



# A Vision and Agenda for Racial and Economic Justice in OUR MPLS

ALL STUDENTS GRADUATE FROM HIGH SCHOOL

- SAFE PLACES FOR YOUTH TO GATHER FOR ART, SPORTS, & FUN
- NO POLICE BRUTALITY
- NO RACIAL PROFILING
- COMMUNITY POLICING
- AFFORDABLE, SAFE HOUSING FOR EVERYONE
- NO EMPLOYMENT DISPARITIES
- CLEAN AIR, LAND, & WATER, WHEREVER WE LIVE
- GREAT PARKS EVERYWHERE
- AN IMMIGRANT-FRIENDLY CITY
- ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY AND SMALL BUSINESS SUPPORT
- LEADERSHIP THAT IS REPRESENTATIVE OF OUR COMMUNITIES
- TRANSIT TO JOBS AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES
- ARTS AND CULTURE FOR ALL

**OAP**  
ORGANIZING APPRENTICESHIP PROJECT

This is the vision for a racially and economically just Minneapolis. A vision for **OUR MPLS**, a city that is rich in its growing diversity, but too often poor in opportunities that all residents can enjoy.

Making this vision a reality won't happen overnight, but it can happen. **What will it take?**

**Courageous leadership. Intentional commitment to racial and economic equity. Authentic engagement with communities.**

**Adoption and implementation of a citywide Racial and Economic Equity Impact Framework.** This must include racial justice training for all city employees, accountability measures, investment in community opportunities to learn about city government, and a robust impact analysis of all proposed policies. Already, community groups have led efforts to adopt an equity impact analysis at the school board level, and have proposed a similar analysis to the parks board. We are committed to working with city leaders to develop a comprehensive approach for OUR MPLS.

**City leadership that reflects our communities.** After the last election, the City Council includes representation from communities that have not been at the table before. Leadership that reflects the community should be present at all levels of city government. Achieving representation that is truly inclusive and equitable should be a priority for city employment in OUR MPLS.

**Authentic community engagement.** The future of Minneapolis depends on its diverse communities. Our communities are ready to work with city leaders to make Minneapolis the racially and economically equitable city it can be. The boards of neighborhood organizations and other



city committees should reflect our communities—but city and neighborhood leaders must work to open doors to those opportunities wider. In OUR MPLS, we take the time, make the effort, and invest to build authentic engagement and leadership.

## What Can OUR MPLS Be?

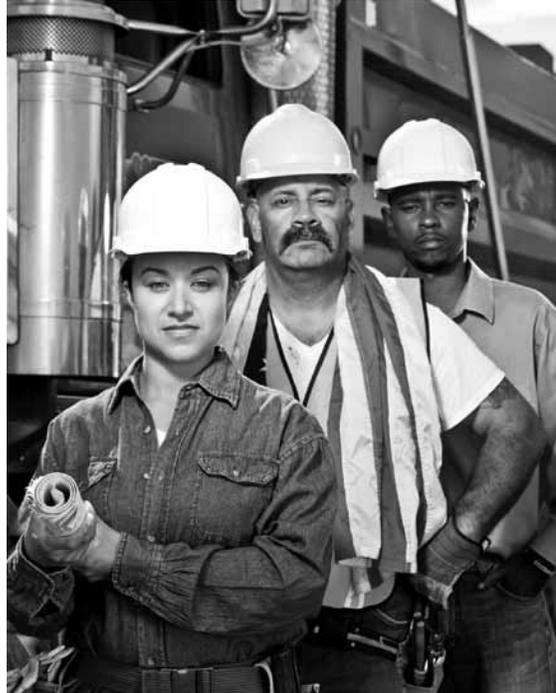
Opportunities for equity are everywhere. We believe our leaders are ready to take them—and see what happens when equity is at the center of city policymaking and practice.

**A PLACE TO WORK.** Minneapolis faces the worst employment gap in the country between whites and African Americans. American Indians in Minneapolis face the highest unemployment rate among all groups at nearly 30 percent. The gap stems from multiple barriers to opportunities, beginning with access to quality education and training. But it also results from structures of racism that persist at all levels, including discriminatory hiring practices. Breaking open economic opportunity will require intentional action on the part of city leaders.

- ✦ Meet the hiring goals established for city contracts and work with firms and training programs to make sure people of color and low-income people can develop the necessary skills.
- ✦ Partner with the private sector to set hiring goals for all new development, even if not publicly funded.
- ✦ Advocate adoption of an increased minimum wage and eventually a living wage at the state and federal levels.

**A PLACE TO LIVE.** Minneapolis has shown a commitment to developing strategies to end homelessness across multiple partners. These strategies will also need to connect to efforts to prevent foreclosures, offer affordable housing options, and build economic opportunities for them to show systemic, long-term success. A challenging economy has piled on the barriers to safe and affordable housing for low-income people—it is time to reverse the rising rates of homelessness with a structural approach.

