SANDY SPRINGS
GEORGIA

Diversity and Inclusion Task Force

Tuesday, April 13, 2021 **Meeting Agenda** **6:00 PM**

The April 13, 2021 Diversity and Inclusion Task Force Meeting will be held virtually.

Live-stream: **Zoom Webinar:** https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83105952860

Teleconference: **Dial Options** (for higher quality, dial a number based on your current location)**:**

- 1 312 626 6799
- 1 646 558 8656
- 1 301 715 8592
- 1 346 248 7799
- 1 669 900 9128
- 1 253 215 8782

Webinar ID: 831 0595 2860

I **Call to Order** - James E. Bostic, Jr., Chair

II **Prayer** – Rabbi Joshua Heller, Congregation B'nai Torah

III **Roll Call**

IV **Approval of Meeting Minutes** – March 9, 2021 Diversity and Inclusion Task Force Meeting

V **New Business**

DIT2021-007 Updates from the Task Force Chairperson
(Presented by James E. Bostic, Jr., Chair)

DIT2021-008 Housing and Transportation Subcommittee Update
(Presented by Olivia Rocamora, Subcommittee Chair)

DIT2021-009 Recreation Subcommittee Update
(Presented by Desmond Curry, Subcommittee Chair)

DIT2021-010 Discussion
(Presented by James E. Bostic, Jr., Chair)

VI **Closing Comments** - James E. Bostic, Jr., Chair

VII **Prayer** – Rev. Dr. Bill Murray, Rector, Holy Innocents' Episcopal Church

VIII **Adjournment**

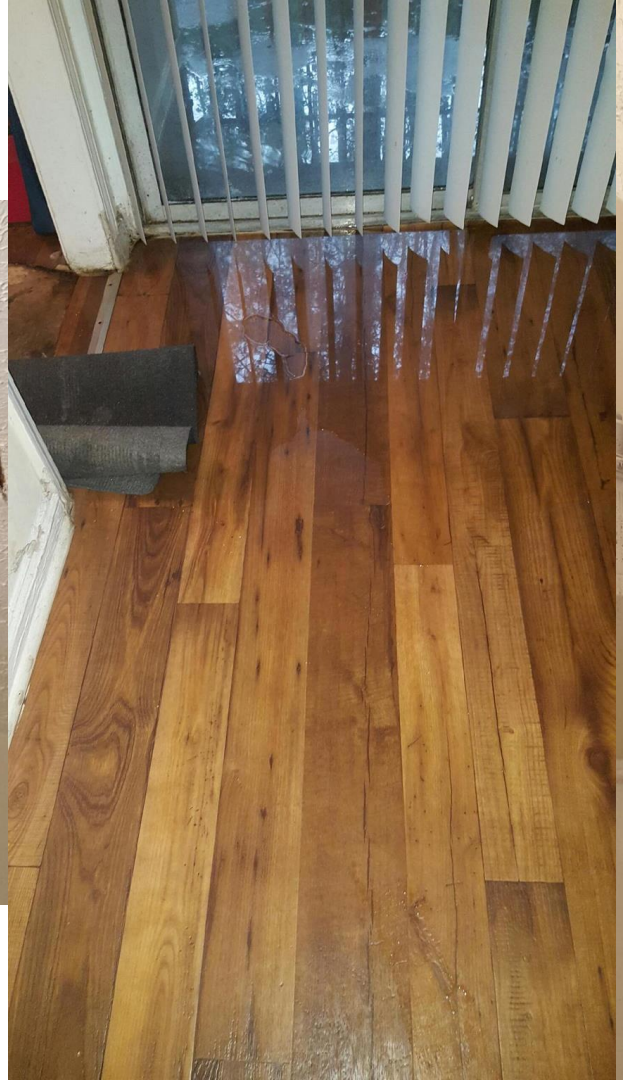
Individuals with disabilities who require certain accommodations in order to allow them to observe and/or participate in a public meeting, or who have questions regarding the accessibility of the meeting or facilities should contact the City Clerk at 770-730-5600 promptly for assistance. The City will make reasonable accommodations for those persons.

Sandy Springs Diversity and Inclusion Task Force: Housing Subcommittee Presentation of Research & Recommendations

Public comments about this presentation may be submitted to the Housing Subcommittee here.

All public comments can be viewed here.

