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# **Environmental Justice in Community Planning and Development Training Session #1**

July 11, 2022

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# Agenda

<b>Welcome</b>
<b>Foundations of Environmental Justice</b> Inequities, History, Principles
<b>Developing a Common Language</b> Presentation and Activity
<b>Closing</b>

## Icebreaker - In the chat...

*Name, Agency, Department / Role*

**QUESTION:**

*When you're looking to rent or buy a new home what are the top 3-5 neighborhood characteristics or amenities that you look for?*

# Environmental Justice Definitions

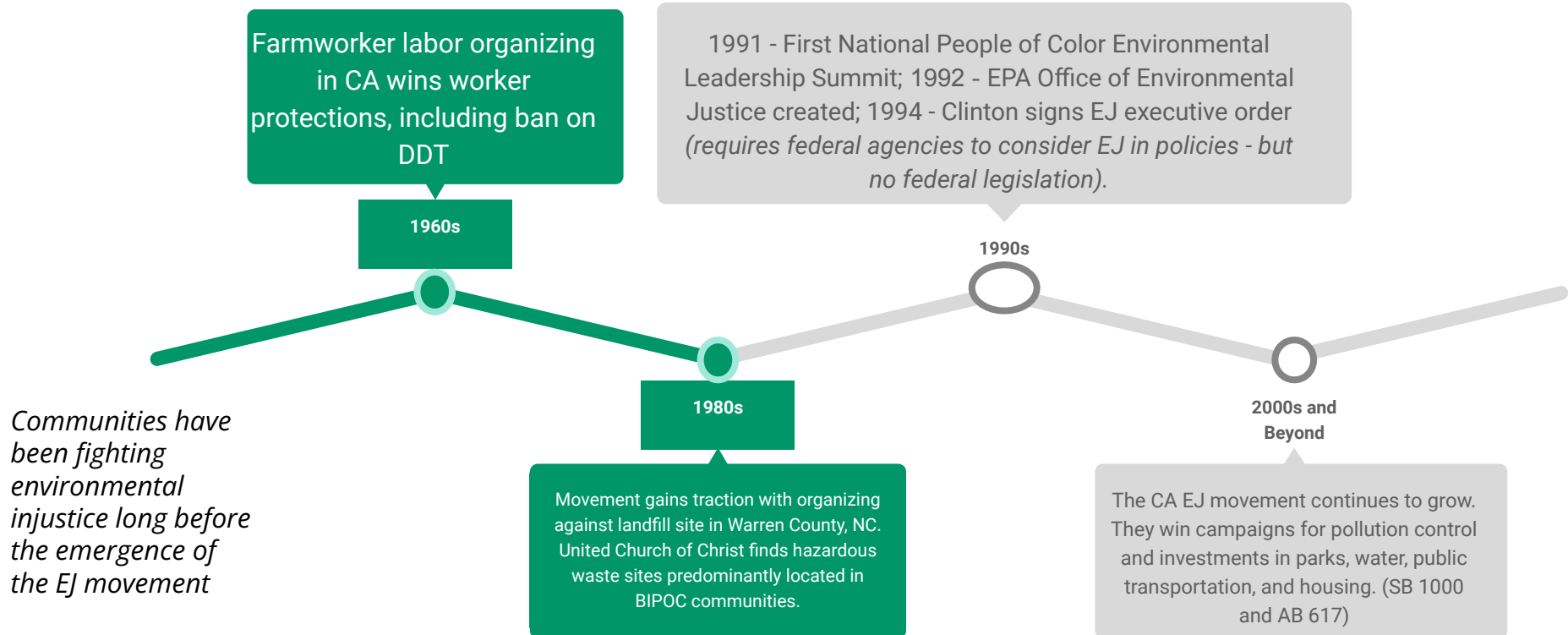
## Environmental justice means

...the fair treatment **and meaningful involvement** of people of all races, cultures, incomes and national origins with respect to the development, adoption, implementation, and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations, and policies.  
(Gov. Code, § 65040.12)

.....The basic right of people to live, work, go to school, play, and pray in a healthy and clean environment.  
(CEJA)

# Foundations of Environmental Justice

# Movements for Environmental Justice



# 17 Principles of Environmental Justice

*Drafted + adopted at the 1991  
First National People of Color  
Environmental Leadership Summit.*

<https://www.ejnet.org/ej/principles.pdf>

## The Principles of Environmental Justice (EJ)

1) **Environmental Justice** affirms the sacredness of Mother Earth, ecological unity and the interdependence of all species, and the right to be free from ecological destruction.

