



## Sustainability, Equity and Community Transformation

Lynn Stoddard, Sustainable CT/ECSU

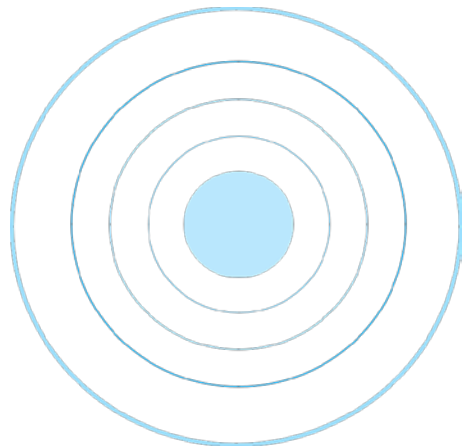
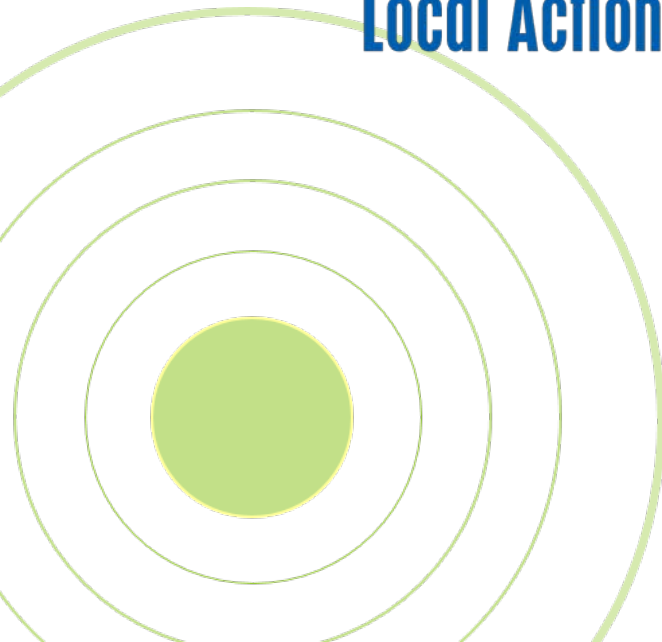
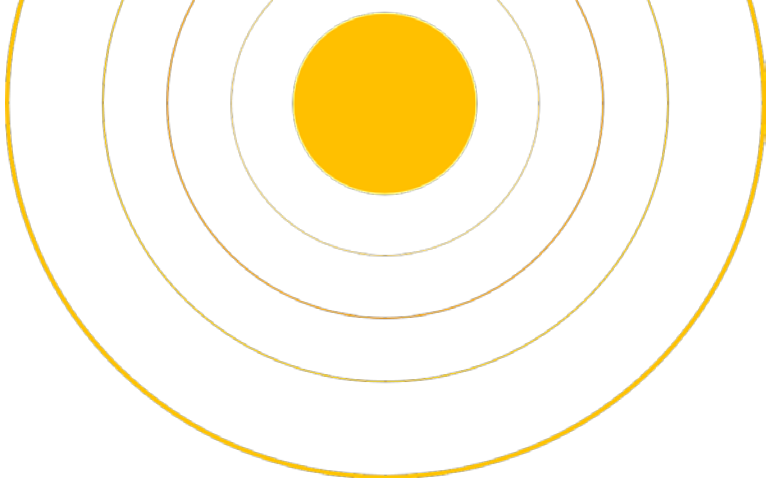
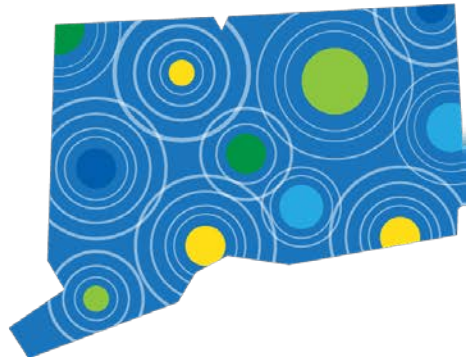
Melanie McDermott, Sustainable Jersey/TCNJ

Nathaly Agosto Filió, City of Newark



# Sustainable CT

Local Actions. Statewide Impact.



# Introduction



- Launched in November 2017
- 83 towns registered (49% of state)
- 22 towns certified in year 1 (13% of state)
- Modeled after Sustainable Jersey - many thanks to you all and our SJ mentors!
- Co-chair of Sustainable States Network

Lynn Stoddard, Executive Director  
Institute for Sustainable Energy at  
Eastern Connecticut State University

- Founder, director of Sustainable CT
- 20+ years of public policy and program development work with CT Department of Energy & Environmental Protection: climate change, energy efficiency, recycling, solid waste planning, pollution prevention, and coastal area management
- CT Governor's Council on Climate Change

# Sustainable CT's Menu of Voluntary Actions

1. Thriving local **economies**
2. Well-steward land and **natural resources**
3. Vibrant and creative **cultural ecosystems**
4. Dynamic and resilient **planning**
5. Clean and diverse **transportation** systems
6. Efficient physical **infrastructure** and operations
7. Strategic and inclusive **public services**
8. Healthy, efficient and diverse **housing**
9. Inclusive and equitable **community impacts**

# One Program – Many Benefits



Environmental Impacts



Economic Well-Being



Greenhouse Gas Reduction



Climate Resilience



Health and Wellness



Community Building



Cost Savings



Equity

# 2019 Certification Requirements



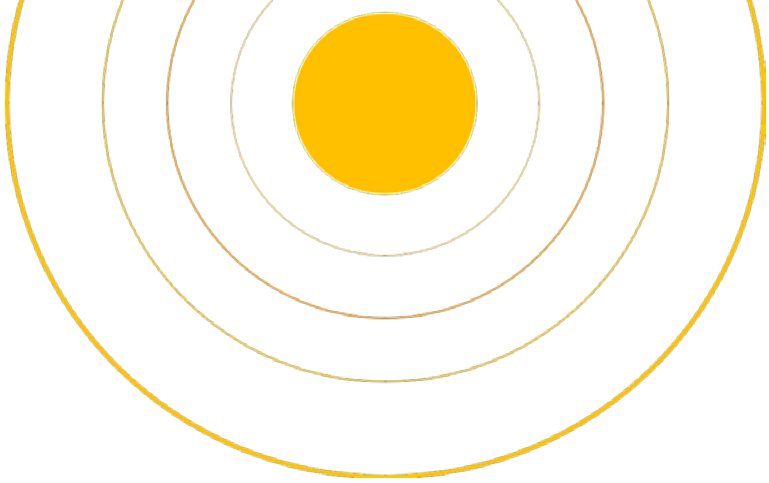
## Bronze Certification

- Successfully complete actions totaling **200 or more points**
- Complete **1 Equity Toolkit** in action 9.1 Optimize for Equity
- Complete at least 1 action in each of **categories 1-9**

