PROJECT MISSION WRITER

Context

Mission

Stakeholder Ecosystem

"Without vision there is no power."

Given the fast-paced funding cycles, demanding development process, and lengthy funding requirements, it's a huge accomplishment just to complete a development project. But how do you achieve more for the people and communities you serve? Your efforts must be focused, your stakeholders inspired to move ideas forward, and your team working in sync. This can be achieved through a Project Mission Statement.

Project mission statements are a powerful tool to:
- distinguish your project in a competitive funding environment;
- ensure project stakeholders make decisions from the same playbook;
- set-up decision making in the value-engineering process; and,
- enable creative problem-solving to retain big project goals.

Project Mission Writer Master Class: Want to make sure your mission considers equity, and that you know how to communicate it to your stakeholders? The appendix contains a few more tools to help.

In this workbook, you will create a Project Mission Statement using the three following exercises:

1) Your Project's Legacy

Great projects make the news. In this exercise, you will zoom out from the details of your project and imagine what people will be saying about your development when it's complete.

2) Understanding Your Context
Good design starts with what is unique about your project: the people it will serve, the community it will join, the site that it sits on, and your

organization's approach. In this exercise, you will consider what your goals for this project might be based on the assets and needs that you observe through clarifying your context.

3) Drafting your Project Mission
Next, you will identify your most important goals. This will tell your design team where to focus their efforts. You will knit together these goals into a Project Mission Statement. Your mission statement becomes your team's shared narrative for impact and decision making tool.

YOUR PROJECT'S LEGACY

Specifying project goals can be challenging when there is so much your project could achieve. In this exercise, you will start to frame your project vision by thinking about what its big picture legacy might be. What will it accomplish and who it will impact when complete?

Headline:

Write a quote from a future resident. *What do they like about their unit and the common areas? How does your project help them with something they are dealing with? Imagine a specific person, give them a name and age – are they a young parent, a teenager, a retiree, or do they represent some other group your building will serve?*

Write a quote from a community member. *What do they appreciate about your development? How does it reflect or add to the community?*

Instructions: Your project made the front page of the regional newspaper for the impact it has made for the residents and the community!

- *What would the headline say?*
- *What would a story from a resident or community member say?*

Key takeaways:

What themes or areas of impact emerge from this exercise?

PEOPLE-BASED

Each community and population is unique. In this exercise, you will clarify what you already know about the residents and community your project will serve and define the role this development might play for your organization. Writing down this context provides new access to what your project might accomplish.

Residents

- Context: What is happening in the lives of residents that you should consider?
- Needs: What are the residents' needs and goals that you already know of (health, education, economic mobility, etc.)?

Pro-tip: Get specific! Think about real people rather than "residents"- i.e. What might someone your grandparents' age need? What challenges might a young parent or a veteran face?

Community

- Context: What are important neighborhood cultural assets, histories, and politics to consider? How might you reflect these?
- Needs: What are the community's needs? How might your project meet them?

*Pro-tip: Unsure about community needs? Use the **Enterprise Opportunity 360 tool** to find census tract-specific data. Organize a charrette using our **Participatory Design Toolkit.***

Organization

- Context: What is the importance of this project to your organization?
- Needs: What goals might it forward internally and externally? Could it pilot something new?

A First Step:
Use this exercise to jump start a deeper stakeholder engagement and research process! This will help ensure your project has equitable outcomes and is representative of its community.

PLACE-BASED

One key thing that separates standard projects from extraordinary projects is how they interact with and take advantage of their surroundings. Use the space below to draw your site and the adjacent area. Identify attributes and features that are internal and external to the site; these attributes could be abstract (such as policies) or physical (such as a nearby park). Then in the SWOT map, chart the features that you identify.

- *Draw your site and its surroundings. Be sure to include nearby amenities, such as supermarket, transit stop, or walking path; and challenges, such as a large greyfield site or flood-prone area*

