

# Strategies to Support Economic Inclusion for Sustainable Communities



I dream of  
my daughters  
Future

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PolicyLink is a research and action institute dedicated to **lifting up what works.**

## The Sustainable Communities Initiative



EQUITY IN SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES ISSUE BRIEFS

Community  
Engagement

Access to  
Opportunity

Regional  
Equity  
Networks

# **Economists are finding a correlation between economic and racial inclusion and regional economic growth.**

Manuel Pastor, “Cohesion and Competitiveness: Business Leadership for Regional Growth and Social Equity,” OECD Territorial Reviews, Competitive Cities in the Global Economy, Organisation For Economic Co-Operation And Development (OECD), 2006.

Manuel Pastor and Chris Benner, *Been Down So Long: Weak-Market Cities and Regional Equity Retooling for Growth* (New York: American Assembly and Columbia University, 2008).

# Where you live has significant implications for educational, economic, and health outcomes



# Who?

- Immigrants and refugees
- Historic communities of color
- Colonias residents
- Native Americans and tribal residents
- Isolated unincorporated communities

# Why?

- Institutionalized disenfranchisement and racism in federal, state, and local policy
- Place and regional identity
- Class and language barriers to engagement
- Lack of political representation
- Ongoing misperceptions

# Strategies for Economic Inclusion

- Grow workforce in high-opportunity industries
- Support and expand small/minority-owned businesses
- Leverage anchor institutions
- Support job creation through public investment
- Asset building and wealth creation
- Immigrant integration

# Building Local Capacity for Economic Inclusion

- Community partnerships
- Resource sharing
- Cultivate stronger urban-rural connections
- Build an equity-focused ecosystem



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