



THE UNITED STATES
CONFERENCE OF MAYORS



HARVARD
UNIVERSITY

GRADUATE
SCHOOL

OF
DESIGN

2026 Just City Mayoral Fellowship

EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST DUE NOVEMBER 17

[MICD.ORG/JCMF](https://micd.org/jcmf)

[INFO@MICD.ORG](mailto:info@micd.org)



Agenda & Speakers

- + Program overview
- + Curriculum & project overview
- + What makes a strong expression of interest?
- + Q&A

Trinity Simons Wagner

Executive Director, Mayors' Institute on City Design
Senior Staff, United States Conference of Mayors

Toni L. Griffin

Director, Just City Lab
Professor in Practice of Urban Planning, Harvard
Graduate School of Design

Just City Mayoral Fellowship

This unique and highly interactive program brings together a small group of mayors to directly tackle injustices in each of their cities through planning and design interventions.

The 2026 Fellowship will follow a hybrid in-person and virtual format between February and April of 2026, with extended advising available to each city in the months that follow. An open call for expressions of interest is currently open through **Monday, November 17, 2025**.

Fellowship Dates

FEBRUARY - APRIL 2026

Extended Advising

SUMMER 2026

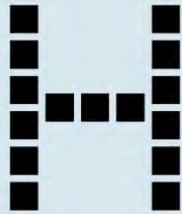
Location

CAMBRIDGE, MA & VIRTUAL

The Partners



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The United States Conference of Mayors

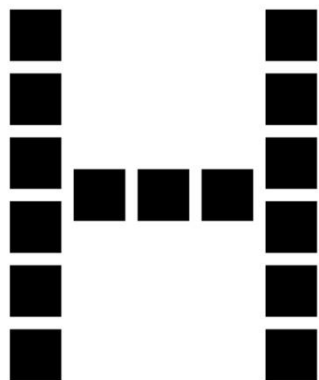
The United States Conference of Mayors is the official non-partisan organization of cities with populations of 30,000 or more. There are over 1,400 such cities in the country today. Each city is represented in the Conference by its chief elected official, the mayor.

The Conference to this day is a nonpartisan forum where mayors engage directly with the President and Congress on the most pressing issues of the day.

usmayors.org



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THE JUST CITY LAB



a **Just City** is where all people and communities, but especially the least not included, have access to networks and environments that offer the opportunities and resources to be productive and prosperous, advancing their social and economic mobility and agency.



INVISIBILITY

TON | DAY LABOR STATION

Design Team: Public Architecture
Client: Day Laborers
Sanitation Police Department, Mayor's Office, Proyecto Vozes
Year: 2007
Project Type: Public Space, Community Engagement
Location: San Jose, Costa Rica
Project Cost: \$100,000
Project Status: Conceptual design



DIGNITY

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT RESPECT HUMANITY COLLABORATION

