



Michigan Association of Planning
A Chapter of the American Planning Association

Strategic Partnerships for Equity Gallery Walk RESULTS

We are grateful for your participation in the Gallery Walk at Spring Institute 2013! We hope it inspired new thoughts and conversations and enhanced the learning of the day. Below are how participants collectively answered the questions that we posed. Duplicates have been removed, but we tried to keep as many raw answers as possible, especially if they framed similar issues slightly different. These responses will help MAP in its action on social equity and justice.

1. What are you most passionate about concerning social equity and justice?

Fair compensation for citizens residing in problem areas
Income equity
Equalizing the income for workers vs CEOs
Lower income neighborhoods neglected
The passion for entertainment is so high (football, NASCAR, etc) while there is little passion to help the needy!
Healthy neighborhoods regardless of income
Neighborhoods/quality of life
Everyone wants to feel safe – coalescing – Bridging the Gap – Living in Poverty vs. meeting needs
Residents feel unempowered to address neighborhood issues/perhaps false presumptions
Teen pregnancy (link to education)
Educational opportunities
Education
Access to quality education, regardless of income or wealth
Educational opportunities in central cities, creativity is needed
Public school equity
Access to jobs and quality education
Opportunity and access to a better future for everyone
Increased access for opportunities
Cultural understanding
Hope in positive future
Education that leads to acceptance
New techniques to extract information from under represented populations
Improving neighborhood relations
Being purposefully inclusive in public decision-making processes

Inclusive
Outreach
Finding better ways to engage—truly engage a wider range of community members in community decision-making
Conversations that reflect all sides and perspectives
Gathering all peoples together to have the conversation
Relationship building with neighbors
Porch conversations
Educate, give tools to, team, to confront the issues, be brave to speak out
Need to change to an ever-changing world
Change will happen either smoothly or NOT
Change is desirable and necessary, the community must evolve to match changes in economy and demographics
Environmental concerns
People affected by pollution need recourse
Media (and other institutions such as schools) representing all sides of the issues; get away from narrow-casting
Challenging stereotypes
How to get past stereotypes, how to think about the issues and form your thoughts
A feeling of hopelessness
Equity connected to economic development
Access to art/culture/recreation
No transit; inadequate transit
Transportation options
Lack of transit options
A transportation system that has equal access by mobility options for all
How to maintain an integrated neighborhood
Unity between different communities
The need for more cooperation between communities and different groups
Thinking about how to integrate equity into creating vibrant communities – it should not be an add on
Having planning be a platform for decision-makers vision and principles rather than trying to engineer false solutions
Relief of suffering
We need reparation effective immediately
Income disparity
Economic disparity
Social disparity
Political disparity
That we don't do "urban renewal" all over again—tearing up communities of color
Making sure that biking and walking are accessible to all people
Passionate about equity
Quality of affordable housing

Truly affordable housing (rent/mortgage/taxes/utilities + cost associated with location i.e. do you need a car?)

Awareness

I fear an unstable society full of violence and conflict...so how can we NOT create that world?

Social equity and justice associated with food and food security in Detroit

LGBT rights in Michigan! MI is one of the worst in country in this regard!

Balancing act between equity and economic prosperity

Racism/prejudice

2. What issues related to social equity and planning fairness are present in your community?

Mental and emotional impact of constant invalidation

Lack of diversity at discussion table

Lack of recognition of inequity by community

Lack of understanding of the multiple cultures that exist within the community

Getting to the right people for input – but being fair to those offering there is no trust in the people offering

Lack of outreach to diverse community groups/members (bring different people to the table)

Need better techniques for outreach and communication

Language barriers

Mistrust of government

Fragmentation of local government (impedes regional collaboration)

Educational gaps

Education

Advocates of every ethnic group need to be engaged

Access to transit

Lack of public transportation

Unreliable dial-a-ride bussing

Lack of access to places

School of choice

Food access-healthy (not equitable)

Food desert

Fair housing...affordable

Inequality in investment

Unawareness of information

Gentrification

Environmental impact in low-income neighborhoods

Arab-American cultural differences

Wealth-ownership

Health is affected by all policies

Old thinking about needs of the community and who makes up the community

3. What barriers, pressures and challenges face practitioners wanting to improve conditions?

Disconnection that there ARE barriers

Narrow frames – larger impacts

Lack of coordination across boundaries – municipal, physical, cultural, political, etc.

Lack of diversity

When we don't look specifically at issues of racial and economic inequity, there are often unintended consequences of planning decisions

Territorialism – transportation/economic development

Feel threatened by others (e.g. village/township/district recreation plan)

Loss of control = fear of retaliation (who profit from status quo)

Fear of change and power/control fear of difference and the unknown

Communities fear the loss of power and their identity

Lack of resources – perception that cutting means less luxury

Lack of agreement on definition of equality

Lack of knowledge to manage collaboration

Failure of leadership to engage population and really listen

General planning is perceived/considered a luxury, which gets cut

Administrative planning valued more

Socio-economic diversity – reaching out to groups – same people

Lack of economic reinvestment

Lack of relationships – transaction/deliverables vs transform

Legislation serves as barriers e.g. drug testing/healthcare

Local government balkanization & legacy of physical development and infrastructure that reinforces it

Language barriers

Fiscal inequality across communities

Starting a conversation about diversity

Discomfort with race, fears of racism, a common language and understanding

Land use and zoning restrictions

Lack of knowledge of situations and issues

Not enough money

Not enough people are aware

Support financial business

4. From YOUR professional perspective, what are some inequities that exist in your community?

Philanthropy is disconnected from community

Political representation is totally disconnected from reality

Education inequity

Neighborhood schools can reinforce inequity when there's racial and economic segregation

