhood.

For more detailed guidance on co-benefit design, see Houghton A. "Co-Benefits" as a lens through which COVID-19 building upgrades can advance environmental sustainability, climate mitigation and adaptation, and social equity. *Harvard Public Health Review*. 2021; 29, <http://doi.org/10.54111/0001/cc4>

Albany Pilot Example (cont.)

Colored lines visually represent links between evidence-based design strategies and priority environmental health topics. All of the strategies were drawn from green/healthy building toolkits and can therefore be measured.



6. Cross-tabulate priority design metrics with key performance indicators (KPIs) in community and regional plans.








Climate change, sustainability, transportation, and public health plans often use metrics that can be interchanged with smaller scale metrics in green/healthy building toolkits.

As a result, it is possible to demonstrate how a single real estate project is contributing to larger scale efforts to meet climate change, community health, and social equity goals.

Albany Pilot Example (cont.)

See below for three examples of design strategies that were recommended in the first draft HSA for the Albany pilot due to their capacity to help address one or more priority environmental health topic in the surrounding neighborhood.

In each case, the metric drawn from a green/healthy building toolkit could be used to demonstrate that the project was contributing to one or more community plan KPI.

	 Highly insulated, Energy efficient building	 Low impact development	 Compact, multi-use development near transit & bike/ped infrastructure
Toolkit Metric	Percent reduction in greenhouse gas emissions compared with code minimum.	LEED stormwater credit.	Number of amenities provided on-site (based on need identified in HSA analysis). Linear feet of sidewalks and protected bike lanes.
 2015 Build Smart NY: Five Cities Energy Plans	Establish energy efficiency standards through green building code and development incentives. Launch a neighborhood energy challenge.		Build on- and off-road bicycling infrastructure within the city. Implement the City's Complete Streets policy.
 Albany Climate Change Vulnerability Assessment and Adaptation Plan		Implement a citywide green infrastructure program and increase urban greening through Green Area Factor ranking system. Incorporate green infrastructure to mitigate flooding and extreme heat.	
 2012 Capital Region Sustainability Plan	Reduce per capita energy consumption by 20%. Reduce metric tons of carbon dioxide equivalent per capita from 16.3 to 12 by 2020.		Reduce single occupancy vehicle miles by 25% by 2030. Reduce vehicle miles traveled per capita by 20% by 2030.
 2022 Capital Region Community Health Needs Assessment	Increase % people who live in a certified Climate Smart Community to 8.6%.	Increase % people who live in a certified Climate Smart Community to 8.6%. Reduce % adults experiencing frequent mental distress to 10.7% (Age-adjusted).	Increase % people who live in a certified Climate Smart Community to 8.6%. Increase the percentage of people who commute to work using alternative transportation to 47.9%.

7. Pull the full analysis together into a single draft HSA diagram.

Use the diagram as a framework for starting the alignment conversation across community, design/development, and government stakeholder groups.

Each column is a natural entry point to the conversation for a different stakeholder group.



Community groups: Most familiar with the neighborhood-scale indicators in the lefthand column of the HSA. This group is also often the best judge of which environmental health topics should be prioritized by the proposed real estate project.



Design/development team: Most familiar with the evidence-based design strategies in the middle column and the associated metrics drawn from green and healthy building toolkits like LEED, WELL, Fitwel, Enterprise Green Communities, and Living Building Challenge.



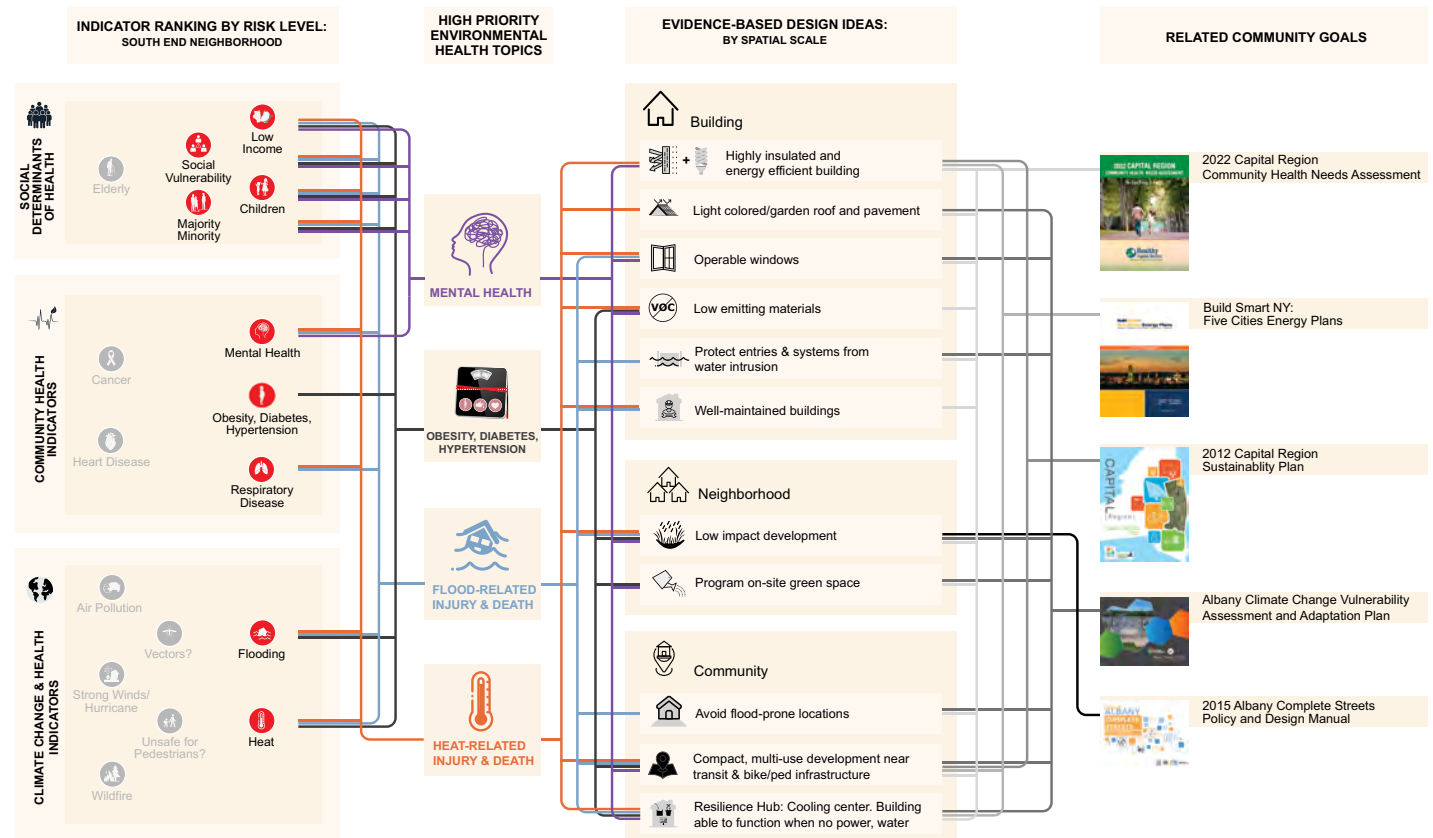
Local officials: Most familiar with the local policies in the righthand column.

Albany Pilot Example (cont.)

The diagram on the right displays the full first draft HSA that Alignment Process organizers used to conduct the stakeholder-specific mini-workshops for the Albany pilot.

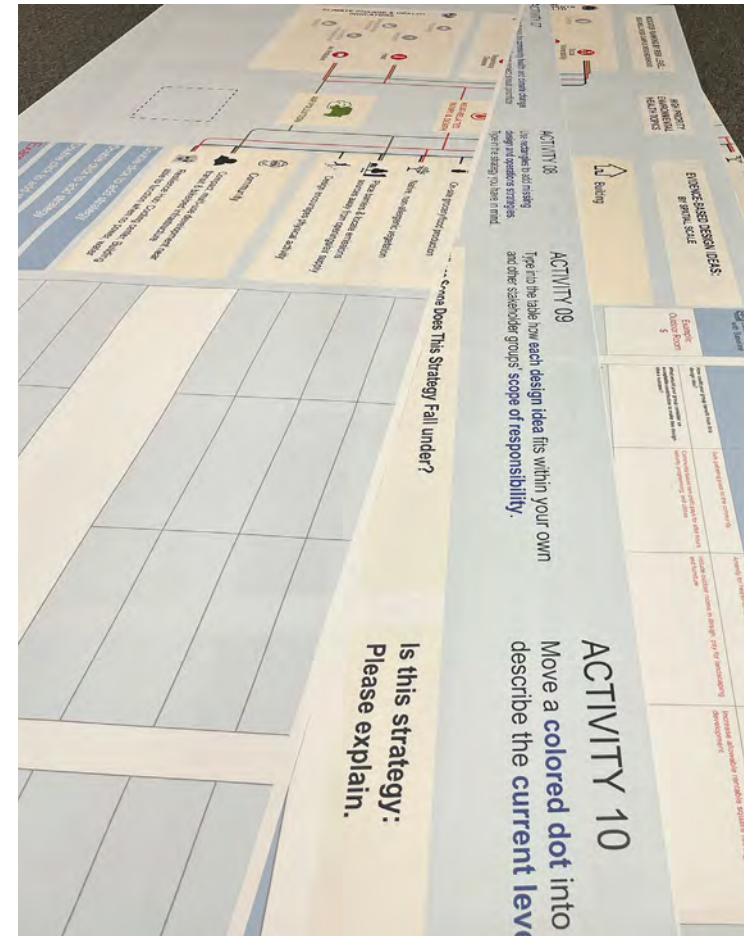
The colored lines linking the first three columns helped participants trace the relationship between neighborhood environmental health needs and an array of potential design strategies that were already under consideration but without a focused understanding of how they might respond to the specific environmental and health needs of that location and population.

The lines linking the design strategies to local climate, sustainability, and public health plans helped local officials visualize the value of supporting design strategies that would advance multiple city and county initiatives.