RESEARCH

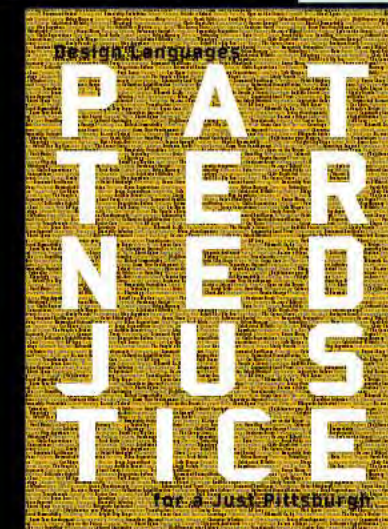
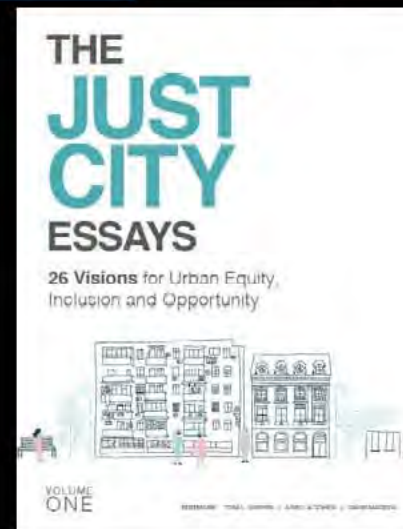
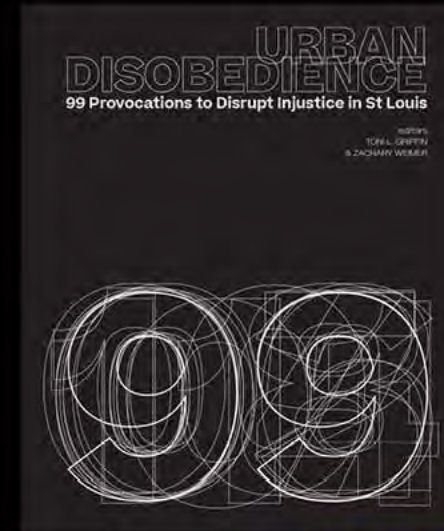
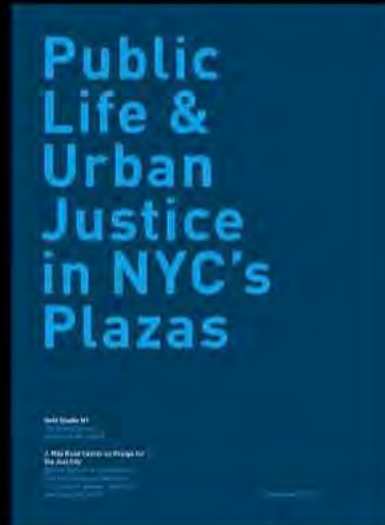
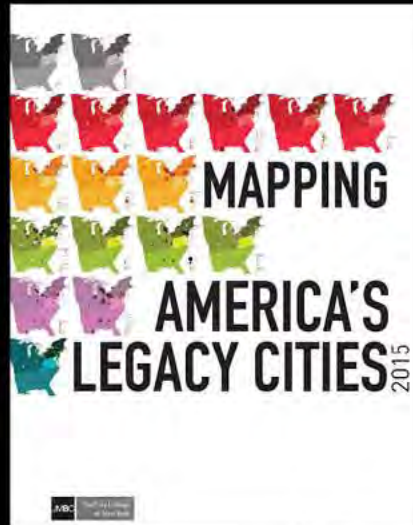
we investigate ways that designers combat social + spatial injustice, and showcase their solutions through case studies and exhibitions

SPECULATE

cross-disciplinary design studios to analyze, speculate and project new futures that dismantle socio-spatial injustice



PUBLISH



EXHIBIT



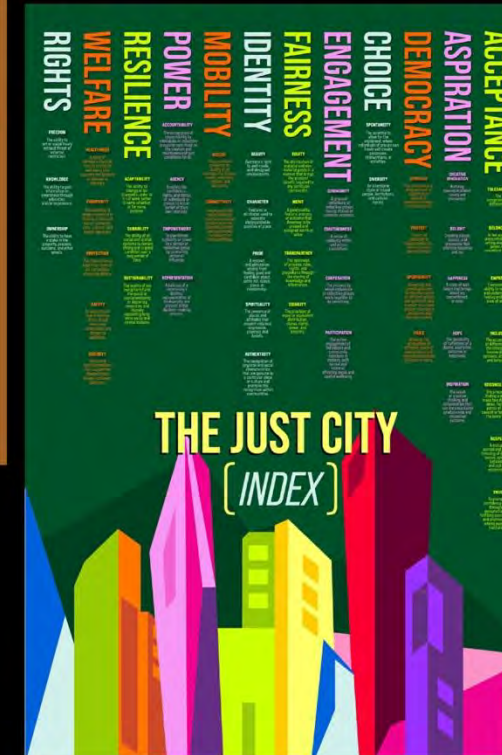
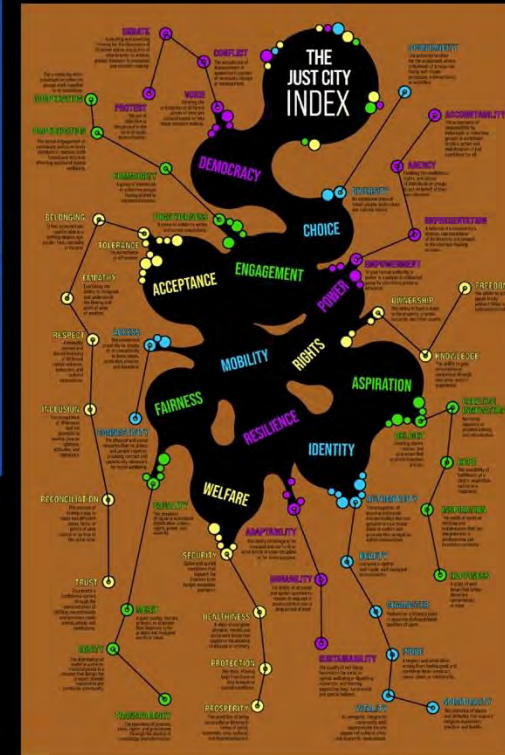
DESIGN FOR THE JUST CITY
HARVARD GRADUATE SCHOOL OF DESIGN
2018