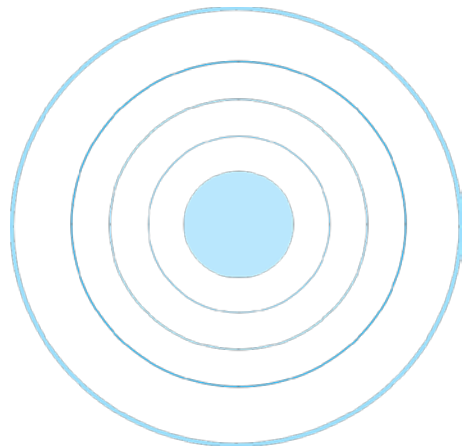
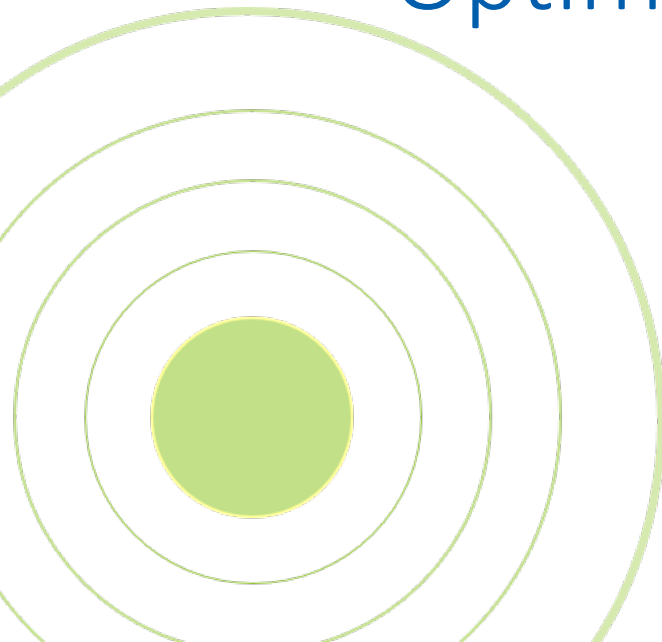


## Silver Certification

- Successfully complete actions totaling **400 or more points**
- Complete **3 Equity Toolkits** in action 9.1 Optimize for Equity
- Complete at least 1 action in each of **categories 1-9**



Action 9.1:  
Optimize for Equity



The purpose of the Sustainable CT Equity Toolkit is to build and strengthen municipal processes to be more **inclusive, cohesive, and representative** of all community members, now and in the future.



## Equitable communities

recognize the intrinsic value of each member and the need to connect with everyone, regardless of a person's race, gender, age, or sexual identity.



### EQUITY MEANS...

.....  
We know our neighbors.

We value diversity.

All members of our community have the ability to co-create the vision for our town and shape decisions.

We connect with people who are different from us.

We strive for genuine collaboration.

Decision makers in our community reflect those impacted by the decisions.

# Equity Toolkit Process

1

Who lives and works in your community?

2

How did you connect with each other?

3

What emerged from your dialogue?

4

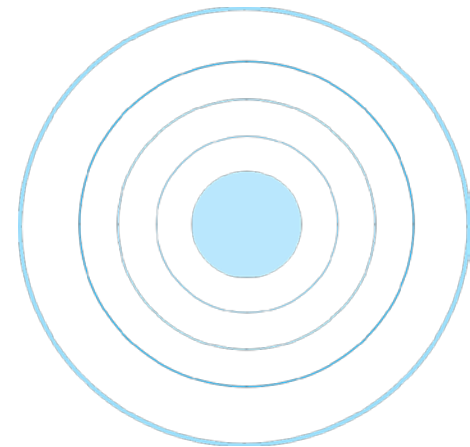
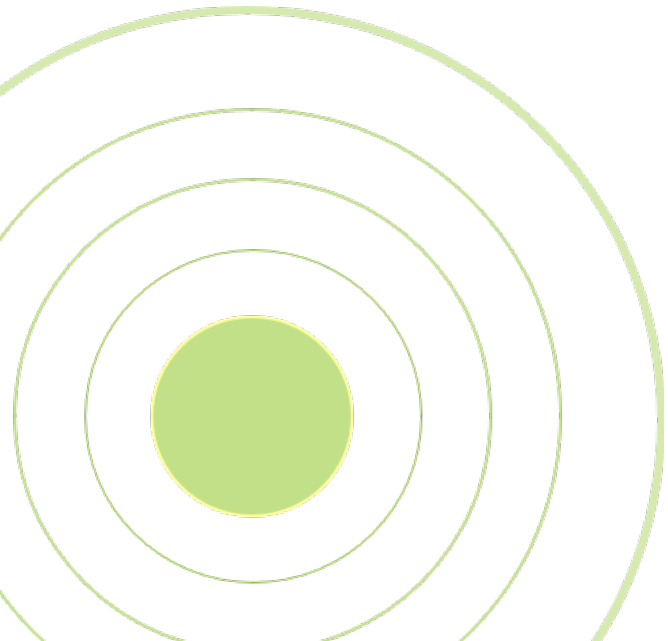
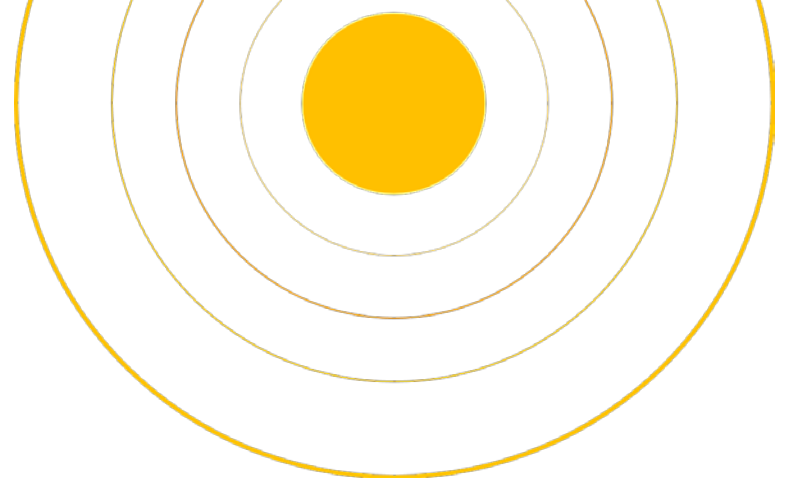
What was the result of your collaboration?

5

How will you refine, revisit, and improve?



# Equity Support Tools



# Individual Town Support from Equity Coaches



**Sustainable CT Equity Coaches**  
Meet the coaches and learn more!

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# Additional Equity Support

## Equity Training Sessions

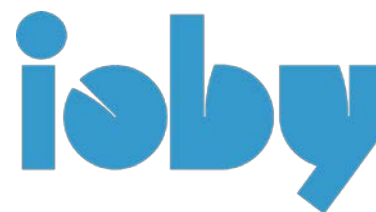
- 3 sets of ½ day workshops, 9 total

## General Support

- Sustainable CT staff support
- 15 Sustainable CT Fellows
- Reviewer feedback from optional pre-certification submission
- One-on-one “office hours” to discuss town action submissions