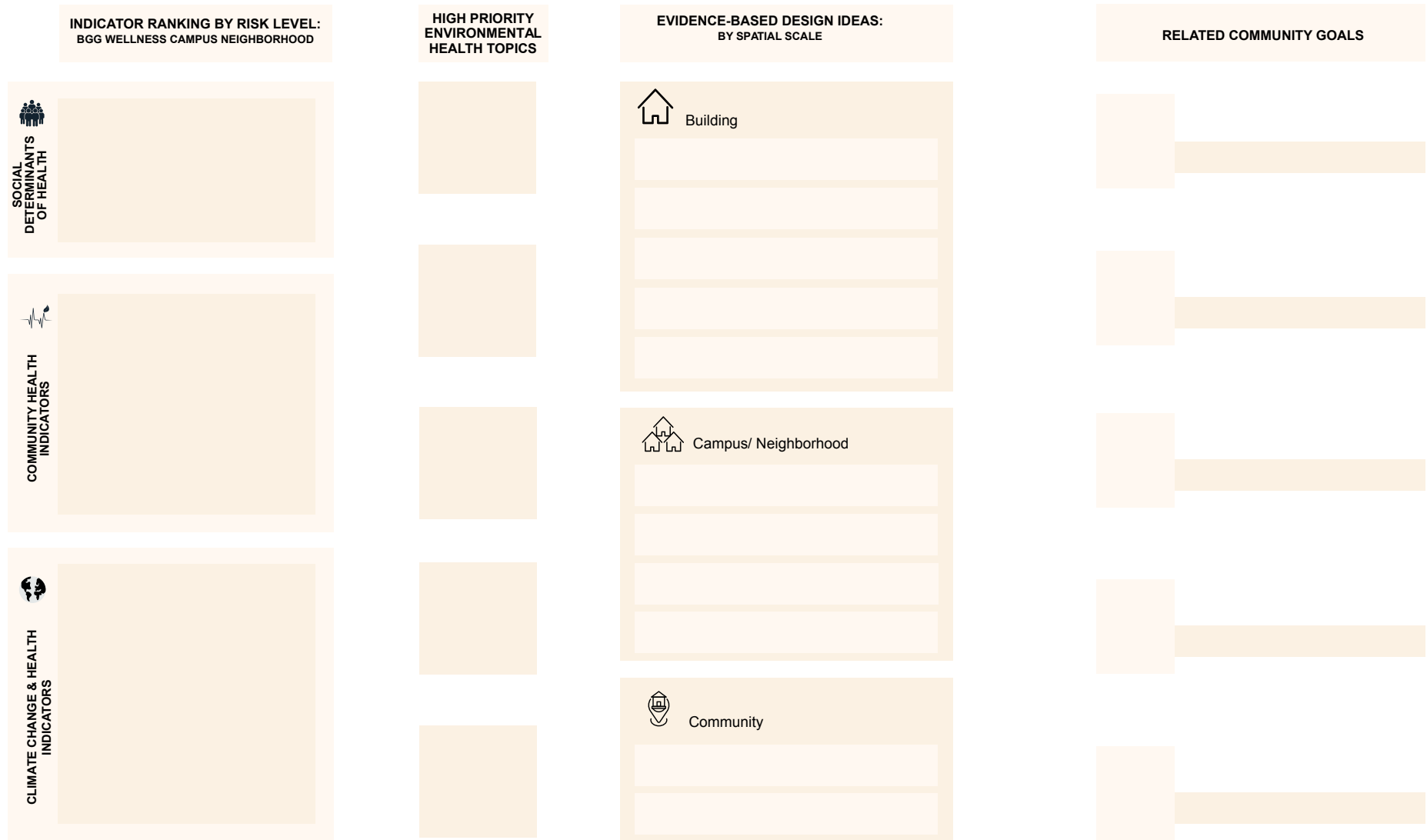


Lessons Learned from the Alignment Pilot

- ✓ Use open source data from federal, state, and local sources to paint a general picture of the census tract where the project will be located.
- ✓ Supplement census tract data with local reports and information gathered by community groups.
- ✓ **Focus on synergies:**
 - Where/how do several environmental exposures and social determinants of health come together?
 - Which design strategies could protect building occupants and the surrounding neighborhood from multiple environmental exposures?
 - What kinds of activities could benefit the community, create a new source of revenue for the property owner, and help local officials accomplish community plan objectives?



Sample Blank Health Situation Analysis Diagram



Resources

Co-Benefit Design

Houghton A. "Co-Benefits" As A Lens Through Which COVID-19 Building Upgrades Can Advance Environmental Sustainability, Climate Mitigation and Adaptation, and Social Equity. *Harvard Public Health Review* 2021, 29. <http://doi.org/10.54111/0001/cc4>

Evidence-Based Design Strategies

Reducing Exposure to Extreme Heat

Houghton, A.; Castillo-Salgado, C. Associations between Green Building Design Strategies and Community Health Resilience to Extreme Heat Events: A Systematic Review of the Evidence. *Int. J. Environ. Res. Public Health* 2019, 16, 663. <https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph16040663>

Reducing Exposure to Flooding

Houghton, A.; Castillo-Salgado, C. Health Co-Benefits of Green Building Design Strategies and Community Resilience to Urban Flooding: A Systematic Review of the Evidence. *Int. J. Environ. Res. Public Health* 2017, 14, 1519. <https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph14121519>

WELL Building Standard Research Digests

https://education.wellcertified.com/well-v2?utm_campaign=Technical%20and%20Product%20Updates

Health Effects of Climate Change

- *Fourth National Climate Assessment*, Chapter 11: Built Environment, Urban Systems, and Cities. <https://nca2018.globalchange.gov/chapter/11/>
- Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, *Sixth Assessment Report*, Chapter 6: Cities, Settlements and Key Infrastructure: <https://www.ipcc.ch/report/ar6/wg2/chapter/chapter-6/>

Social Determinants of Health for Real Estate

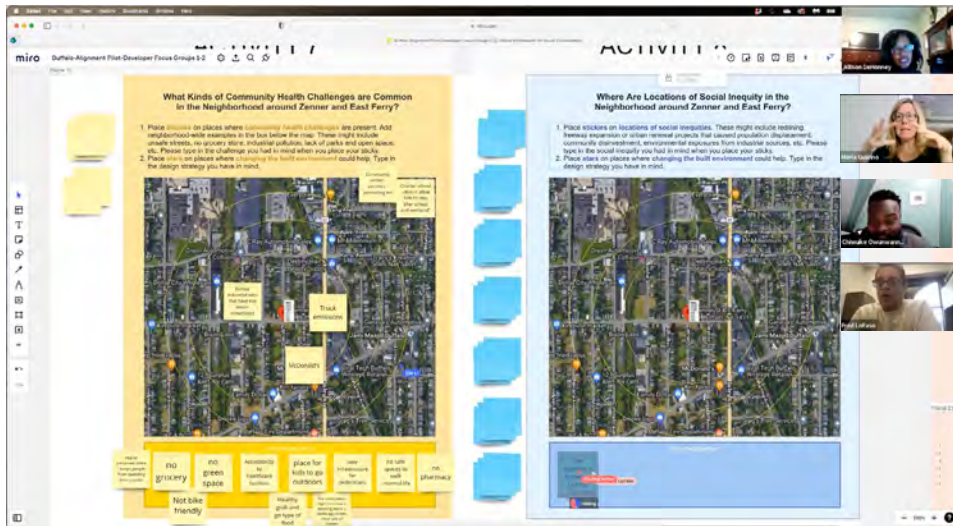
<https://www.usgbc.org/resources/social-determinants-health-real-estate>





Step 4: Learning from Lived Experience: How Do Stakeholders Experience the Neighborhood?

Preparation Time: 4 hours



Alignment Pilot in Buffalo, NY. Design and Development Team Mini-workshop.

Start the stakeholder-specific mini-workshops by asking participants to describe the neighborhood around the proposed real estate project from various perspectives.

(See Step 2 for sample materials, introductory agenda.)

Bring to participants' minds the tangible reality of the topics that will be covered in their conversation about the HSA diagram by asking them to annotate four neighborhood maps showing a 1/4 mile radius around the site:

- **Key neighborhood characteristics:** What makes the neighborhood surrounding the proposed real estate project unique?
- **Climate change exposure:** How and where does the neighborhood experience climate change?
- **Community health characteristics:** What kinds of community health challenges are common in the neighborhood?
- **Social equity:** Where are social inequities (whether historic or current day) present?

Every new building or renovation changes the neighborhood. Responsive design can create new destinations; new job opportunities; safer streets; and, protection from air pollution, heat, flooding, wildfire.



Sample Agenda - Stakeholder-specific Mini-workshop

(Continued from Step 2)

	Time	Description	Materials
Step 4	0:15 - 0:25	Why talk about three topics, not just one? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Designing for only one outcome can result in unintended consequences. Why talk about the social determinants of health? Why talk about climate change? Why talk about community health? 	Powerpoint slides
	0:25 - 0:50	Paint a picture of the neighborhood from four perspectives <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Annotate four large scale maps: important neighborhood characteristics, ways the neighborhood experiences climate change, community health challenges, locations of current or historical social inequities. 	Large printed maps; Post-its, 1/4" stars, pens and markers for annotation
	0:50 - 1:00	Public Approvals Process - facilitated conversation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> How would you describe the local public approvals process? How does the current process work well for your group? How might it be improved? How could neighborhood-level metrics help streamline the local public approvals process? 	Whiteboard/ large post-it sheets on wall, markers
	1:00 - 1:40	Health Situation Analysis - Stakeholder-specific Comments <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Overview of health situation analysis (HSA) process (See Step 3) Walk through the preliminary HSA results for each section, pausing to ask for feedback at the end of each section. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sections: Social Determinants of Health (SDOH), Community Health, Climate Change and Health Questions: Do these results sound right? What's missing? Annotate HSA diagram. Add missing topics. Delete topics that do not resonate with participants. 	Powerpoint slides HSA diagram; Post-its, pens and markers for annotation
Step 5	1:40 - 1:50	Environmental Health (EH) Priorities for the Project <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Place 3 stars in the lefthand column of the HSA diagram to vote for the three most important EH topics for this project. 	Star stickers; markers for annotation
	1:50 - 1:55	Linking EH Priorities and Stakeholder Group Priorities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> How could EH data help your stakeholder group achieve its goals for the project? 	Whiteboard/ paper on wall, markers
	1:55 - 2:00	Wrap Up <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bring takeaways from this mini-workshop to the multi-stakeholder workshop. 	