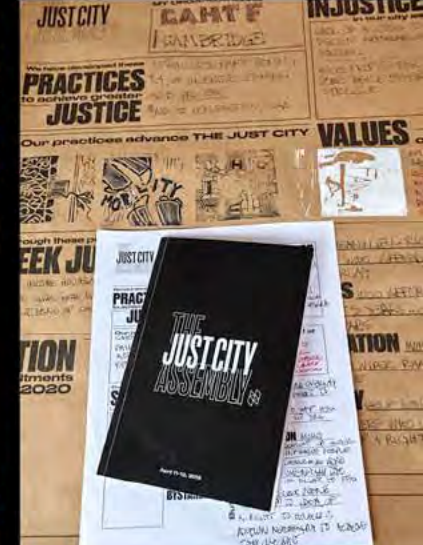
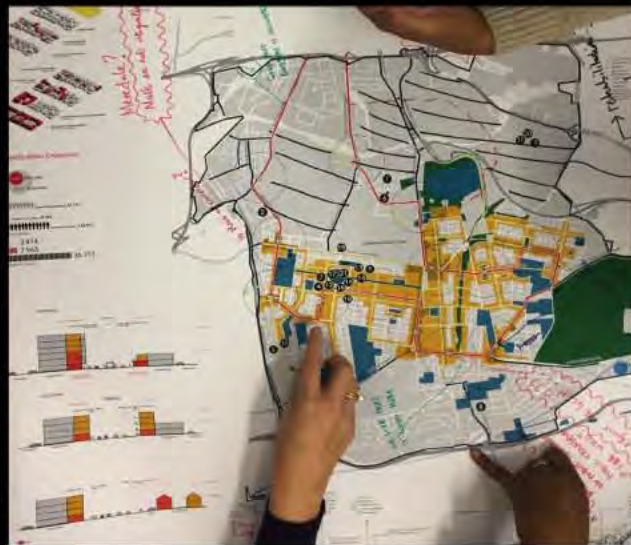
DESIGN AND THE JUST CITY IN NYC
CENTER FOR ARCHITECTURE
2019

ENGAGE

the **Just City Index** is a language of 50 values intended to be used by communities to self-select and define what makes for a more Just City



CONVENE

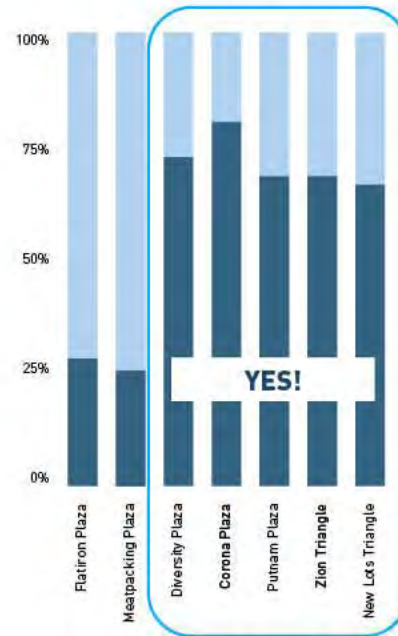


EVALUATE

creating evidence-based
research on the presence of
social and spatial justice in
the built environment



Do you recognize or know more people
since the plaza opened?



