



UP2030 URBAN PLANNING & DESIGN READY FOR 2030

**SPATIAL
JUSTICE
BENCHMARKING
WORKSHOP
GUIDE**

ROCCO, GONÇALVES, LOPEZ, DĄBROWSKI

UP2030

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UP2030 SPATIAL PLANNING & DESIGN READY FOR 2030



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This Spatial Justice Handbook has been developed within the framework of the UP2030 Horizon project, generously funded by the European Union. As a cornerstone contribution to work package three (WP3), this manual aligns with the project's overarching goals of enhancing innovation and advancing spatial justice in urban planning and design by 2030. Furthermore, it is a complementary resource to the Spatial Justice Benchmarking tool developed by the Delft University of Technology (TU Delft). This integration ensures that the manual not only provides theoretical insights and practical guidance for advancing Spatial Justice in sustainability transitions but also aligns with cutting-edge research and tools designed to measure and improve spatial justice outcomes. Through this collaborative effort, the handbook aims to empower practitioners, scholars, and policymakers with the knowledge and strategies needed to create more equitable, inclusive, and just urban environments, reflecting the shared commitment of the UP2030 Horizon project and its contributors to fostering Spatial Justice on a global scale.



COLOPHON

SPATIAL JUSTICE BENCHMARKING WORKSHOP GUIDE

This workshop invites participants to step inside five fictional cities and interrogate their promises. Using the Spatial Justice Benchmarking Tool, groups uncover hidden assumptions, debate what fairness truly means, and learn how visions shape power, opportunity, and recognition. It is a playful exercise with serious implications.

KEYWORDS: SPATIAL JUSTICE, URBAN TRANSITIONS TO SUSTAINABILITY, JUST TRANSITIONS, CITIZEN PARTICIPATION, GOVERNANCE, SPATIAL PLANNING & STRATEGY

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BOOK DESIGNED BY ROBERTO ROCCO

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UP2030



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1. WHAT IS UP2030 AND WHAT IS THE ROLE OF SPATIAL JUSTICE IN THE PROJECT

UP2030 is a Horizon Europe project that supports European cities in accelerating their transition towards climate neutrality through urban planning, design, and governance innovation. Aligned with the Mission for Climate-Neutral and Smart Cities, the project works with 11 pilot cities to move beyond project-based climate action towards integrated, strategy-led transformation pathways that connect climate neutrality with liveability, resilience, and equity.

A defining feature of UP2030 is its explicit integration of spatial justice as a guiding principle for climate action. Spatial justice is understood as the relationship between spatial planning, social vulnerability, and unequal exposure to environmental risks and benefits. In UP2030, this is operationalised primarily through distributive and procedural dimensions. Distributive justice focuses on how emissions, climate risks, infrastructure investments, and ecosystem services are spatially allocated, particularly at neighbourhood scale. Procedural justice addresses how decisions are made, who participates, and how governance arrangements enable or constrain equitable outcomes.

UP2030 implements these principles through Living Labs and Learning and Action Alliances, where municipalities, researchers, citizens, and stakeholders co-produce visions, implementation roadmaps, and neighbourhood-scale prototypes. The project combines digital planning tools, climate modelling, participatory methods, and capacity building to support inclusive decision-making and city-wide upscale. Particular attention is given to vulnerable and “left-behind” neighbourhoods, ensuring that climate neutrality contributes to social inclusion rather than deepening existing inequalities.

In UP2030, spatial justice is not a parallel objective but a condition for a legitimate, effective, and durable climate-neutral transition.

Visit the project's website at:
<https://up2030-he.eu/>

2. THE TU DELFT CENTRE FOR THE JUST CITY

The TU Delft Centre for the Just City is a knowledge hub dedicated to advancing more equitable urban futures by examining the spatial, institutional, and political conditions that shape cities. Embedded in the Faculty of Architecture and the Built Environment of the Delft University of Technology, the Centre integrates research, teaching, and public engagement to explore how urban planning and design can promote fairness, dignity, and democratic participation in contexts of rapid urban change.

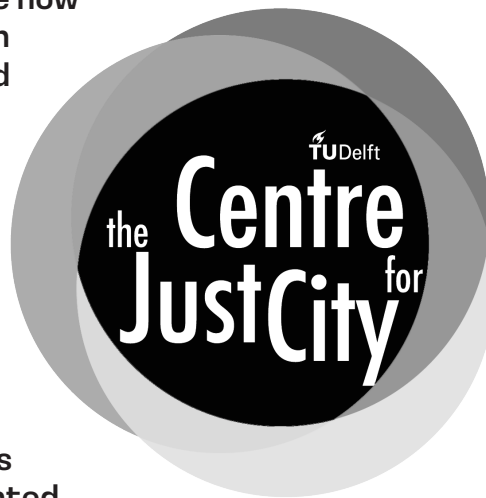
The Centre's work builds on international scholarship in spatial justice, democratic governance, critical urbanism, and public policy, with a strong emphasis on applied and practice-oriented research. It recognises that cities are structured by unequal power relations and that planning decisions play a central role in either reproducing or challenging social and spatial inequalities. Its agenda is organised around distributive, procedural, and recognitional dimensions of justice, grounded in learning from diverse urban contexts.

The Centre coordinates a wide range of activities, including the annual Planning and Design for the Just City Summer School, collaborative teaching across the TU Delft Urbanism curriculum, and research partnerships with municipalities, civil society organisations, and international institutions. Cities are approached as laboratories for democratic innovation, using co-design, participatory workshops, spatial diagnostics, and field-based inquiry.

A distinctive feature of the Centre is its commitment to developing practical tools for planners and policymakers, including benchmarking instruments, participato-

ry frameworks, and evaluation methods. Through initiatives such as UP2030, the Centre contributes to translating spatial justice from theory into actionable planning practice.

Visit the Centre at: <https://just-city.org/>



3. THE SPATIAL JUSTICE PACKAGE

The Spatial Justice Package developed by TU Delft for UP2030 is a structured portfolio of conceptual, analytical, and practical tools designed to support cities in embedding justice considerations into their climate-neutral transition pathways. The package is

not a single instrument but an integrated ecosystem that helps municipal teams and stakeholders reflect on fairness, diagnose inequalities, engage communities, and adjust planning processes in more transparent, inclusive, and accountable directions. All tools are rooted in the Spatial Justice Conceptual Model (SJCM), which provides the theoretical and operational backbone of the entire package.

The Spatial Justice Conceptual Model (SJCM) is the starting point. It clarifies the three central dimensions of spatial justice—distributive, procedural, and recognition justice—and translates them into nine concrete components. This breakdown makes spatial justice accessible to practitioners, policymakers, and citizens, moving it beyond theory into an actionable framework that informs the rest of the package.

Building on this model, **the Spatial Justice Matrix (SJM)** offers a structured set of “criteria, recommendations, and references for Spatial Justice.” It is a practitioner-oriented guide that links each SJCM component to practical questions, considerations, and directions for improving justice outcomes. The matrix supports cities in interpreting the conceptual model and provides an entry point for incorporating justice concerns into planning, design, governance, and implementation.



The Spatial Justice Benchmarking Tool (SJBT) is the participatory evaluation tool within the package. It facilitates structured discussion by enabling users to “evaluate, discuss, and reflect on Spatial Justice considerations” in urban visions, policies, or plans. Through qualitative scoring and debate, the SJBT ex-

poses how different stakeholders perceive fairness, identifies gaps or contradictions in local strategies, and generates a justice profile that can be compared across iterations or departments. The citizen-friendly version used in this workshop is one mode of this tool.

The Justice Readiness Level (JRL) complements this by offering a “visual tool for comparing and monitoring justice-readiness levels.” It does not assess whether a city is already just, but whether it possesses the institutional structures, governance habits, and planning capacities required to support just transitions. The JRL helps cities understand where they stand on the path toward justice-oriented transformation and what institutional improvements may be required.

The Citizen Voice tool adds a participatory data-collection layer. Described as a “digital survey for collecting spatial data from stakeholders,” it allows municipalities to gather resident perspectives on inequalities, access barriers, recognition issues, and institutional behaviour. Citizen Voice feeds into other tools, particularly the SJBT and SJM, ensuring that lived experience informs the justice assessment.