Leading with a Human Lens:
Two Stories from Sandy Springs Renters

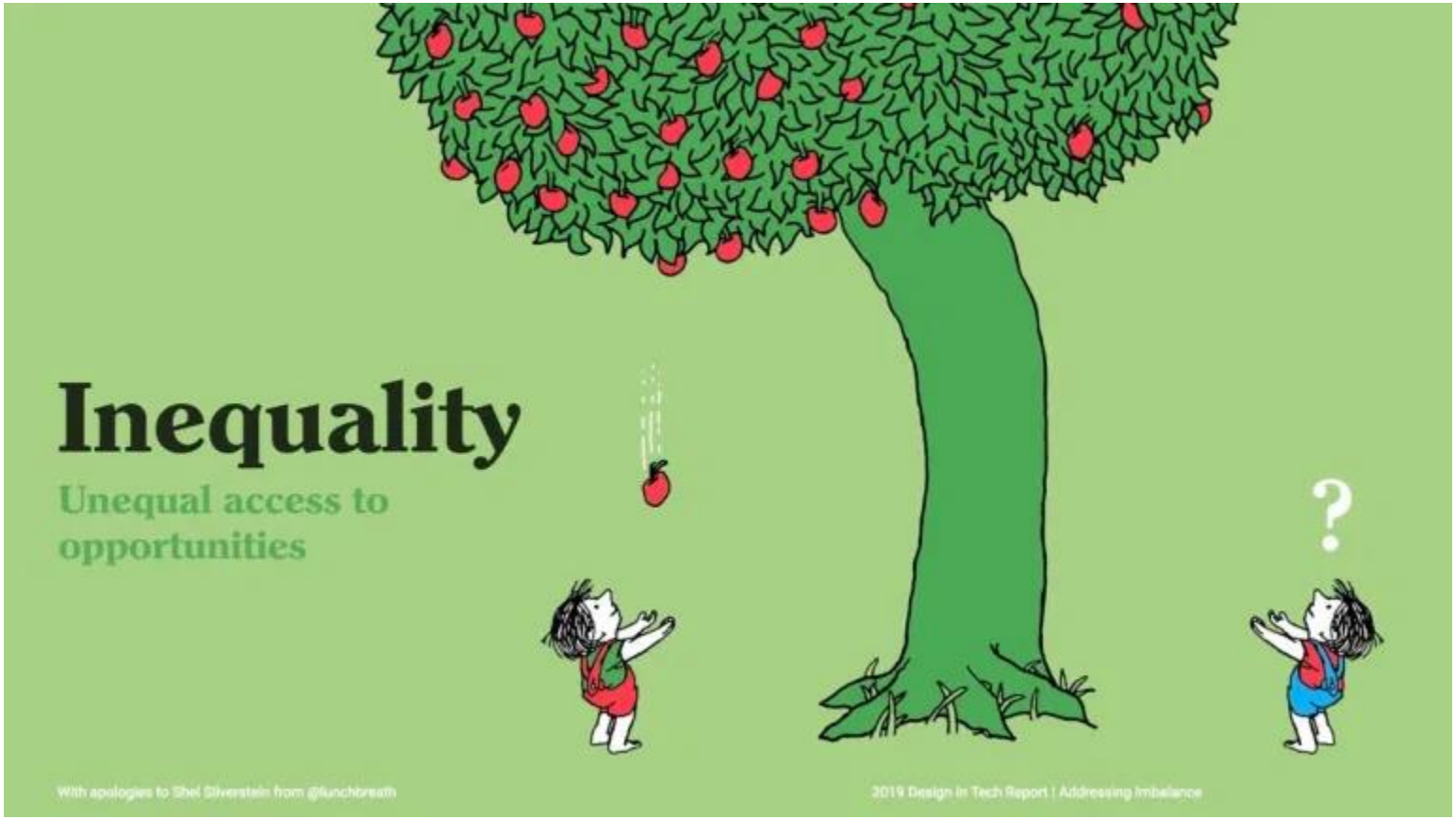


“The root word of community is common. [You] can’t be in community unless you share fully in the common amenities and assets and quality of life and experiences of the community. Then that commonality that is the root word of community really doesn’t exist. Or it exists only for a few people.