2) **Environmental Justice** demands that public policy be based on mutual respect and justice for all peoples, free from any form of discrimination or bias.

3) **Environmental Justice** mandates the right to ethical, balanced and responsible uses of land and renewable resources in the interest of a sustainable planet for humans and other living things.

4) **Environmental Justice** calls for universal protection from nuclear testing, extraction, production and disposal of toxic/hazardous wastes and poisons and nuclear testing that threaten the fundamental right to clean air, land, water, and food.

5) **Environmental Justice** affirms the fundamental right to political, economic, cultural and environmental self-determination of all peoples.

6) **Environmental Justice** demands the cessation of the production of all toxins, hazardous wastes, and radioactive materials, and that all past and current producers be held strictly accountable to the people for detoxification and the containment at the point of production.

7) **Environmental Justice** demands the right to participate as equal partners at every level of decision-making, including needs assessment, planning, implementation, enforcement and evaluation.

8) **Environmental Justice** affirms the right of all workers to a safe and healthy work environment without being forced to choose between an unsafe livelihood and unemployment. It also affirms the right of those who work at home to be free from environmental hazards.

9) **Environmental Justice** protects the right of victims of environmental injustice to receive full compensation and reparations for damages as well as quality health care.

10) **Environmental Justice** considers governmental acts of environmental injustice a violation of international law, the Universal Declaration On Human Rights, and the United Nations Convention on Genocide.

11) **Environmental Justice** must recognize a special legal and natural relationship of Native Peoples to the U.S. government through treaties, agreements, compacts, and covenants affirming sovereignty and self-determination.

12) **Environmental Justice** affirms the need for urban and rural ecological policies to clean up and rebuild our cities and rural areas in balance with nature, honoring the cultural integrity of all our communities, and provided fair access for all to the full range of resources.

13) **Environmental Justice** calls for the strict enforcement of principles of informed consent, and a halt to the testing of experimental reproductive and medical procedures and vaccinations on people of color.

14) **Environmental Justice** opposes the destructive operations of multi-national corporations.

15) **Environmental Justice** opposes military occupation, repression and exploitation of lands, peoples and cultures, and other life forms.

16) **Environmental Justice** calls for the education of present and future generations which emphasizes social and environmental issues, based on our experience and an appreciation of our diverse cultural perspectives.

17) **Environmental Justice** requires that we, as individuals, make personal and consumer choices to consume as little of Mother Earth's resources and to produce as little waste as possible; and make the conscious decision to challenge and reprioritize our lifestyles to ensure the health of the natural world for present and future generations.

**More info on environmental justice and environmental racism can be found online at [www.ejnet.org/ej/](https://www.ejnet.org/ej/)**

*Delegates to the First National People of Color Environmental Leadership Summit held on October 24-27, 1991, in Washington DC, drafted and adopted these 17 principles of Environmental Justice. Since then, the Principles have served as a defining document for the growing grassroots movement for environmental justice.*

# Principle Spotlights

- Environmental Justice demands the right to participate as equal partners at every level of decision-making, including needs assessment, planning, implementation, enforcement and evaluation.
- EJ victims to receive full compensation and reparations for damages as well as quality health care.
- Holding past and current (toxin) producers accountable to the people for detoxification and the containment at the point of production.
- the right to ethical, balanced and responsible uses of land and renewable resources in the interest of a sustainable planet for humans and other living things.
- the need for urban and rural ecological policies to clean up and rebuild our cities and rural areas in balance with nature, honoring the community cultural integrity, and providing fair access to the full range of resources.

Low-income residents, Black, Indigenous, and People of color (BIPOC) experience the worst burdens and related health problems from environmental pollution and natural disasters.