Facilitator's Role:

Elicit stories and details about the neighborhood surrounding the real estate project. Paint a composite picture through the eyes of each stakeholder group.

Point out links and synergies across the three themes, particularly the role of the built and natural environment in creating a health-promoting context.



Tips



Walk through each map in turn, but let participants move on to the next topic when they are ready. Some participants may have more to share on one or two of the maps.



It's okay if participants add the same item to more than one map. You can use that overlap later when you start talking about how to synthesize the results.



Don't stand in the way of data generation. If a participant places a comment on a map with a different theme from what you might expect, ask them to share their reasons for the placement. Encourage them to generate ideas quickly rather than worrying about whether the comments are placed in exactly the right spot.



Ask stakeholders to share stories about different parts of the neighborhood to turn a quick note on the post-it or virtual whiteboard into a nuanced insight into the participant's lived experience.

Sample Introductory Slides

Introduce the Alignment Process as an opportunity for a single building design to create a positive ripple effect on three topics that are fundamental for creating conditions supporting a high quality of life both on the property and in the neighborhood.

Our Conversation Will Focus on 3 Topics



Climate Change




Community Health



Social Equity

Why Talk about Three Topics, Not Just One?


Designing for only one outcome can result in unintended consequences



"The building is designed so that every employee will have a view."

Why Talk about Social Equity?

A design's success ...



... can be measured by how well it reflects community needs

Source: Frederic T. A framework for public health actions: the health impact pyramid. *Am J Public Health*. 2013;103(12):1991-5

Why Talk about Community Health?

Buildings ...



20%
Chronic Disease

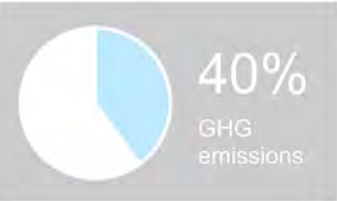


Image Source: Oxygen

... contribute up to 20% of premature deaths from chronic disease


Why Talk about Climate Change?

Buildings ...



40%
GHG emissions

are causing climate change

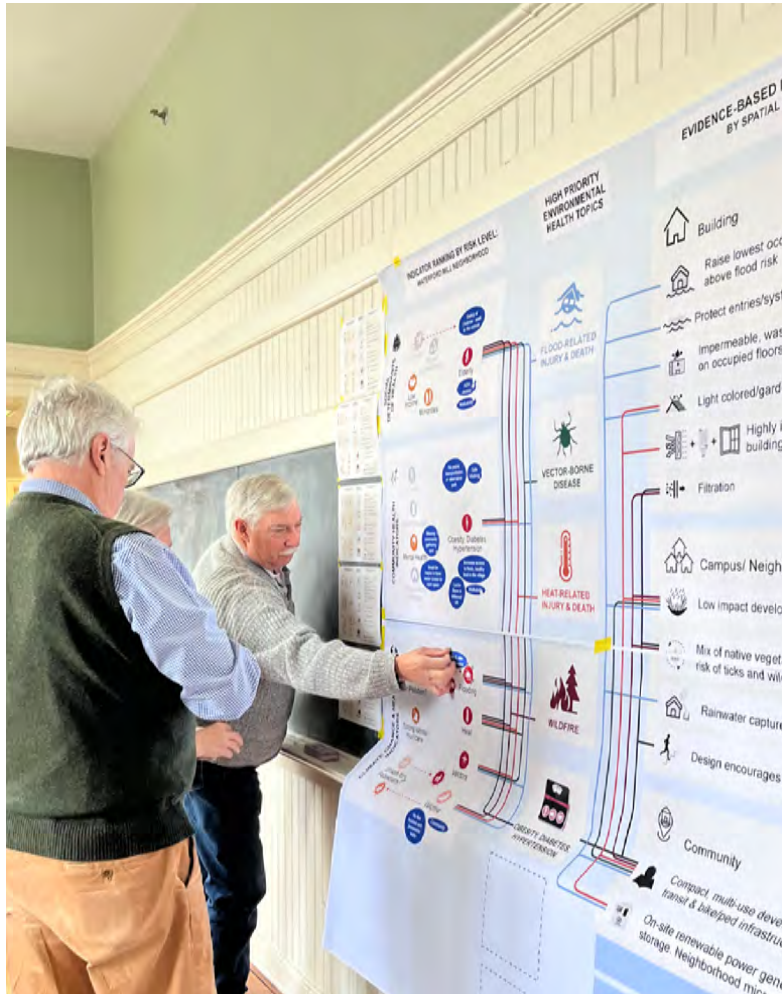


protect us from climatic events



Step 5: Interrogating the Data: Stakeholder Engagement with Draft Health Situation Analysis

Preparation Time: 2 hours



Alignment Pilot in Waterford, VA. Multi-stakeholder workshop. Participants annotate the draft HSA diagram.

Walk each stakeholder group through the draft HSA diagram, step-by-step, asking for their reactions and edits along the way.

Spend the second half of the stakeholder-specific mini-workshop ground-truthing and revising the draft HSA diagram. It is important to do this work privately within each stakeholder group, so that participants feel free to speak their minds and focus only on their own experience and viewpoint.

This exercise builds on the personal stories that were shared in the annotation exercise. Rather than giving the data primacy over anecdotal evidence, the Alignment Process asks participants to use their personal knowledge of the property and surrounding neighborhood to convert estimated averages at the census tract scale into precise data points that are specific to the proposed real estate project (its purpose and intended occupancy) and the ripple effect it will have on its immediate surroundings.



Data on its own is simply an estimate of probabilities. Stakeholder review converts it into a powerful design tool and leverage point for value creation.

Example: Walking Stakeholders Through the Draft HSA

Alignment Pilot Example: Buffalo, NY (Census Tract 36029003600)

Start your review of the draft health situation analysis (HSA) by acknowledging that it relies on data sets that are estimated averages of the entire census tract.

As a result, the HSA data may not be 100% accurate, even for the entire neighborhood. And, even if they are, there might be a group of people, buildings, or natural elements (like a park) on or next to the project that should be given more weight than the neighborhood average.

The purpose of the HSA annotation exercise is to change the diagram to better reflect the people and place on and around the property where the project will be built.

Walk through each data category, one at a time, so that participants have a chance to focus on social determinants of health, community health, and health effects of climate change as separate groupings first. Then, circle back around to ask the group where they see common themes and opportunities to link topics.

How to Read the Indicators

Indices: Absolute value, usually between 0 and 1. Index specifies the data's risk level.

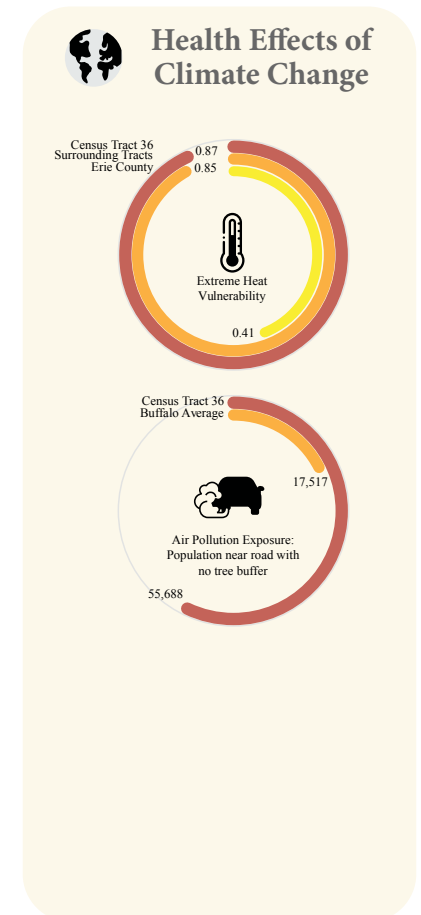
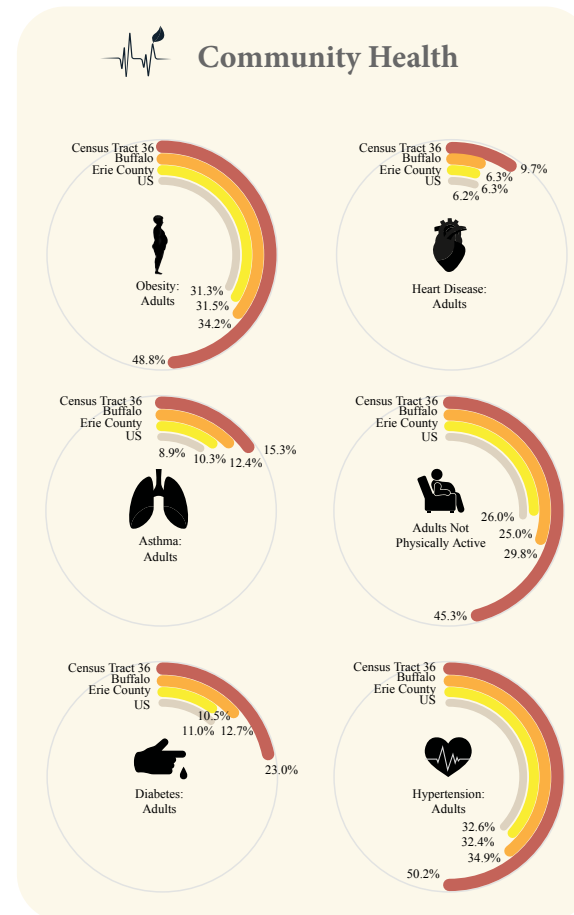
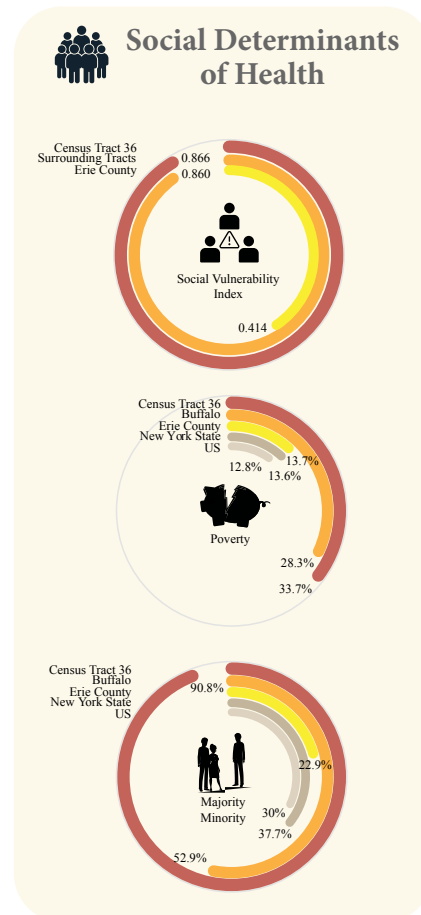
The following indices were identified as high risk for the Alignment Pilot project in Buffalo, NY: Social Vulnerability, Extreme Heat Vulnerability.