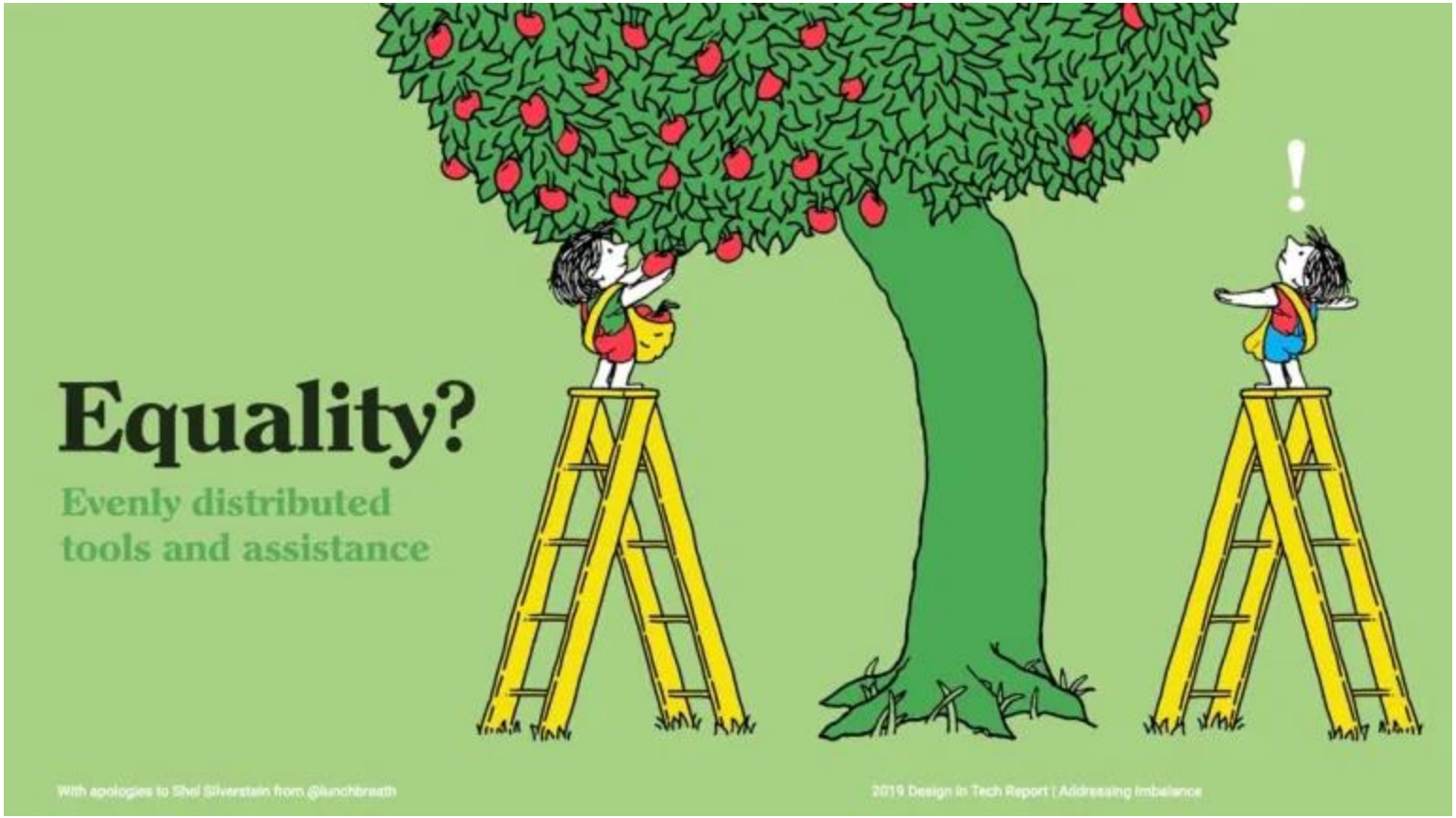
-Mayor Paul, March 9, Diversity and Inclusion Task Force Meeting

“Diversity”
“Inclusion”

“Equity”
“Justice”



Source: “Addressing Imbalance,” by Tony Ruth for the 2019 Design in Tech Report.