Photo credit: San Mateo Daily Journal (top), Tara Lohan (bottom)



- **+50%** of people who live close to hazardous waste are people of color
- Floodplains nationwide have **higher** populations of Blacks and Latinos
- Black children are **2x** more likely to experience lead poisoning
- In CA, over **1 million** people lack access to clean water - mostly rural, low-income Latino communities
- **1 out of every 5** Californians does not know where their next meal will come from — with **greater** levels of hunger among Black and Latino families

Photo credit: Mike Spencer/AP/REX/Shutterstock (top),  
United Farmworkers (bottom)



# The most environmentally impacted CA neighborhoods are home to people of color.

*Why?*

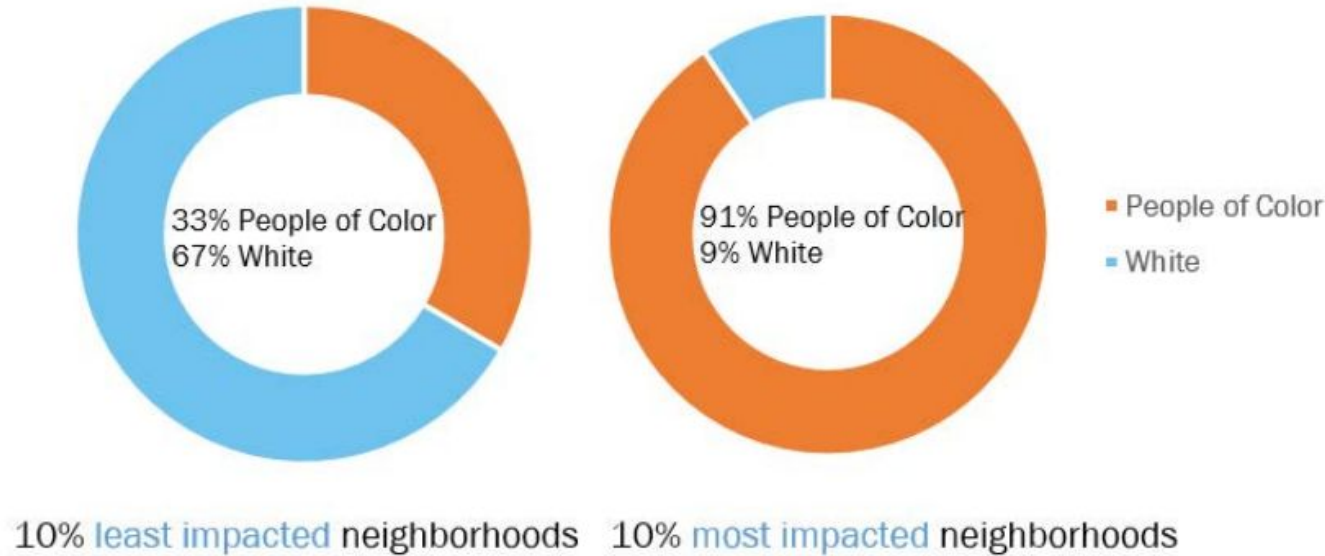
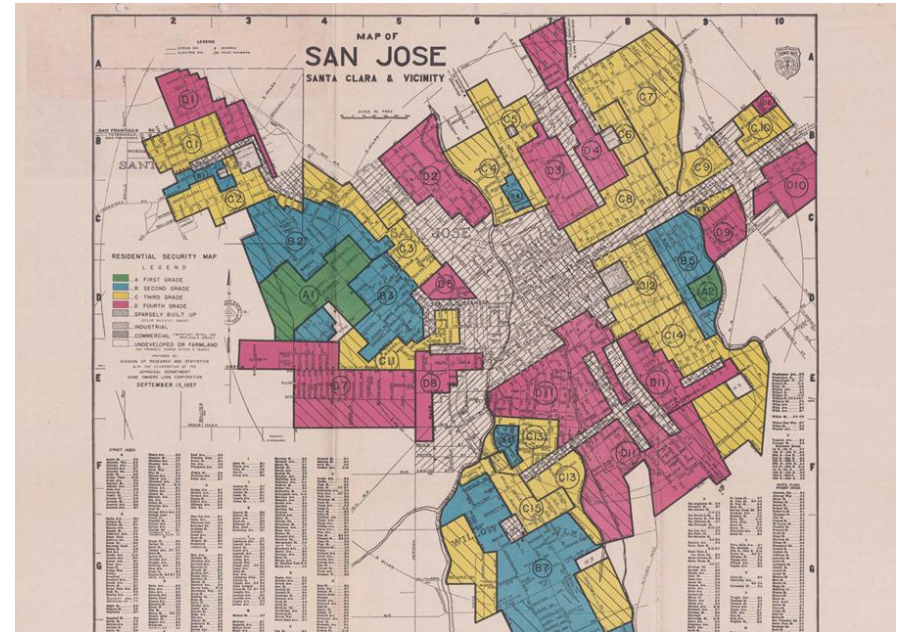


Figure 2. Race in the Least and Most Impacted Census Tracts of CalEnviroScreen 4.0.