Relative Indicators: Compare census tract data with one or more reference indicators using a consistent definition for high risk.

For the Buffalo, NY Alignment Pilot, high risk was defined as 30% higher than the national average or 15% higher if the

reference indicator was already high.

The following relative indicators met that definition: Poverty, Majority Minority, Obesity, Diabetes, Hypertension, Heart Disease, Asthma, Physical Inactivity, Air Pollution.



Sample Output: Stakeholder-Specific Revisions to the Draft HSA

Alignment Pilot Example: Buffalo, NY (using a virtual whiteboard)

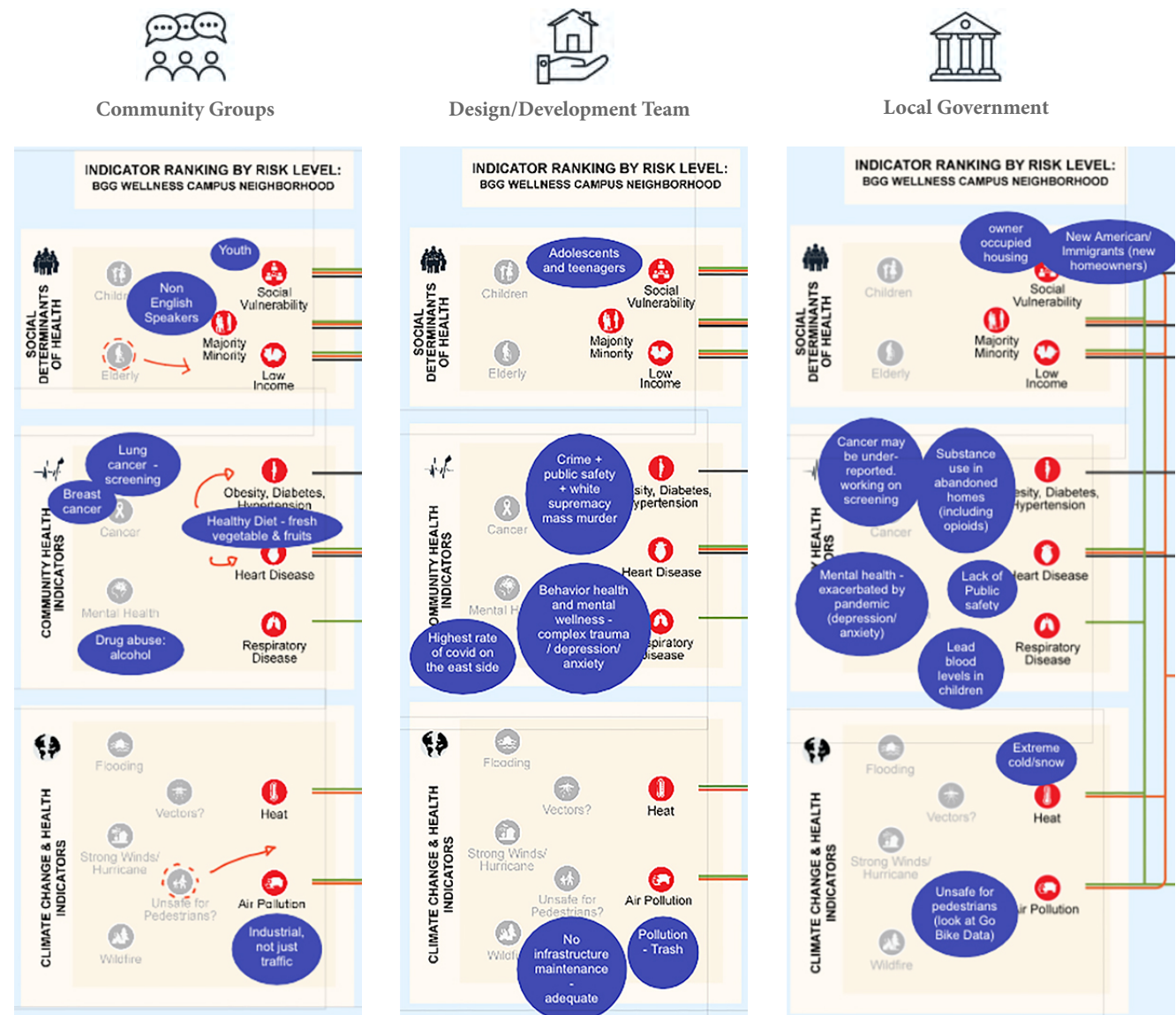
Use the previous activity drawing on stakeholder groups' lived experience of the neighborhood (see Step 4) to set the stage for asking for their reactions to the draft health situation analysis (HSA). Annotate the HSA diagram to reflect stakeholder group comments.

Social Determinants of Health: A comparison across stakeholder groups in Buffalo shows large areas of overlap, such as the importance of including adolescents and new neighborhood residents (particularly immigrants) as key demographic groups in the final design.

Community Health: All groups in Buffalo emphasized the complex relationship between poverty, the traumatic effects of experiencing racism, public safety concerns, drug and alcohol abuse, behavioral health, and mental wellness.

Climate Change and Health: Buffalo participants added concerns about legacy industrial toxins and disparities in infrastructure upkeep and improvements. The pilot was held entirely online due to severe winter weather, prompting stakeholders to suggest changing "heat" to "heat and cold."

Conclude the mini-workshop by asking participants to place stars next to the three highest priority environmental health concerns for the proposed real estate project. Ask them to consider both their lived experience and the annotated HSA when making their choice.



Part 3:

Finding Alignment Across Stakeholder Groups



Part Three of this playbook focuses on the culminating event in the Alignment Process: a half-day workshop that convenes participants from all three stakeholder groups in an effort to **identify areas of overlap and opportunities for partnership.**

The results of the stakeholder-specific mini-workshops set the baseline for areas of agreement around environmental health priorities, an aligned vision for the project design, and a summary of the ways each stakeholder group will contribute to and benefit from the construction of the real estate development.

Goals:

1. Make visible areas of alignment across stakeholder groups that may not have been readily apparent prior to the mini-workshops.
2. Prioritize a design vision and design strategies that reflect all stakeholders' priorities.

Outcomes

1. Aligned HSA Diagram

The first order of business for the multi-stakeholder workshop is to review the (unattributed) updates and annotation to the draft HSA and agree upon the final set of priority environmental health topics and high risk indicators.

2. Aligned Design Vision and Design Priorities

Stakeholder groups work separately first and then together to prioritize a short list of design strategies for the project, as well as how the final design will support community climate, health, and equity priorities.

3. Clear Link Between Aligned Vision and Co-Benefits

The workshop concludes with the co-creation of a final vision describing how each stakeholder group will contribute to the project's success and how they will benefit from it.



Alignment Pilot in Waterford, VA. Multi-stakeholder workshop.



Action Plan: Finding Alignment Across Stakeholder Groups



Step 6: EH Priorities

*Organizing Principle:
Creating Conditions for Trust*

Start the multi-stakeholder workshop with a **summary of comments that were raised by all three stakeholder groups.** Annotate the HSA to reflect stakeholder-specific comments.

Facilitate a large group conversation about each category in the HSA - particularly which indicators should be prioritized by the proposed real estate project. Further annotate the diagram to record the results of the large group conversation.

Ask participants to place stars next to the three highest priority indicators in the lefthand column of the HSA. Then, facilitate a large group conversation to **designate 3-5 environmental health (EH) priorities for the project.**

Annotate the large HSA diagram to confirm the final EH priorities.



Step 7: Design Ranking

*Organizing Principle:
Creating Conditions for Trust*

Provide each stakeholder group with a stack of cards displaying images of evidence-based design and operations strategies linked to the priority EH topics on one side and a definition on the back.

Ask each group to **organize the stack of design and operations strategies from highest priority to lowest priority for the proposed real estate project.**

Ask each group to tape the cards in order on a wall, so that the three groups' rankings can be viewed at a single glance.

Facilitate a large group conversation to identify priority design strategies for the project.



Step 8: Link to Policy

*Organizing Principle:
Creating Conditions for Trust*

Ask participants to use colored dots to indicate if each design strategy is: encouraged/required (green), allowed by code (yellow), or requires a variance (red). Add post-its indicating whose scope a design strategy falls under.

Facilitate a large group conversation about which priority design strategies are actively encouraged (including through incentive programs) and which strategies may require advocacy to overcome regulatory hurdles.

Consider as a group how the project could help advance community climate, health, and equity policies.



Step 9: Aligned Vision

*Organizing Principle:
Setting the Baseline*

Use the annotations on the HSA diagram and design ranking cards to facilitate the **co-creation of an aligned vision for the proposed real estate development.**

Include a list of the highest priority design strategies supporting the vision.

List the ways each stakeholder group will contribute to the project's successful completion and how each group will benefit from the vision.