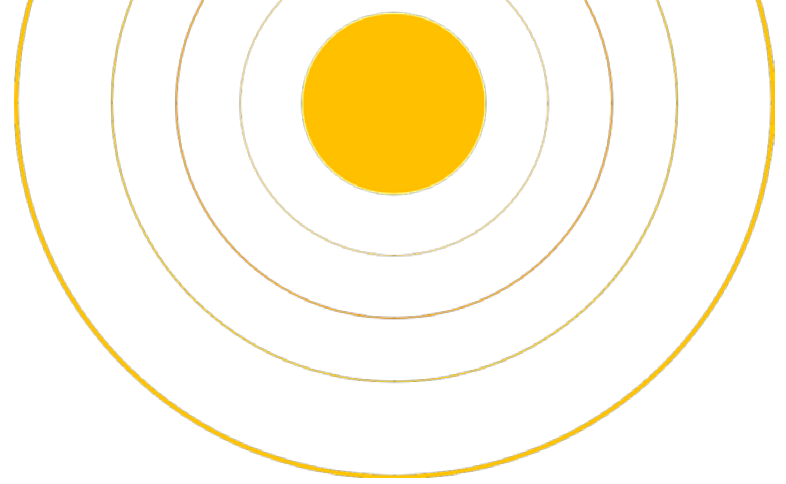
## Coming Soon

- Sustainable CT Community Match Fund partnership

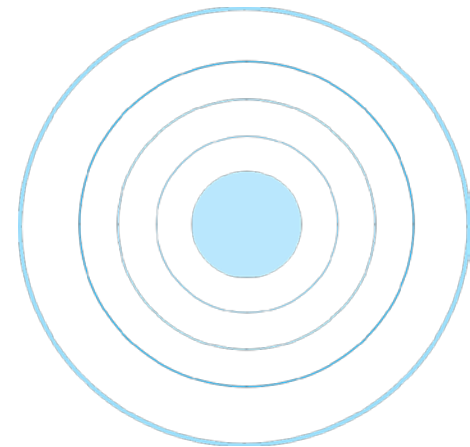
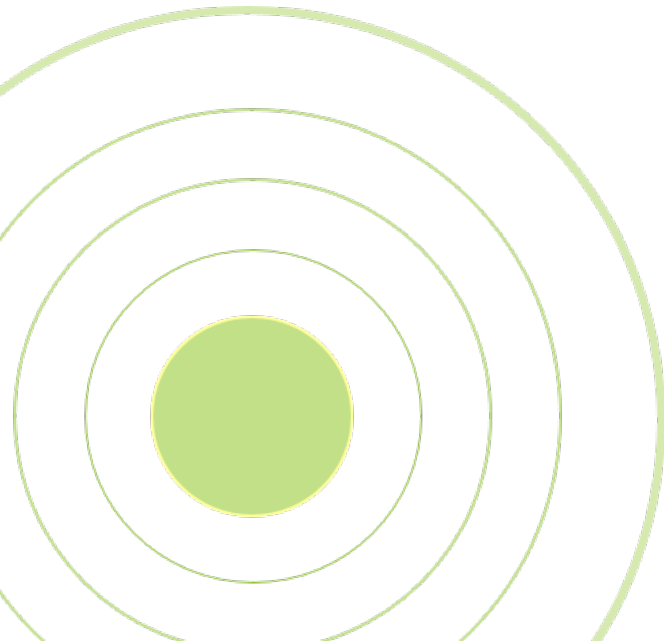
A promotional graphic for ioby with a green border. The background is light gray with faint white geometric shapes. At the top, the text "More than just crowdfunding" is in blue, followed by "Positive change, block by block" in a larger, bold blue font. On the left, there is a green-tinted photo of a smiling man. On the right, a white box contains the text "Someone like you" in bold blue, followed by "You're a neighbor, a local leader, or someone with a great idea to transform your community" in a smaller black font.

**More than just crowdfunding**  
**Positive change, block by block**

**Someone like you**  
You're a neighbor, a local leader, or someone with a great idea to transform your community



# Equity Action Examples



# Hartford: Equity & 2.7 Provide Education on Water Conservation



## PROJECT

- City trained local youth on rainwater harvesting and conservation
- Youth provided education and outreach in their neighborhoods
- Payment from Youth Service Corps (paid community service opportunities to unemployed Hartford youth)

## RESULTS

- Youth took control of the initiative, their input was incorporated and implemented
- Youth proposed alternative outreach language that was more grounded and relatable to residents
- Their suggestions were “incredibly helpful in providing guidance on existing barriers and potential solutions”
- Community needs met best through residents from the community

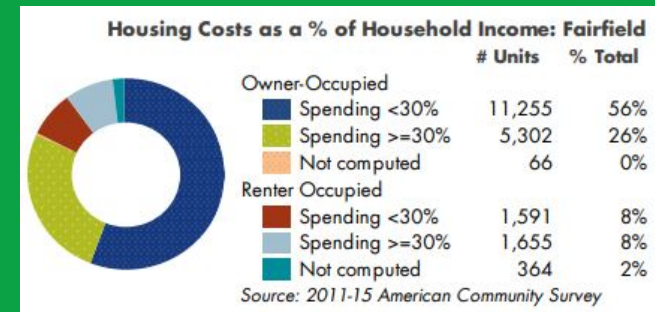


**Before**



**After**

# Fairfield: Equity & 8.1 Design and Implement a Housing Needs Assessment

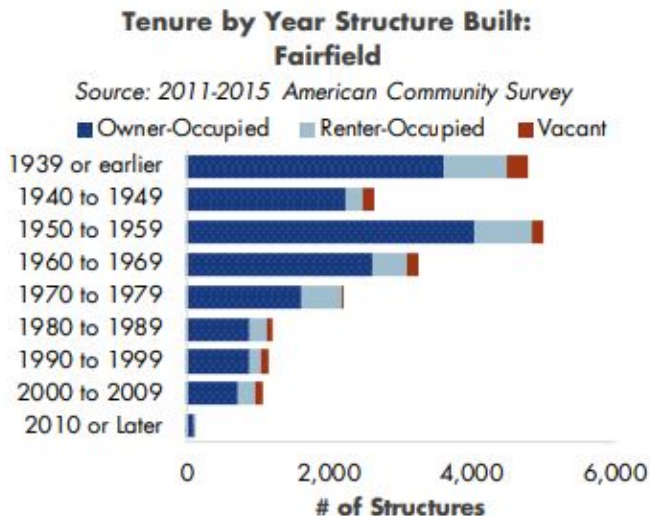


## PROJECT

- Goal: to get input from the community to best address housing needs
- Completed a thorough Housing Needs Assessment, discussed the diverse populations that influenced housing needs

## RESULTS

- Expanded communication strategies: traditional and digital media, survey instruments, neighborhood workshops, direct mailings, public access televised town meetings, multiple workshops with Fairfield Senior Advocates
- Identified need to provide a diverse range of housing options - type, style, amenities, and price range
- Identified need for more rental housing and affordable housing, especially for seniors, young people, those with disabilities






# Glastonbury: Equity & 1.3 Implement Buy Local Campaign

## PROJECT

- Through Glastonbury Grown, apply equity to identify barriers to buying local produce
- Conducted survey in four low-income areas to determine residents' knowledge of local produce and purchasing

## RESULTS

- Identified barriers: lack of information, transportation, and cost, especially for low-income residents and seniors
- Implemented shuttle service to farmers market
- Hosted farm stand in target areas
- Raised awareness about buying local produce: Glastonbury Grown webpage, ads in local newspapers, tax bill inserts, included info on other programs to address food insecurity



**A TRIP TO THE  
FARMERS  
MARKET**

Glastonbury is offering shuttle service to the Farmers' Market  
For residents of the Herbert T Clark, Center Village, Knox Lane  
and Naubuc Green

**WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 15<sup>TH</sup>**


**Pick Up Schedule:**

3:30pm- Knox Lane (Community Center entrance)  
3:40pm- Herbert T. Clark House (front entrance to 45 Canione Rd.)  
3:50pm- Center Village (75 New London Tpke. in front of main entrance)  
3:55pm- Naubuc Green (193 Welles Street, in front of the main entrance)

Return Trip- 5:00pm/5:30pm



**SIGN UP TODAY!** To sign up, call the Senior Center at 860-652-7638 by  
12 Noon on August 15th



**Welles Village Farm Stand!**

*Offering*

**FREE Locally Grown Produce!**



**Come Visit Us on Saturday, August 16<sup>th</sup>**

**10am**

**25 Risley Road**

*(Outside of the Glastonbury Housing Authority Office)*


Sponsored by Glastonbury Grown and the Town of Glastonbury

[www.glastonbury-ct.gov/glastonburygrown](http://www.glastonbury-ct.gov/glastonburygrown)



# Challenges and Benefits for Communities

- Equity is a **process**, unlike other actions
- Equity is **applied to another action** to help transform municipal decision making
- Equity is the only action that is **required for certification**
- The equity process expands boundaries and brings about **challenging conversations**



We started to look at future challenges from a more diverse point of view.

In order to eliminate unrecognized biases, we expanded our team to become more inclusive.

This process is a source of empowerment: everyone can play a role in effecting positive change in our community.



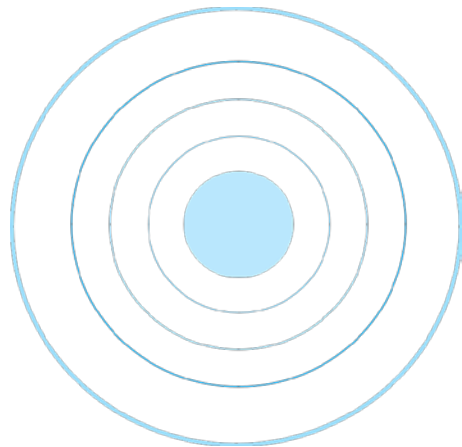
**Find Out More**

[www.sustainablect.org](http://www.sustainablect.org)  
[info@sustainablect.org](mailto:info@sustainablect.org)

Lynn Stoddard  
860.465.2813



@sustainablect



# Sustainable Jersey Equity Initiative

*Shared Understanding, Learning  
and Opportunities*

Melanie McDermott  
Senior Researcher



@SJ\_Program • #DecadeofImpact

# *Why Equity?*

...integral to Sustainable Jersey  
holistic vision of sustainability

## *What is the Equity Initiative?*

... explores how we can more  
effectively promote social equity  
as a driver of sustainability in  
New Jersey municipalities

Equity  
(Society)

Economy

Environment



# Equity Initiative Steps

1. **Define** equity: co-develop framework w/ Diversity & Equity Task Force (*all steps*)
2. **Screen** (sort) all SJ actions for equity impact
3. **Analyze** municipal performance in certification & grants
4. **Integrate** equity: fill gaps, institutionalize

# Performance at 10: Quantitative Analysis

- Do (dis)advantaged municipalities face (dis)advantages in Sustainable Jersey program?
  - Certification level
  - Grants
- 10 years of program performance data
- Equity & difference among municipalities:
  - Poverty/wealth
  - Racial & ethnic composition

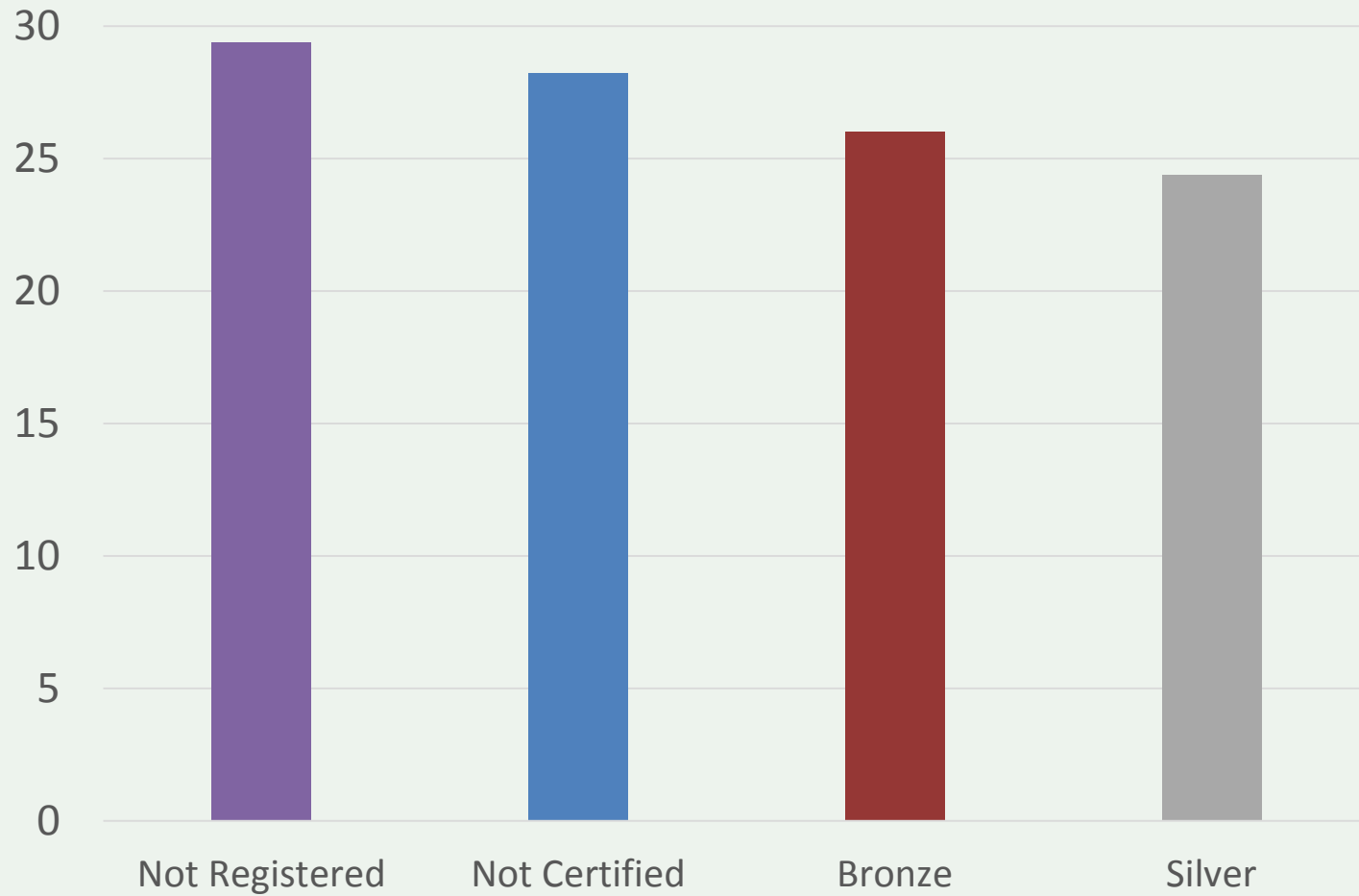
# Municipal Distress Score (MRI)

## Index of 'distress' from 0 to 100:

- Children on welfare
- Unemployment
- Poverty
- Education
- Income
- % on SNAP (food stamps)
- Population change
- Housing vacancy rate, etc.



