



**cities**

**STRATEGIC PLAN**  
**2022-2027**



# INTRODUCTION

In the Fall/Winter 2021 8 80 Cities' Board of Directors and staff began the journey to sunset our previous five-year Strategic Plan and to move towards the creation of this new 2022-2027 Strategic Plan. During this time, we worked in collaboration to develop strategic priorities to propel 8 80 Cities into the future.

It was also critical for us to ensure that our Strategic Plan was steeped and centered in equity-driven approaches aligned with, and reflective of the world we live in today, and the cities and communities we want to be a part of for generations to come.





# STRENGTHENING OUR COMMITMENT TO CREATING CITIES FOR ALL

A message from our Founder and Executive Director



Gil Penalosa  
Founder &  
Outgoing Chair



Amanda O'Rourke  
Executive Director

We are so thrilled to launch our new 5-year Strategic Plan which will guide the next exciting chapter of 8 80 Cities and strengthen our commitment to creating healthy, equitable, and sustainable cities for all.

The timing of this strategic plan comes at a critical time, as the COVID-19 pandemic has further demonstrated how both health and social conditions are inequitably distributed in cities, that these inequities must be addressed with bold action, and that the health and wellbeing of people and the planet are at stake.

At the outset of this strategic planning process our board and staff have been united in our desire to dig deeper and further strengthen our commitment to equity in all that we do. Whether it's in our project approach and program design, to our operations and organizational culture, we want to acknowledge the good work of the past, while also having the courage and humility to challenge assumptions and find new and even better ways of moving forward.

As an organization, we've always had a knack for attracting some of the most fantastic people to support our mission over the years. Folks who have helped shape the 8 80 Cities you see today. Folks with can-do attitudes and that special '8 80 spark' – a quality that we would describe as a charming mix of empathy and ambition. We will always challenge the status quo. We will at times be frustrated by the pace of change, but we will always be motivated, hopeful, and optimistic about the future.

It's been 17 years since 8 80 Cities began its journey. The seeds that were planted have grown over the years and we've both had the privilege to witness, contribute, and help steer this growth. **We are proud of where we are today, but even more excited about what lies ahead.**

Thank you to everyone who has gotten us this far and a warm welcome to the anticipated new people, projects, and collaborations that will help us meet our ambitious goals for the next five years.



# OUR VALUES



Right to Participate



Right to Public Space



Right to Mobility

Empathy Respect Solidarity Positivity Authenticity Creativity Action

family and friends  
self determination  
safe streets  
impactful  
sleeping at home  
clean air  
time with loved ones  
belonging  
healthy relationships  
connected  
holistic  
healthy  
good food  
active  
being part of a community  
access to green space  
love  
safe  
local  
spontaneous connections  
giving back  
health physical mental  
know your ecosystem  
walkable  
community  
mobility  
living affordably  
access to nature  
ease of social connection  
easy access to amenities  
contact with nature  
healthy eating  
knowing you can stay  
dynamic  
peaceable  
green  
familial  
respected  
welcomed  
socializing





## OUR MISSION

**To ignite action and challenge the status quo to create healthier, more equitable, and sustainable cities for all people.**

## OUR VISION

**Healthy, happy, and sustainable cities for people to grow up and grow old in; where all people have the right to safe and active mobility, welcoming and accessible public spaces, and inclusive city building processes.**



# OUR UNIQUE POSITION

We learn from a strong **international** network of collaborators, evidence-based research, and the diverse lived experiences and expertise of community.

We strengthen the capacity of leaders at all levels; from grassroots community **changemakers** and champions to senior elected officials and public sector staff.

We demonstrate change with transformative public space projects that reimagine streets, parks, and public spaces through the **880 lens**.

We create **actionable tools** that can be used by communities of all shapes and sizes to strengthen local advocacy, placemaking, and inclusive city building efforts.





# OUR COMMITMENTS TO EQUITY

As an organization that envisions the transformation of public spaces and the creation of better cities for all people, we adhere to and support the ***Universal Declaration of Human Rights*** and recognize the fundamental human rights of all people. Everyone, no matter their age, ability, socioeconomic status, race, gender, or gender identity should be able to freely occupy and move in public space safely without fear of harm and violence. We also acknowledge that words and solidarity are not enough. At 8 80 Cities, we know we have a responsibility to do more, challenge more, use our position to elevate and push the conversation forward and to take action.

8 80 Cities has been grounded in values and principles of equity since its inception. The very existence of 8 80 Cities is about advocating for cities that are great for all people, whether they are 8 or 80 years old. We understand that age, while a universal human experience, is just one dimension of how people in cities experience inequity. We recognize the multiple ways in which marginalization and oppression intersect depending on one's social location.