Step 6: Aligning Around Environmental Health Priorities

Preparation Time: 4 hours



Set a collaborative tone for the half-day multi-stakeholder workshop by starting the event with a series of activities that both summarize the results from the stakeholder-specific mini-workshops and also emphasize areas of agreement across stakeholder groups.

Focus the first part of the workshop on co-creating a list of **3-5 priority environmental health topics**.

Many times, stakeholders agree in their description of key characteristics, social determinants of health (SDOH), community health needs, and ways the neighborhood experiences climate change.

Use those areas of agreement to **start creating space for alignment around opportunities for the project to leverage its location to benefit both occupants and the surrounding neighborhood.**

Sample Agenda - Multi-stakeholder Workshop

(Continued from Step 2)

Time	Description	Materials
0:50 - 1:00	<p>Come to agreement on environmental health priorities for the proposed real estate project</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Facilitator displays the current list of priority environmental health topics, based on a combination of the initial HSA and input from the stakeholder-specific mini-workshops Each participant places 3 stars next to priority health topics for the project Facilitator moderates a large group conversation to identify 3-5 environmental health priorities that all three groups agree could be positively influenced by the proposed real estate project 	<p>Powerpoint slides</p> <p>Large-scale printed HSA diagram</p> <p>Star stickers</p> <p>Pens, markers, and Post-its for annotations</p>

Facilitator's Role:

Emphasize the areas of alignment across all three stakeholder groups, particularly picking up on comments that repeat across the stakeholder groups' recap of their stakeholder-specific mini-workshop.

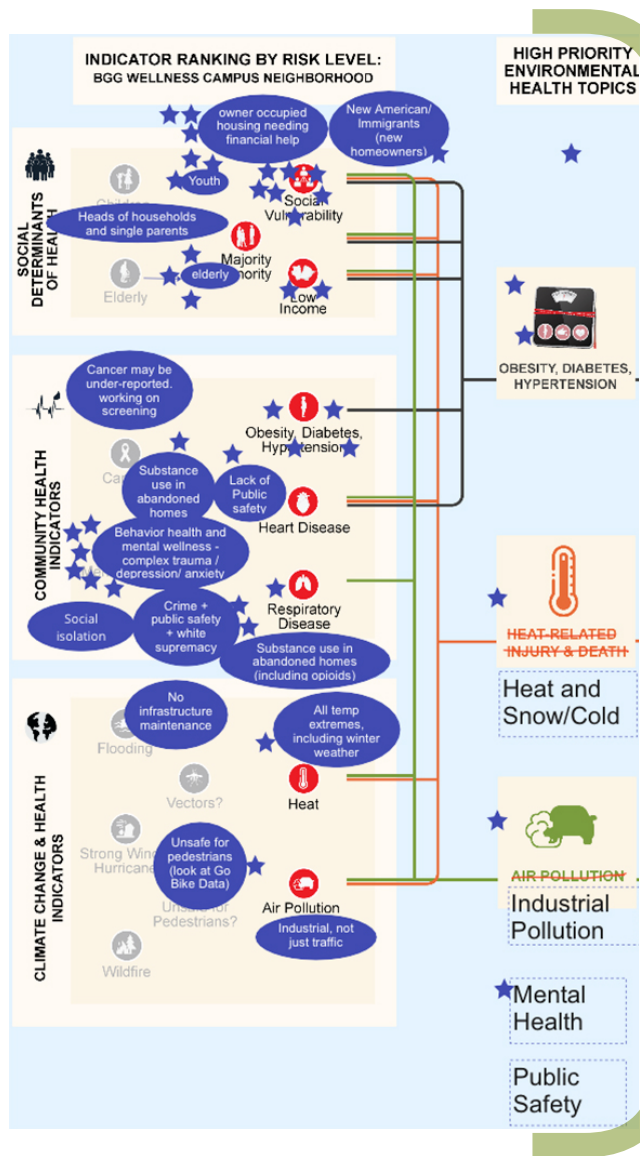


Tips

- ✓ Don't feel hemmed in by the environmental health indicators and priorities on the HSA diagram. This is the time to convert the diagram into a design tool and to use a joint activity to start building trust across stakeholder groups.
- ✓ This exercise can act as a bridge to the next activity by beginning to blend a conversation about common pathways across environmental exposures with a preliminary conversation about ways the project might support design solutions.

Example: Aligning Around Environmental Health (EH) Priorities

Alignment Pilot Example: Buffalo, NY (using a virtual whiteboard)

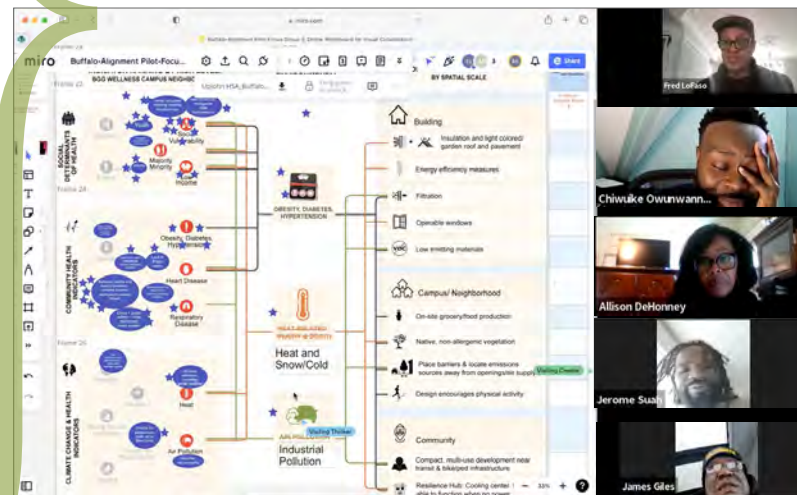


The purpose of the Environmental Health (EH) Prioritization exercise is for the three stakeholder groups to jointly identify priorities in the Community Health and Climate Change and Health categories.

If participants place stars next to the Social Determinants of Health (SDOH) category instead, facilitate a conversation about the aspects of the built and social environment that support or stand in the way of high risk groups living their healthiest life.

Demonstrate to participants that their voice is being heard by walking through the annotations from the stakeholder-specific mini-workshops and continuing to change the diagram during the multi-stakeholder workshop in response to comments.

Alignment Pilot in Buffalo, NY: The EH prioritization conversation resulted in changes to two topics in the original diagram. Heat-related injury and death was changed to Heat- and Snow/Cold-related Injury and Death. Air Pollution was changed to Industrial Pollution. Two new priority topics were also added by the group: Mental Health and Public Safety.



"One topic that we didn't talk about [in the stakeholder-specific mini-workshop but was brought up by a community member at this meeting] was drug use and gang violence. ... We need to be conscious of it and be part of the solution if we're going to go into a community and truly want to have a positive effect on it"
 – Design/Development Participant

Alignment Pilot in Buffalo, NY: Multi-stakeholder Workshop. Video Conference Using Virtual Whiteboard. Annotation and Environmental Health Prioritization Exercise.



Step 7: Design Ranking Exercise

Preparation Time: 4 hours



Use the health situation analysis diagram to **show participants the relationship between priority environmental health topics** agreed upon in Step 6 of the Alignment Process **and related evidence-based design and operations strategies.**

Distribute a stack of cards to each stakeholder group with an image and brief description of each

strategy. Encourage participants to contribute additional strategies by writing the term and definition on index cards and placing them in the pile.

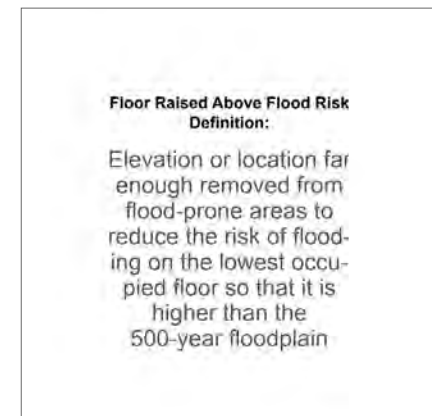
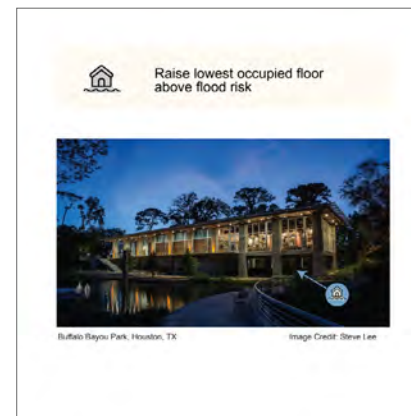
Ask each stakeholder group to organize the cards in order from highest to lowest priority for the project.

Sample Agenda - Multi-stakeholder Workshop

(Continued from Step 6)

Time	Description	Materials
1:00 - 1:10	<p>Sort relevant design strategies from highest to lowest priority</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Facilitator distributes cards displaying images and descriptions of each evidence-based design strategy associated with priority environmental health topics. Ask each stakeholder group to organize the cards from highest to lowest priority specific to the proposed real estate project. 	Laminated cards with relevant evidence-based design and operations strategies

Evidence-based Design Strategies Card Example Front and Back



Lessons Learned from the Alignment Pilot

- ✓ Before the multi-stakeholder workshop begins, mark an area in the room where all three sets of ranked design strategies can be displayed next to each other – one for each stakeholder group.
- ✓ Ask each stakeholder group to rank potential design strategies separately and then display them in order, so that the entire group can compare rankings across groups.
- ✓ The surprise surrounding the unveiling of the design rankings can create an opening for participants to find common ground with each other. It can also demonstrate how stakeholder roles can influence their initial thoughts about design priorities. But, those ideas and priorities might shift when they think about the project through the eyes of the other two groups.
- ✓ Rearranging something tangible that includes both images and a brief definition of the design strategy facilitates participation. When the design strategies are only available as a list on the HSA diagram, they seem more abstract and less relatable, particularly for participants whose expertise lies outside of the design field.



*Alignment Pilot in Waterford, VA. Multi-stakeholder Workshop.
Design Ranking Exercise.*



Step 8: Connecting the Dots: How Could the Project Contribute to Local Policies?