- ✦ Enforce the recently adopted responsible banking ordinance so that banks are transparent and accountable on lending practices, foreclosures, and community investments.
- ✦ Develop strategies to prevent foreclosure and expand affordable housing options, including exploring the use of eminent domain to turn vacant properties into places to live and to reset underwater mortgages to fair market value.



- ✦ Cooperate with groups to develop community benefits agreements that include community priorities, such as jobs and small business development, affordable housing, and other amenities.

**A PLACE THAT IS SAFE AND JUST.** Police accountability remains an issue that affects communities of color personally every day. The Minneapolis Police Department must commit to working with communities to end racial profiling, police brutality, and the school to prison pipeline. We need a police force that is connected to neighborhoods, that is representative of our communities, and that is ready to work with us to make justice and safety a priority.

- ✦ Create a deterrent to police brutality and misconduct through officer-purchased liability insurance for additional premiums above the base rate.
- ✦ Engage stakeholders, including community members, in developing a more effective assessment of police misconduct complaints.
- ✦ Require collection of quantifiable data, including race, on all police stops so that the department and communities are aware of potential racial profiling.
- ✦ Expand community policing efforts, including hiring officers that are from and reflect the communities in which they are working.

**CONTRIBUTORS TO DEVELOPING THIS AGENDA INCLUDE:**

African American Leadership Forum  
Alliance for Metropolitan Stability  
CAPI  
Center for Urban and Regional Affairs (CURA)  
Community Action Against Racism (CAAR)  
Harrison Neighborhood Association  
HIRE MN  
Hope Community  
Jewish Community Action  
MIGIZI Communications  
Minnesota Voice  
Native American Community Development Institute  
NAVIGATE  
Neighborhoods Organizing for Change  
Nexus Community Partners  
Occupy Homes MN Organizing  
Apprenticeship Project  
Protect Minnesota  
Somali Action Alliance  
Waite House/Pillsbury United Communities

**A PLACE TO GROW.** We all know that our children are our future. Children of color make up 65 percent of Minneapolis students—we must work together to ensure that every child has the opportunities necessary to grow, learn, and thrive in OUR MPLS. It is the responsibility of school boards, parks commissioners, and city leadership to invest time and resources in our youth. Immigrant communities, indigenous communities, and all communities of color are prepared to help define what will make this city a great place to raise children.

- ✦ Invest in youth programming that expands opportunities—in the arts, sciences, recreation, and more.
- ✦ Align with community groups who are committed to building education equity in all Minneapolis schools and statewide.

**A PLACE TO GO.** Getting around the Twin Cities metropolitan area is a challenge for people without a car. At the same time, mobility is a key component for accessing job and education opportunities. Minneapolis must make it a priority to connect residents across neighborhoods through rail and bus lines that are accessible and affordable. Working with the Metropolitan Council and our neighboring cities for a region that makes movement possible is crucial to our economic and social fabric.

- ✦ Prioritize bus rapid transit or streetcar lines along major streets in low-income neighborhoods, including West Broadway, Central Avenue, and Chicago Avenue.
- ✦ Work with the Metropolitan Council to develop amenities that support safe, efficient, and equitable transit use, such as heated bus shelters and a North Side transit station.

**A PLACE TO BREATHE.** The health of our communities depends on clean air and water, but also access to safe parks and recreation areas no matter where we live. It depends on access to health care across the city, for all residents regardless of immigrant status. Minneapolis can be a model for health and vibrancy by making what we all know matters truly available for all its residents.

- ✦ Work with communities to eliminate food deserts and open access to affordable, healthy food.
- ✦ Adopt a Racial Equity Impact Analysis at the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board.
- ✦ Oppose a proposed diesel train storage facility in the Harrison neighborhood, both to prevent environmental damage in a low-income community and to allow instead for much needed economic development in the neighborhood's Bassett Creek Valley.

**A PLACE THAT INSPIRES.** Arts and culture have been a priority for Minneapolis—and rightly so. Through the arts, we can share multiple experiences and perspectives, celebrate our different communities, and develop a deeper sense of the many voices that make up our city. Let's stay committed to the arts and look for ways to expand opportunities in communities of color and for all generations to enjoy the multiracial, multicultural experiences that add up to OUR MPLS.

- ✦ Engage communities of color and low-income communities in defining city priorities for investing in arts programming.
- ✦ Work with parks and schools programs, as well as youth leaders, to offer more after school and summer arts activities to youth throughout the city.

**New leadership in OUR MPLS, together with engaged residents, can see this vision through. This is just the beginning—more voices are adding to this movement for racial and economic equity. We look forward to working with you.**

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