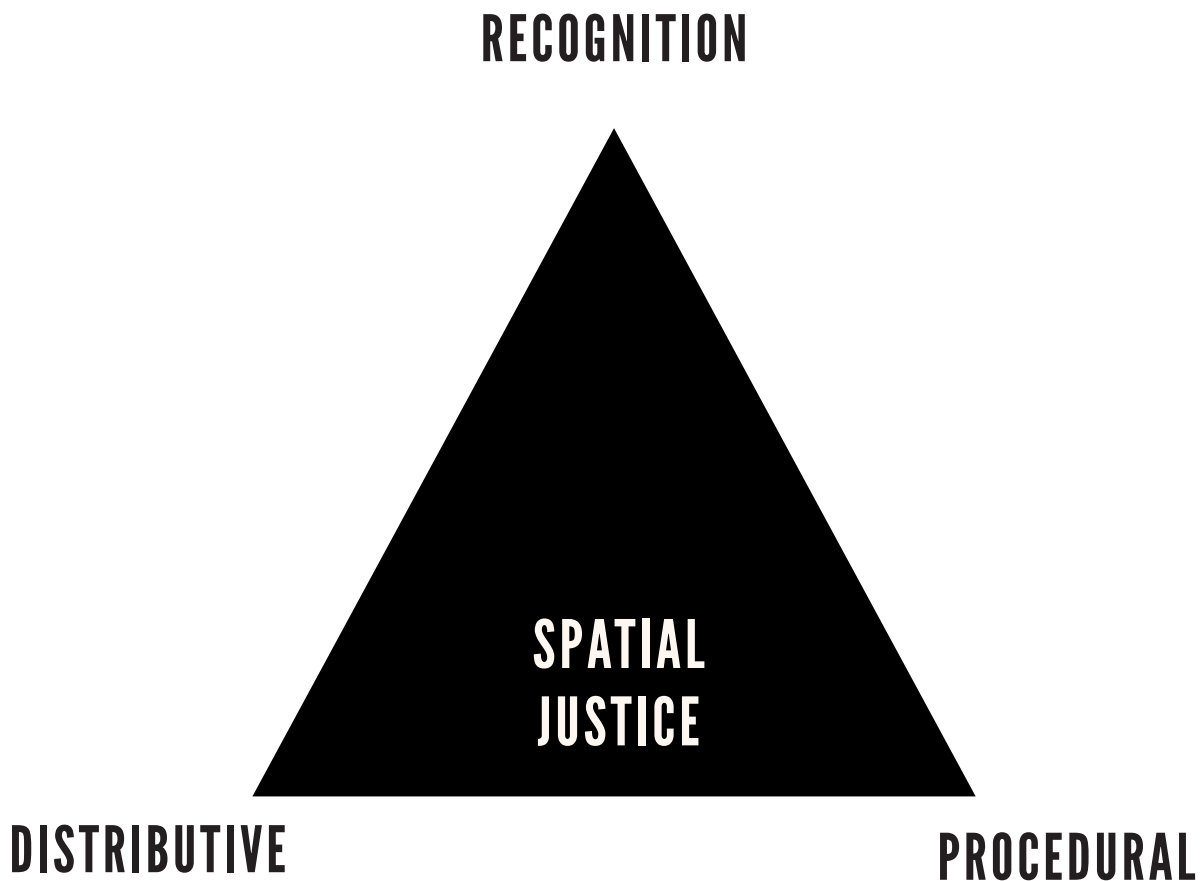
To consolidate and translate all these elements into an accessible reference, TU Delft developed the **Spatial Justice Handbook**, a “comprehensive guide for applying Spatial

Justice in urban research and practice.” It integrates the conceptual foundations, tools, examples, and methodological steps needed to support cities at different stages of the UP2030 process.

Finally, the package includes integrative and meta-level resources: the Strategic Planning Cycle, which “outlines the planning phases to integrate Spatial Justice” across the transition process; the Catalogue of UP2030 Tools and Catalogue of SJ Tools, which organise the wider ecosystem of project instruments; and the Special Number (PPR), a publication consolidating project findings and methodological innovations.

Taken together, the Spatial Justice Package equips cities with a coherent set of resources to think, measure, debate, and act on spatial justice throughout their climate-neutral journey.

4. WHY INTEGRATE SPATIAL JUSTICE INTO URBAN PLANNING AND POLICY MAKING?¹



Integrating justice into urban planning and policymaking is crucial for creating equitable, socially sustainable, and resilient cities that cater to the needs of all citizens, thereby achieving true sustainability. By 'true sustainability', we mean the simultaneous occurrence of sustainability's three crucial dimensions (social, environmental and economic), which are mutually dependent and mutually reinforcing.

Justice is a human institution. It serves as

both a moral and legal framework that seeks to balance individual rights with the common good, ensuring that all members of a society have the opportunity to lead fulfilling and prosperous lives. Central to this conception of justice is the notion of fairness, where each person receives what they are due, whether in terms of resources, opportunities, or protection.

At the heart of the idea of justice lies a profound question: How can we live together? And how can we coexist harmoniously with our planet, ensuring that every being leads a flourishing life while maintaining the Earth's natural balance? In light of our current unsustainable practices, we are also compelled

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to ask: How can we revolutionise our interactions with our cities, our planet, and one another, to nurture a world where both human and ecological well-being are realised?

We explore the idea of Spatial Justice, which examines the spatial ontology of social processes and their outcomes. Everything happens somewhere. Space plays a definitive role (albeit not a deterministic one) in shaping social processes. It is not only about the distribution of burdens and benefits in our life together (the outcomes), but also about recognising the diverse needs and trajectories of those affected, as well as the decision-making processes that shape our spaces (the processes).

Spatial justice seeks to address inequalities that lead to disparities in how groups experience their environment, advocating for a more equitable distribution of spaces and resources that foster community well-being and inclusivity. It also supports more democratic and inclusive processes to achieve this.

Spatial Justice encompasses three fundamental, co-constitutive dimensions: distributive, procedural, and recognition justice, which we briefly describe here.

Distributive Justice concerns the equitable distribution of resources, benefits, and burdens of our lives in society across different geographical areas or communities. It strives to ensure that no group or locality is systematically disadvantaged in accessing essential services, amenities, or economic opportunities. Distributive justice addresses issues such as the fair allocation of public goods, infrastructure, and environmental quality to prevent spatial inequalities.

Procedural Justice focuses on the fairness of decision-making processes related to urban development and planning. It emphasises inclusive governance, participation, transparency and accountability. In this dimension, a wide range of stakeholders should have a voice in shaping policies, regulations, and development plans, ensuring that decision-making procedures are open, account-

able, and considerate of diverse perspectives, with particular attention to the pleas of disadvantaged or historically oppressed communities.

In Recognition Justice, we acknowledge the importance of cultural identity, historical trajectories, and the specific needs and aspirations of various social groups. Recognition justice emphasises respecting the rights and values of marginalised or minority communities, acknowledging their unique experiences, and addressing historical injustices. It also addresses past injustices and trajectories of oppression. Recognition justice seeks to create inclusive urban environments that validate and support the diverse identities, needs and aspirations of citizens. In a way, it is impossible to have procedural justice without recognition justice.

These three dimensions are integral and essential to Spatial Justice. What we mean by this is that although those dimensions can be understood separately, they are mutually reinforcing and necessary for true and sustainable Spatial Justice to exist. Recognition that does not lead to parity of participation (Fraser, 1999) and fairness in the material distribution of the burdens and benefits of life in society is but a symbolic exercise. In the evolving discourse about how to steer our cities and communities towards a fair and sustainable future, the concept of spatial justice emerges as both a 'meaning-giver' and a 'sense-maker' for urban development policy and projects. It does so by providing a critical lens through which the spatial dimensions of justice and equity can be understood and addressed. Urban space is not neutral; it reflects and reproduces social inequalities and power dynamics. By applying spatial justice principles, urban planners and policy-makers can recognise and analyse the ways in which urban spaces either perpetuate inequality or contribute to more equitable outcomes.

Giving meaning refers to the act of assigning significance or value to something. It involves imbuing a person, object, or situation with a deeper, often subjective, interpretation that resonates on a personal or collec-

tive level. Spatial justice, as a ‘meaning-giver,’ helps us collectively reflect, discuss, identify, and articulate the underlying values and goals that should guide urban development. Spatial justice provides a more profound framework for understanding the complex interactions between space, society, and the environment. It helps us reflect on how urban policies and projects impact different communities and individuals, particularly those who are marginalised or disadvantaged. This perspective gives meaning to collective, public action, fostering a holistic approach to urban development, one that considers the spatial implications of policy decisions and seeks to create environments that are socially inclusive, empowering and regenerative.

Making sense pertains to making something comprehensible or logical. It involves explaining or arranging information in a way that makes it clear and understandable to others. When you give sense to a statement or an idea, you are clarifying it, making it reasonable or understandable in the context it is presented. As a “sense-maker”, spatial justice encourages a systematic value-based rethinking of urban development based on a clear three-dimensional framework that addresses multiple aspects simultaneously, namely the distribution of burdens and benefits of urban development, who has access to urban resources and goods and how urban planning and design can either exacerbate or mitigate social disparities. Doing so gives sense to urban policy and projects, ensuring they are aligned with the broader goals of equity and inclusion.

Spatial justice, of course, is merely a concept, and it is challenging to implement. However, it is also a powerful idea that helps us give meaning to and make sense of our activities as planners, designers, activists, decision makers, and may animate others to join us in the struggle for better cities. While these ideas may seem desperately naïve in the face of the harsh realities of city administration, with multiple challenges and political obstacles, we argue that meaning-giving and sense-making are by no means trivial pursuits. In fact, capturing the imagination

of our fellow citizens is crucial for effective collective action to combat complex societal challenges.

All in all, concepts such as Justice and the Market are not ‘natural’; they are human creations that allow us to live with each other. The imperative to embed justice into these processes’ stems from a profound understanding that cities are not just physical spaces but also social environments where inequities can be perpetuated or dismantled. Urban areas are mosaics of diverse communities with unique needs, aspirations, and challenges. Without a justice-oriented approach, urban planning and policy-making risk exacerbating social inequalities, allowing environmental degradation and economic disparities, and ultimately undermining the urban social fabric of cities.

The integration of justice dimensions into urban planning and policymaking is not only a moral imperative but also a practical necessity for addressing complex urban challenges that require collective imagination and collective action. Cities are at the forefront of confronting climate change, migration, economic shifts, and technological advancements. Justice-oriented planning ensures that the benefits and burdens of urban development are shared equitably, increasing social sustainability and making cities more resilient to shocks and stresses. Furthermore, a justice-based approach can drive innovation and sustainability by fostering environments where diverse ideas and solutions are welcomed and where social equity is seen as integral to economic prosperity and environmental stewardship.

In the run-of-the-mill toiling of planners, justice may lose some of its appeal as a utopian concept. Yet, it is time we take justice off its scholarly and judicial pedestals and integrate it into spatial planning more vigorously. It is imperative to undertake this endeavour to render the concept accessible and practical. By translating complex theoretical frameworks into practical applications, such a handbook can serve as a critical tool for policymakers, planners, and practitioners. This effort not only democratises the knowl-

edge but also ensures that spatial justice transcends academic discourse, facilitating tangible interventions and fostering equitable spatial outcomes. Thus, the potential risk is outweighed by the significant benefit of operationalising spatial justice to address real-world inequalities.