Plazas in Queens
and Brooklyn
fostered more
social interaction
and recognition
than those in
Manhattan

Key:

- No, I don't recognize / know more
- Yes, I recognize / know more

What is the Just City
Mayoral Fellowship?

“

The [Just City Mayoral Fellowship] has equipped my city with a *holistic new set of planning and design tools* that have broadened our capacity... to address historic inequities facing some of our highest-need neighborhoods.

MAYOR REX RICHARDSON | LONG BEACH, CA

2024 JUST CITY MAYORAL FELLOWSHIP

”

The Cohort



8 Mayors

After an open call for expressions of interest, 8 mayors will be invited to the 2026 cohort. Each mayor will examine conditions of injustice in their city and work toward a manifesto of action.

16 City Staff

Each mayor selects 2 members of their senior staff to participate in the weekly curriculum, ongoing projects, and closing convening.

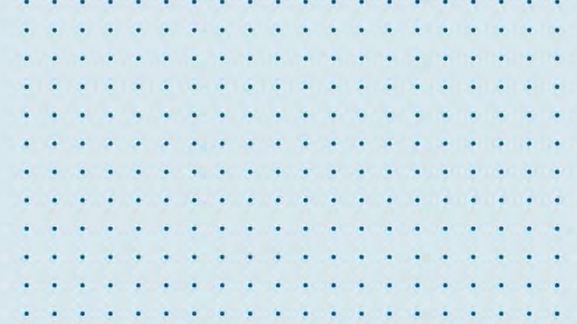
12+ Expert Speakers

At the February opening workshop and in each virtual class, justice-focused experts in the fields of urban planning, architecture, landscape architecture, equitable development, and more will share their expertise with the Fellows.

8 Resource Team Members

At the April project workshop, a team of 8 design justice experts offers recommendations and advice on the mayors' projects and manifestos of action.

The Agenda



Opening Workshop

In-person in Cambridge, MA (mayors)
February 4-5, 2026 (1.5 days)

Six In-Depth Classes

Virtual (mayors + staff)
Thursdays at 2pm ET (90 minutes)

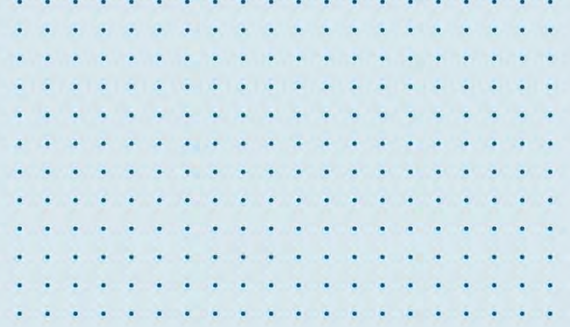
Project & Manifesto

Virtual (mayors + staff)
Self-paced with assistance from Fellowship team

Project Workshop

In-person in Cambridge, MA (mayors + staff)
April 15-17, 2026 (2.5 days)

Extended Advising



Summer 2026

New for the 2026 cohort, after the semester concludes, each mayor may continue to advance their priority project over the next several months with personalized consultation from a team of leading experts and graduate student interns.

The Program



In-depth curriculum

Hear from justice-focused experts in the design fields through a series of in-person and virtual lectures.

Peer-to-peer learning

Through weekly classes and convenings, build relationships with fellow mayors and staff who are committed to justice.

Justice-centered projects

Program staff will help you identify a project in your city for a deep dive into its challenges and opportunities for equity.