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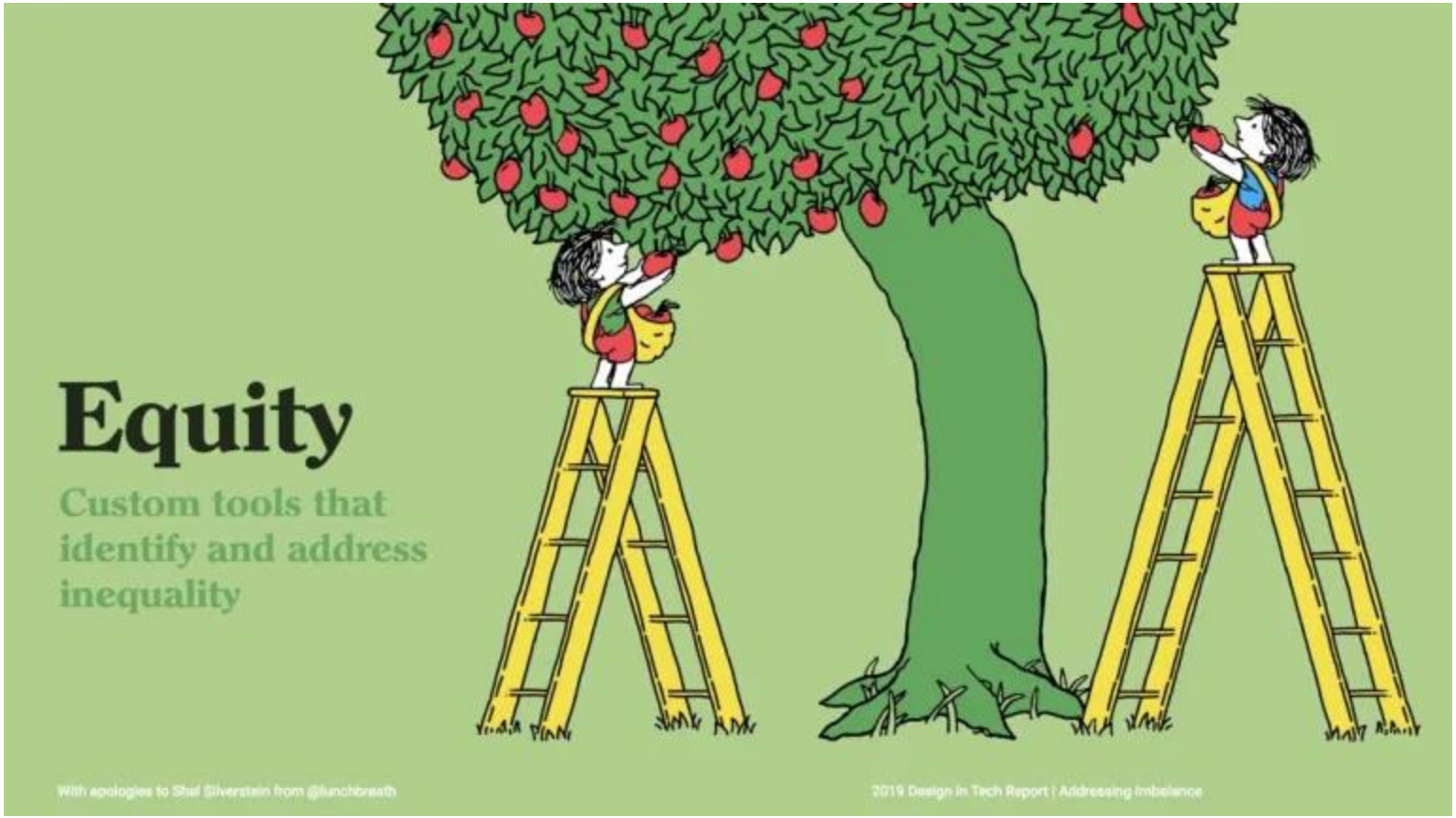