According to the great Indian economist and philosopher of justice Amartya Sen, there is no perfect justice, nor is a perfectly just world achievable. Sen argues that the pursuit of a perfectly just society is not only unattainable but also potentially misguided. Instead, he emphasises the importance of addressing and reducing existing injustices incrementally, suggesting that we should focus on making societies more just over time through practical measures and continuous improvement (Sen, 2009). This approach aligns with the idea that justice should be pursued as incremental improvement, rather than as an absolute ideal.

What we should aspire to is making cities a little more just tomorrow than they were yesterday. However, the work needs to be done today.

In conclusion, integrating justice into urban planning and policymaking is crucial for building cities that are not only physically well-designed, but also socially sustainable. This approach requires a commitment to understanding and addressing the multidimensional and mutually reinforcing aspects of justice—distributive, procedural, and recognitional—to ensure that urban development promotes the well-being of all, humans and non-humans. By doing so, cities can become places of care, resilience, and solidarity, capable of meeting current and future challenges.

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5. INTRODUCTION TO THE WORKSHOP

SPATIAL JUSTICE BENCHMARKING

This workshop introduces participants to the Spatial Justice Benchmarking Tool developed by TU Delft for the UP2030 project. The session invites small groups to engage critically with a set of fictional city visions that illustrate different strengths, weaknesses, and blind spots in climate-transition planning. By evaluating these visions against the nine components of spatial justice, participants learn how justice considerations can be made explicit, debated, and improved in real urban strategies.

The exercise is intentionally dialogic. Instead of treating justice as a checklist, the workshop creates conditions for participants to explore contested interpretations of fairness, inclusion, and recognition. Each fictional city captures a particular planning culture, from overly technocratic to heavily participatory, from bureaucratically paralysed to subtly authoritarian, so that groups must read carefully, negotiate meaning, and justify their evaluations.

Using the citizen-friendly version of the Benchmarking Tool or the more detailed Policymakers' Version, groups score their assigned vision, plot results on the Spatial Justice Radar, and reflect on how different emphases shape the city's transition trajectory. The goal is not to arrive at perfect scores but to reveal how planning narratives encode assumptions about power, access, and representation, and how these assumptions affect policy legitimacy.

The workshop closes with a collective discussion comparing the five city profiles, highlighting how justice can be strengthened through better visioning, clearer governance commitments, and more inclusive spatial strategies. This

exercise prepares participants to apply the tool to their own municipal contexts and supports the broader UP2030 objective of embedding spatial justice into climate-neutrality pathways.

6. SPATIAL JUSTICE BENCHMARKING WORKSHOP SCRIPT (2 HOURS)

Using the Five Fictional City Visions + the Citizen-Friendly SJ Evaluation Board (Alternatively, you can use your own city's vision).

Tools: Vision statements, evaluation board printouts, sticky notes, markers, printed "leaked memos" (optional drama booster)

00:00–00:10 — Welcome & Introduction (10 min)

Facilitator script:

"Today we will explore how different visions of a city express (or fail to express) spatial justice. You will work in groups of five. Each group receives one fictional city vision. Your task is to read it, debate it, and evaluate it using the Spatial Justice Benchmarking Tool (citizen version)."

Show slide summarising the nine components

(from page 1 of the board: FAIR SHARE, FAIR ACCESS, FAIR ABILITY TO SHAPE SERVICES & SPACES, FAIR VOICE, FAIR PROCESSES, FAIR INSTITUTIONS, FAIR RIGHTS, FAIR SUPPORT FOR COMMUNITIES, FAIR RESPECT FOR DIVERSITY)

Remind participants:

"We are scoring the vision—not the city, not the plan, not the staff. Just what is written."

00:10–00:15 — Group Allocation & Materials (5 min)

Each group receives:

- One city vision (Waterdam, Klompendam, Mosselbroek, Regelspoort, Ordewijk)
- The evaluation board (A3)
- Sticky notes
- Pens

(Optional: the leaked internal memo for dramatic effect)

00:15–00:30 — Silent Reading & First Impressions (15 min)

Participants silently read the assigned vision.

Prompt questions on screen:

1. What does this city seem to care about?
2. Who appears in the text, and who doesn't?
3. What assumptions are hidden behind the tone?
4. What contradictions do you notice?

5. What feels strong or promising?
6. What feels vague, missing, or suspicious?

Groups briefly share first impressions.

00:30–01:10 — Component-by-Component Scoring (40 min)

Each group moves through the nine components, scoring each from 1 (low) to 5 (high) as defined on the board ().

The facilitator should circulate and push groups with provocative questions such as:

DISTRIBUTIVE

- **FAIR SHARE:** Does the vision specify where benefits go? Or just nice words?
- **FAIR ACCESS:** Are transport or opportunities really accessible, or just “optimised”?
- **FAIR ABILITY:** Do residents have agency, or only consultation?

PROCEDURAL

- **FAIR VOICE:** Are people allowed to influence outcomes, or only give input?
- **FAIR PROCESSES:** Are institutions flexible, or hiding behind procedures?
- **FAIR INSTITUTIONS:** Is transparency claimed or demonstrated?

RECOGNITION

- **FAIR RIGHTS:** Are vulnerable groups named or erased?
- **FAIR SUPPORT FOR COMMUNITIES:** Are community networks acknowledged?
- **FAIR RESPECT FOR DIVERSITY:** Is diversity real, or an ornamental paragraph?

Encourage disagreement inside groups.

The point is debate, not consensus.

Groups write sticky notes for each component with:

- Why they scored the way they did
- What evidence in the text supports the score
- What is missing

01:10–01:25 — Plotting the Triangle (15 min)

Each group calculates the median for each dimension (distributive, procedural, recognition). Using a thick marker, they plot the scores on the radial diagram (page 2 of the board) and connect them into a triangle.

Facilitator commentary:

“Your triangle is a portrait of the city’s priorities. Where is it strong? Where is it weak? Is it balanced or lopsided?”

01:25–01:45 — Cross-Group Debate (20 min)

Groups pin their boards on the wall.

They walk around, comparing:

- Klompendam’s participatory excess
- Ordewijk’s soft authoritarianism
- Regelspoort’s bureaucratic fog
- Mosselbroek’s ambiguity
- Waterdam’s partial justice

Debate prompts:

1. Which city produced the most just triangle?
2. Which city hides injustice behind nice language?
3. Which dimension is most commonly ignored across all cities?
4. Which components sparked the greatest group argument?
5. Which visions are actually dangerous if taken at face value?

(Optional drama: hand out leaked memos and ask if scores still hold.)

01:45–02:00 — Plenary Reflection & Closing (15 min)

Final reflection questions:

1. What surprised you about your scoring?
2. Which justice dimensions were hardest to evaluate?
3. What is one thing that every real city should add to its vision?
4. How might this tool change the way you read planning documents?
5. Which fictional city reminded you a bit too much of reality?

Facilitator closing line:

“Spatial justice is not what cities say—it is what their words allow us to see, question, and demand.”

7. USING THE SPATIAL JUSTICE BENCHMARKING TOOL BOARD

The Spatial Justice Benchmarking Tool Board helps participants assess how a city vision addresses fairness across nine components of spatial justice. It is a discussion-based method rather than a technical assessment. Each group reads a vision statement, reflects on how it speaks to distributive, procedural, and recognitional justice, and then scores each component on a scale from low to high consideration. The tool guides users to justify their interpretations, compare perspectives, and identify gaps or contradictions in the text.

To use the tool, groups move through the components one by one, discussing evidence from the vision and placing their score on the board. They write comments or recommendations on sticky notes and place them under the relevant component. Once scoring is complete, groups calculate the median for each justice dimension and plot these values on the triangular radar. This creates a visual profile that reveals strengths, weaknesses, and imbalances in the city's justice orientation.

The aim is not to reach consensus or produce a definitive judgment. The tool is designed to spark critical conversation, reveal hidden assumptions, and help participants engage more deeply with how justice is framed or overlooked in urban transition narratives.



Spatial Justice Benchmarking Tool (Policymakers)



The Spatial Justice Benchmarking Tool (SJBT) is a qualitative evaluation tool designed to benchmark how justice considerations are addressed in urban governance and planning at the scale of a city or region. It supports evaluation and structured reflection. The tool defines levels of justice, ranging from Low to Embedded, by assigning a score that reflects the degree to which assessed elements meet the components of the Spatial Justice Conceptual Model.

The tool is intended to spark discussion and reflection based on the three co-constitutive dimensions of Spatial Justice: distribution, procedure, and recognition. Using this lens makes it possible to pay closer attention to how benefits and burdens are redistributed, how people are engaged in policy and decision-making processes, and how the needs and aspirations of disadvantaged individuals, groups, and communities are recognised.

How to use this tool:

1. Start by clarifying what is being assessed, such as a vision, policy, or project.
2. Review each column on the right-hand side. Each column represents a component of the Spatial Justice Conceptual Model (SJCM).
3. Discuss how well the assessed material aligns with each component and assign a rating from Low to Embedded.
4. Use post-it notes to record ideas, observations, or recommendations. Place these directly on the relevant component for reference.