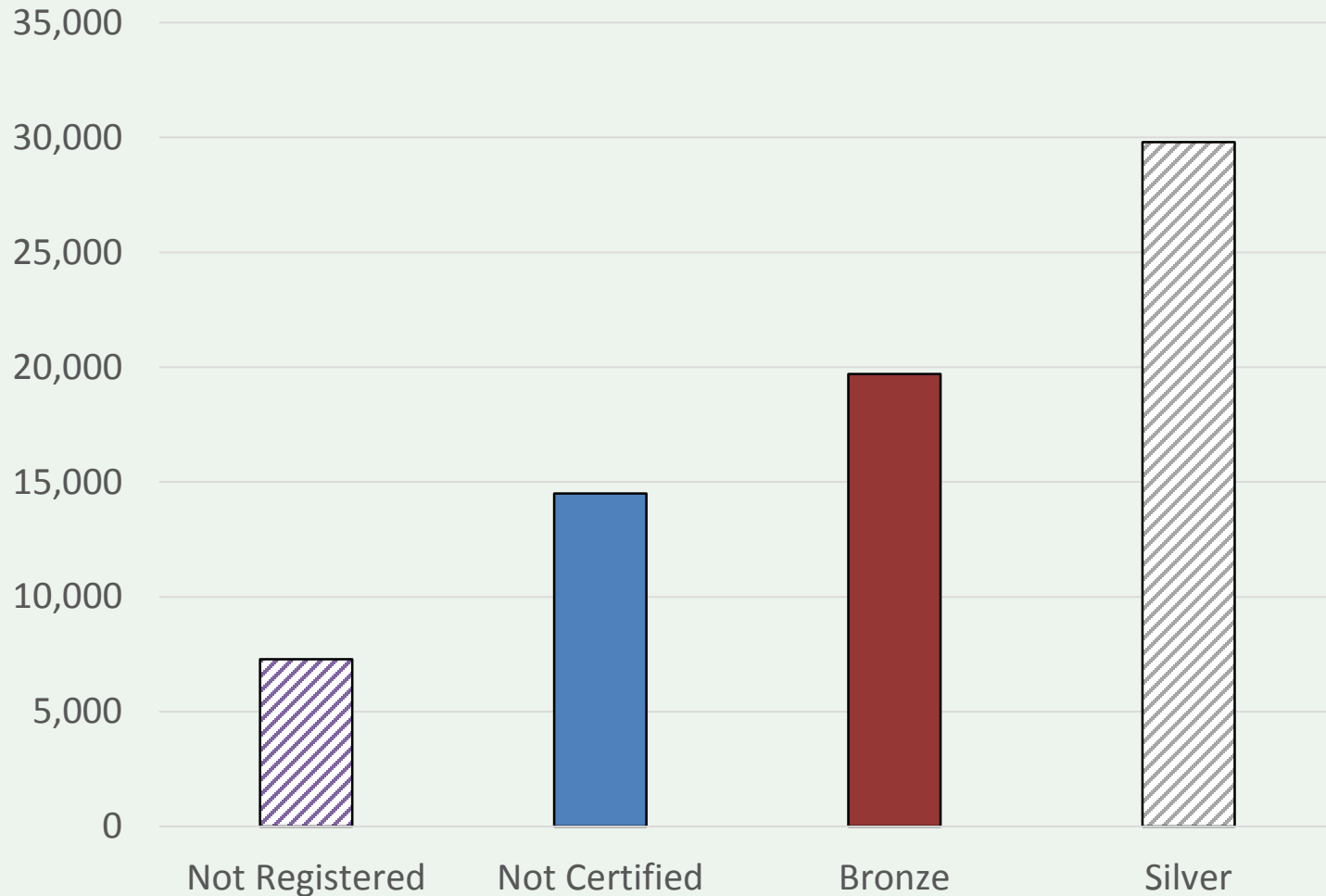
# Average Distress Score by Certification Level



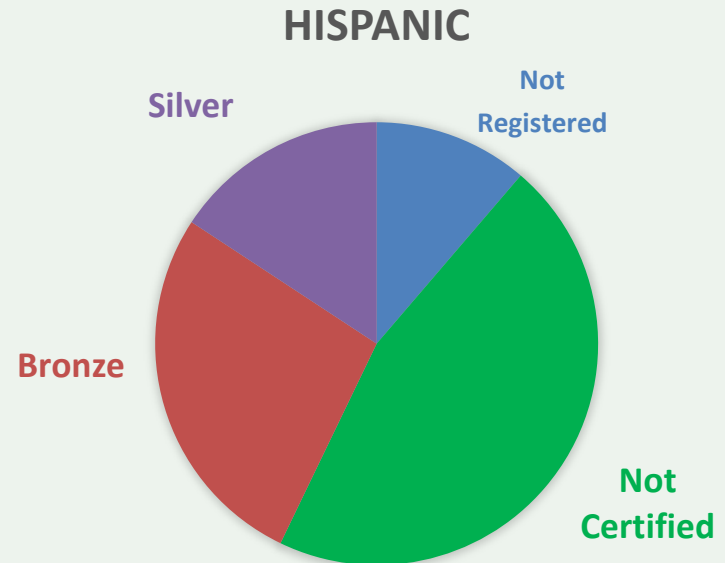
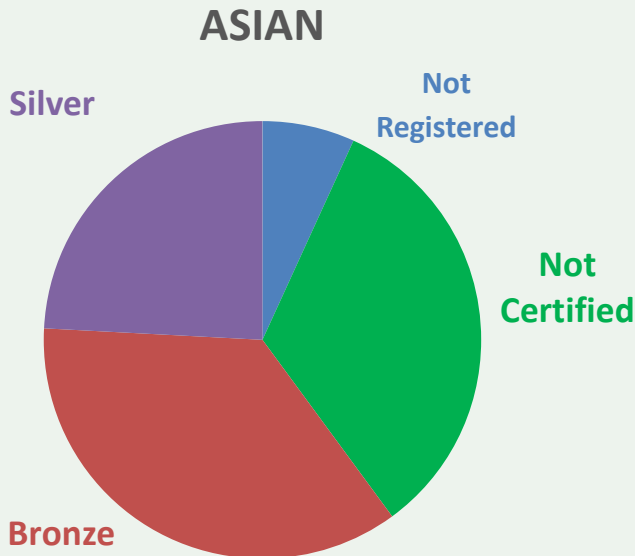
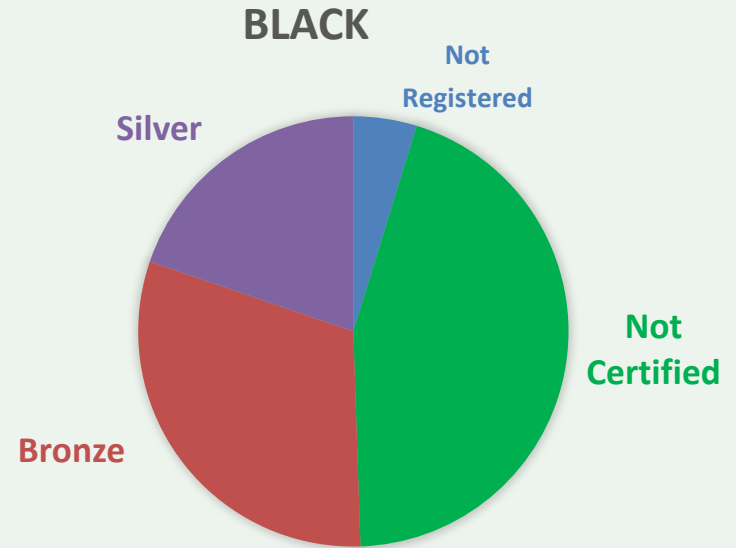
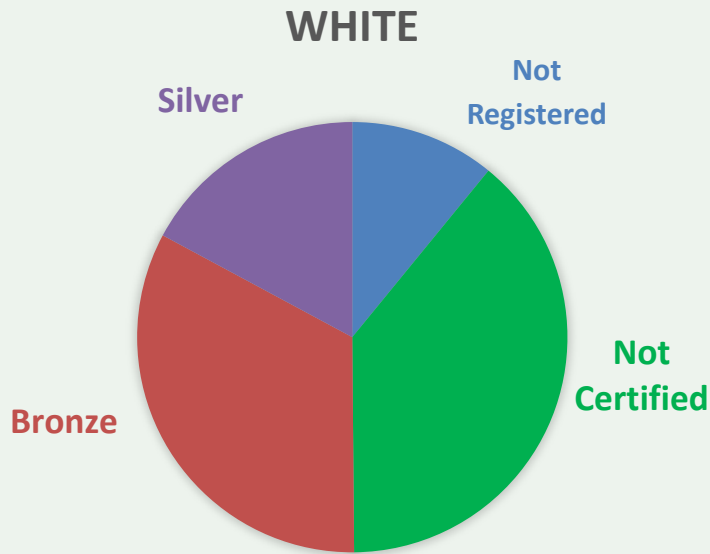
# Municipal Distress by Certification Level

