

Data Placemat Checklist

When gathering the data:

- Identify which jurisdictions already have a policy on the topic
- State the scope of the problem – how many/what proportion of the community/population of interest is affected by (or represents) this issue (e.g., x% of low income residents or number of apartment units in the county/city)
- Include a community profile of the demographic breakdown of the county/cities. This can be a separate sheet that you refer to for every indicator, or it can be pasted in for every indicator's placemat. Note where the population composition differs in certain cities. You may want to purposely choose to work in those areas where there are greater numbers of priority populations
- Utilize important evaluation findings to illustrate the problem, social or health disparities, public perception of the issue, media coverage, policymaker sentiment
- Use local data whenever possible as you will be trying to make determinations about what is needed in your communities. Anecdotal observations are not the strongest evidence upon which to base decisions. Regional, statewide, or national data is useful for comparisons or to illustrate why the issue is a problem, concerning trends, or needed solutions
- Specific to each indicator, show additional demographic data relating to the issue. Depending on the topic, that might be gender, age, tobacco use, health conditions affected by the problem, economic or educational status of the population, number of units of interest (e.g., parks, tobacco retailers, calls to Smoker's Helpline, etc.).
- Include comparisons that indicate where the problem is greater in some jurisdictions or populations than others (social justice lens). This will help when it comes to setting priorities and target communities. One size DOES NOT fit all!

When formatting data visualizations:

- Use font size, bolding, color to emphasize certain pieces of data (the storyline)
- Include headlines to state key takeaway messages
- Be sure to identify the sample size, source and year of information displayed or cited

When organizing the placemat:

- Label the placemat with the topic and indicator number
- Include a city council/supervisory district map, if possible or relevant
- Use data visualizations to convey otherwise complex data in an easy-to-understand format
- Incorporate icons (from newer versions of Excel add-ons or the Noun Project <https://thenounproject.com/>) to add visual interest to text
- When laying out a document or slide with a bunch of graphic and text elements, Powerpoint is easier to work in than Word. Depending on whether the placemat is going to be printed out or presented in a slide deck, decide on the page dimensions. On the Design tab, click on the dropdown arrow where you can select a standard or widescreen slide size (for presentations) OR select Custom Slide Size where you can choose a portrait or landscape orientation (for a printed document). If the placemat will be sent out to participants AND displayed on screen during the virtual CX meeting, it's best to select a standard slide size rather than widescreen which doesn't print out on a page correctly.
- Add page numbers to the placemat if it is more than 1 page
- Consider building in white space that can be used for making notations directly onto the placemat.
- Keep the placemats brief (1-2 pages), highlighting just the most important information that will help CX participants rate the indicator/asset and set program priorities from there.