

DESIGN AS STRATEGY

Developing Resilient Economies





INTRODUCTIONS

- Name
- Title or Role
- City or Town
- Something Unique
 - ◆ a person, place, product, or program
 - ◆ small and simple or large and complex



CO-EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
DESIGN CORE DETROIT



FOCAL POINT -
DETROIT CITY OF DESIGN

CHAIR, UNESCO CITIES
SOCIAL DESIGN WORKING GROUP

THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS



RESILIENCE

Community economic resilience is the capacity to anticipate, absorb, and recover from economic shocks while preserving equity. Instead of returning to a vulnerable status quo, true resilience means bouncing forward into a more adaptable, self-reliant, and equitable local economy.



SOCIAL CAPITAL & CONNECTEDNESS

Communities with high social cohesion share resources, check on vulnerable neighbors, and suffer lower mortality rates during shocks.



ECONOMIC VITALITY & DIVERSITY

Diverse economies with resources, reserves and equitable income distribution can absorb financial hits without collapsing.



BUILT INFRASTRUCTURE & PHYSICAL ASSETS

Reliable power, water and telecom networks, safe housing and shelters, and varied evacuation and supply chain routes aid emergency response.



ENVIRONMENTAL & NATURAL SYSTEMS

Healthy environmental ecosystems, with natural buffers and intentional management, act as buffers against climate hazards.



INFORMATION, COMMUNICATION & PREPAREDNESS

Early warning systems, proactive public education, and information integrity enable fast, informed action in a crisis.



GOVERNANCE & LEADERSHIP CAPACITY

Transparent communication and strong cross-sector collaboration supports planning, response, and long-term recovery.

DESIGN

The intentional process of planning, creating, and shaping something that balances form and function and solves a problem or fulfills a specific purpose.

Architecture
Landscape
Transportation
Visual Communication
Digital Assets
Products
Experiences
Systems
Processes

GOOD DESIGN

- Solves current & future problems
- Reduces inefficiencies
- Improves service delivery
- Stretches limited resources
- Shapes sustainable infrastructure
- Celebrates local culture and history
- Attracts residents and visitors
- Supports businesses
- Strengthens commercial corridors
- Creates a competitive advantage



GREAT DESIGN IS INCLUSIVE

Inclusive Design:

A **set of approaches** that takes into consideration the **spectrum of human diversity** and the **individual experiences** of each person at **every stage** of the design process to create **solutions** which have a broader **social impact**.

DESIGNING WITH, NOT FOR

When we design economic systems, infrastructure, and programs with and for the people most vulnerable to systemic shocks, we don't just solve isolated problems—we build flexibility, adaptability, and strength into the entire ecosystem.

WHEN YOU PRACTICE INCLUSIVE DESIGN:

- More people can participate
- Participants feel greater satisfaction and belonging
- Greater innovation in products and services, places, and experiences
- Products & services reach larger markets or audiences
- Lower cost for retrofits & redesigns
- Reduce liability and brand risk
- More connection to outcomes



DETROIT PUT THE WORLD ON WHEELS

Not because we invented the wheel

Because we invented a **PROCESS** for
assembling cars that made them **MORE**
ACCESSIBLE to everyone





We believe that today, it's still **the improvement of processes and practices** that will **expand access, deepen belonging,** and **reimagine what's possible** for more people

Inclusive design is the most rigorous process method we have for future-proofing local economies.

THE CHALLENGE



"Both large and small placemaking projects can have important impact on a community. Not only do these projects improve a physical public space, but they also strengthen the social fabric of a community."

**The Economic Impact of PLACEMAKING,
Michigan Municipal League report, June 2014**

Clean & Safe
Initiatives

Unique
Identity

Commercial
Facades

Adaptive Reuse

Festivals and Events

Artists &
Makers

Small Businesses

Resources and
Incentives

Cultural Assets

Celebrated Residents

Historical Events

Natural Resources

SMART, INCLUSIVITY GOAL

- Specific
- Measurable
- Achievable
- Relevant
- Time-bound



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THANK YOU

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Inquiries
bfahoome@designcore.org