# Government policy and neglect shaped environmental inequities affecting communities today.

- Redlining included both **race and environmental criteria** in assessing the perceived credit risk of neighborhoods
- Any significant population of non-white residents resulted in a high-risk rating
- Local governments were encouraged protect these investments through **zoning** and **racial covenants**.



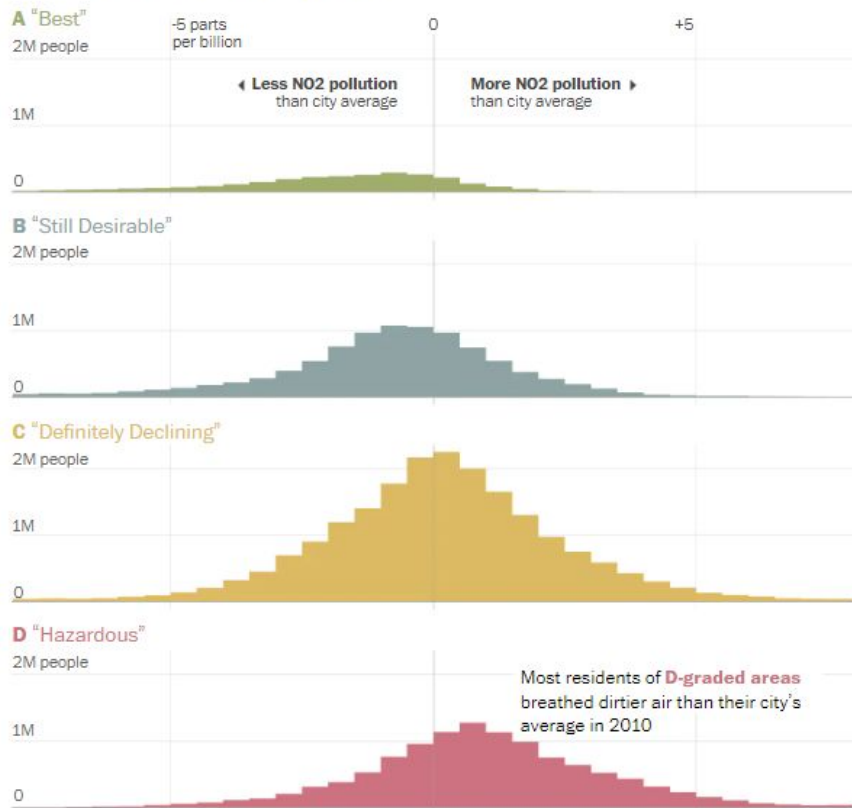
the locations within it from adverse influences. Usually the protection against adverse influences afforded by these means include prevention of the infiltration of business and industrial uses, lower-class occupancy, and inharmonious racial groups. A location close

# Zoning to codify environmental injustices.

- Local governments have attempted to use zoning to enforce segregation since its origins
- Racially explicit zoning ordinances were found unconstitutional in 1917, but followed by other exclusionary zoning practices
- Local gov concentrated pollution in communities of color through industrial and commercial zoning designations, spot zoning, and variances

## Redlining's fingerprint lingers in the nation's air

Levels of nitrogen dioxide pollution in 2010 tended to be worse in areas graded **C** or **D** than areas graded **A** or **B** on government mortgage maps dating to the 1930s.