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Download the online version of the Spatial Justice Benchmarking Tool



Download the Spatial Justice Handbook



Download the Spatial Justice Conceptual Model



DISTRIBUTIVE DIMENSION

	DISTRIBUTIVE DIMENSION		
EMBEDDED	The plan/project/ vision clearly addresses how benefits and burdens are shared across the city. It considers all three dimensions of Spatial Justice. This is shown by explicitly stating what is distributed, how decisions are made, and who is affected.	The plan/project/ vision clearly addresses access to benefits and burdens across the city. All dimensions of Spatial Justice are considered, with explicit attention to what is provided, how access is organised, and who is affected.	The plan/project/ vision clearly addresses the appropriation of benefits and burdens across the city. All dimensions of Spatial Justice are considered, with explicit attention to what is appropriated, how this occurs, and by whom.
GROWING	The plan shows emerging attention to how benefits and burdens are shared across the city. More than one dimension of Spatial Justice is considered, with some clarity on what is redistributed and how.	The plan shows growing attention to access to benefits and burdens across the city. More than one dimension of Spatial Justice is considered, with some clarity on what is made accessible and how.	The plan shows growing attention to the appropriation of benefits and burdens across the city. More than one dimension of Spatial Justice is considered, with some clarity on what is open to appropriation and how.
BASIC	The plan shows initial consideration of how benefits and burdens are distributed across the city. It identifies where services or resources are allocated, without further detail on how or for whom.	The plan shows basic consideration of access to benefits and burdens across the city. It identifies where or which services or resources are addressed, without clarifying how access is ensured or for whom.	The plan shows basic consideration of the appropriation of benefits and burdens across the city. It identifies where or which materials or services are open to change, without clarifying how this occurs or who can appropriate them.
STARTING	The plan expresses a general concern about how benefits and burdens are distributed across the city, without specifying actions, mechanisms, or affected groups.	The plan expresses a general concern about access to benefits and burdens across the city, without specifying locations, mechanisms, or affected groups.	The plan expresses a general concern about the appropriation of benefits and burdens across the city, with early acknowledgement of how people use and programme spaces, but without clear mechanisms or responsibilities.
LOW	The plan does not address how benefits and burdens are distributed across the city.	The plan does not address access to benefits and burdens by citizens across the city.	The plan does not address the appropriation of benefits and burdens by citizens across the city.
	COMPONENT 1	COMPONENT 2	COMPONENT 3
	FAIR ALLOCATION This component focuses on ensuring that resources are fairly distributed to address inequality. It concerns the material or service provision of public goods, basic services, cultural goods, economic opportunities, and healthy environments.	IMPROVE ACCESS TO OPPORTUNITIES This component highlights efforts to enhance people's ability to reach and benefit from key opportunities. It concerns affordability, availability, connectivity, etc.	EMPOWER PEOPLE TO ADAPT AND ADOPT This component emphasizes empowering individuals and groups to actively shape and utilise available resources. It concerns the design, programming, and openness to people's agency.

PROCEDURAL DIMENSION

The plan/project/vision clearly addresses how people are engaged in decision-making processes. All dimensions of Spatial Justice are considered, with explicit attention to what processes are used, where engagement takes place, how it is organised, and who is involved.

The plan shows growing attention to how people are engaged in decision-making processes. More than one dimension of Spatial Justice is considered, with some clarity on how engagement occurs and who or where it involves.

The plan shows basic consideration of how people are engaged in decision-making processes (such as policies, regulations, or standards). It specifies either how engagement takes place or who is engaged, but not both.

The plan expresses a general concern about how people are engaged in processes such as policy, planning, or projects, without specifying methods, actors, or stages of engagement.

The plan does not address how people are engaged in processes such as policy-making, planning, or projects.

The plan/project/ vision clearly addresses how internal processes adapt to advance justice. All dimensions of Spatial Justice are considered, with explicit attention to which processes change, where this occurs, how adaptations are implemented, and who is responsible.

The plan shows growing attention to how internal processes adapt to advance justice. More than one dimension of Spatial Justice is considered, with some clarity on how changes are made and who or where they apply.

The plan shows basic consideration of how internal processes adapt to advance justice. It specifies how this is addressed, without clarifying where changes apply or who is responsible.

The plan expresses a general concern about how internal processes, such as procedures, values, or standards, might adapt to promote justice within institutions, without specifying changes or responsibilities.

The plan does not address how internal processes, such as procedures, values, or standards, adapt to promote justice within institutions.

The plan/project/ vision clearly integrates Spatial Justice into government action. All dimensions of Spatial Justice are considered, with explicit attention to what actions are taken, where they apply, how they are carried out, and who they affect.

The plan shows growing attention to Spatial Justice in government action. More than one dimension of Spatial Justice is considered, with some clarity on what actions are taken and where, and partial attention to how they are implemented or who they affect.

The plan shows basic consideration of Spatial Justice in government action. It specifies one aspect of action, such as what is done, where it applies, how it is carried out, or who is addressed, but not in an integrated way.

The plan expresses a general concern for Spatial Justice in government action, without specifying actions, locations, methods, or affected groups.

The plan does not address Spatial Justice in government action.

RECOGNITION DIMENSION

The plan/project/ vision clearly validates disadvantaged individuals and groups in laws and regulations. All dimensions of Spatial Justice are considered, with explicit attention to who is recognised, what or where protections apply, and how they are implemented.

The plan shows growing attention to validating disadvantaged individuals and groups in laws and regulations. More than one dimension of Spatial Justice is considered, with some clarity on who is recognised and partial attention to where protections apply or how they operate.

The plan shows basic consideration of disadvantaged individuals and groups in laws and regulations. It specifies who is recognised, without clarifying where protections apply or how they are enforced.

The plan expresses a general concern for validating disadvantaged individuals and groups in laws and regulations, with an acknowledgement of existing disparities but without specifying legal measures or protections.

The plan does not address the validation of disadvantaged individuals and groups in laws and regulations.

The plan/project/ vision clearly recognises the practices of marginalised or non-hegemonic groups. All dimensions of Spatial Justice are considered, with explicit attention to who is recognised, what practices or spaces are involved, and how this recognition is enacted.

The plan shows growing attention to recognising the practices of marginalised or non-hegemonic groups. More than one dimension of Spatial Justice is considered, with some clarity on who is recognised and partial attention to the practices or spaces involved, or how recognition is implemented.

The plan shows basic consideration of recognising the practices of marginalised or non-hegemonic groups. It specifies who is recognised, without clarifying what practices or spaces are involved or how recognition is operationalised.

The plan expresses a general concern for recognising the practices of marginalised or non-hegemonic groups, without specifying which groups, practices, or forms of recognition.

The plan does not address the recognition of practices of marginalised or non-hegemonic groups.

The plan/project/vision clearly considers the aspirations, values, and livelihoods of marginalised or non-hegemonic communities and diverse lifestyles. All dimensions of Spatial Justice are addressed, with explicit attention to who is concerned, what or where is affected, and how these considerations are integrated.

The plan shows growing attention to the aspirations, values, and livelihoods of marginalised or non-hegemonic communities and diverse lifestyles. More than one dimension of Spatial Justice is considered, with some clarity on who is concerned and partial attention to what or where is affected, or how these concerns are addressed.

The plan shows basic consideration of the aspirations, values, or livelihoods of marginalised or non-hegemonic communities and diverse lifestyles. It specifies who is addressed, without clarifying what is affected, where this applies, or how these concerns are taken into account.

The plan expresses a general concern for the aspirations, values, or livelihoods of marginalised or non-hegemonic communities and diverse lifestyles, acknowledging their existence and relevance without specifying measures or impacts.

The plan does not address the aspirations, values, or livelihoods of marginalised or non-hegemonic communities or diverse lifestyles.

COMPONENT 1

DEMOCRATIC ENGAGEMENT

This component focuses on the ongoing involvement of citizens in decision-making processes. The easiness of people to approach the institution.

COMPONENT 2

FOSTER INTERNAL ADAPTIVENESS

This component focuses on the institution's internal flexibility and adaptability to evolving circumstances, incorporating feedback, and adjusting policies, practices, and programs to better reflect justice

COMPONENT 3

INSTITUTIONAL RESPONSIVENESS

This component focuses on how the institution address external stakeholders. It concerns ensuring that processes are fair, transparent, and sustainable, in views to uphold justice and that it legitimatises social sustainability.

COMPONENT 1

LEGAL EMPOWERMENT

This component emphasises the importance of legal frameworks in recognising and protecting the intrinsic value and dignity of individuals and groups as moral agents.

COMPONENT 2

SUPPORT FOR COLLECTIVE CARE PRACTICES

This component highlights actions to sustain and uplift collective efforts and everyday practices in disadvantaged communities, such as solidarity networks and the management of communal resources.

COMPONENT 3

RECOGNISE AND FOSTER THE PLURIVERSE

This component calls for a profound transformation of values to enable novel socioeconomic and institutional arrangements, advocating for considering the values, qualities, and unique socio-spatial dynamics of non-hegemonic cultures and communities.

PROCEDURAL DIMENSION

RECOGNITION DIMENSION

COMPONENT 1

COMPONENT 2

COMPONENT 3

COMPONENT 1

COMPONENT 2

COMPONENT 3

FAIR VOICE

People must have **real chances to take part in decisions** about their neighbourhood. Participation should be **easy, welcoming, and meaningful**, not just a box-ticking exercise.

FAIR INSTITUTIONS

City institutions should be able to **learn, adapt, and change** when something is not working. They must **update rules, tools, and ways of working** so they can respond better to people's needs.

FAIR PROCESSES

Public institutions must **treat residents fairly, act transparently, explain decisions clearly, and respond openly** to concerns. People should feel that government is **accountable and trustworthy**.

FAIR RIGHTS

The laws of the city should **protect everyone equally and recognise the rights and dignity of groups** who often face discrimination or exclusion.

FAIR SUPPORT FOR COMMUNITIES

The city should support **community-led efforts** like mutual aid, neighbourhood groups, shared spaces, and collective projects that **help people look after one another and manage common resources**.