	Helpful	Harmful
Internal	Strengths	Weaknesses
External	Opportunities	Threats
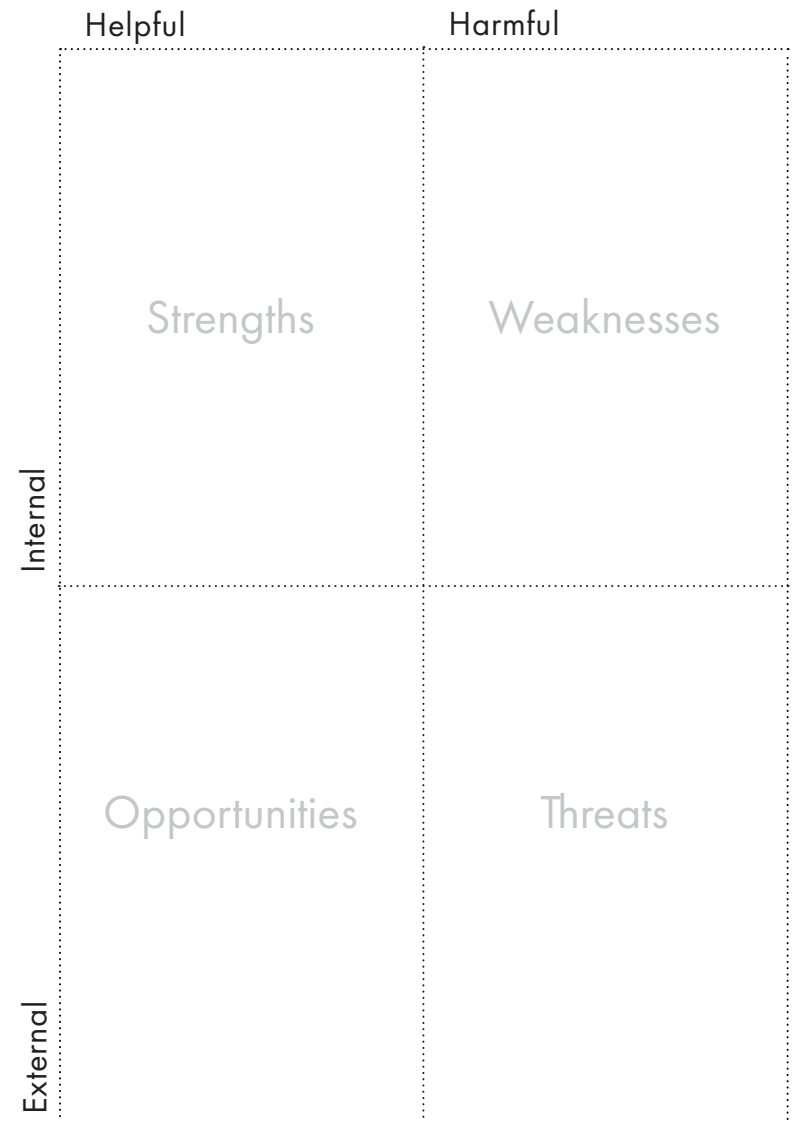
Pro-tip:
- *Think back to the previous exercise. How might these attributes meet the needs you have identified?*
- *Take a site visit. Talk to neighbors and business owners. Is there anything missing in your drawing?*

DRAFTING YOUR MISSION

Draft your project mission statement below. Think of this as an elevator pitch to share with your stakeholders, internal and external, to gain their input and buy-in on your project's big picture goals. Refer to the previous pages to establish the context for your mission.

Project Name

Did you...

☐ Specify the people you would like to impact?

☐ Include your resident or community goals? *e.g. wellbeing, housing stability, improved mobility*

☐ Define the qualities of your project? (community-generating, healthy, etc.)

☐ Include your organizational goal for this project?

Sample: Station North CDC is committed to supporting the vibrant artist community in Baltimore. Station North Art Lofts will help practicing artists at or below 60% AMI by developing housing that is well list, comfortable , and easy to maintain with durable, low-toxicity materials, and benefit our residents by having breathable live/work lofts in walkable and transit-rich location.

Pro Tip: Don't worry about getting the language exactly right. Instead, use this as an opportunity to outline and prioritize your most important goals. When working in a group, first complete this activity individually, then collaborate to create a shared version.

DESIGN MATTERS

toolkit

PROJECT MISSION WRITER: MASTERCLASS

PROCESS

Taking the next step in responding to the context of your project, it's important to recognize the historic inequities that may be built into the socio-political and economic systems of your neighborhood. If projects do not create specific goals for addressing inequity, they may unintentionally perpetuate it.

Past	Current	Future
• What is the history of your neighborhood? Was this community redlined?	• What are the community engagement processes your organization facilitates? • How have they been successful? What could be improved?	• What are your goals for the outcomes of your community engagement and partnership process? How might the process itself benefit the community? • Who in your community should be at the table for your process to be equitable?

*Pro-tip: Not sure if this neighborhood was redlined and prevented from receiving mortgages? Check out **Mapping Inequity** dsl.richmond.edu/panorama/redlining*

*Pro-tip: Not sure what's next? Check-out Enterprise's **Placemaking for Community Developers** and the **Participatory Design Toolkit**.*

IDENTIFYING STAKEHOLDERS, PT. 1

In order to share your mission effectively with your stakeholders, you must understand who they are, what motivates them, and their relationship to your project.

