

Zoning and Land Use Assessment

Key Definitions Summary

Equity

Outcomes and processes that result in fair and just access to opportunities and resources by way of repairing past harms and transforming power dynamics so that everyone, but particularly oppressed groups, both historically and presently, have the power and resources that they need to thrive.

Considerations: The committee discussed the importance of highlighting the need to transform power dynamics and having a better understanding of what equality or equity means—if it's referring to health, wealth, education, or sameness.

Sustainability

An inclusive, systemic approach that improves and integrates environment, climate, health, social equity, and economic vitality in order to create thriving, healthy, diverse, and resilient communities and natural ecosystems for this generation and generations to come.

Considerations: The committee discussed how growth is or is not embedded within the definition, as growth does not always signify improvement. True sustainability that includes the economy would lead with the well-being of people and the planet. The approach to sustainability is just as important as the result and approach would include analysis.

Public Health

The physical, mental, and social wellbeing of individuals and neighborhoods and populations. All of these are shaped by social and physical structures, conditions and processes.

Considerations: The committee discussed that public health is a state of being as well as the system that gives rise to it. Healthiness is an end state with structural conditions that have both upstream and downstream impacts on health. 'Social wellbeing' includes the state of being as well as the infrastructure that supports it.

Based on the committee discussions, a separate but connected definition for Health Equity was also developed.

Health Equity

The collective structural and social conditions within which individuals' wellbeing (physical, mental, and social) can thrive and where social categories cannot predict health outcomes.

Considerations: The committee discussed the need to include the social determinants of health as part of defining what is included in the definition of "structural".

Equitable Development

Development that acknowledges economic and historic and current drivers of disinvestment, fosters health, and vibrant places, centers and meets the needs of historically marginalized residents, and reduces racial, ethnic, and class disparities through a process that includes resident engagement and accountability, leading to improved socio-economic outcomes.

Considerations: The committee discussed that this definition does not define development and suggested that development is a broad term that could include many things, such as businesses, land use, built environment, etc. At the very least, it should acknowledge economic, land use, and preservation processes.

(Environmentally) Sustainable Development

Development that acknowledges the importance of ecology and natural systems and works to address past environmental harms, reduce current negative impacts especially the overburdening of marginalized communities--mitigate future harms, and ensure the benefits of economic activity are broadly distributed throughout neighborhoods by taking positive steps towards a sustainable future.

Considerations: The committee discussed that the definition could be tighter and less verbose, but the wordiness lends itself to a more specific definition. This definition is broader than what the title implies it would focus on and could have been narrowed to "development that reduces pollution and conserves natural resources", but many felt it was important to acknowledge environmental justice to recognize human sustainability rather than solely prioritizing natural sustainability.