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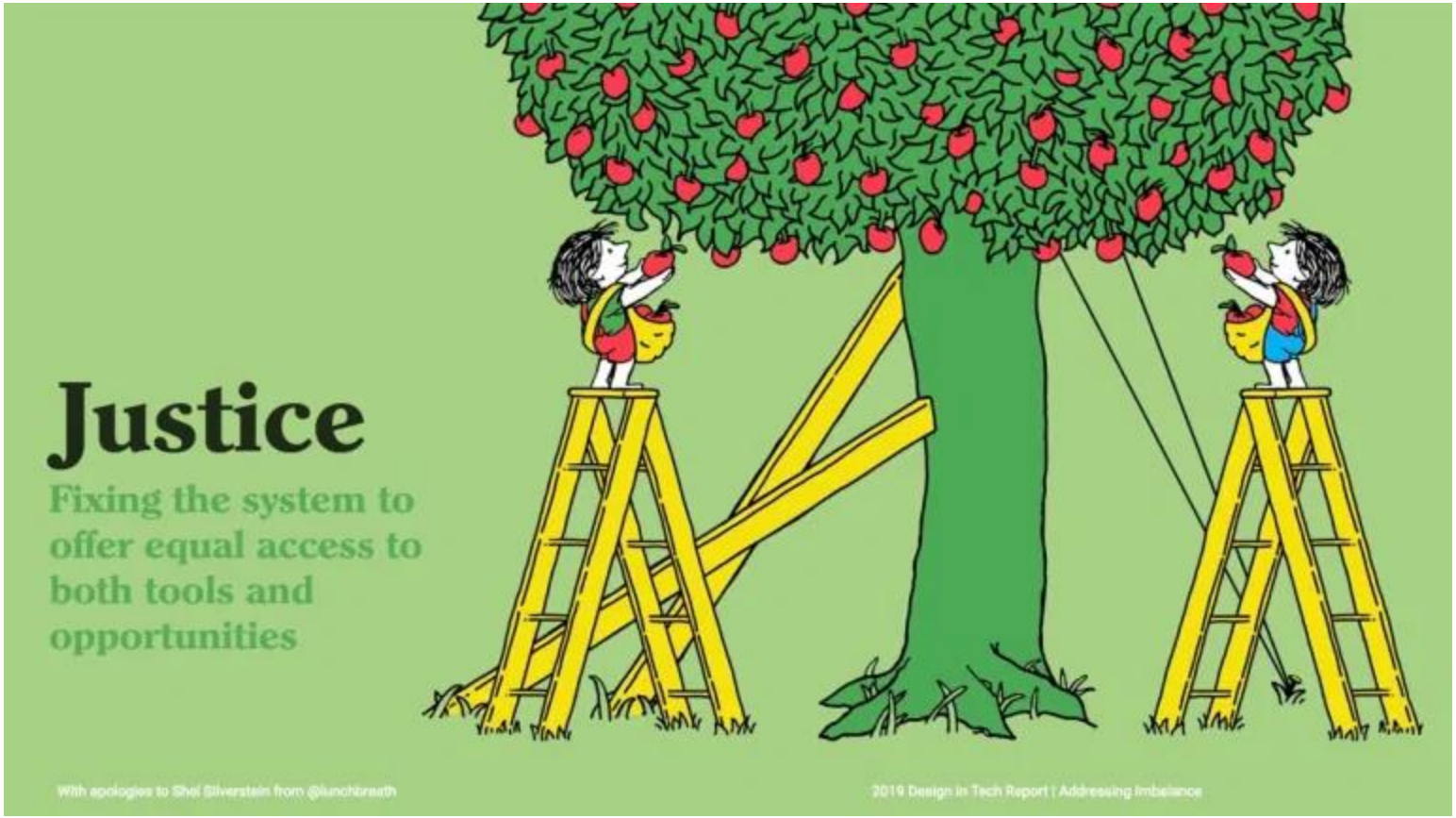