Network of justice experts

During the project workshop and beyond, receive project guidance and support from a team of experts.

“

The Fellowship experience was both empowering and validating for our team. First, it was an important bonding experience with senior staff... giving us *time and space to focus solely on the big picture and our goals*. Second, the exposure to other cities and extremely talented professionals gave us insights on how to move forward and what was possible.

MAYOR ABDULLAH HAMMOUD | DEARBORN, MI

2024 JUST CITY MAYORAL FELLOWSHIP

”

THE COURSE

THE SYLLABUS AT A GLANCE

Sample Curriculum

	DATE & TIME	TOPIC	DESCRIPTION	SPEAKERS
INTRODUCTION	Week 1: Thu, Feb 6 - Fri, Feb 7 Travel dates: Wed, Feb 5 & Fri, Feb 7 (evening)	Opening Workshop Sessions: Housing Our Communities	<i>The MCD Just City Mayoral Fellowship opening workshop will lay a foundation for defining urban justice and injustice through design and public policy, inviting the mayors to examine these conditions in their own cities.</i>	Toni L. Griffin GSD Faculty Invited Speakers
	In-person in Cambridge, MA (Mayors)		Mayors will reflect on lectures and draft their initial Just City Manifesto, outlining current conditions of injustice and aspirations for a more just city.	
MODULE 1	Week 2: Thu, Feb 13 (2-3:30 PM ET) Virtual	Trends in Neighborhood Change and Gentrification	<i>This week's speakers will discuss defining and assessing when neighborhood change leads to gentrification and how governments have managed housing policy and investment over time.</i>	Lance Freeman James Stockard
	Week 3: Thu, Feb 20 (2-3:30 PM ET) Virtual	Housing Diverse Populations	<i>This week's lectures and speakers will focus on housing affordability for different populations, considering changes in rents, sales prices, renovations, and new construction as key indicators of neighborhood change and gentrification.</i>	Jennifer Molinsky William Gilchrist
	Week 4: Mayors' Assignment 1 Office Hours Thu, Feb 27, 2025 (2-3 PM ET)	What Makes Our City Just and Unjust	Mayors will prepare a just city overview of the conditions of injustice in the city, current work around urban justice, and goals for advancing more just outcomes.	
	Week 5: Thu, Mar 6 (2-3:30 PM ET) Virtual	Just Neighborhood Methods and Design Solutions	<i>This week's readings and lecturers will introduce methods and project examples that highlight contemporary practices in justice-centered neighborhood planning, design and engagement.</i>	Stephen Gray Bryan C. Lee
MODULE 2	Week 6: Thu, Mar 13 (2-3:30 PM ET) Virtual	Just Housing Design Solutions	<i>This week's speakers will discuss strategies for radical housing solutions rooted in attracting and retaining middle income households, investing in housing restoration, and infill housing solutions.</i>	Elizabeth Christoforetti Derwin Sisnett
	Week 7: Mayors' Assignment 2 Office Hours Thu, Mar 20, 2025 (2-3 PM ET)	The Just City Project	Mayors and their teams will update their Just City Manifestos and elaborate on the project identified at the beginning of the course.	
MODULE 3	Week 8: Thu, Mar 27 (2-3:30 PM ET) Virtual	Advancing Affordability and Wealth	<i>This week's guest lectures will explore collective ownership models for communities.</i>	Nikishka Iyengar David Kemper
	Week 9: Thu, Apr 3 (2-3:30 PM ET) Virtual	Leveling the Playing Field for Just Investment	<i>This week's guest lecturers will present emerging financing and investment practices that channel resources into high-impact projects and programs.</i>	Lourdes German (invited) Eric Shaw
	Week 10: Mayors' Assignment 3 Office Hours Thu, Apr 10, 2025 (2-3 PM ET)	The Just City Project Presentation	The final assignment asks the mayors and their teams to elaborate on their identified priority project to be presented in the Closing Workshop. Mayors will also share their final manifesto.	
CLOSING	Week 11: Wed, Apr 16 - Fri, Apr 18 Travel dates: Wed, Apr 16 (morning) & Fri, Apr 18 (afternoon)	Closing Workshop: Mayor Presentations and Resource Team Feedback	<i>The course will end at Harvard Graduate School of Design in the tradition of the Mayors' Institute on City Design format. Each mayor will deliver a presentation of their city and just city project, followed by critical review from design experts in the field.</i>	
	In-person in Cambridge, MA (Mayors, City Staff, and Resource Team)			