Preparation Time: 1 hour



A key benefit of the Alignment Process is its ability to quantify the ways in which a single real estate project will contribute to neighborhood and community plans.

Usually, larger scale plans do not include private property in their metrics.

The purpose of this exercise is to ask stakeholder groups to consider the design and operations strategies they prioritized in Step 7 from a regulatory perspective.

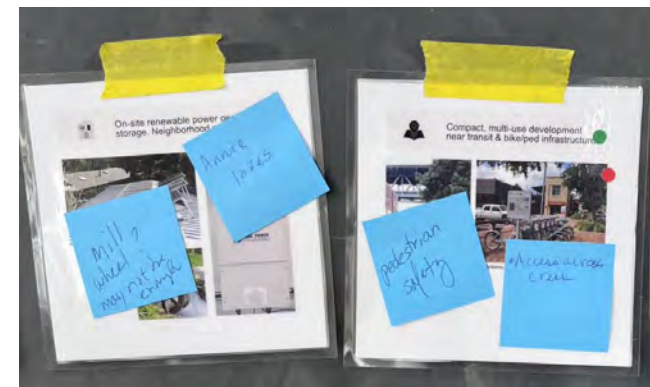
Ask each stakeholder group to use stickers to identify the strategies that are required or incentivized within the project's jurisdiction (green), allowed but not required (yellow), or require a variance to be implemented (red).

Ask each group to indicate whose scope each design strategy falls under and why. Some strategies may fall under more than one scope.

Wrap up by facilitating a large group conversation about which design and operations strategies support local policy goals related to climate change mitigation, adaptation, and resilience; environmental sustainability; transportation; public health; and, social equity.

Tips

- ✓ Encourage stakeholder groups to add post-it notes and colored dots to the design cards as part of the ranking exercise (Step 7).
- ✓ Ask each stakeholder group to present their design rankings together with their relationship with local policies, so that each group has a chance to present the project within its larger context from their own perspective.
- ✓ Facilitate a conversation with the large group that opens up space for stakeholders to find opportunities to align their interests with each other through a common approach to responding to or suggesting modifications to local policies.



Alignment Pilot in Waterford, VA. Multi-stakeholder Workshop. Placing Design Ideas Within Current Regulatory Framework.

Sample Agenda - Multi-stakeholder Workshop

(Continued from Step 7)

Time	Description	Materials
1:10 - 1:15	<p>Identify level of regulatory support for prioritized design and operations strategies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use colored stickers to mark strategies that are required or incentivized (green), allowed (yellow), or require a variance (red). 	Laminated cards with design/operations strategies
1:15 - 1:25	<p>Who is responsible for each strategy?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use Post-its to indicate whose scope the strategy falls under and why 	Green, yellow, red sticker dots 2x2 Post-its (one color per group to distinguish responses)
1:25 - 1:45	<p>Compare Group Responses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tape your annotated stack of design strategies on the wall in order from highest to lowest priority. Ask each group to explain their reasoning for the order in which they ranked the design/operations strategies. Facilitate a large group conversation about similarities and differences in rankings, thoughts about regulatory support/constraints, and scope of responsibility. Use stars or Post-its to identify strategies that all groups agree should be prioritized. 	Pens and markers Painter's tape Whiteboard/large post-it sheets on wall

Facilitator's Role:

Ask participants for their initial reactions to the design and operations rankings. Are some stakeholder groups' rankings more similar to each other? Why?

Facilitate a conversation about areas where the rankings differ greatly across groups. Create space for participants to learn more about other groups' approach to the project. Point out unexpected synergies.



Alignment Pilot Example: Waterford, VA

The design ranking exercise in Waterford returned very similar priorities for the community and property owner groups. In contrast, the government group's rankings were close to a mirror image - with the lowest priorities for the community and property owner groups in first place and their highest priorities in last place.

The design ranking exercise created space for each stakeholder group to explain their reasoning. In the process, **they articulated similar core values and desires for the property** - namely to center its historic significance and original function in the final design.



The pilot project in Waterford, VA is a proposed adaptive reuse of an historic mill dating from the American Colonial period. As a result, the main **authorities having jurisdiction** are the local, state, and national historic preservation agencies. Their primary focus is on preserving the building's original structure and appearance. They therefore prioritized design strategies that would protect the structure from coming in contact with water.



The **community and property owner groups**, on the other hand, are interested in reimagining a functional role for the mill that harmonizes its historic use with a contemporary function. Their vision requires working with water, not protecting it from exposure.



Alignment Pilot in Waterford, VA. Multi-stakeholder Workshop. Design Rankings by Stakeholder Group.



Step 9: Co-creating Alignment Around the Project Vision, Design, and Stakeholder Benefits & Contributions

Preparation Time: 1 hours

This is the culminating conversation in the multi-stakeholder workshop.

It is an opportunity for the entire group to reaffirm their agreement around (1) which environmental health topics the proposed

real estate project should address, (2) which design and operations strategies will be most effective at addressing those topics, and (3) list the ways each stakeholder group will benefit from the project and how they will contribute to its success.



Alignment Pilot in Waterford, VA. Multi-stakeholder workshop.



"I have never had the pleasure before of exploring how one single structure can, when considered through the impact lens of climate change, health, and equity, be designed to create a beneficial ripple effect within the surrounding community." - Community Member

Tips



This conversation is gets at the heart of the alignment method. By this time in the multi-stakeholder workshop, participants should have a strong sense of how their stakeholder group's motivations and needs intersect with the other stakeholder groups.



Keep the large group conversation as informal as possible during this activity. If the group is larger than 20 participants, use two facilitators, so that two parallel conversations can take place with a subset of each of the three stakeholder groups in each subgroup, and set aside time at the end of the workshop to bring the larger group together to agree on a final, consensus vision, set of design strategies, and benefits/contributions for each stakeholder group.



Support participants in developing a consensus around areas of common values, common interests, and/or opportunities to strike up unconventional partnerships.

Sample Agenda - Multi-stakeholder Workshop

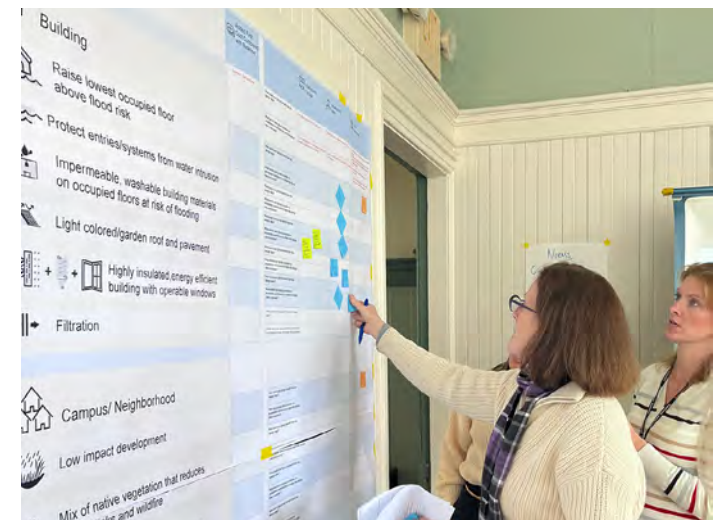
(Continued from Step 8)

Time	Description	Materials
1:45 - 2:00	<p>Benefits and Contributions for Each Stakeholder Group</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ask participants to use colored Post-its to list how each priority design/operations strategy could benefit their stakeholder group and what kinds of contributions their group would find acceptable to support its inclusion in the project. 	Benefits and contributions table on the large-scale HSA diagram posted on the wall
2:00 - 2:10	<p>Read Potential Benefits and Contributions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ask participants to read other group's Post-its and compare with their own group. Consider opportunities for alignment. 	2x2 Post-its (one color per group to distinguish responses)
2:10 - 2:30	<p>Compare Group Responses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ask participants to report out on their group's thoughts about benefits and contributions. Facilitate a large group conversation to elicit co-benefits associated with specific design/operations strategies. 	Whiteboard/ large post-it sheets on wall
2:30 - 2:45	Break	
2:45 - 3:15	<p>Co-create Aligned Vision for the Project: Facilitated large group conversation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Where can we begin to see alignment between the goals of each of the groups here today? Which design/operations ideas were strongly aligned across stakeholder groups? Why? Which ideas don't work for this project? Why? Let's work as a group to summarize the vision for the project. How could we describe the project? What are its goals and design attributes? How does each stakeholder group benefit from that vision? What kinds of tradeoffs is each stakeholder group willing to consider in order to achieve this consensus vision? 	Pens and markers for annotations
3:15 - 3:30	<p>Potential Opportunities and Financial/Regulatory Hurdles</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> How do the project vision and supporting design/operations strategies advance local priorities? What kinds of funding opportunities are available? What kinds of regulatory and financial constraints stand in the way of achieving the shared vision? How might the combined efforts of Alignment Process participants overcome those hurdles? 	

Facilitator's Role:

Participants may be hesitant to **articulate** the ways their group would **benefit** from the project, or commit themselves to any tangible **contributions**.

You can diffuse these concerns by asking stakeholder groups to **focus on each design/ operations strategy separately** and by **framing the conversation as a brainstorming session**.

Alignment Pilot in Waterford, VA. Multi-stakeholder Workshop. Stakeholders mark benefits and contributions for each design strategy.

Alignment Pilot Example: Benefits and Contributions

The following table summarizes the benefits and contributions developed by Alignment Pilot participants.

The three pilot projects included different building types, different scales of activity, different uses, and a wide range of demographics.

In spite of that diversity, common themes emerged when stakeholder groups listed benefits and contributions associated with the aligned project vision.