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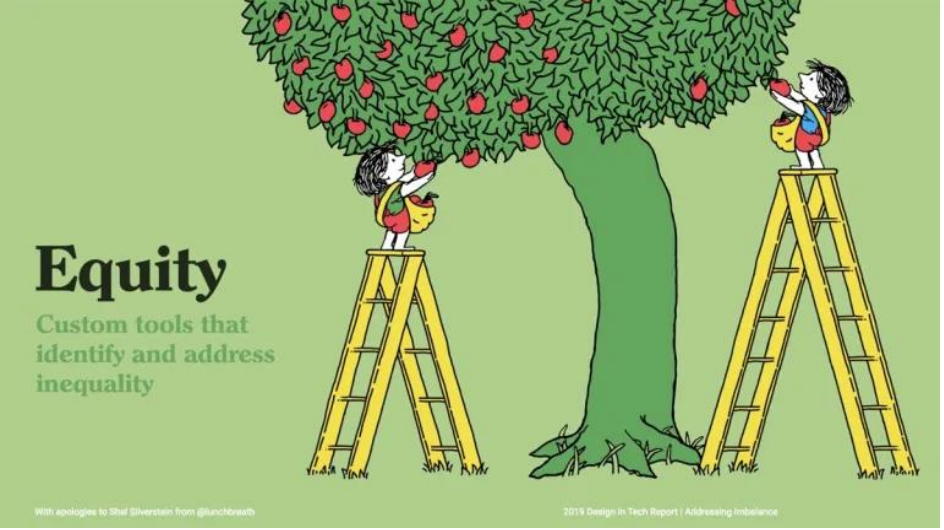
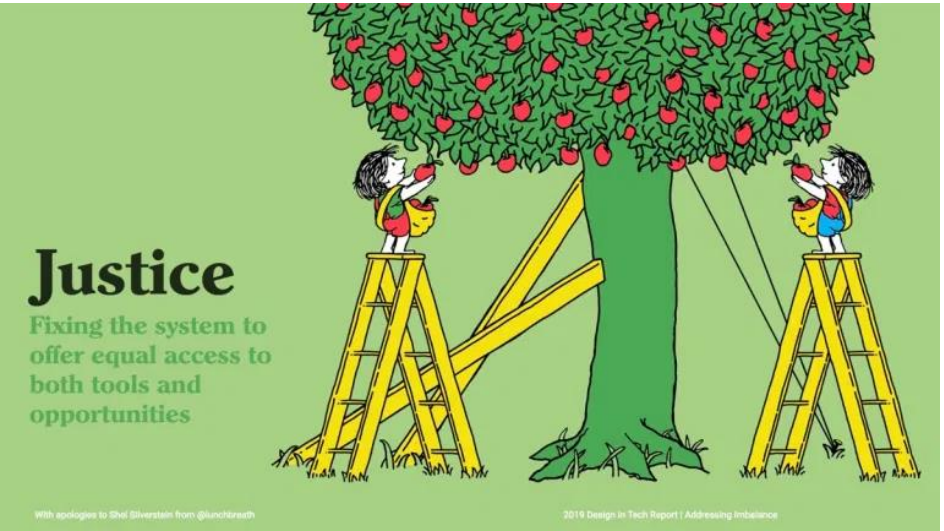




Housing Affordability:

- Understand the needs faced by communities of color surrounding housing affordability
- Identify “custom ladders” or tools the city can provide (Equity)
- Identify “scaffolding” or foundational policy the city can implement (Justice)

The majority of Sandy Springs' minority communities reside in apartments.

This reality creates challenges in ensuring diversity and inclusion for the following reasons:

1. **The negative connotation of the term "affordable housing"**
2. **The lack of access apartment residents have to city communication and bilingual services.**
    - The *Northside Neighbor* and *Sandy Springs Reporter* are delivered to the driveway of every home, but none are delivered to the 52% of the city's population in apartments.
    - Sandy Springs Council of Neighborhoods-- for HOA Neighborhoods only.
    - 15% of Sandy Springs' residents are Spanish-speaking and there are currently no bilingual services offered to them to engage in the city.
3. **Zoning-** 85% of the city's residential land is not zoned for apartments, but for detached, single-family homes.
4. **Incentives to redevelop older complexes-** The city offers incentives to developers to redevelop areas that are considered of lower value, including apartment complexes, making minority communities vulnerable to displacement.
    - Example of Displacement: 2015 Gateway Project. Table:

Apartment Neighborhood	Area	Year	units	Residents	White	Black	Asian	Latino	Other
Versailles	Gateway	2014	172	597	50	88	5	440	14
Chastain	Gateway	2014	264	773	64	114	7	570	18
Avistele at Andalusia	Gateway	2016	308	855	158	153	41	478	25
Belle Isle	Gateway	2017	9	31	-	31	-	-	-
Provence North	City Springs	2015	112	333	60	59	11	198	5
		Totals---->	865	2,589	332	445	64	1,686	62
		# of people /apt	3.0	100%	13%	17%	2%	65%	2%
				100%	**13%**	**87%**			
				Total	**White**	**Non-White**			

Recommendations in these four areas:

First Steps + End Goals

Stigma

Communication

Zoning

Redevelopment

Identify solutions that do not disenfranchise one group of residents over another.

