



## CENTERING RACIAL JUSTICE IN PLANNING FOR URBAN FLOOD RESILIENCE

# PRINCIPLE #5 | FACILITATE CROSS-SECTOR COLLABORATION

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Cities should encourage cross-sector collaboration and engage other government entities, non-profits, community groups, and neighborhood associations, and partners in the public sector. Watersheds and floodplains cross jurisdictional boundaries, necessitating cooperation at a regional scale. Numerous government entities are directly or indirectly involved in flood risk management and the resulting impacts on racial equity.

### Putting this Principle into Action

Local governments and their planning departments can:

- ✓ Acknowledge past equity performance and need for improvement among city agencies as well as partners
- ✓ Collaborate between departments in order to address urban flooding
- ✓ Partner with non-governmental organizations to address urban flooding
- ✓ Seek partnerships with neighboring jurisdictions where residents may live or work
- ✓ Work with county and regional planning units to address regional flood hazards and to adopt integrated flood mitigation projects
- ✓ Support and engage with tribal governments on water issues in the region

### Example from the Great Lakes

In 1997, Detroiters Working for Environmental Justice launched Build Up Detroit (BUD). This program trained youth in GIS and guided them in mapping their community to identify clean-up sites. These sites were then targeted for revitalization through a green jobs training program where participants learned to redevelop abandoned brownfields into affordable housing. All trainees in the initial cohort were placed into jobs upon completion of the program.

At the Creative Cities Summit in 2008, Build Up Detroit launched an advisory council and gained the attention of stakeholders from across the business, professional and policy sectors. The council consists of several working groups, which focus on creating local green jobs and increasing civic engagement among historically disenfranchised communities, among other initiatives. As an organization, DWEJ has attracted and facilitated collaboration on environmental justice issues across sectors of policy, business, and local government.

### USEFUL TOOLS AVAILABLE

The Public Health Institute has published a guide, “[Health in All Policies](#),” to help state and local governments address social determinants of health in planning work that takes place outside of health departments. A similar model could be adopted by all stakeholders involved in urban flood adaptation work beyond Sustainability Offices.

The [Nuts and Bolts of Building an Alliance](#) toolkit guides collectives in establishing their function and mode of operating. Function is the product of structure, culture and strategy. The toolkit does not focus on strategy, but rather how structure and culture relate to strategy, questions collectives must address to determine their culture and strategy, and common pitfalls.