

July 8, 2024

## **A Message on Equity from Lancaster City Alliance Board Chair Vanessa Philbert**

Thank you to all who joined us for our first-ever breakfast event on June 28, 2024.

As board chair of Lancaster City Alliance, I wanted to provide some additional insights that I did not have time to share during the event due to time restraints.

First, I am extremely proud to be part of the Lancaster City Alliance and look forward to my new leadership role with this organization. Thank you all for your time, support, and investment in what we do. We have much to celebrate and what we have collectively achieved is not possible without our many partners and collaborators. So, thank you for that.

The mission of Lancaster City Alliance is a *Lancaster City that flourishes, and everyone shares in its success.*

The team works hard every day to achieve this goal. While we are proud of what we and the City have achieved over the last decade, we know there are additional barriers to equitable economic development that must be addressed.

To that end, in 2020, the Chairperson's Council, led by Lancaster City Alliance, championed the need to ensure equity is advanced to support a flourishing community for everyone. Their commitment helped to launch the [Lancaster County Racial Equity Profile](#) authored by Policy Link.

To support community and economic development efforts, we need to center equity and the value it offers. Equity in this context refers to fairness, inclusivity, and access to opportunities and resources. To express the value of equity, we need to prioritize the following:

- **Inclusivity:** Ensure that all community members, regardless of background or identity, have a seat at the table and are involved in the decision-making process.
- **Fair distribution of resources:** Allocate resources in a way that benefits all members of the community, particularly those who have been historically marginalized or disadvantaged.
- **Addressing systemic barriers:** Identify and address systemic barriers that prevent certain groups from fully participating in economic development.

- **Promoting diversity:** Encourage diversity in leadership, workforce, and business ownership to reflect the community and ensure all voices are heard.

While we have had so much to celebrate over the past 10 years, we also know there is more to be done. We look forward to continuing to work with our many partners to ensure that everyone can benefit from the continued growth of Lancaster City.

Sincerely,

Vanessa Philbert  
Chair, Lancaster City Alliance