FAIR RESPECT FOR DIVERSITY & THE PLURIVERSE

The city should value **different cultures, lifestyles, and ways of being in and using space**. No single group's way of life should dominate; diversity should be respected and included in planning decisions and created spaces.

Spatial Justice Benchmarking Tool



The Spatial Justice Benchmarking Tool (SJB) is a qualitative evaluation tool designed to benchmark how justice considerations are addressed in urban governance and planning at the scale of a city or region. It supports evaluation and structured reflection. The tool defines levels of justice, ranging from Low to Embedded, by assigning a score that reflects how well what is being assessed (a plan, vision, policy, or project) aligns with the components of the Spatial Justice Conceptual Model.

The tool is intended to spark discussion and reflection on Spatial Justice considerations. Using this lens allows closer attention to how benefits and burdens are redistributed, how people are engaged and policy and decision-making processes are made more responsive, and how the needs and aspirations of disadvantaged individuals, groups, and communities are recognised.

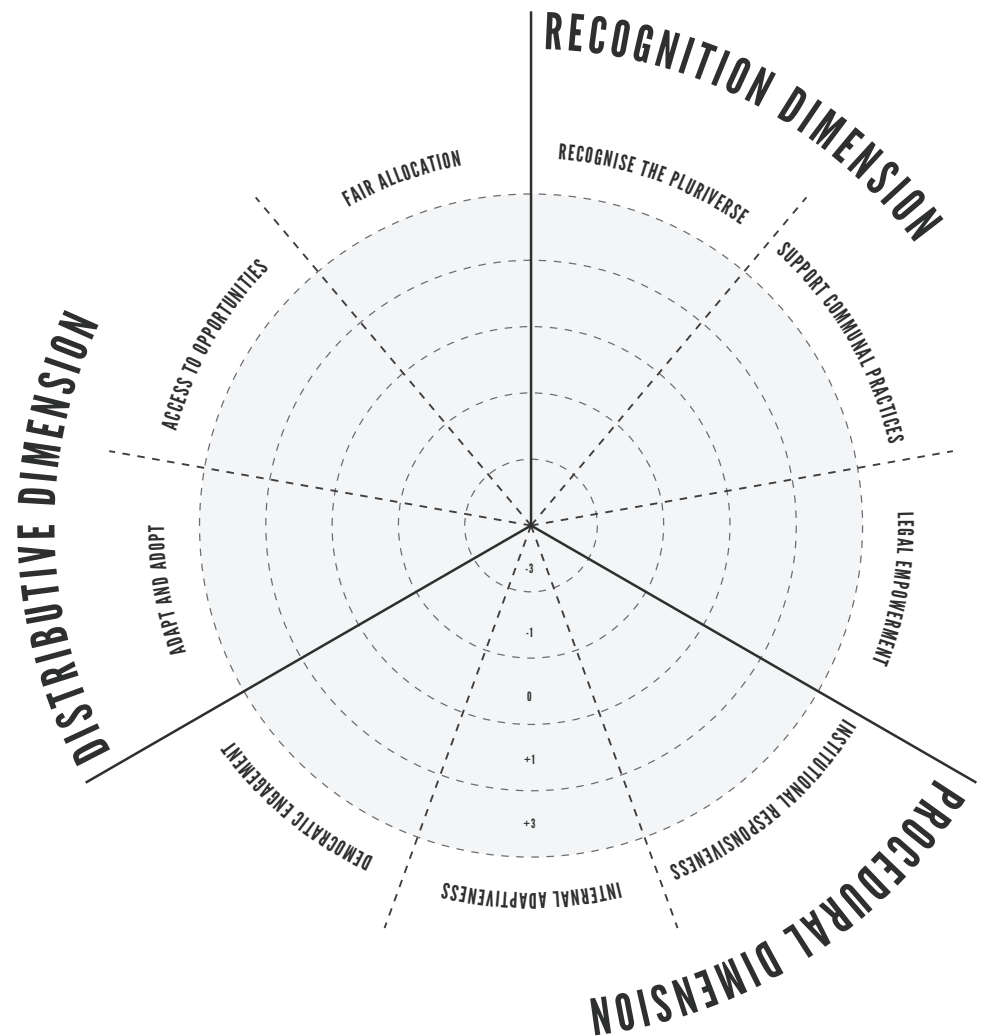
How to use this tool:

1. Start by clarifying what is being assessed, such as a plan, policy, vision, or project.
2. Review each column on the right-hand side. Each column represents a component of the Spatial Justice Conceptual Model (SJC).M).
3. Discuss how well the assessed material aligns with each component and assign a rating from Low to Embedded.
4. Use post-it notes to record ideas or recommendations discussed by the group. Place these directly on the relevant component for reference.
5. Calculate a quick median of the component scores for each dimension. Use a thicker pen to mark this median score along the dimension axis. Connect these points to form a triangle, which helps visualise the strength and balance of each dimension.

Contact and further information:

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 Hugo López (hlopez1@sheffield.ac.uk)

Low (-3) No consideration for the component.
 Starting (-1) General considerations: it touches an aspect.
 Basic (0) Explicit concerns: the component is mentioned.
 Growing (+1) In-depth concern: connect the component with other dimension.
 Embedded (+3) Integrated concern: it connects the component with all dimensions.



Download the online version of the Spatial Justice Benchmarking Tool



Download the Spatial Justice Handbook



Download the Spatial Justice Conceptual Model

COMPONENT 1	COMPONENT 2	COMPONENT 3	COMPONENT 1	COMPONENT 2	COMPONENT 3	COMPONENT 1	COMPONENT 2	COMPONENT 3
FAIR ALLOCATION	IMPROVE ACCESS TO OPPORTUNITIES	EMPOWER PEOPLE TO ADAPT AND ADOPT	DEMOCRATIC ENGAGEMENT	FOSTER INTERNAL ADAPTIVENESS	INSTITUTIONAL RESPONSIVENESS	LEGAL EMPOWERMENT	SUPPORT FOR COLLECTIVE CARE PRACTICES	RECOGNISE AND FOSTER THE PLURIVERSE
This component focuses on ensuring that resources are fairly distributed to address inequality. It concerns the material or service provision of public goods, basic services, cultural goods, economic opportunities, and healthy environments.	This component highlights efforts to enhance people's ability to reach and benefit from key opportunities. It concerns affordability, availability, connectivity, etc.	This component emphasizes the empowering individuals and groups to actively shape and utilise available resources. It concerns the design, programming, and openness to people's agency.	This component focuses on the ongoing involvement of citizens in decision-making processes. The easiness of people to approach the institution.	This component focuses on the institution's internal flexibility and adaptability to evolving circumstances, incorporating feedback, and adjusting policies, practices, and programs to better reflect justice considerations.	This component focuses on how the institution address external stakeholders. It concerns ensuring that processes are fair, transparent, and sustainable, in views to uphold justice and that it legitimatises social sustainability.	This component emphasises the importance of legal frameworks in recognising and protecting the intrinsic value and dignity of individuals and groups as moral agents.	This component highlights actions to sustain and uplift collective efforts and everyday practices in disadvantaged communities, such as solidarity networks and the management of communal resources.	This component calls for a profound transformation of values to enable novel socioeconomic and institutional arrangements, advocating for the values, qualities, and unique socio-spatial dynamics of non-hegemonic cultures and communities.

8. SPATIAL JUSTICE BENCHMARKING TOOL GUIDING QUESTIONS

These guiding questions help participants read urban visions through a justice lens. Drawn from the nine components of the Spatial Justice Conceptual Model, they prompt reflection on who benefits, who participates, and who is recognised in a city's transition. The questions are not a checklist but an invitation to debate how fairness is articulated, omitted, or contested in planning narratives. They support groups in scoring each component, comparing interpretations, and uncovering the deeper assumptions shaping a city's imagined future.

Distributive justice

1. Fair Share

Does your city's vision actually specify who gets what improvements, or does it rely on abstract commitments?

- Is there any indication that benefits will reach neighbourhoods with the greatest need?
- Or does "balanced development" simply mask politically convenient investments?

2. Fair Access

Does the vision meaningfully address access, or does it only gesture at mobility without naming who struggles?

- Do proposed mobility reforms reduce inequalities in commuting time, safety, and cost?
- Or is the plan silently privileging car users, central districts, or already well-served populations?

3. Fair Ability to Shape Services & Spaces

Does your city create conditions for residents to shape their environment?

- Is "participation" enabling people to influence outcomes, or is it merely input-collection before decisions already made?
- Are any groups explicitly empowered to adapt, manage, or transform local resources?

Procedural justice

4. Fair Voice

Does the vision describe participation mechanisms that are meaningful, accessible, and shared across communities?

- Are people invited early enough to shape decisions?
- Or is participation positioned mostly as a formality that must follow "updated protocols" and "reporting structures"?

5. Fair Institutions

Is your city capable of changing course based on feedback?

- Do the references to alignment processes, frameworks, and internal reviews suggest learning and improvement?
- Or are these barriers disguised as procedures, slowing institutional change to a crawl?

6. Fair Processes

Does the municipality commit to acting on what it hears and sees?

- Are there any direct statements about how public input will shift priorities or revise actions?
- Or does the vision maintain plausible deniability by emphasising "efficiency" and "strategic alignment" over responsiveness?

Recognition justice

7. Fair Rights

Does your city recognise and protect groups who face discrimination or structural disadvantage?

- Are there concrete measures, rights expansions, or commitments to address inequities?
- Or does the city hide behind generic language like "evolving needs" and "integrated approaches"?

8. Fair Support for Communities

Does the vision strengthen community-led initiatives, mutual support networks, or shared-resource management?