- No statistically significant difference between average distress scores among certification levels.
- Yet, higher certification levels *are* significantly associated with a lower distress score (regression).
- Could differences be due not to distress, but to other factors, such as
  - **population** (reflects budget, staff, capacity)?

# Average Municipal Population by Certification Level



# Race (Total NJ Population) by Certification



# Certification Level vs. Size vs. Distress

- Distressed municipalities do not appear to face any systematic bias in achieving SJ certification.
- Overall, larger population gives a significant advantage in certification.
  - Size not a factor in achieving bronze.
  - Largest cities have advantage in reaching silver.
- Population + distress explain less than 10% of the variation in certification ... *something else provides the secret sauce!*

# Distribution of SJ Grants

- Neither number nor total \$ amount of grants awarded is correlated with municipal distress.
- Population is significantly, but weakly, correlated with number and total of grants received.

## Equity involves *fairness* in three dimensions:

1. **Distribution** of environmental benefits & burdens
2. **Participation** & influence in decision-making
3. **Scale** of impact:
  - Time
    - Past discrimination; future generations
  - Space
    - Upstream/downstream effects

Distribution

Participation

Scale



# Equity Action Screen

**1. Distribution:** Are benefits & burdens of implementing action equitably distributed *within* the municipality? Rate likely impact:

- Action has inequitable impact
  - Action may have slightly inequitable impact
  - Action may slightly improve social equity
  - Action improves social equity
  - Not Applicable
- *How could this action do a better job ... ?*



# Equity Action Screen

**2. Participation:** Do all social groups have meaningful opportunity to participate in *decisions* involved in implementing action?

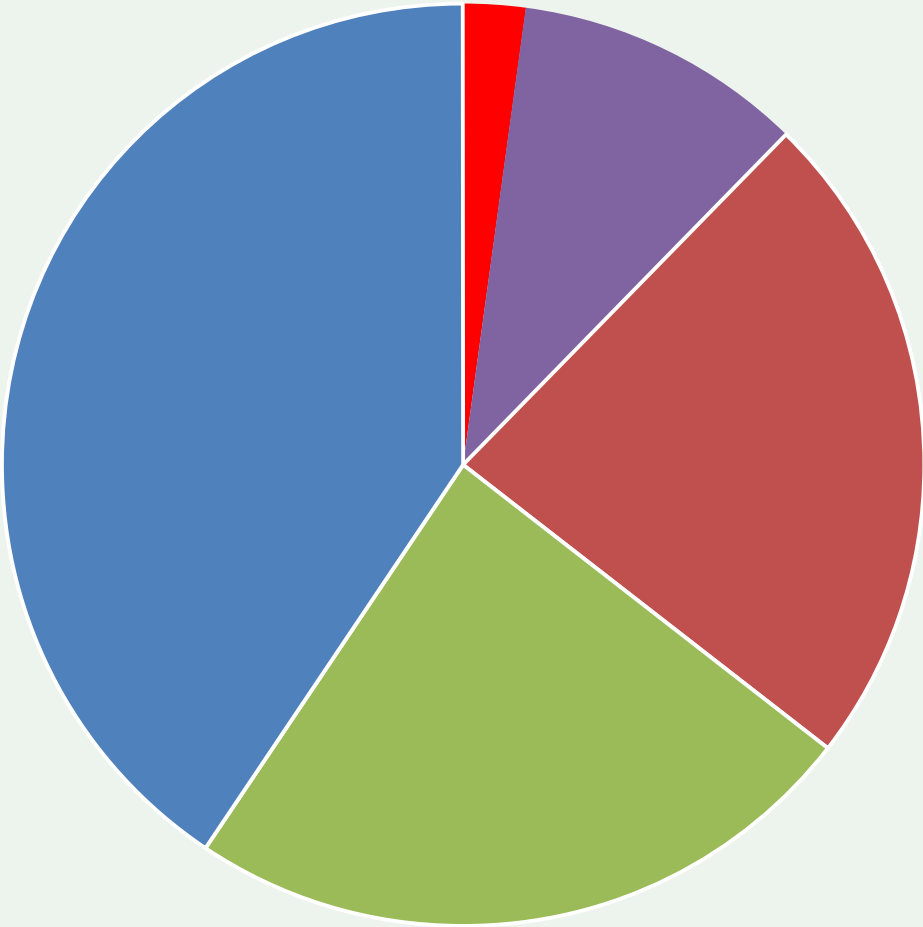
- Opportunities to participate are inequitable
- Opportunities to participate are slightly inequitable
- Opportunities to participate could be more equitable
- Opportunities to participate are equitable
- Not Applicable