While we understand philosophically and intuitively that equity is at the core of everything we do, this equity-driven Strategic Plan is a renewed opportunity to reaffirm and amplify these principles through planned priorities that will be reflected, measured and evaluated regularly through our operational plans, key initiatives and through targeted metrics.

*What can be perceived as a simple act of going for a walk, riding your bike, jogging, participating in a protest, sitting on a park bench, or watching some birds has different stakes depending on one's social location.*



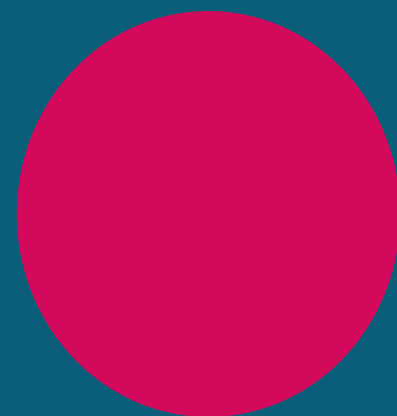


# 8 80 CITIES' COMMITMENTS TO EQUITY

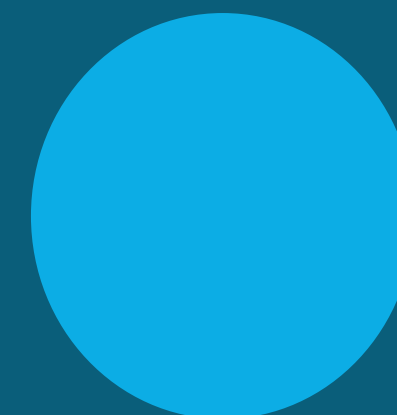
***Our streets and public spaces in our cities are a mirror. They are a reflection of our society and our values. They can demonstrate the beauty of democracy in action while also revealing the ugliness of broken and dysfunctional institutions, implicit and explicit structures of power and privilege, and social and spatial injustices.***



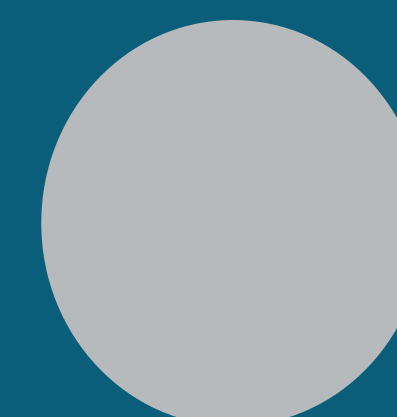
We understand the important role social identities such as gender, race, ability, sexual orientation, gender expression, ethnic and cultural background, and economic status play in a person's experience navigating public space and city building processes.



We will be advocates of public spaces, urban mobility, and community engagement practices that are designed to welcome and serve all communities, including newcomers, immigrants and racialized communities.



We will better educate ourselves, our partners and our clients to deconstruct the systemic racism that can be perpetrated by urban planning practices and urban form.



We will do more to centre the experiences of Indigenous, Black and racialized people in our work to create equitable streets and public spaces.