Impact	Interest	Relationship
• Who will this project affect? • Who must be involved to make the project a success?	• What concerns or fears do they have regarding the project? • What motivates or excites them?	• How would you characterize your relationship? • Place a star next to final decision makers.
Residents **Staff**		
Other Stakeholder Groups:		

IDENTIFYING STAKEHOLDERS, PT. 2

How do your stakeholders relate to each other and to your project? This influence mapping exercise visualizes the power each stakeholder has, as well as their support for your objectives. Use this as an opportunity to think about the relationships, both positive and negative, that you will have to navigate to achieve your project mission.

Most Influence

Strongly Support

Strongly Opposed

Least Influence
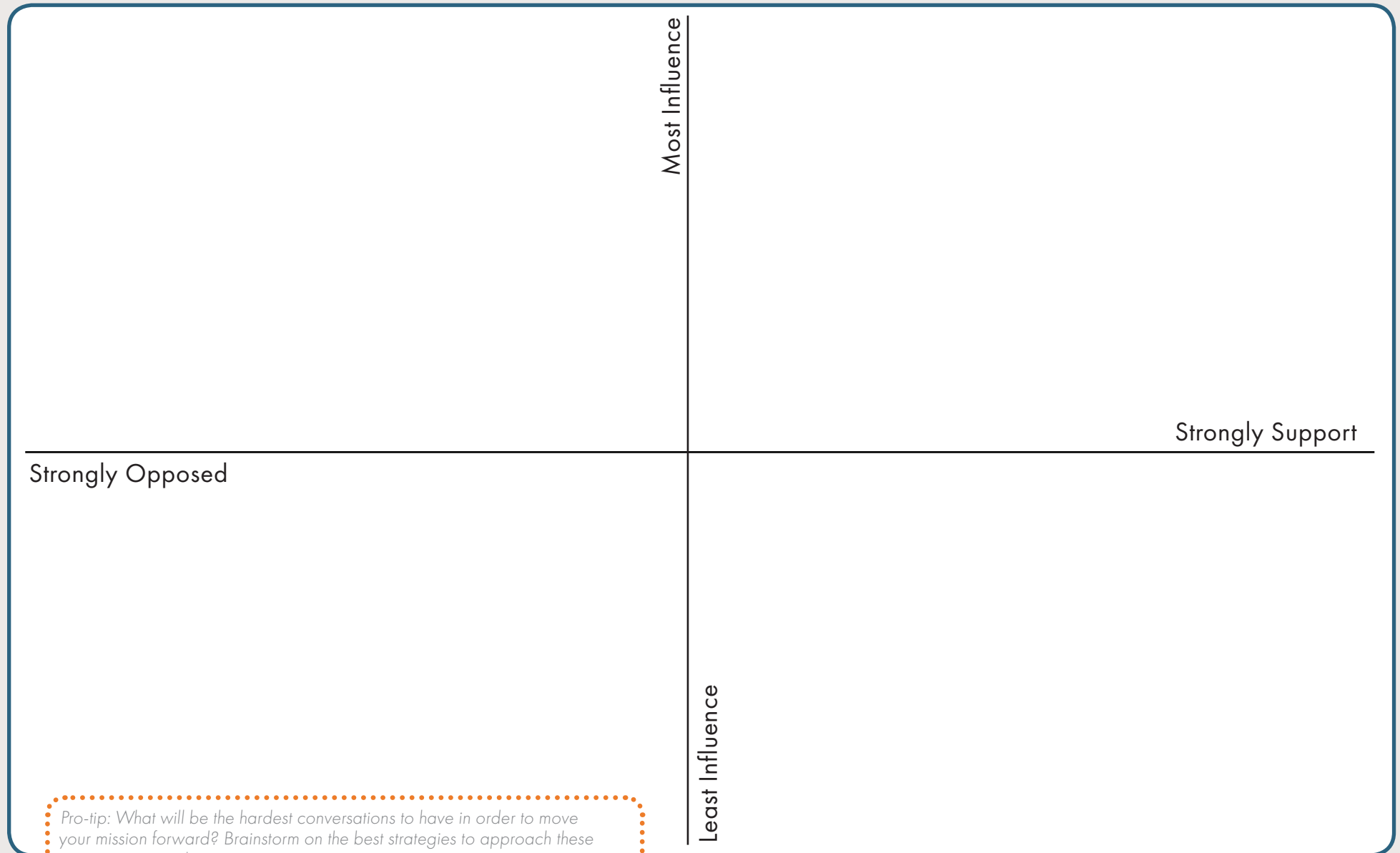
Pro-tip: What will be the hardest conversations to have in order to move your mission forward? Brainstorm on the best strategies to approach these conversations with your team.