- Is any form of collective organising acknowledged or supported?
- Or does the city's emphasis on protocols and frameworks crowd out community autonomy?

9. Fair Respect for Communities

Does your city make space for different cultures, ways of living, and alternative spatial practices?

- Is diversity understood as a lived reality shaped by material conditions and cultural claims to space?
- Or is “diversity” treated merely as branding, detached from power, rights, and recognition?

Bonus Questions

A. Based on the vision alone, who in your city gains the most? Who loses the most? Why?

B. Which parts of the city would actually become more just under this vision? Which would become less so?

C. If you lived in this city, would you feel seen, heard, and valued? Or merely managed?

D. Where does procedure strengthen justice? Where does it quietly destroy it?

E. Is your city’s vision a careful plan... or a very polite way of saying nothing?

Vision Statement for the City of Mosselbroek



“A Balanced City for a Changing Future”

The Municipality of Mosselbroek presents its Vision 2040, outlining the city’s ambition to remain a liveable, attractive, and future-ready community for all residents. Situated between wetlands, rail lines, and a growing business corridor, Mosselbroek is experiencing economic expansion and demographic change. This vision aims to guide development in a way that preserves the city’s character while preparing it for the challenges of climate adaptation, mobility transitions, and shifting social needs.

Mosselbroek’s long-term goal is to create “a compact, connected, and comfortable city,” where mobility, housing, and public spaces work together to support daily life. To achieve this, the municipality plans to continue investing in cycling routes, public transport improvements, and the renewal of neighbourhood centres. New green corridors will link parks and waterways, creating shaded routes for walking and recreation. The city is also exploring incentives for energy-efficient renovations in older neighbourhoods, although details of such programmes are still being evaluated.

Housing remains an important concern. While Mosselbroek has delivered several new mixed-use developments, rising demand and limited land have increased pressure on affordability. The municipality intends to “promote a balanced housing supply” through public-private partnerships and targeted zoning adjustments. The vision emphasises the need for a “diverse housing market,” but does not yet specify which income groups will be prioritised or how affordability will be maintained over time.

Public engagement is described as “an essential pillar” of Mosselbroek’s planning process. The city will continue to use online participation tools, neighbourhood meetings, and feedback sessions to gather resident input. However, the vision notes that the responsibility for constructive participation lies with both residents and institutions. While the municipality expresses enthusiasm for hearing from diverse groups, it also underlines that “decision-making must remain efficient and aligned with long-term strategic goals.”

Mosselbroek acknowledges that communities in the city have different needs and cultural backgrounds.

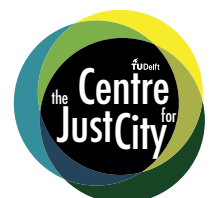
The vision states that the municipality “values diversity and aims to foster inclusive neighbourhoods,” yet concrete measures for recognising or supporting specific groups are not elaborated. Existing programmes that work with youth groups, seniors, and migrant communities will be “reviewed and updated as needed,” but no new commitments are made.

The vision highlights the importance of “strengthening social cohesion,” though primarily through improved public spaces, cultural events, and sports initiatives. Community organisations and volunteers are mentioned as “key partners,” but their role in shaping policies or managing shared resources remains undefined.

Institutionally, Mosselbroek is committed to “working smarter.” Internal processes will be reviewed to improve coordination across departments, especially regarding climate adaptation and mobility planning. While the city aspires to become more responsive, mechanisms for incorporating public feedback into policy adjustments are not specified.

Overall, Vision 2040 presents Mosselbroek as a city that wants to adapt to change, maintain quality of life, and support a vibrant urban environment. Its commitments are promising but often broad, leaving space for interpretation and debate. The vision invites conversation about who benefits, who participates, and how justice and inclusion should shape Mosselbroek’s future.

Mosselbroek: One Future. Many Paths. Shared Responsibility.



Vision Statement for the City of Ordewijk



“One Direction. One Community. One Future.”

The Municipality of Ordewijk is pleased to present its Vision 2042, a unified roadmap guiding our city toward long-term stability, resilience, and collective progress. In a rapidly changing world, Ordewijk’s ambition is to provide clarity, confidence, and cohesion by ensuring that all residents move forward together under a shared urban vision.

Ordewijk aims to be “a streamlined, harmonious, and future-secure city,” where coordinated governance and citywide alignment create the conditions for success. To achieve this, we are strengthening central decision-making structures to ensure policies are implemented consistently across all neighbourhoods. This will reduce fragmentation, accelerate delivery, and safeguard residents from uncertainty created by conflicting local demands.

Mobility transformation is a key priority for Ordewijk. To maintain order and efficiency, the city will implement a unified mobility standard across all districts. A single central authority will coordinate public transport routes, cycling corridors, and traffic management to ensure coherence and minimise disruption. Residents will benefit from a predictable system designed to optimise movement while discouraging behaviours that undermine collective efficiency.

Housing development in Ordewijk follows the principle of “planned balance.” New residential areas will be delivered according to benchmarks defined by the Strategic Population Management Framework. This ensures that neighbourhood growth aligns with Ordewijk’s demographic expectations and infrastructural capabilities. The municipality will reserve the right to adjust local plans where resident proposals diverge from strategic needs.

Climate adaptation and urban safety will be addressed through the new Resilient Ordewijk Directive. This directive centralises responsibility for green infrastructure, water management, and emergency planning. Neighbourhoods will be required to follow uniform guidelines that streamline implementation. These guidelines replace earlier community-level variability, ensuring that all areas meet the city’s standards for resilience.

Participation remains a valued pillar of Ordewijk’s governance. Residents will continue to be invited to contribute through the Ordewijk Input Portal, where they may share suggestions and perspectives on relevant policy themes. To maintain quality and consistency in decision-making, participation outcomes will be synthesised by the Central Coordination Office before being integrated into final municipal decisions. This ensures that diverse opinions are harmonised into a cohesive direction that reflects the collective interest.

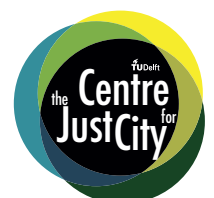
Ordewijk recognises cultural diversity as an important part of city life. To promote unity, the municipality will create a new Ordewijk Identity Programme, supporting activities that strengthen shared values and social cohesion. Cultural events and organisations will be eligible for municipal funding provided their programmes align with the city’s overarching integration goals.

Institutionally, Ordewijk is committed to enhancing its efficiency and responsiveness. The new Integrated Decision System will streamline administrative processes, reduce procedural delays, and ensure that all municipal departments operate under clear, centrally verified objectives. This unified system will strengthen accountability and ensure swift correction when initiatives deviate from Ordewijk’s strategic trajectory.

Through coordinated planning, unified standards, and a shared civic purpose, Ordewijk is ready to lead its residents toward a secure and harmonious future.

Ordewijk: One Direction. One Community. One Future.

UP2030



Vision Statement for the City of Klompendam



“Co-Creating a Connected Pluriverse Through Deep Participation Pathways”

Klompendam, a vibrant mid-sized city nestled between meadows, wind turbines, and an inconveniently large roundabout, proudly announces its Vision 2045: “One City, Many Worlds.” This vision positions Klompendam as a national leader in radical participation, community-led urban governance, and pluriversal planning practices grounded in lived experience and local wisdoms.

At the centre of Klompendam’s approach is the belief that reality is not singular but plural. Our city contains many ways of knowing, dwelling, celebrating, grieving, organising, and imagining the future. Klompendam therefore commits to building a civic ecosystem where diverse cosmologies, cultural practices, and community infrastructures can thrive without being absorbed into a single dominant narrative. We call this our Pluriverse Platform, a municipal commitment to supporting heterogeneous lifeworlds as equal contributors to the urban future.

Participation constitutes the backbone of our transformation journey. Through our Deep Democracy for Everyday Life programme, Klompendam is rolling out new formats for co-creation, including story circles, neighbourhood listening rituals, mapping walks, pop-up citizen studios, night-time assemblies, and the much-celebrated “Bring Your Own Ontology” dialogues held in community centres and laundromats. We aim to create conditions where every resident feels invited to shape the city’s priorities in ways aligned with their own identities, experiences, and rhythms of life.

To support this, the municipality has created the Klompendam Civic Orchestra, a permanent participatory structure that brings together residents, civil servants, artists, neighbourhood elders, youth organisers, and representatives from local community kitchens. The Orchestra meets every six weeks to identify collective priorities, raise concerns, and develop co-created action pathways. Decisions are reached not by majority vote but by a facilitated resonance process that seeks common ground without erasing difference.

Recognising that many communities in Klompendam

have long operated outside formal planning channels, we are expanding our Spaces of Recognition programme. This includes legal support for groups whose cultural practices do not neatly fit existing regulations, micro-grants for collective care initiatives, and the allocation of municipal spaces for community-led environmental stewardship, joyful resistance, and everyday cultural expression.

The municipality is also mapping “pluriversal hotspots” across the city: places where different cultural, social, and ecological worlds intersect. These hotspots will serve as anchors for participatory planning sessions where communities articulate their spatial imaginaries and propose neighbourhood-level interventions. The goal is not to integrate everyone into a single vision, but to stitch together multiple visions into a shared urban fabric that honours difference.

Through these practices, Klompendam seeks to become a city where participation is not an administrative requirement but a way of life; where planning is not a technical procedure but a collective storytelling exercise; and where plural ways of being and knowing are recognised as essential to urban flourishing.

Klompendam: Many Worlds. One City. All Voices Heard.

UP2030



Vision Statement of the Municipality of Regelspoort



“Advancing Coordination, Strengthening Synergy, Delivering Tomorrow”

The Municipality of Regelspoort proudly presents its Vision 2038, a strategic framework designed to guide our city through a decade of opportunity, renewal, and coordinated transformation. Building on a strong administrative tradition, Regelspoort is committed to delivering integrated solutions that align policy ambition with operational excellence.