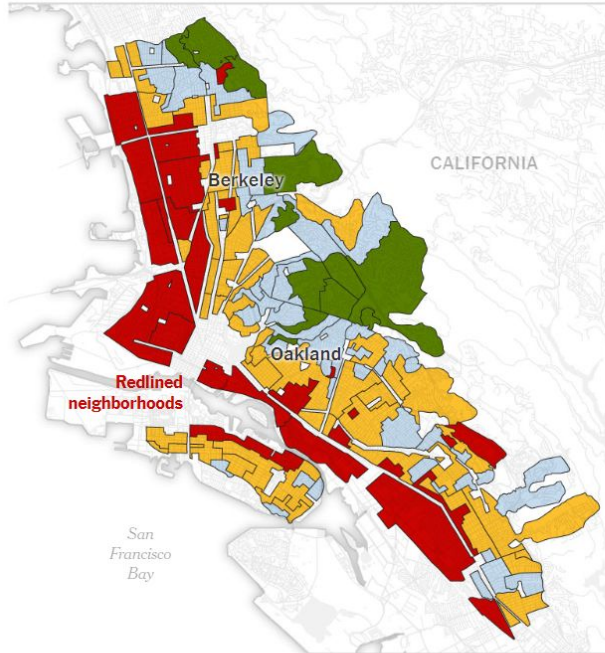
Note: City averages are population-weighted mean values calculated for HOLC-graded blocks only.

Source: Lane et al., 2022

JOHN MUYSKENS/THE WASHINGTON POST

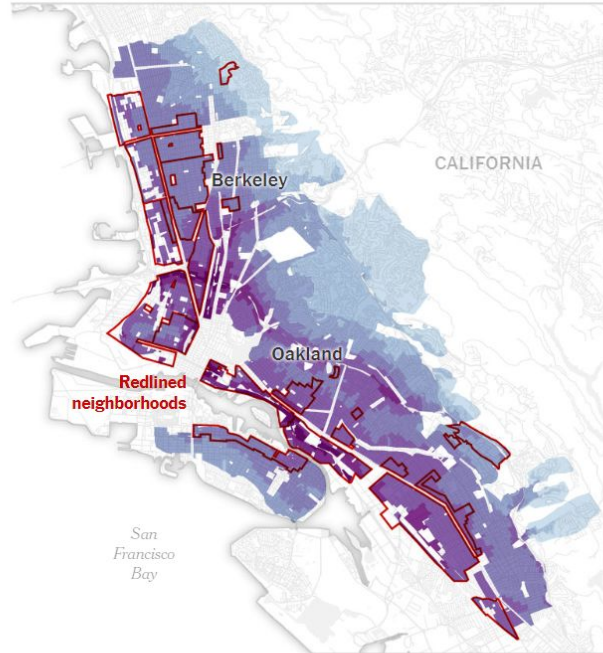
Neighborhood grade, 1930s

A "Best" B "Still desirable" C "Declining" D "Hazardous"



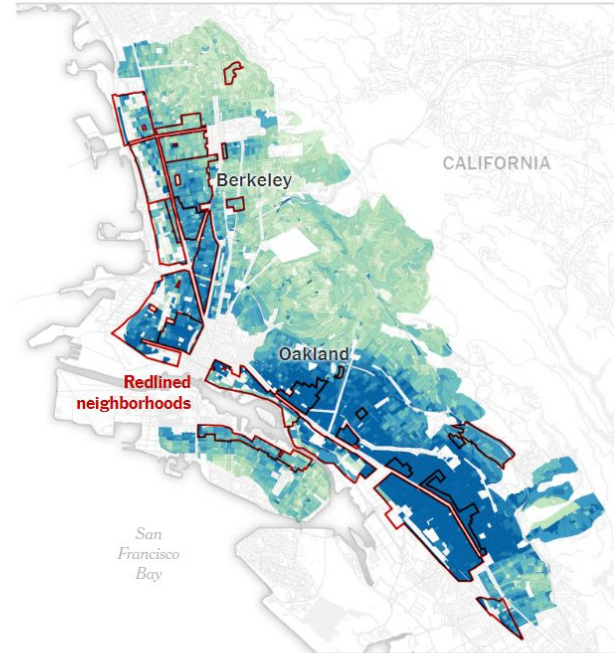
Nitrogen dioxide pollution, 2010

More → 0 p.p.b. 20 p.p.b.