*For speaker affiliations, see page 65

THE JUST CITY MANIFESTO

JUST CITY MANIFESTO

During the introduction workshop sessions, mayors will use this Manifesto worksheet to reflect and record current city conditions and their aspirations for a more just city. The mayors will document responses to specific questions asked during the workshop. Over the duration of the 11-week course, mayors and their staffs will have the opportunity to revise and update their Manifesto as they acquire new information from each week's guest lectures.

The final Mayor's Manifesto, combined with Mayor Assignments 1 and 2, will be part of each mayor's final presentation at the end of the semester, to be presented at the April 19-21 sessions at Harvard Graduate School of Design.

THE
JUST CITY
MAYORAL
FELLOWSHIP

MY CITY IS

Our **PRIORITY PROJECT**
FOR A JUST CITY

Our JUST CITY
VALUES

Our conditions of
INJUSTICE

What makes my city
A JUST CITY is

MORE JUST **NEIGHBORHOODS** NEED (PLACES)

MORE JUST **WELLBEING** (FOR PEOPLE) NEEDS

MORE JUST **PARTICIPATION** NEEDS

Who must be involved in **BUILDING A JUST CITY**

MAYORS' JUST CITY PROJECTS CATEGORIES

NEIGHBORHOODS

AS COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE

2023

THE WEST HILL COMMUNITY CENTER
Albany, New York

THE LOST NEIGHBORHOOD
Pensacola, Florida

2022

CRAB CREEK REDEVELOPMENT STRATEGY
Youngstown, Ohio

VISION FOR LAKELAND: WELL CONNECTED, CELEBRATED AND VIBRANT PLAN
College Park, Maryland

BUILDING SITES FOR SOCIAL INFRASTRUCTURE

2023

THE CENTRAL CITY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT SALES TAX DISTRICT
Kansas City, Missouri

THE MLK CORRIDOR REDEVELOPMENT PLAN
St. Louis, Missouri

2022

REDEVELOPMENT OF 246 PRAIRIE AVENUE URBAN LEAGUE OF RHODE ISLAND SITE
Providence, Rhode Island