Our overarching goal is to create “a cohesive, accessible, and resilient city,” supported by clear governance pathways and well-defined implementation structures. To achieve this, Regelspoort will continue to refine its internal processes, enhance interdepartmental collaboration, and apply robust procedural standards to ensure consistency across all planning domains.

Mobility is a central pillar of our vision. Regelspoort is taking decisive steps to promote sustainable travel options while safeguarding efficient road connectivity. The forthcoming Mobility Outlook 2040 will outline measures to enhance cycling infrastructure, optimise traffic flow along strategic corridors, and strengthen public transport performance. Preparatory work for this plan is already underway across relevant departments, with detailed actions to be finalised once the cross-directorate alignment process is concluded.

Housing remains a priority as Regelspoort continues to attract residents and businesses. We are committed to supporting a balanced housing market by encouraging mixed-use development and enabling strategic densification in suitable areas. The city will explore mechanisms to expand affordable housing options, subject to ongoing feasibility assessments and coordination with regional partners. Further spatial decisions will follow the approval of the updated Urban Development Guidance Framework.

Climate adaptation is integrated throughout our vision. Regelspoort will implement nature-forward public space interventions and explore opportunities to enhance local biodiversity and climate robustness. Pilot projects are currently being assessed for alignment with departmental priorities, with wider roll-out anticipated pending outcomes of the internal

review cycle.

Regelspoort recognises the importance of public participation in shaping long-term urban development. The city will continue to broaden engagement channels through digital platforms, neighbourhood sessions, and thematic dialogues. To ensure productive input, participation processes will follow an updated protocol that clarifies steps, responsibilities, and reporting structures. This will help reinforce transparency and ensure that community perspectives can be appropriately considered within existing decision-making pathways.

Diversity and inclusion remain guiding values for Regelspoort. The municipality acknowledges the evolving needs of our population and will continue reviewing programmes that support social cohesion. Work is underway to develop an integrated approach that aligns cultural, welfare, and community initiatives across municipal teams. Once internal consultations are complete, Regelspoort will issue a coordinated framework outlining key ambitions in this area.

The municipality also aims to strengthen organisational adaptiveness. Over the coming years, Regelspoort will assess opportunities for improved workflow integration, centralised monitoring, and enhanced responsiveness. These efforts will be included in the forthcoming Internal Innovation Agenda, currently under interdepartmental consideration.

Regelspoort believes in steady, well-coordinated progress. Through aligned planning, structured engagement, and continuous refinement of our governance architecture, the city is confident in its ability to deliver a resilient and forward-looking future for all residents.

Regelspoort: Coordinated Today. Ready for Tomorrow.

UP2030



Vision Statement for the City of Waterdam



“Accelerating Integrated Climate-Neutral Transformation Pathways Through Scalable Urban Innovation Ecosystems”

The Municipality of Waterdam is proud to present its Vision 2040, a forward-looking roadmap positioning our city as a frontrunner in climate-neutrality acceleration through synergistic, data-driven, and future-proof transformation pathways. Building on our strong governance architecture and our award-winning Integrated Spatial-Energy Transition Strategy, Waterdam aims to leverage mission-oriented innovation ecosystems to catalyse circular urban metabolism and unlock unprecedented decarbonisation synergies across all scales of the built environment.

Our objective is clear: **Waterdam will become a fully climate-neutral, regenerative, and nature-positive city by 2040 through a holistic, systems-based approach.**

This approach mobilises quadruple-helix actors in co-creative multi-stakeholder constellations designed to optimise urban efficiency, resilience, and adaptive capacity. Key enablers include big-data-enabled predictive modelling, cross-sectoral decarbonisation coalitions, and a pioneering governance platform for multilevel climate mainstreaming.

At the core of Waterdam’s strategy is our GreenConnect Urban Infrastructure Programme, which integrates next-generation mobility corridors, autonomous electric transit, and smart energy microgrids. Through real-time sensor networks, Waterdam will optimise modal shifts, reduce operational emissions, and dynamically adjust mobility flows using AI-enhanced behavioural analytics. Combined with our BlueDelta Water-Energy Nexus Framework, the city will scale up renewable-energy harvesting from canals, wastewater, and residual heat streams, contributing to a circular metabolic loop across the metropolitan region.

To support this transformation, Waterdam is implementing its Digital Twin+ Platform, an advanced simulation environment enabling scenario-based decision-making for climate-proof spatial development. This platform incorporates geospatial machine learning, adaptive carbon budgeting, and dynamic

climate-risk dashboards, ensuring governance actors can proactively identify mitigation co-benefits and accelerate investment pipelines. Our partnership with leading private-sector innovators will further mainstream blockchain-enabled material passports across the construction sector, maximising traceability, circularity, and lifecycle optimisation.

The municipality has also launched the Waterdam Lighthouse Projects Portfolio, a set of scalable demonstration districts that showcases high-performance energy retrofits, climate-adaptive streetscapes, biophilic superblocs, and positive-energy housing typologies. These districts will act as transformation accelerators, generating replicable insights, transferable methodologies, and scalable governance protocols for regional adoption.

Waterdam’s ambition extends beyond local benefit. As an emerging hub in the European climate-neutral cities network, we aim to become a reference model for integrated sustainable urbanism, contributing to EU-wide decarbonisation missions and establishing new standards for climate-forward municipal governance.

Through strategic foresight, evidence-based planning, and a strong commitment to innovation-driven transition governance, Waterdam positions itself not simply as a city adapting to the future, but as a city actively designing it. By aligning urban systems with circular, regenerative, and climate-positive principles, Waterdam will ensure long-term competitiveness, resilience, and planetary stewardship.

Waterdam: Leading the Transformation. Scaling the Future!



9. THE CITY LEAKS

Alongside the official vision statements, this guide includes a set of “City Leaks”, fictional internal memos that reveal what each municipality prefers not to say aloud. These leaks expose contradictions, hidden priorities, and institutional blind spots that rarely appear in public documents. They are not meant as satire but as analytical prompts: fragments that help participants read between the lines, question surface narratives, and recognise how governance cultures shape urban transitions. In the workshop, the leaks serve as additional evidence for debate, encouraging participants to contrast public ambitions with internal realities and to explore how justice is strengthened, diluted, or quietly undermined through daily municipal practice.

1. Leak from WATERDAM

From: Senior Policy Advisor (redacted)
To: Director of Urban Futures
Subject: Re: Vision Implementation Constraints

As requested, here is the internal clarification for what we can realistically deliver under Vision 2040.

Despite the public messaging, we will not be able to address the mobility-access gaps in Noorddam and Veenwijk until at least 2032. The budget reallocations to the canal belt upgrades have locked in our investment path for the next four cycles. Communications should continue to emphasise “phased roll-out,” but internally we should assume the outer districts will retain current service levels.

Regarding housing: displacement continues to be raised by community groups, but current redevelopment contracts include no negotiable affordability clauses. Legal has advised against opening this discussion. Recommend shifting attention to “place identity” storytelling and encouraging residents to make use of the new cultural amenities, even if uptake remains low.

Participation platforms remain popular with younger residents, which we will highlight. Engagement gaps in migrant communities should be described as “barriers we are actively learning from,” not as structural shortcomings.

Please advise if you want a revised communications package.

2. Leak from KLOMPENDAM

From: Participation Office Coordinator
To: Deputy City Manager
Subject: Practical Limits of the Pluriverse Platform

We are reaching capacity with the current co-creation formats. Staff have reported that the story circles run past midnight, and facilitators are struggling to synthesise 200+ “coexisting realities” into a single planning input. The Bring Your Own Ontology sessions have exceeded budget, particularly once groups requested multilingual metaphysical mediation.

We still lack a process for situations where two community worldviews directly contradict each other. Legal is unsure whether the proposed “mutual validity clause” has any grounding in Dutch administrative law.

Also, participation fatigue is becoming visible. Some groups are now refusing to attend further sessions unless we commit to direct implementation of their specific visions. Given that we cannot accommodate all simultaneous cosmologies spatially, we may need to scale back expectations without undermining the public narrative.

Please advise on whether we should pause new pluriversal pilots until staff are trained in conflict de-escalation.

3. Leak from MOSSELBROEK

From: Interdepartmental Strategy Liaison
To: Manager, Vision 2040 Programme
Subject: Clarification Needed Before Public Roll-Out

While the Vision text states that Mosselbroek will “promote a balanced housing supply,” we still have no internal alignment on what “balanced” means. Planning interprets it as more mid-range units; Welfare believes it should prioritise low-income households; and Finance insists on market-rate developments for revenue stability.

Mobility teams are also asking whether “connected city” implies reallocating road space to cyclists. This became sensitive after the business association complained that reduced car access could “disrupt entrepreneurial vitality.” Suggest keeping language general.

Participation protocols remain unclear. The statement that “responsibility lies with both residents and institutions” has already been flagged by legal, who worry it may be read as shifting blame to residents for low turnout.

We need internal guidance on how much specificity departments are allowed to provide when residents ask for details we do not yet have.

4. Leak from REGELSPORT

From: Chief Administrative Analyst
To: Municipal Secretary
Subject: Procedural Overlaps – Request for Immediate Streamlining

We now have five overlapping frameworks for cross-department coordination, none of which reference each other. Staff are unsure which applies in which context. For example, the Spatial Allocation Matrix requires inputs that depend on approval of the Outcomes Assessment Protocol, which is itself waiting for results from the Pilot for Testing the Pilot.