	Benefits	Contributions
 Community Groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintain/strengthen neighborhood identity, pride, and sense that “we have something going on here.” Neighborhood beautification. Place for community engagement. Counteract gentrification caused by historical overlay and inequitable green subsidies. Increased flexibility for adaptive reuse of other properties. Increased safety, prosperity. Reliable electricity and water. Replace lead pipes. Reduced risk of flooding, combined sewer overflows, and impaired water quality. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support project rezoning, permit application, and effort to bring more flexibility to historic overlay. Connect owner/developer to local non-profits and businesses interested in leasing space. Make available building roofs, gardens, etc., to support a community effort that is anchored by the pilot project. Want to stay involved and informed about next steps. Want to participate in the process.
 Property Owner/ Development Team	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase community trust and develop new partnerships. Meet local, state, and federal design standards. Achieve re-zoning and variance goals. Lower operating costs. Expand services. Achieve a balance of financial productivity and social mission. Access funding targeted to climate change strategies; environmental, social, governance (ESG) investments; etc. Apply lessons learned to other assets. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Include aligned design ideas in project budget. Bring local and state attention to the neighborhood. Use the project as a demonstration site for other similar projects. Provide community services, such as public restrooms, education, access to fresh and healthy food, health and wellness services, community center, etc. Act as a catalyst for neighborhood-initiated economic development, community solar, etc.
 Local Government	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase efficiency of public review process. Point to the project as a demonstration of harmonizing local plans, such as: historic overlay, climate action, food action, linear parks, multi-modal transportation, community health needs assessment. Add data collected from private property to tracking programs. Expand community engagement and services in the neighborhood. Signal that local government is responding to community needs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Educate community on development process. Look to other neighborhoods as models for future funding. Support community and developer proposals to infuse equity into historic preservation review process and access to green subsidies. Connect project with other relevant agencies. Coordinate with owner/developer to increase community services in the neighborhood (particularly programs that will help residents pay to upgrade their homes).

Table source: Adele Houghton, *Priority Green for Community Benefit: A Framework for Tailoring Real Estate Entitlement Concessions to Neighborhood-Specific Priorities Around Climate, Health, and Equity*, Harvard University ProQuest Dissertations Publishing, 2023.

Part 4:

Pulling it All Together: Next Steps



The ultimate success of the Alignment Process hinges on the implementation of the aligned vision. **Wrap up the multi-stakeholder workshop by working with participants to draft an action plan for turning the aligned vision into reality.**

The plan should include a timeline, metrics, and point person for each stakeholder group contribution and expected benefit, to create an accountability framework for the project. Alignment Process organizers can also support the next phase of the project by producing stakeholder-specific materials that bring supporting evidence to back up their contribution.

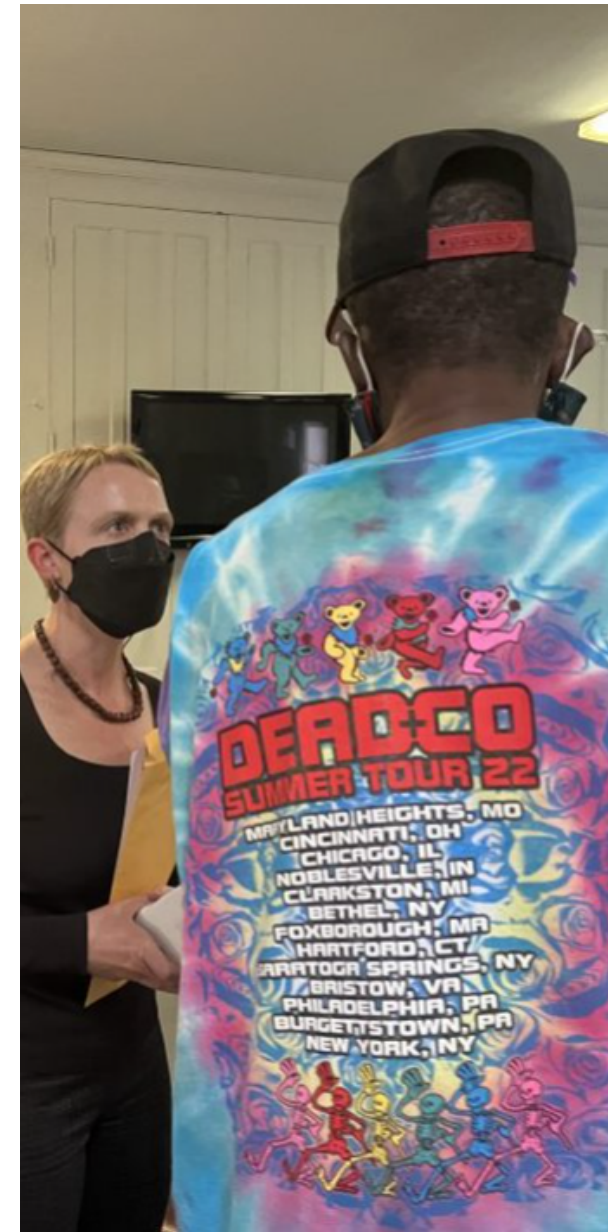
Goals:

1. Develop an action plan for the aligned vision that is feasible and is viewed as supporting stakeholder work rather than a burden.
2. Develop materials that will support the next phase of each stakeholder group's work.

Outcomes

1. Action Plan Participants should leave the multi-stakeholder workshop with an action plan in hand, a few near term milestones, a date for the next meeting, and an understanding of roles and responsibilities. In some cases, it may be appropriate for the Alignment Process organizers to convene follow up meetings and manage the implementation of the action plan. In other cases, stakeholder groups may prefer to coordinate implementation of the action plan to support ongoing trust-building work.

2. Stakeholder-specific Documentation The data and community stories in the health situation analysis could be useful in different ways to each stakeholder group - both to streamline their contribution to the aligned vision and for other projects. The Alignment Process organizers should ask participants as part of the wrap up to the multi-stakeholder workshop what data is most useful to them and the best format to receive it: as a data table or formatted into a specific deliverable.



Alignment Pilot in Albany, NY. Multi-stakeholder Workshop.



Action Plan: Pulling It All Together - Next Steps



Step 10: Action Plan

*Organizing Principle:
Creating Conditions for Trust*

Wrap up the multi-stakeholder workshop by facilitating a large group conversation reviewing the aligned vision, priority design strategies, and stakeholder benefits and contributions - all of which should be publicly displayed on the wall or on a projected computer screen.

Facilitate a conversation across the stakeholder groups to decide:

- **Milestones and deliverables for the next 3-6 months.**
- **Responsible parties for each deliverable**, including ongoing communications and scheduling/facilitating the next multi-stakeholder meeting.

Ask for verbal agreement from all participants prior to closing the workshop.

Share the action plan with the larger email group associated with the project as soon as possible after the workshop and request final edits over a short timeframe (2-3 days).



Step 11: Documentation

*Organizing Principle:
Setting the Baseline*

The data and lived experiences compiled in the health situation analysis could be useful to each stakeholder group in different ways.

For example, the design/development team might use them to track and document the project's achievement of green and healthy building certification and/or planning, zoning, and building code requirements. Community groups might use the same data to advocate for funding a neighborhood improvement. And, local officials might use it to improve coordination across existing policies and programs.

As part of the wrap up conversation, Alignment Process organizers should **ask participants if packaging the HSA data in specific ways would support their contribution to the project under discussion and/or other high priority initiatives.**

Make a good faith effort to add those materials to an appendix in the final report.



Step 10: Build an Action Plan for Next Steps



Preparation Time: 1 hour

Use the final half hour of the multi-stakeholder workshop to **identify specific, timebound actions for implementing the aligned vision.**

Make sure that milestones, metrics, and responsible parties are designated for each stakeholder group contribution and expected benefit,

so that everyone leaves the workshop with both a list of “things to do” and expectations of specific co-benefits for their stakeholder group.

Sample Agenda - Multi-stakeholder Workshop

(Continued from Step 9)

Time	Description	Materials
3:30 - 3:40	<p>Recap and Reflection</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Facilitator reviews the full Alignment Process and walks the group through the priority EH topics, aligned vision for the project, priority design/ operations strategies, and stakeholder benefits and contributions. Invite participants to write their reflections about the Alignment process, current areas of agreement, gaps in agreement, and opportunities for next steps on index cards. 	<p>Index cards</p> <p>Whiteboard/ large post-it sheets on wall</p> <p>Evaluation forms</p> <p>Pens and Markers</p>
3:40 - 3:50	<p>Develop an Action Plan for Next Steps</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Facilitate a large group conversation to co-develop an action plan for the next 3-6 months, including milestones, deliverables, and responsible parties. 	
3:50 - 4:00	<p>Process Evaluation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pass out evaluation forms to collect feedback about the process. Ask participants to turn them in to receive compensation for their time (community) and lunch (all participants). 	

Facilitator’s Role:

Ensure that participants lead the development of the action plan, not the facilitator.

Prep an action plan framework ahead of time on a whiteboard, large piece of paper, or computer, so that all participants need to do is fill in the blanks.



Sample Forms

Sample Evaluation Form

1. How would you best describe the stakeholder group you represent? (select one)

- Neighborhood/Community Group
- Development Team
- Local Government

2. How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements:

After attending the alignment pilot focus group meetings I have a better understanding of...

...the relationship between neighborhood health topics and building design
 Strongly Agree Agree Neutral Disagree Strongly Disagree

...the role that neighborhood data can play in improving building design
 Strongly Agree Agree Neutral Disagree Strongly Disagree

... the role that neighborhood data can play in creating new value for my stakeholder group
 Strongly Agree Agree Neutral Disagree Strongly Disagree

...the role that neighborhood data can play in aligning the interests of all three stakeholder groups
 Strongly Agree Agree Neutral Disagree Strongly Disagree

3. How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements:

The focus group presentations were engaging

Strongly Agree Agree Neutral Disagree Strongly Disagree

Additional Comments: _____

I felt my voice was heard and my stakeholder group's views are reflected in the final project vision

Strongly Agree Agree Neutral Disagree Strongly Disagree

Additional Comments: _____

I felt the other stakeholder groups' voices were heard and their views are reflected in the summary project vision

Strongly Agree Agree Neutral Disagree Strongly Disagree

Additional Comments: _____

Our conversations about neighborhood climate, health, and equity data changed my view of the kind of contributions that were acceptable for my stakeholder group to make in order to support the summary project vision

Strongly Agree Agree Neutral Disagree Strongly Disagree

Additional Comments: _____

The summary project vision does a better job of balancing all stakeholder groups' priorities compared with a typical project in your community

Strongly Agree Agree Neutral Disagree Strongly Disagree

Additional Comments: _____

4. The following local initiatives might benefit from using information provided by the alignment pilot. Please include initiative name(s), website or host organization, and how they could benefit.

