

# Our Values

## Context + Commitment

Committed  
to building  
just places.

Disparities in well-being, health, wealth, policing, and education are distinct across race and class lines. We\* acknowledge that business as usual in the development of the built environment will continue to perpetuate the social, economic, environmental, and geographic inequalities that exist in our communities today.

Unless we are actively working to mitigate immediate effects and dismantle long-standing power structures, we are complicit in upholding systemic oppression and white supremacy. We use these criteria to guide where we work, the projects we take on, how and where we invest resources, and the culture of our own practice.

\*We are the current staff and board of the Neighborhood Design Center.

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## Mindset

Courageous  
in our curiosity.

We come to our work with open minds and a readiness to ask hard questions, listen deeply, and change course when necessary. Through this responsive approach, we make room for radical imagination, creativity and inspired action in our collaborative practice. We strive to maintain a curious and critical lens on our own processes, programs, biases and patterns, and to incorporate what we learn from our partners, peers, and environment.

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## Process

Inclusive in our  
collaboration.

We create participatory spaces anchored in support, connection, and mutual respect, where diverse experiences and types of expertise are valued. This approach recognizes everyone's innate agency, surfaces a range of perspectives and opinions, and makes space for all who want to join in.

We welcome the opportunity to work through differing perspectives and priorities and build deeper understanding. By fostering connections across traditional hierarchies, we support new relationships, the redistribution of power, and increased access to resources long after an individual project ends.

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## Vision

Designing for  
just futures.

Systemic inequity has both created current conditions of disinvestment and disproportionately accorded influence and resources to white-led nonprofits. We acknowledge the privilege our organization holds within the existing system. To push back on that system and support community power, we work where we are invited and on community-identified and community-led efforts.

Further, we commit to decision-making structures that break down existing barriers; broadening our definitions of "skill" and "expertise" in community design; making space for new models of community development and ownership; and building an organization that centers those furthest from power. We believe in the radical potential of these actions.