DARBO-WORTHINGTON NEIGHBORHOOD COMMUNITY CENTER REDEVELOPMENT
Madison, Wisconsin

DOWNTOWN CENTRAL LIBRARY AND COMMUNITY CENTER
Duluth, Minnesota

MOBILITY INFRASTRUCTURE

2023

THE ALBUQUERQUE RAIL TRAIL
Albuquerque, New Mexico

THE SOUTH MONROE LOOPS
Monroe, Louisiana

THE MIDTOWN NEIGHBORHOOD STABILIZATION PROJECT
Santa Fe, New Mexico

2022

JACKSON WARD/CAPPING I-95
Richmond, Virginia

SALISBURY RAIL-TO-TRAIL ENGAGEMENT PROJECT
Salisbury, Maryland

LOWCOUNTRY LOWLINE
Charleston, South Carolina

NEIGHBORHOOD DEVELOPMENT

2020

SOUTHSIDE MANIFESTO
Greenville, Mississippi

ENSLEY MANIFESTO
Birmingham, Alabama

SOUTHEAST FRAMINGHAM MANIFESTO
Framingham, Massachusetts

RAYMOND DRIVE MANIFESTO
Union City, Georgia

URBAN RENEWAL MANIFESTO
Mount Vernon, New York

WASHINGTON ADDITION MANIFESTO
Jackson, Mississippi

GREENVIEW MANIFESTO
Columbia, South Carolina

MAYORS' JUST CITY PROJECTS CATEGORIES

JUST SPACES THAT PROMOTE INCLUSION AND IDENTITY

2024

**LINCOLN KING REDEVELOPMENT
PLAN**
Racine, Wisconsin

**SCHNOOVER PARK, A CASE STUDY ON
THE REDESIGN OF PUBLIC SPACE**
Lima, Ohio

JUST NEIGHBORHOODS/DISTRICTS

2025

RECONNECTING THE WESTSIDE
San Bernardino, California

**HEALTH AND HOUSING IN OLDER
NEIGHBORHOODS**
Flagstaff, Arizona

**NORTH MONTGOMERY
REVITALIZATION**
Montgomery, Alabama

JUST NEIGHBORHOODS AND STRENGTHENING BELONGING

2024

**EUGENE-PORATH RESILIENCY
REDEVELOPMENT**
Dearborn, Michigan

**A RESIDENT LED COMMUNITY
VISION PLAN FOR SAN RAFAEL'S
CANAL NEIGHBORHOOD**
San Rafael, California

THE GREEN TI FREEWAY
Long Beach, California

**CITY OF ALLENTOWN
RECOMPETE AREA**
Allentown, Pennsylvania

JUST PARTICIPATION

2024

**ULTIMATE RUBBER
REDEVELOPMENT**
McMinnville, Oregon

JUST REDEVELOPMENT

2025

**CORNERSTONE HEALTH AND
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
INITIATIVE**
Gainesville, Florida

REBUILDING EAST CHESTER
Jackson, Tennessee

34-ACRE SITE REDEVELOPMENT
Suisun City, California

JUST POLICIES

2025

**UNITED DEVELOPMENT
ORDINANCE (UDO)**
Bloomington, Indiana

**HIGH STREET INNOVATION
CORRIDOR**
Portsmouth, Virginia

ALUMNI CITIES

Albany, NY 2023

Albuquerque, NM 2023

Allentown, PA 2024

Arlington, TX 2023

Birmingham, AL 2020

Bloomington, IN 2025

Charleston, SC 2022

College Park, MD 2022

Columbia, SC 2020

Dearborn, MI 2024

Duluth, MN 2022

Flagstaff, AZ 2025

Framingham, MA 2020

Gainesville, FL 2025

Greenville, MS 2020

Jackson, MS 2020

Jackson, TN 2025

Kansas City, MO 2023

Lima, OH 2024

Long Beach, CA 2024

Madison, WI 2022

McMinnville, OR 2024

Monroe, LA 2023

Montgomery, AL 2025

Mount Vernon, NY 2020

Pensacola, FL 2023

Portsmouth, VA 2025

Providence, RI 2022

Racine, WI 2024

Richmond, VA 2022

Salisbury, MD 2022

San Bernardino, CA 2025

San Rafael, CA 2024

Santa Fe, NM 2023

St. Louis, MO 2023

Suisun City, CA 2025

Union City, GA 2020

Youngstown, OH 2022

Expression of Interest

- **Mayors: In your own words, please describe your interest in the Just City Mayoral Fellowship and why you would be a good fit for the 2026 cohort.**

This question seeks to understand why you personally believe that this is the right moment for you to participate in a program like this.

- **What are the most pressing justice-related opportunities and challenges in your city that you and your team could confront through a design justice lens?**

You may wish to describe the conditions of injustice in different areas or in your city as a whole, demonstrating an understanding of the challenges and the potential for planning and design interventions to help address them.

Date

DUE NOVEMBER 17

Format

ONLINE FORM

View Form

[MICD.ORG/JCMF](https://micd.org/jcmf)

Expression of Interest, continued

- **What project might you bring to the Fellowship?**

Over the semester, each mayor will devise an approach to advancing more just outcomes for their city by developing a project of their choosing. This could be a planning, development, or place-based policy initiative that faces new challenges as resources and capacity change, requiring a reimagined project design or implementation approach.