Percent people of color, 2010

More → 0% 100%

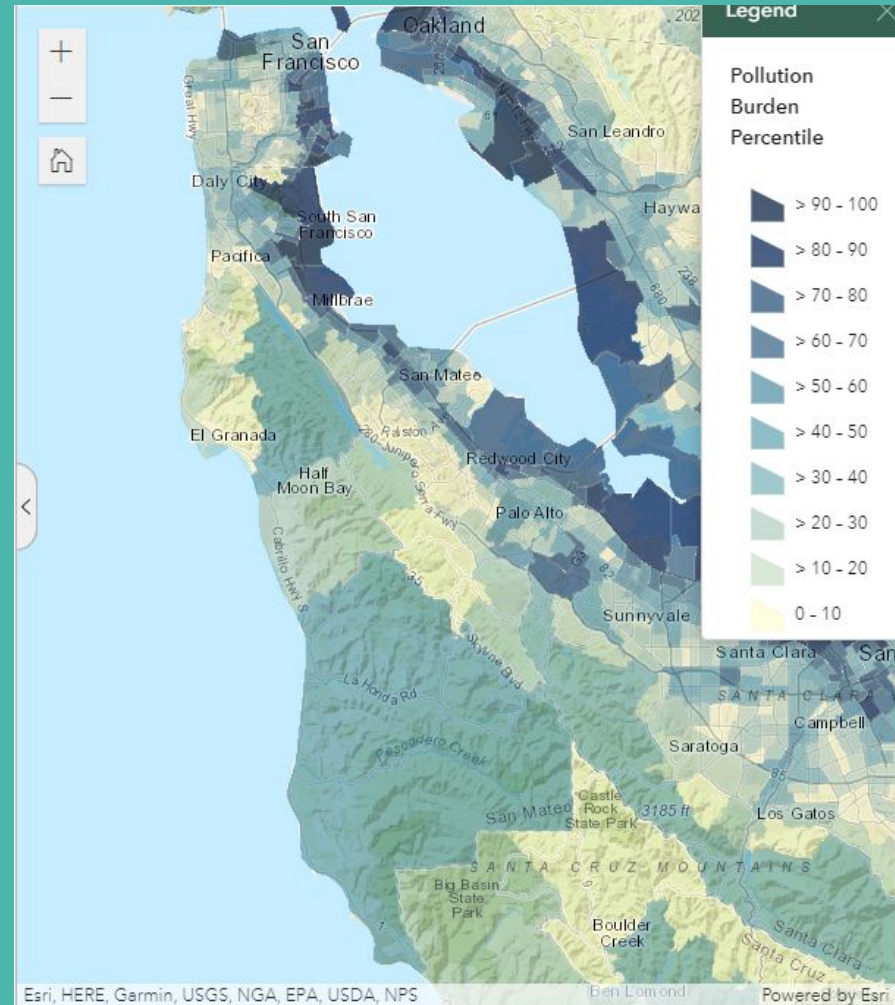


# Beyond redlining, government has perpetuated environmental inequities through...

- **Differential enforcement** of environmental laws in communities of color
- Reliance on **complaint-based enforcement**
- **Exclusion of agricultural and domestic workers from federal labor** laws in the 1930s and persistent weak protections
- **Barriers to public engagement** and decision-making

In the chat: What other examples can you name?

How have these practices shaped environmental outcomes in San Mateo County?



# Air Quality Disparities

SF Bay Area communities of color are exposed to **55 percent more nitrogen dioxide**, which contributes to smog, than mostly White communities.



→ This is a map of long-term levels of air pollution measured in **San Mateo County**.

## Nitrogen Dioxide (NO<sub>2</sub>)

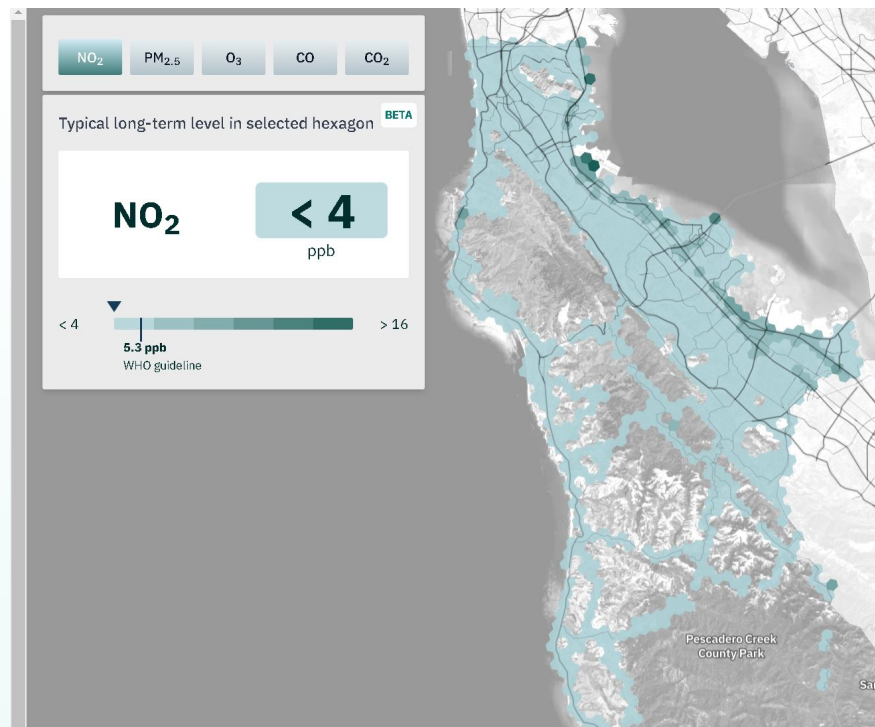
A highly reactive gas produced by burning fuels.