# Equity Action Screen

**3. Scale:** What is likely impact of action on neighboring (“downstream”) municipalities?

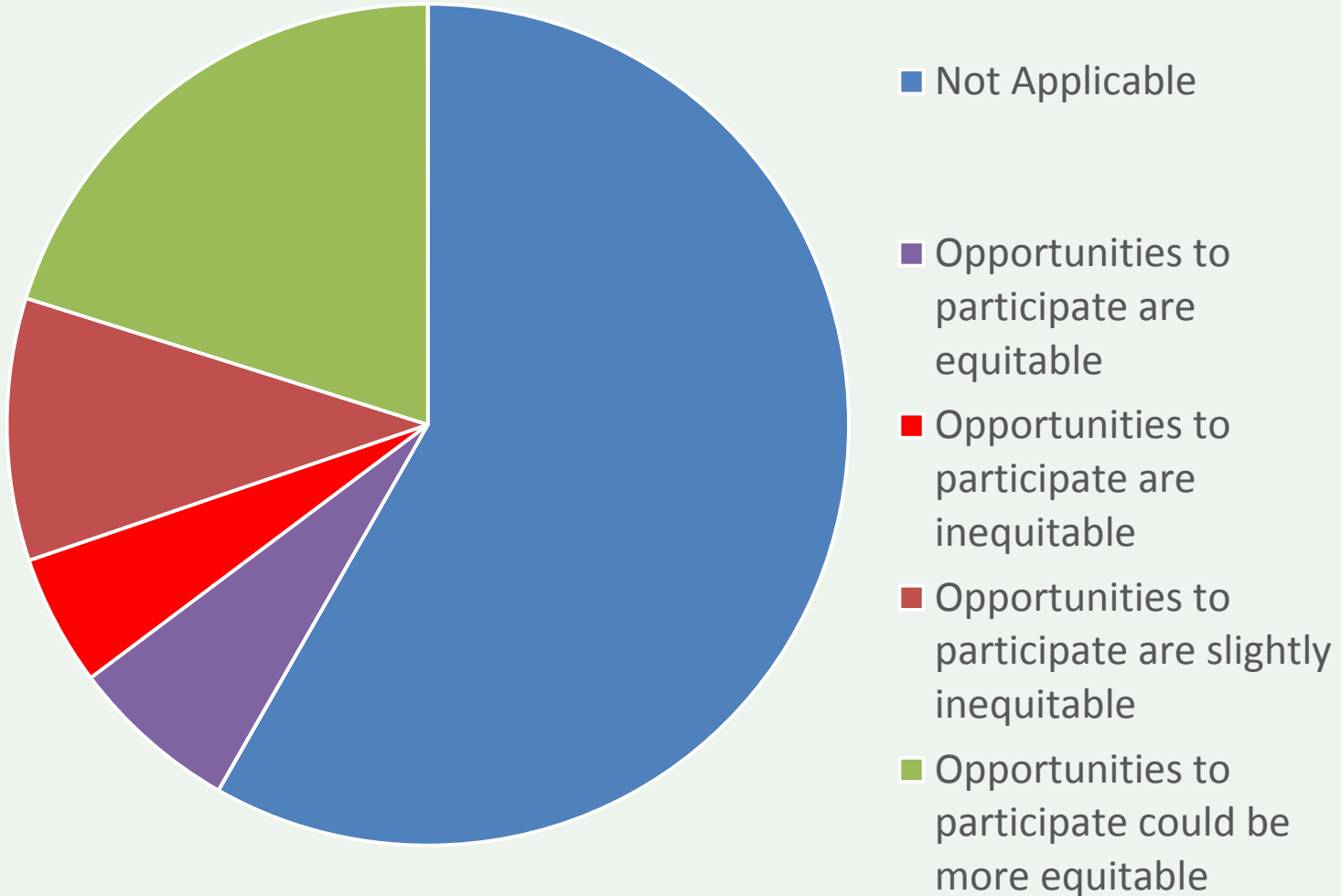
- Action has negative impact on neighboring municipalities
- Action may have slightly inequitable impact on neighboring municipalities
- Action leads to slight improvements in neighboring municipalities
- Actions leads to significant improvement in neighboring municipalities
- Not Applicable

# Equity Impact of Actions: Distribution



- Action has inequitable impact
- Action improves social equity
- Action may have slightly inequitable impact
- Action may slightly improve social equity
- Not Applicable

# Equity Impact of SJ Actions: Participation



# Examples of Actions sorted by impact on:

- **Distribution**

- Action has equitable impact

- Smoke & Tobacco-Free Public Places
- Diversity & Equity in Boards and Commissions

- Action has inequitable impact (must revise)

- Public Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure

- **Participation**

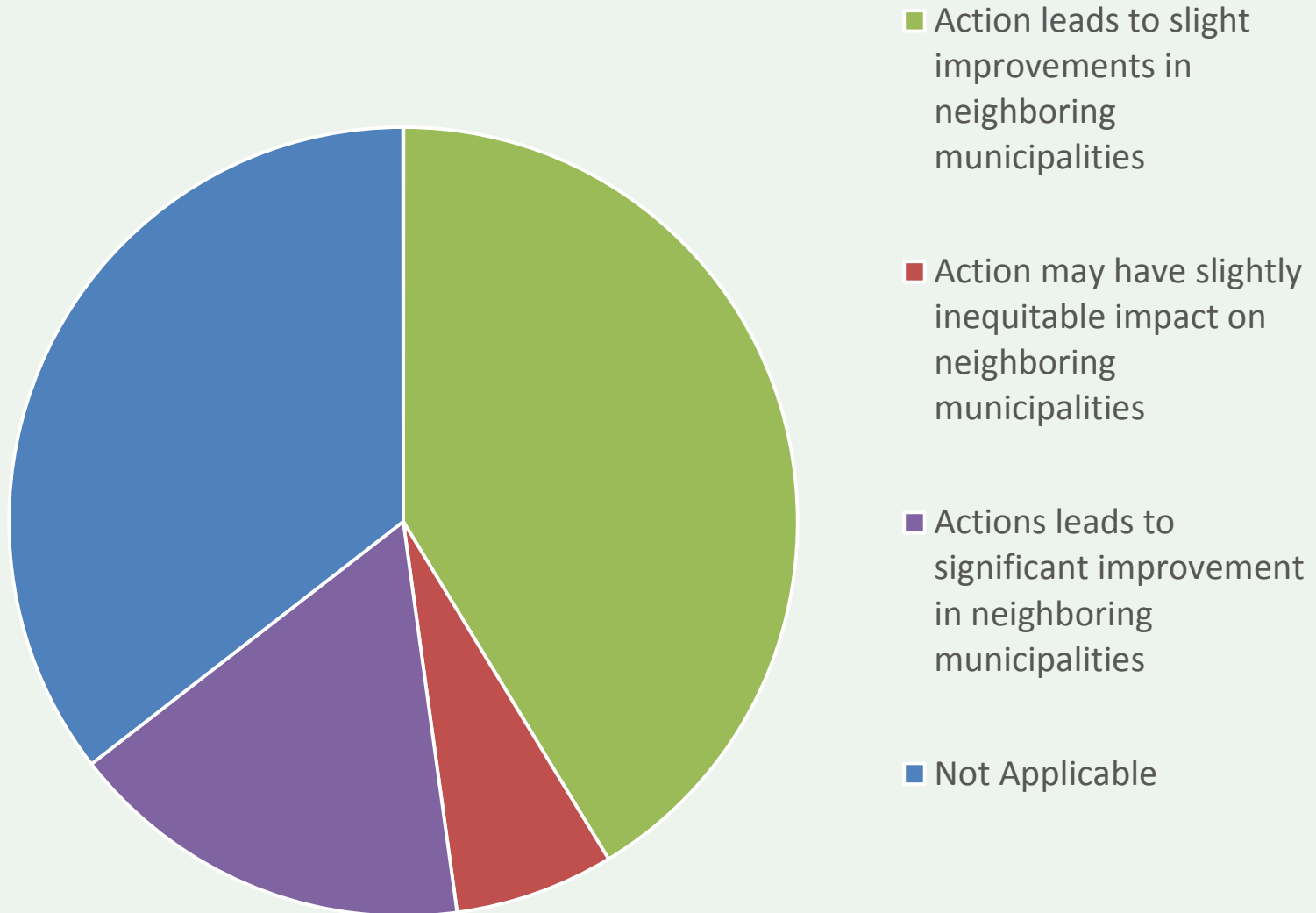
- Equitable opportunities to participate in decisions