Educate and Motivate the Public

(Stigma)

Debunk the myths that create hesitation to embrace housing affordability.

- Myth #1- Apartment residents are the source for the city's crime.
- Myth #2- Apartment residents are the source for the city's low achievement in schools.
- Myth #3- Apartment residents are the source for the city's traffic.
    - Limited housing affordability actually causes more traffic congestion:
      "As more workers are forced to live elsewhere in the region, traffic congestion will likely worsen as the number of incommuters increases."
      -Sandy Springs Housing Needs Assessment, p. 65

Educate and Motivate the Public

(Stigma)

Build the public will to create the political will to embrace housing affordability.

Many residents are still unaware of the magnitude of the housing affordability crisis in Sandy Springs. Until there is more pressure placed on the city by its residents, the city is less likely to make the necessary changes needed to establish housing equity in the city.

The Sandy Springs Housing Needs Assessment concluded that "currently, a worker earning $50K annually can only afford 17% of rental apartments and 8% of for-sale homes in Sandy Springs" (p. 12). In addition to service/essential industry employees, teachers, nurses, first responders and many other crucial professions struggle to find housing in the city.

This reality should and will fuel public engagement on behalf of these valuable sectors of the community.

Increase Access to City Publications of Record

(Communication)

Deliver the *Northside Neighbor* and *Sandy Springs Reporter* to apartment complexes.

- First Step: a metal rack with a stack of newspapers in the leasing office of each complex, just as exists in select restaurants like Sandy Springs Diner and Egg Harbor Cafe.

- End Goal: at the doorstep of every apartment, clearing away every obstacle for renters as is done for homeowners.

Increase Access to City Publications of Record

(Communication)

Offer translation services to the greatest extent possible.

- First Step: Make major documents such as city plans and public surveys available in Spanish. Partner with Spanish-speaking organizations to help educate the Spanish-speaking community that these resources exist and how they might request them.

- End Goal: Implement translation technology for public meetings when requested. Technology such as Wordly allows for translation of meetings in real time and in 15 languages without the use of a human translator.

Enact Anti-Displacement Housing Policies

(Zoning)

Rewrite zoning policies to allow for more housing affordability.

- Allow for more land zoned for multifamily residential housing.

- Allow residents and organizations to creatively tackle the housing affordability problem themselves.
  - Allow for apartments to be built over garages in single family neighborhoods.
  - Allow for projects similar to those underway in other parts of Atlanta such as Atlanta First United Methodist Church (building housing on their parking lot)

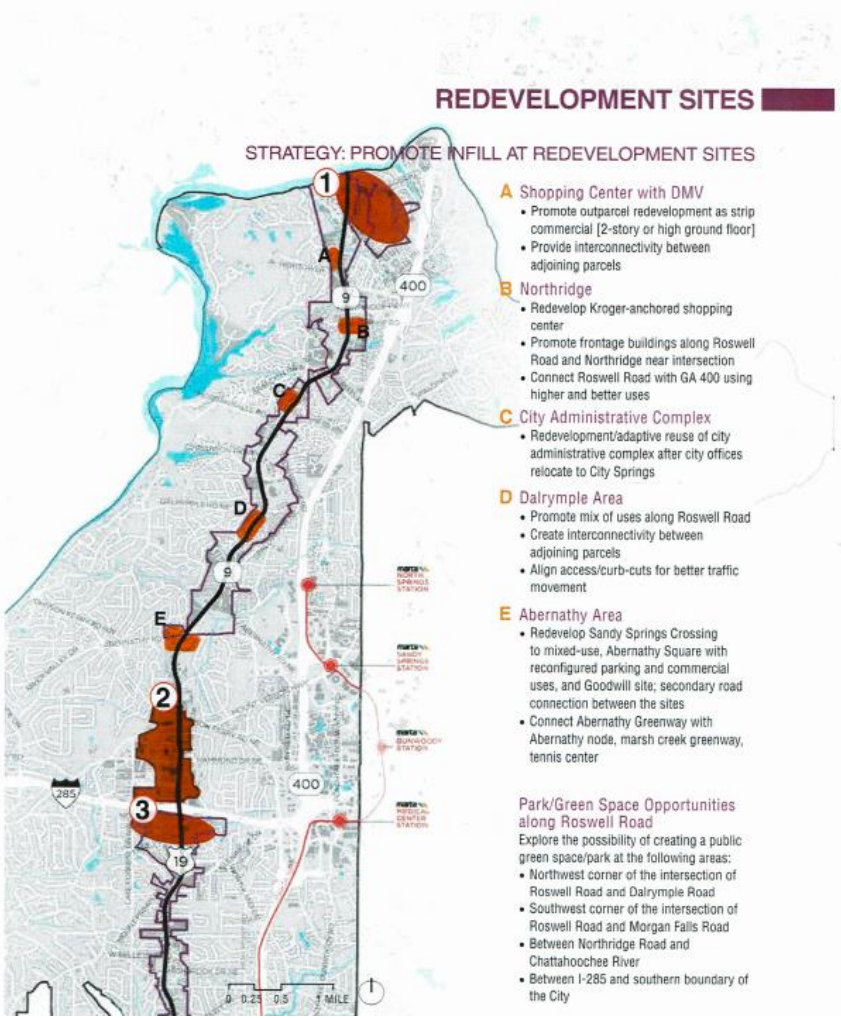
Hire Experts to Protect Renters from Displacement Caused by Redevelopment