☁ Traffic emissions & power plants are major sources of NO<sub>2</sub>. Diesel engines (like in heavy-duty trucks, ships, and trains) produce most combustion-related NO<sub>2</sub> emissions.

♥ NO<sub>2</sub> irritates airways. Short exposures can aggravate diseases like asthma. Long-term exposure may increase risk of asthma and susceptibility to respiratory infections.

📊 Every 5.3 ppb increase (above 10.6 ppb) may increase adult mortality by 5%. [\[1\]](#) [\[2\]](#)

[WHO](#) guideline: 5.3 ppb  
[USEPA](#) standard: 53 ppb



# Our environment helps shape our health.

## Disproportionate exposure to pollution *contributes* to health disparities.

Self-Reported General Health Assessment: Good or Better by Race/Ethnicity  
County: San Mateo

[www.smcalthtogether.org](http://www.smcalthtogether.org)

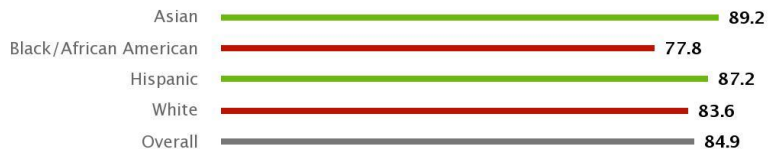


Source: California Health Interview Survey (2020)

\*Value may be statistically unstable and should be interpreted with caution.

Life Expectancy by Race/Ethnicity  
County: San Mateo

[www.smcalthtogetherbetter.org/](http://www.smcalthtogetherbetter.org/)



Source: County Health Rankings (2018–2020)

# Developing a Common Language

# Environmental Justice Definitions

## Environmental justice means

...the fair treatment **and meaningful involvement** of people of all races, cultures, incomes and national origins with respect to the development, adoption, implementation, and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations, and policies.  
(Gov. Code, § 65040.12)

.....The basic right of people to live, work, go to school, play, and pray in a healthy and clean environment.  
(CEJA)

# Definitions

**Disadvantaged Community:** An area identified by the California Environmental Protection Agency pursuant to Section 39711 of the Health and Safety Code or an area that is a low-income area that is disproportionately affected by environmental pollution and other hazards that can lead to negative health effects, exposure, or environmental degradation.

Alternative terms:

- EJ Community
- Under Resourced Community
- Historically marginalized Community
- Communities of Concern
- Frontline Communities