- Health in All Policies

- Opportunities inequitable (must revise)

- Brownfields Inventory & Prioritization; Environmental Commission

# Impact on Neighboring Municipalities



# Equity Screen Results: Insights

- Equity impact depends on implementation.
- Specific requirements may make actions more equitable – but also more difficult (more documentation).
- Equitable distribution ensured by equitable *participation* & outreach.
- Requires *targeted* effort: know who lives in community; recruit from underrepresented groups; appropriate communication means & meetings

# Next Steps

- Institutionalize Equity Screen
- Develop new actions
  - Municipal equity self-assessment
  - Health equity
    - Housing: affordability and quality
    - Lead (housing, water infrastructure)



# Next Steps

- Brainstorm opportunities to advance equity as part of 10-year program collective ‘re-think’
- As programming evolves to address inequity, interest and participation expected to increase from
  - disadvantaged municipalities &
  - groups/neighborhoods *within* municipalities

**Panelist:**  
**Nathaly Agosto**  
**Filión**

Chief Sustainability Officer  
City of Newark

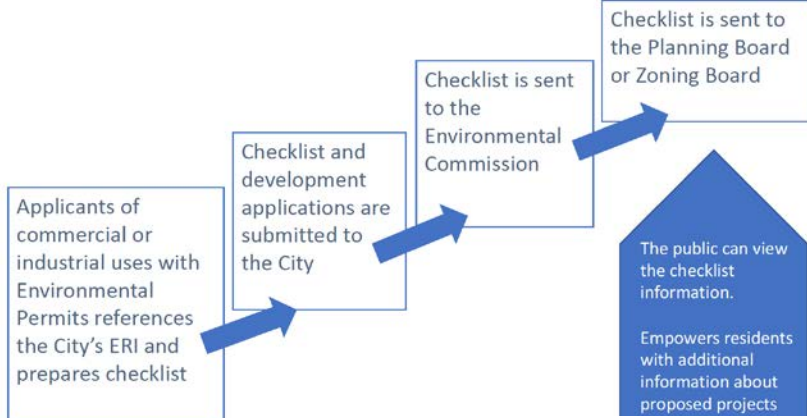


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# Overview of Newark Environmental Justice & Cumulative Impacts Ordinance

## How does the Ordinance Work?

Empowers planning and zoning boards with additional information pertaining to the proposed development's potential environmental impact within the context of existing neighborhood conditions.



## PRIORITY EJ ISSUES FOR NEWARK NJ Snapshot of Checklist

- Truck Trips (Diesel Pollution)
- Particulate from other sources
- Vehicle Idling
- Tree Cover
- Impervious Surface

### Cover Sheet:

- Name of applicant entity
- Contact information
- Location of proposed project
- Summary project description
- Existing land use at project site
- Requested variance (if any)

### Basic Environmental Checklist:

- List of permits & approvals needed
- Dimensions (size of operation)
- Total project cost
- Activities with environmental impact
  - Type and quantity of air emissions
  - Type and quantity of groundwater emissions
  - Type and quantity of substances used/stored
  - Estimated truck trips per day
- Environmental Mitigation Activities
  - Pollution reduction technology
  - Stormwater management
  - Waste minimization or re-use programs
  - Etc.

- ❖ The Ordinance requires new industrial or commercial projects with environmental permits to provide a detailed set of information about their potential to impact the local environment & quality of life
- ❖ It allows the public and city officials to be fully informed of a proposed projects' potential and burdens on the local community.

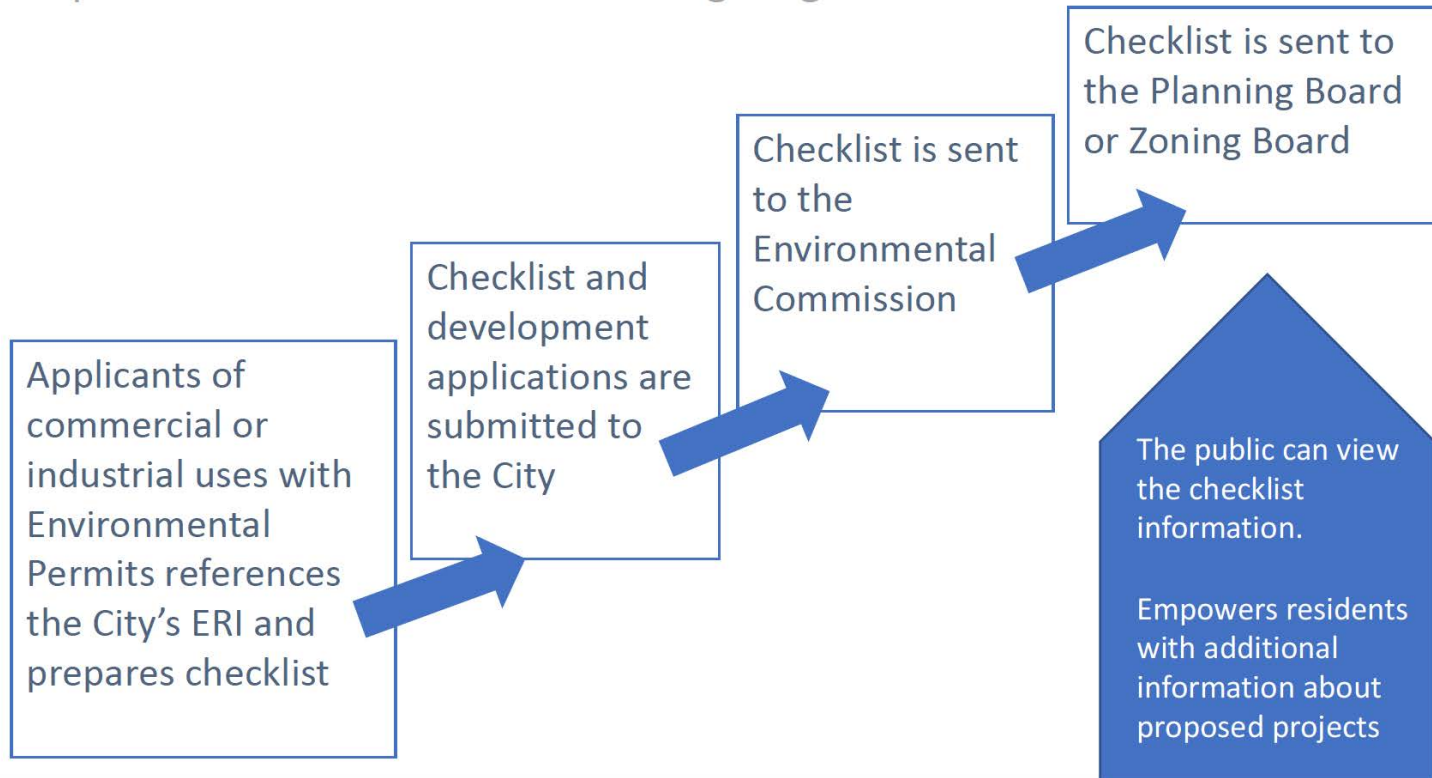


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