Is This the Right Word?

Need help deciding on a word choice in your reporting? Use this flow chart to think through the decision and explore alternatives.

What does it describe?

A person

- Did you ask the person in question?
  - NO
    - Ask them!
  - YES
    - Is it a term your audience is familiar with?
      - NO
        - Great, explain it!
      - YES
        - Can you default to person-first language?
          - NO
            - Great, use it!
          - YES
            - Describe states & experiences, not traits or labels.

A community

- Can you determine the community's preference?
  - NO
  - YES

A place

- Does it use a single trait to generalize about this place?
  - NO
    - Does it focus unnecessarily on problems and deficits?
      - NO
        - Flip the sentence to focus on assets & solutions.
      - YES
        - Get more specific. Clunky is better than misleading.
  - YES
    - Use terms that align with your audience mission.

Something else

- Does the term rely on shared assumptions to be understood?
  - N/A
  - YES
    - Restructure to focus on causation & agency.