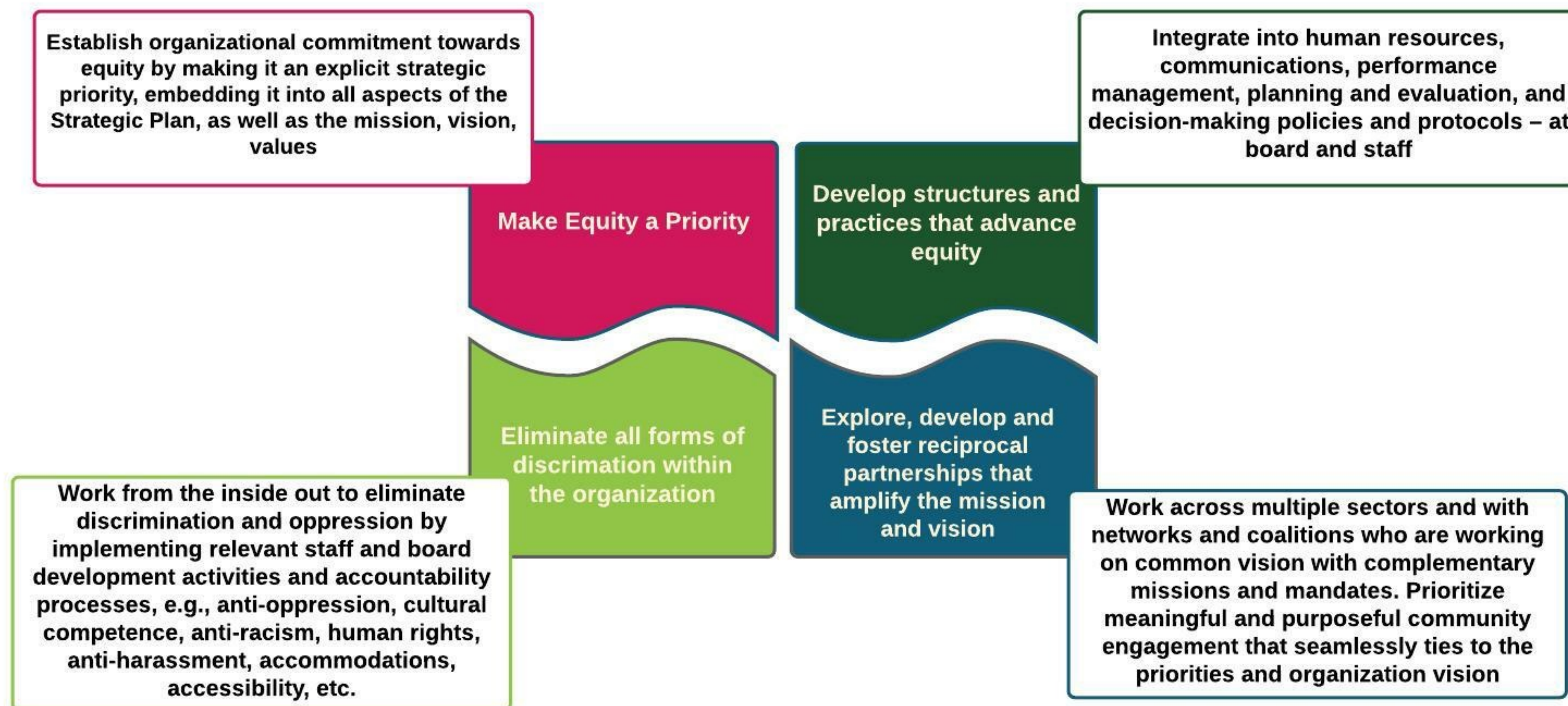
Our impacts, through our services and program design, will be responsive to the most marginalized in communities, with empathy and through an emphasis on social solidarity.

The impacts and outcomes of our engagement and advocacy processes will be informed by and will be responsive to social determinants of health, including mental, physical, emotional and environmental health.

While our mission is centred on a people-first approach, we understand the interconnectedness of all living things, and that the health of the land, water and air around us and our cities is quintessential to our very survival.



# OUR EQUITY FRAMEWORK



We view equity as a direction, not a destination. This equity driven Strategic Plan starts from the inside out, with initial and immediate term impacts and results anticipated at an internal level while we continue to aim for external impacts in the mid and longer terms. While our initiatives and priorities may change seasonally or annually we commit to actualizing these action areas as our **forever and founding priorities**.



# OUR 2022-2027 STRATEGIC GOAL STATEMENTS

## 1 Advance Equity

**We will use our equity framework to prioritize, plan and deliver all projects, programs, and services.**

The new mission, vision, values, and commitments to equity are foundational to implementing all activities and operations. We have clarity, a sense of belonging and collective understanding of the organizational culture, and we are better equipped/oriented to succeed in achieving set goals.

## 2 Strengthen Relationships & Build Trust

**We play a unique, supportive, and complementary role in "building back better" strategies for municipalities and the non-profit sector in the GTHA.**

Diverse partners and stakeholders trust us to provide our unique knowledge, expertise, and services. We are more meaningfully connected to a diverse network of GTHA partners and networks.

## 3 Spark New Ideas & Accelerate Action

**We will spark new ideas, innovate, and demonstrate change to accelerate action to build stronger, resilient and sustainable communities in the GTHA and beyond.**

We will share global good practices that can also positively impact Southern Ontario communities, one of the largest and fastest growing urban populations in the world. Our unique services, projects, and advocacy initiatives are more widely delivered across diverse cities and towns, benefiting more GTHA communities than before.

## 4 Build a Resilient Funding Infrastructure

**We will expand the adoption of the 8 80 Neighbourhood Diagnostic Tool and 8 80 Cities programs and services to enable GTHA leaders to shape informed plans and actions for improving the equity and sustainability of their community.**

We have a solid plan in place to achieve financial sustainability that allows us to not only survive, but thrive to achieve our mission. We track the progress of our strategic initiatives in meaningful ways, share our stories, and repeat and iterate as needed.



*Creating cities for all*