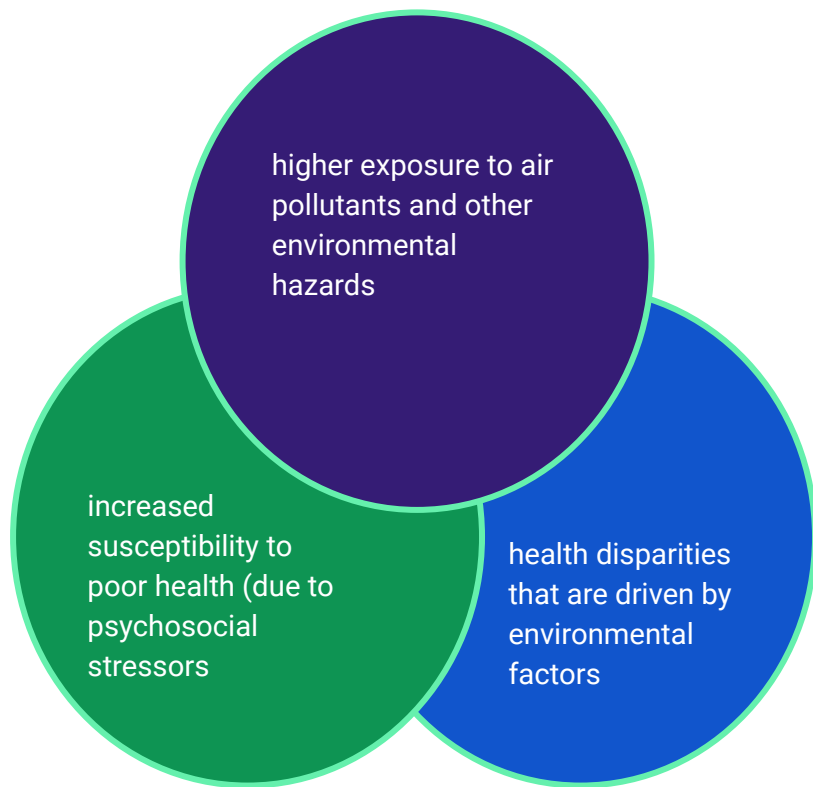
*ASK RESIDENTS / CBOs about their preferred term.*

# Definitions

**Sensitive land uses:** Certain types of facilities (e.g., schools, day care centers, playgrounds, medical facilities) that deserve special attention when siting new industrial facilities because sensitive populations are especially vulnerable to the adverse health risks of pollution.

**Sensitive receptors/populations:** Populations that are especially vulnerable to the adverse health effects of pollution exposure and poor air quality compared to other populations (i.e. children, the elderly, exercising adults, and those with pre-existing serious health problems which are exacerbated by poor air quality).

# Triple Jeopardy



## Triple Jeopardy low SES communities face

- (1) higher exposure to air pollutants and other environmental hazards and
- (2) increased susceptibility to poor health (primarily as a result of more psychosocial stressors, such as discrimination and chronic stress, fewer opportunities to choose health-promoting behaviors and poorer health status) resulting in
- (3) health disparities that are driven by environmental factors

# Your Turn! Common Language Activity

**Step 1:** In your breakout group, review the definition of your assigned term

**Step 2:** Come up with examples of how this term/concept is present in your work.

## Key Terms

1. Distributive Justice
2. Procedural Justice
3. Structural Justice
4. Health Equity

Link to worksheets:

[https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/1Q0zHINKrYzgOSnh6fbn2YupQsOdE1H94kkoBttNH\\_O4/edit#slide=id.g13a61af2f0c\\_0\\_95](https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/1Q0zHINKrYzgOSnh6fbn2YupQsOdE1H94kkoBttNH_O4/edit#slide=id.g13a61af2f0c_0_95)

# Take Home Definitions

## **Health Equity:**

Health equity refers to efforts to ensure that all people have full and equal access to opportunities that enable them to lead healthy lives. *(CA Health and Safety Code Section 131019.5)*

This requires removing obstacles to health such as poverty, discrimination, and their consequences, including powerlessness and lack of access to good jobs with fair pay, quality education and housing, safe environments and healthcare *(RWJF)*.

## PROCEDURAL

- Create processes that are transparent, fair, and inclusive in developing and implementing any program, plan, or policy
- Ensure that all people are treated openly and fairly
- Increase the civic engagement opportunities of communities that are disproportionately impacted by climate change

## DISTRIBUTIONAL

- Fairly distribute resources, benefits, and burdens
- Prioritize resources for communities that experience the greatest inequities, disproportionate impacts, and have the greatest unmet needs

## STRUCTURAL

- Make a commitment to correct past harms and prevent future unintended consequences
- Address the underlying structural and institutional systems that are the root causes of social and racial inequities

# View more definitions here.....

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1C4YUxz7spA34uv79zSZEZNMW9Es8-Q-CPxLXgSPySk/edit?usp=sharing>

# Closing

# Training Session #2 Preview

## Draft Agenda

- **Session #1 Review**
- Ej **Data** Sources and Approach
- Ej **Policy** Topic Areas and Best Practices
- Ej **Engagement** Principles and Best Practices
- Broad **RFP/Scoping Considerations**

### In the chat/or unmute:

Does this agenda match your learning interests?

What, if any, other topics areas are missing?

Are there specific policy topics you'd like us to use for examples?

# Thank you

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