Lack of civic engagement

Access to opportunities for those who need them

Housing and jobs

Limited affordable housing
 Affordable housing
 Payment for infrastructure needs
 Income
 Access via transit, planning, county
 Inadequate transportation and other basic services in Detroit and inner-ring suburbs
 Access to a reliable car is assumed. Being physically able to quickly cross a street is assumed.
 Seniors have limited access to shopping and basic human services. No public transit or connections to shopping areas
 Seniors have limited access to support services
 Transportation – low paying, service sector – no p.m. public transportation
 Lack of equal access to services which leads to segregation or separation
 Lack of regionalism
 Regardless of past practice or history you cannot write-off a portion of the community and expect it to work out to the advantage of the whole
 Lower SES
 Native American community and other people of color members are treated differently and are held to different standards
 Not learning enough about the “new” people
 Lack of transparency around appointments and opportunities
 Lack of diversity within leadership positions (elected and/or appointed positions)

5. What community partners should be engaged to elevate the equity conversation in your community?

Everyone!	Chamber of commerce
Churches	Employers
Strengthen community organizations	Larger employers
Association and citizen groups	Youth involvement
Neighborhood/community organizations	High schools
Ethnic groups and their associations	Youth club/centers
Service/social groups (Kiwanis, Elks, Rotary, etc)	Schools
Neighborhood associations	Students
Other social organizations	Children
Tribal council	Youth adults
Government	Parents (ex. PTAs)
Elected officials	Soccer mom/football dads, etc.
Police officers	Universities and community colleges
Code enforcement	Department of Transportation and other state agencies
Local and regional economic development agencies	Transit users
Job placement/training agencies	Transportation authority
Business communities	Transportation providers
	Rich people

Folks who don't necessarily need the services
Poor people
Folks who actually need the services
Elderly/senior centers
Non-profits

Mental health organizations
Hospitals
Healthcare
Service providers
Community foundations
Residents

6. What was most meaningful to you?

The change (speed of it)
Sharing money is hard
Sharing of helpful solutions
Equal environment
Fairness
Learning from each other!
Corruption!
Political parties can work together
Need to create physical/social equity
Seeing the statistical info and hearing about the importance of "regionalism"
Manuel Pastor's presentation
Word cloud

Fault Line story
Level playing field is needed
Quality of speakers and presentations
Townships seeing it as somebody's problem
No incentive to care about borders outside your community
Dispelled all the media reports on immigration
Everybody is a minority
Class segregation (future)
Economic disparity
Our region's inability to act in our own best interest!

7. What indicators would tell you that positive change has occurred?

Grassroots efforts – new groups formed/or strengthened
How racially integrated our own personal networks are
Reduction in hateful emails that fuels fears
Less or no need for school millages
Graduation and literacy rates are up
Consolidation of governments
Well-attended informational/problem solving meetings
Stable area with low turnover or quick home sales
Regions embracing economic diversity as well as cultural diversity
Economic growth
Leveling of economic values = income/property values
Statements and actions, from elected officials indicating an interest or commitment to taking a common approach to meeting challenges
Low rates of child poverty – at least comparable to adult poverty!
A visual marked change in neighborhoods with family poverty
Development of a "citizens advisory board" and people of color would not fear the police
More balanced public school achievement levels
If others, besides a select few, would talk about equity, diversity, etc.
Our committees would be as diverse as our community
"Crossing the cultural lines"

Our community would be integrated!
Data demonstrates integration

8. What one thing are you going to do as a result of something you've learned at this event?

Try to convince our city leadership to do something different!
Talk, talk, talk – this needs to become part of our regular dialogue – not ignored
Get a better understanding of how planning decisions are done in our county
Promote mixed-use development as a means of affordable housing
Share what we learned to help better our community
Equality in planning
Learn more about social equity and justice
Push revenue sharing
Get re-engaged in the work
Engage more groups concerned with lower income groups
Look for and partner with a racially diverse magnet school
Call my county commissioner to get public transportation (countywide) on the ballot this fall!

9. What information do you need to advance equity issues in your work?

Awareness of health conditions/concerns related to energy efficiency
Understanding of the laws
Good listening skills to better understand all the issues
Simplified agendas – issues written simpler for easier understanding
Tools/resources to get the issues to our public officials (PowerPoints, pamphlets, etc.)
Understanding the power structure to identify the decision makers and target them
Understanding municipal budget to use that information to further your argument/issue
Understanding background information/issues/power players
Others working in the community working on the issue
Public awareness
Interest
Strategies for engagement
Greater participation from all socio-economic levels
Leadership – who are the leaders? Potential leaders?
Good, relevant data connecting equity to good economic outcomes (but I wish we didn't need that)
The financial pictures of the community. How much funding is available within the community and what criterion is used to prioritize spending
Diversification of the workplace
Demographic information (SES, homelessness, poverty)
Current training that city officials undergo relative to diversity and inclusion, equity, and social justice
Being able to engage more community members in the work and not constantly “recycle” the same few people all the time

List your Aha moments.

Surprised by the fact that Michigan will remain “majority” longer than most

The negative impact of regional decisions

Perception is our reality – whether statistics back or not

How do you balance a citizen’s concern about safety and property value decline with equity

What is your best take away today’s event?

Divisiveness (silos) inhibits real problem solving

Very innovative brainstorming conference

People have shared values about social equity but implementation of those values in practices is not widespread

Greater understanding of some of the realities of social injustices today

Wasn’t thinking of planning in terms of social injustice

Connections to build true relationships is key

See dysfunction more clearly in some circumstances