(Redevelopment)

Hire a city staff person who exclusively oversees redevelopment from a Racial Equity & Housing Affordability lens and who prioritizes preserving existing apartment buildings (renovating over razing).

- "Margaret Stagmeier, an Atlanta landlord and managing partner at Tristar Real Estate Investment, said that no one strategy is paramount, and that preserving affordable housing is best done with a combination of tactics. The crucial task is convincing municipalities to support renovating rather than razing and rebuilding apartments, which she said costs twice as much. 'I keep telling everyone, 'Don't tear them down, all of them can be saved,' ' she said. 'It doesn't matter if they're burned out, full of black mold or they have plumbing issues, you can rebuild them.' -*Washington Post*, "Preserving Affordable Housing"

REDEVELOPMENT SITES



A Shopping Center with DMV
- Promote outparcel redevelopment as strip commercial [2-story or high ground floor]
- Provide interconnectivity between adjoining parcels

B Northridge
- Redevelop Kroger-anchored shopping center
- Promote frontage buildings along Roswell Road and Northridge near intersection
- Connect Roswell Road with GA 400 using higher and better uses

C City Administrative Complex
- Redevelopment/adaptive reuse of city administrative complex after city offices relocate to City Springs

D Dalrymple Area
- Promote mix of uses along Roswell Road
- Create interconnectivity between adjoining parcels
- Align access/curb-cuts for better traffic movement

E Abernathy Area
- Redevelop Sandy Springs Crossing to mixed-use, Abernathy Square with reconfigured parking and commercial uses, and Goodwill site; secondary road connection between the sites
- Connect Abernathy Greenway with Abernathy node, marsh creek greenway, tennis center

Park/Green Space Opportunities along Roswell Road

Explore the possibility of creating a public green space/park at the following areas:
- Northwest corner of the intersection of Roswell Road and Dalrymple Road
- Southwest corner of the intersection of Roswell Road and Morgan Falls Road
- Between Northridge Road and Chattahoochee River
- Between I-285 and southern boundary of the City

Hire Experts to Protect Renters from Displacement Caused by Redevelopment

(Redevelopment)

Continue studying Housing Affordability

- First Step Already Taken in 2020: thorough Sandy Springs Housing Needs Assessment

- Next Step: Reinstate Phase 2 of Housing Needs Assessment to review the need for housing policies that distribute housing affordability throughout the city and not clustered in one area. In December 2020, a request for a second housing study was put forth by Kristin Smith, Assistant City Manager. The request, however, was suspended in January 2021.

- End Goal: Establish a protocol requiring a Housing Affordability Impact Study of an area before it is redeveloped.

Identifying and Incentivizing Developers that will Act on Behalf of Diversity and Inclusion

(Redevelopment)

First Step: Incentivize developers to allocate a portion of their units for housing affordability.

End Goal: Follow the lead of cities like Charlotte, North Carolina, which has created a fund to buy old complexes ("NOAHs"), renovate them, and keep rents steady while still turning a modest profit.