If you wish for us to connect with the initiatives listed above, please share you name and contact information below. Answers to this question will be processed separately from answers in the preceding questions to maintain confidentiality behind answers to questions 1-3.

Name: _____

Email and/or Phone Number: _____

Thank you for participating in the Alignment Process!

Please contact [Insert Organizer's name] with any questions or comments: [Insert email and phone number].

Sample Action Plan

Action Items	Due Date	Deliverable(s)	Responsible Parties
1 Distribute design brief summarizing the results of the Alignment Process engagement.	2 weeks	PDF	Alignment Process organizer
2 Request feedback from stakeholders who were not able to participate in the Alignment engagement(s).	4 weeks	Emailed comments; Tracked changes	Point person for Community: Point person for Owner/Devel: Point person for Government:
3 Schedule regular check-in meetings	2 weeks		
4 Community contribution			
5 Developer contribution			
6 Government contribution			



Alignment Pilot in Waterford, VA. Multi-stakeholder Workshop.



Step 11: Create Stakeholder-specific Documentation to Support Project Contributions

Preparation Time: 10-20 hours



Every Alignment engagement should conclude with a **summary design brief** including:

- the results of the final health situation analysis,
- the aligned vision for the project, and
- each stakeholder group's contributions and expected benefits from supporting the successful completion of the project.

Additionally, **stakeholder groups may find the information generated through the Alignment Process useful for related initiatives.**

This section shares examples of some of the stakeholder-specific materials that organizers developed for the projects that participated in the Alignment Pilot.



Sample Design Brief

Table of Contents

1. Executive Summary
2. Introduction
3. Health Situation Analysis
4. Alignment Process
5. Aligned Vision and Next Steps
6. Conclusion
7. Appendix: Stakeholder Toolbox

Background Materials

- Annotated HSA
- Workshop notes, Post-it notes, index cards, evaluation forms
- Transcript recordings
- Photos of the workshops

Alignment Pilot Example: Buffalo, NY

Environmental Health Priorities:



Aligned Project Vision: Create an indoor and outdoor space for community members to spend time together, participate in physical activity, and access healthy food and social services (including health screenings, mental health counseling, free Wifi, and housing support).

Priority Design Strategies:

- Welcoming, inclusive design.
- Affordable housing.
- Greenhouse.
- No burning of fossil fuels on-site.
- Community solar/resilience hub.
- Flexible spaces to support community programming.
- Indoor/outdoor spaces.
- Maximize vegetation, including on roofs.

Alignment Pilot Example: Albany, NY

Community Talking Points, based on Alignment Process results

REQUEST 02: REVISE HISTORICAL OVERLAY IN THE SOUTH END TO INCENTIVIZE BUILDING UPGRADES ADVANCING COMMUNITY HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

Why this is a priority:

THE HISTORIC RESOURCES OVERLAY IN THE LOCAL ZONING CODE NEEDS TO BE ALTERED TO BETTER REFLECT CONTEMPORARY LIFE IN THE SOUTH END

Neighborhood Specific Data

Section 375-2(F)(1) HR-O Historic Resources Overlay in the 2017 City of Albany Unified Sustainable Development Ordinance aims to promote welfare by identifying, protecting, enhancing, and utilizing structures, signs, sites, and areas representing the city's historical, architectural, cultural, economic, and aesthetic heritage.



Poverty is a risk factor for increased exposure to environmental hazards like heat, flooding, and poor air quality. Poverty also increases the risk of lower access to medical care, which in turn increases the risk of chronic diseases.

South End property owners are proud of their historic properties. But, many struggle to finance costly renovations, which meet historic overlay requirements.

Modern day redlining by banks hinders South End property owners' access to loans, perpetuating housing disparities. Redlined neighborhoods (1940-2010) had lower homeownership, housing values, and rental rates (FED).



Extreme heat vulnerability is a combination of low levels of green space, under-insulated buildings, and a concentration of groups who are at higher risk of heat-related illness for physiological reasons (such as children and over 65 years) and/or social reasons (such as marginalized groups).

The neighborhood is on a hillside, with low levels of vegetation. The eastern end of the neighborhood is located in a flood plain. (FLOOD)

Ezra Prentice Homes had 34% child asthma rate in 2016, higher than nearby Creighton Storey Homes 18% (SECHS). That same year, 13.5% of children in New York State and 12.5% of children in the U.S. reported active asthma (BRFSS).

Evidence-Based Design Strategies

Upgrading historic buildings in the South End can both advance community health and help the city meet environmental goals

Protection from the Elements

- Weatherize the building walls and roof (i.e., improve insulation, seal cracks, protect from water intrusion) to maintain a comfortable temperature.
- Upgrade windows to operable, insulated glass with screens for energy efficiency and year-round ventilation.
- Install ceiling fans to reduce the need for air conditioning.
- Install LED lightbulbs to reduce electricity costs.
- Upgrade to efficient heat pumps and electric appliances to lower costs and eliminate carbon monoxide exposure.
- Install solar arrays and batteries (possibly connect to a community solar microgrid) to reduce energy costs and keep the lights on during power outages.
- Install plantings on the property that simultaneously reduce flood risk, shade the street and buildings, and filter out air pollution.

Healthy Indoor Air

- Weatherize walls and roof to prevent mold, pests. Educate on pest management and non-chemical cleaning for long-term maintenance.
- Install low-VOC (easily cleanable and do not release toxic chemicals into the air) materials for asthma friendly environments, reducing exposure to triggering chemicals toxic.
- Collaborate with the City to reroute trucks, reduce congestion, and plant greenery to filter outdoor air pollution. Install filtered weep vents and operable windows on pollution-free sides of buildings.
- Expand/maintain sidewalks, bike racks, bus stops, and other infrastructure on the property that make nonmotorized transportation the easy choice.

Mental Health

- Install operable windows away from source of air pollution, connecting occupants with nature for enhanced well-being and productivity.
- Install low-VOC materials, educate on pest management and non-chemical cleaning to reduce chemical exposure, improve mental health.
- Install flood-reducing plantings promoting physical activity, social interactions, and connecting with nature for improved mental health.

Local Policy Alignment

Investing in These Upgrades Will Contribute to the Success of Local and Regional Initiatives:

- 2017 Albany Unified Sustainable Development Ordinance, Section 375-2 Zoning Districts, Subsection (F)(4) CS-O Combined Sewer Overlay: Plantings designed to reduce flooding (also known as low impact development) contribute to protection of the combined sewer serving the South End.
- Albany 2030 Comprehensive Plan, Social Section, Public Safety PS. 6: Enhance resiliency against natural events.
- Albany 2030 Comprehensive Plan, Utilities and Infrastructure Section, Energy EN-4: Incentivize energy-efficiency/renewable energy technologies in construction projects.
- New York State Prevention Agenda, 2019-2024 (adopted by the Capital Region Community Health Needs Assessment): Increase the percentage of people who live in a certified Climate Smart Community to 8.6%.
- 2012 Capital Region Sustainability Plan: Reduce per capita energy consumption by 20% by 2020. Reduce metric tons of carbon dioxide equivalent per capita from 16.3 to 12 by 2020.
- Albany Climate Change Vulnerability Assessment and Adaptation Plan: Develop design standards and building and zoning codes that address the impacts of climate change. Implement cooling strategies like green and white roofs, strategically planted trees, urban greening. Increase local renewable energy sources and solar powered generators.
- Albany Water Board Backwater Grant Program: Funding to reduce the risk of exposure to combined sewer overflows.
- 2015 Build Smart NY, Five Cities Energy Plans: Reduce or eliminate permitting fees for renewable energy installations. Plan for the development of microgrids. Establish partnerships for resilient grid development.
- New York State Prevention Agenda, 2019-2024 (adopted by the Capital Region Community Health Needs Assessment): Increase the percentage of people who live in a certified Climate Smart Community to 8.6%.
- Relevant Measures in New York State Prevention Agenda, 2019-2024, contributes to Efforts Mitigating Combined Sewer Overflows and Efforts to Enhance Community Health, Recreation, and Urban Forest³
- Providing Regulatory and Financial Support to South End Property Owners to Upgrade Historic Buildings Will Contribute to the Success of 7 Measures and Actions in the Albany 2030 Comprehensive Plan⁴

3. See Appendix C for relevant measures in New York State Prevention Agenda, 2019-2024 and specific contributions to Efforts Mitigating Combined Sewer Overflows and Efforts to Enhance Community Health, Recreation, and Urban Forest

4. See Appendix D for the 7 Measures and Actions in the Albany 2030 Comprehensive Plan

Related Green and Healthy Building Credits

The Alignment Process can be used to document credits in several green and healthy building rating systems, including:

LEED

- LEED Pilot Credit: Integrative Process for Health Promotion
- LEED Pilot Credit: Assessment and Planning for Resilience
- LEED Pilot Credit: Design for Enhanced Resilience
- LEED Pilot Credit: Social Equity within the Community

For more information, visit: <https://www.usgbc.org/credits/>

Enterprise Green Communities

- Criteria 1.1 Integrative Design: Project Priorities Survey
- Criteria 1.5. Design for Health and Well-Being: Health Action Plan
- Criteria 1.6: Resilient Communities: Multi-Hazard Risk/Vulnerability Assessment
- Criteria 1.7: Resilient Communities: Strengthening Cultural Resilience

For more information, visit: <https://www.greencommunitiesonline.org/introduction>

WELL

Community Concept

- C02: Integrative Design
- C03: Emergency Preparedness
- C11: Civic Engagement
- C14: Emergency Resources
- C15 Beta: Emergency Resilience and Recovery

For more information, visit: <https://v2.wellcertified.com/en/wellv2/community>

Alignment Pilot Example: Buffalo, NY

1-Pagers Linking Priority Environmental Health Topics with Evidence-based Design and Operations Strategies