- **(Optional) Are there any other justice-related efforts or conditions in your community not addressed in your answers above?**

Date

DUE NOVEMBER 17

Format

ONLINE FORM

View Form

MICD.ORG/JCMF

What makes a strong Expression of Interest?

- **Personal:** Written in the mayor's own words, explaining your commitment to shaping a more just city
- **Specific:** Identify relevant conditions of injustice in your city and why the timing is right to address them
- **Aspirational:** What you hope to take away from this Fellowship for a potential project that could have a tangible impact on shaping a more just city

Past City Staff



Chief Economic & Cultural Development Officer	Development Director	Public Relations Officer
Chief Equity Officer	Director of Community Development	Grant Writer
Chief of Staff	Director of Digital Service and Open Government	Manager of Neighborhood Investment and Business Diversity
Children & Youth Program Manager	Director of Economic Development	Metropolitan Redevelopment Agency Manager
Citizen Participation Officer	Director of Housing & Community Development	Operations Coordinator
City Administrator	Director of Planning and Development	Planning and Regional Development Manager
City Manager	Director of Planning, Engineering, and Permits	Planning Division Director
Commissioner, Dept. of Neighborhood and Community Services	Director of Policy	Policy Director
Community Development Director	Director of Special Projects	President, Development Corporation
Community Relations Officer	Director of Youth, Family and Senior Services	Project Manager
CRA Urban Design Planner	Director, Office of Affordable Housing	Racial Equity Officer
Deputy Commissioner of Planning & Development	Director, Office of Equity & Inclusion	Real Property Manager
Deputy Director, Community and Economic Development	Diversity, Racial Reconciliation and Tolerance Manager	Senior Advisor for External Affairs
Deputy Director, Office of Equitable Development	Economic & Community Development Director	Senior Planner
Deputy Director, Planning & Economic Development	Equity & Inclusion Coordinator	Special Assistant to the Mayor
	Equity and Social Justice Division Manager	Transportation Planner
	Executive and Legislative Assistant	Urban Designer

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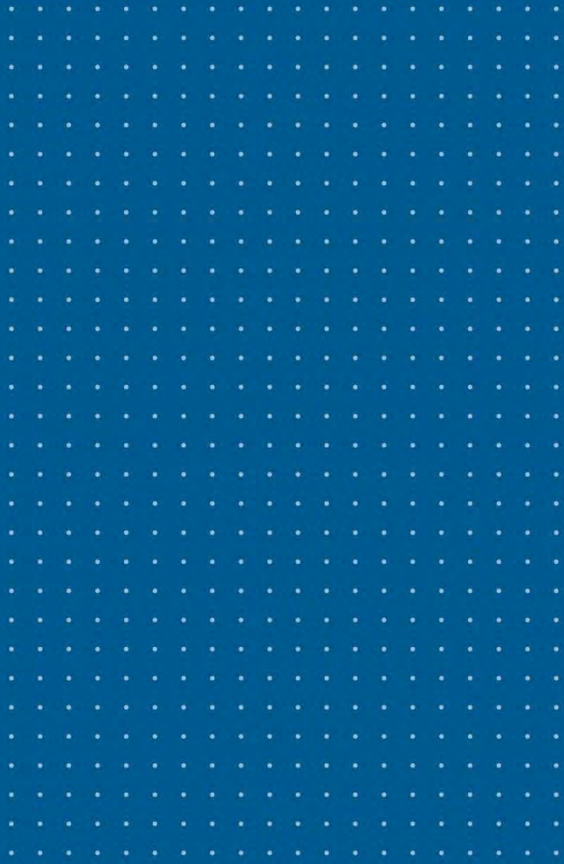
The Just City Mayoral Fellowship is not just a technical assistance, project formation experience. The fellowship was a *spiritual journey focused on bettering the lives and agency* for communities that deserve dignity and pride, through catalyzing the spaces where they live and ultimately thrive.

**JERIME L. REID | CHIEF OF STAFF TO MAYOR STEVEN REED
MONTGOMERY, AL**

2025 JUST CITY MAYORAL FELLOWSHIP

”

Questions?



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