



**Michigan Association of Planning**  
**A Chapter of the American Planning Association**

## **Transportation and Race Film Reactions**

This session included a film and discussion. Attendees had small group candid discussions regarding transportation, race, poverty, and access. These were the reactions.

- Need for transportation reform
- Segregation, denial, abuse of power, stereotyping, red lining
- Sad that a death was necessary to cause change! Had to bring the issues to the widespread public, one side sees no likelihood for change! The other not informed or ignored the issue. Original result was bad planning.
- May have been other reasons the bus did not stop there. What if a white person had been killed? What would the response have been? #1 indicator of poverty is teen pregnancy.
- Still happening – who's interest is paramount? The owner, the \$, the people are least.
- Contention between planning good design and having public/private support
- Disconnect between planners & engineers
- Design affects safety and access
- Transportation does not happen on county lines
- What is the role of planners in planning bus stops? Fairness/equity; accessibility; not just transportation but all levels of including housing
- Teenage pregnancy as a determinant in Cynthia's bio matters NONE, yet some crutch on that as her having a history of poor judgments
- Were they fearful or proud that they could see having a black officer eventually
- "sanitized, guiltless racism"
- Clear demarcations between black and white neighborhoods – who put them there? Are they just physical or psychological/sociological too?
- Race as an excuse for society's problems
- Why are we planning individuals/groups for systemic & structural (transportation, access to jobs [residency rules for even being able to apply for a job], healthcare, education) challenges and inequities that we each contribute to upholding?
- "I don't see any racial tension."
- "I saw it as a safety issue" – Sure! Who do you keep safe?
- Half of families earn no wage or salary
- 1/3 of those that do work take public transportation; embedded segregation; residency/economic requirements in hiring practices

- Access or the lack of, to transportation in this country is an issue that continues to lack attention or priority
- Economic development is being impacted by racism
- Sad, race has always been and still is an issue
- Will mass transit planning in Michigan please take equity into consideration!
- Can we please take stigma out of mass transit in Michigan!
- Perceptions and systems need to change!
- Do our existing systems keep people down?
- “small” decisions = “big” impacts; understand the “why”
- Perceptions of crime
- Poverty
- Don’t want troubles to move down the street
- Continues
- Diverse development
- Looks familiar
- Recognize racism
- Parallels with this story and our “SMART” debate – community opting out
- Public employment practices = no residency requirements; still issues with promotions
- What are the other implicit policies “hidden” in our communities that foster racial or social equity? How do we discover and change them?
- Social equity was very extreme and not understood
- NIMBYism
- Overt example
- Fear: rich will lose if the poor come in
- Racism or classism? Haves vs. have nots
- Tragic
- Times have not changed
- Complete streets; transit connections to regional destinations; job access; false boundaries
- Outrageous; ridiculous; waste of a life, of resources, of an entire community!
- Limited transit in metro Detroit
- Lack of transit planning during mall approval; veiled racism; lack of responsibility by transit authority to let passengers off on the street and not notice the need for an actual transit stop!
- Better infrastructure design: crossings/sidewalks/elevated bridge
- Transportation must connect people to where the jobs are or joblessness remains and economic prosperity is hindered for everyone; employment services need to provide transportation; transportation must be reliable/on time, etc.
- Perception is our reality no matter what the statistics say
- Manipulate circumstances
- RTA
- Trapped
- No buses=no black or lower income people (trapped by my circumstances)

- No way out
- Transit planning = racism?
- "Racism isn't a big problem it's a scam"
- Unwed mother
- "utterly ridiculous"
- Blacks:Whites
- Ostrich approach = if I can't see it, it isn't happening
- No increase in crime rate
- "blacks need not apply"
- No access to jobs
- Institutional racism
- Denial of racism
- What gives them (the decision makers) the right to deny options and opportunities to select groups of people?
- Regional planning and access to all the jobs in metro Detroit
- "transportation and access is crucial to these issues"
- We shouldn't legalize the isolation of people
- Lack of communication between planners engineers
- Subsidizing automobile ownership or access [multiple policy interventions]
- Limited access to...DECENTRALIZATION of assets/institutions
- Malls are fundamentally anti-pedestrian
- Worries about safety
- Complete Streets:Urban Sprawl
- Jobs/employees location
- Urban design
- Blaming
- Denial of impact to black community
- Passing over vulnerable communities
- Mismatch of jobless and jobs
- Institutional racism; transport; safety
- Responsibility of public officials and planners