The PCP (Participation Compliance Process) checklist has reached 47 steps, many of which require signatures from offices that no longer exist due to restructuring. Several departments have begun quietly skipping steps to meet deadlines, which technically invalidates the process but has become unavoidable if we want anything to move forward.

Communications is requesting a simplified narrative to maintain public confidence. They propose emphasising “phased implementation,” “adaptive coordination,” and “ongoing refinement,” while avoiding any mention of procedural bottlenecks.

5. Leak from ORDEWIJK

From: Internal Governance Advisor
To: Chief Executive, Central Coordination Office
Subject: Monitoring Risks in the Unified Decision System

Early testing shows that the Integrated Decision System centralises authority more tightly than anticipated. While efficiencies are indeed improving, several departments have raised concerns that they no longer have meaningful discretion. Staff morale is declining, though they remain cautious about expressing this openly due to the new performance review indicators tied to “strategic alignment.”

The Ordewijk Input Portal continues to receive resident suggestions, but synthesis teams report that 90% of submissions are being classified as “non-actionable” due to misalignment with the city’s predetermined objectives. The public version of the dashboard should continue displaying high engagement without detailing approval rates.

Cultural Affairs has asked whether the Ordewijk Identity Programme might be perceived as prescriptive. Communications recommends emphasising “unity” and “shared values,” but avoiding specifics that might draw attention to the underlying behavioural expectations.

Please advise on how explicitly we should address these concerns in internal reporting, given the leadership’s priority of maintaining a cohesive narrative.

10. THE SPATIAL JUSTICE READINESS LEVEL (SJRL)

The Spatial Justice Readiness Level (SJRL) helps cities understand how prepared they are to think and act fairly when planning for the future. Just as the Benchmarking Tool looks at what is written in a city's vision, the SJRL looks at how deeply ideas of fairness are built into the city's way of working.

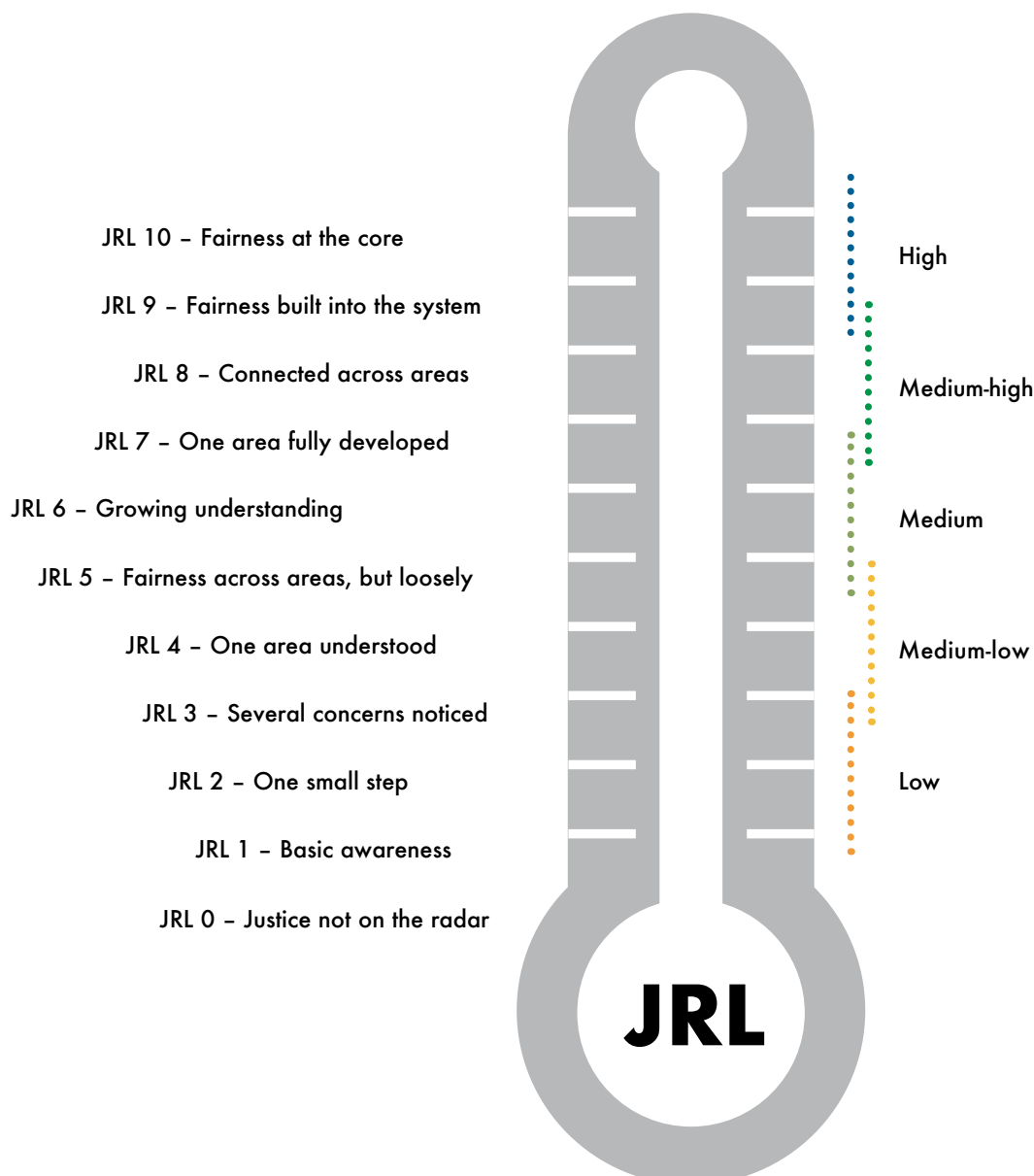
The SJRL scale runs from 0 to 10.

At the lower levels, a city has little awareness of justice issues or mentions them only in vague ways.

As the levels rise, the city begins to recognise unfairness, talk about it more clearly, and connect different fairness issues.

At the highest levels, fairness becomes part of everyday decision-making and communities have a real voice in shaping the city. The SJRL does not judge cities. Instead, it offers a simple way to see where a city is starting from and what steps it might take next to make sure resources are shared fairly, people can participate meaningfully, and diverse groups are recognised and respected. It is a learning tool that complements the Spatial Justice Benchmarking Tool by showing the bigger picture: not only what a city says, but how ready it is to act on those ideas.

The SJRL is meant to spark reflection, conversation, and improvement—not competition. You can mark your city's SJ Readiness level below.



JUSTICE READINESS LEVELS EXPLAINED

How ready a city is to think and act fairly

JRL 0 – Not on the radar

Justice, fairness, inequality, participation, or recognition do not appear in visions or internal discussions.

JRL 1 – Basic awareness

Terms like “inclusive,” “fair,” or “for all” appear, but with no definitions or policy meaning.

JRL 2 – One small step

The city shows concern for one fairness issue (for example access, participation, or diversity), but only at a very general level.

JRL 3 – Several concerns noticed

The city mentions a few fairness issues but does not go into detail and does not connect them to each other.

JRL 4 – One area understood

The city clearly understands one whole area of fairness (for example access, or participation, or recognition). The ideas are there, but still basic.

JRL 5 – Fairness across areas, but loosely

The city talks about fairness in all three areas (sharing resources, involving people, recognising diversity), but not in a connected or consistent way.

JRL 6 – Growing understanding

The city shows deeper thinking in some areas and begins to link fairness issues together (for example connecting access with participation).

JRL 7 – One area fully developed

The city has one area of fairness well integrated and clear in its plans (for example participation). Other areas are still developing.

JRL 8 – Connected across areas

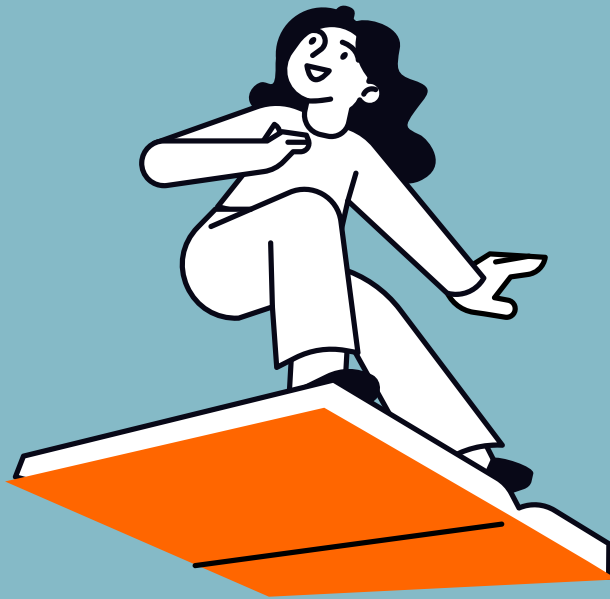
The city treats fairness as something that belongs in all parts of planning. Different fairness ideas start working together in a joined-up way.

JRL 9 – Fairness built into the system

All fairness elements appear clearly in the city’s plans and decisions. The ideas support each other and guide how the city works.

JRL 10 – Fairness at the core

Fairness is part of every decision. The city plans, acts, learns, and adjusts with justice in mind, and communities share real power in shaping the future.



SPATIAL JUSTICE BENCHMARKING WORKSHOP GUIDE

This workshop invites participants to step inside five fictional cities and interrogate their promises. Using the Spatial Justice Benchmarking Tool, groups uncover hidden assumptions, debate what fairness truly means, and learn how visions shape power, opportunity, and recognition. It is a playful exercise with serious implications.

The transformation of society presupposes a collective ownership and management of space founded on the permanent participation of the “interested parties,” with their multiple, varied, and even contradictory interests. It thus also presupposes confrontation [...] (p.422). Lefèbvre, H., (1991), *The Production of Space*, Blackwell.



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