

ALBEMARLE COUNTY'S EQUITY ROADSHOW



A Report on Findings and Recommendations

May 2020

Co-produced by Albemarle County's Office of Equity and Inclusion staff Siri Russell and Ginny Brooks, and UVA students Carolyn Heaps, Tyler Hinkle, Kevin Kask, Nicholas Wittkofski, and Mikayla Woodley.

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Executive Summary

Albemarle County is located in central Virginia. Its partly suburban, partly rural composition serves a variety of land uses: from residential, to recreational, to commercial. In 2019, Albemarle County's Office of Equity and Inclusion (OEI) launched an Equity Roadshow to determine the level of access its diverse residents had to various resources and services in the community. The Equity Roadshow consisted of a short survey for residents to complete in person with representatives from the county. These OEI staff and volunteers visited 20 locations throughout the county in 12 weeks, collecting responses from residents who were interested in participating.

The following report was completed by graduate student consultants at the University of Virginia (UVA). It provides an analysis of the Equity Roadshow's results, reviews the literature on best practices for equity assessments and community engagement, and presents several recommendations for OEI to implement in future Roadshows. Results from the Roadshow indicate that respondents value the opportunities, people, community, and experiences available to them in Albemarle County. However, traffic, housing, development, and transportation were perceived as negative aspects of the county. The majority of respondents did not believe the county to be an equitable place, citing concerns related to community, housing, people, diversity, resources, opportunities, and segregation.

Based on an examination of the data collected, several case study examples, and discussions with OEI staff and volunteers, three overarching recommendations are given for improving future iterations of the Equity Roadshow:

1. Target More Diverse Cross-Sections of County Residents
2. Develop a More Engaging Survey Environment
3. Enhance Survey Tools

A list of sub-objectives are provided underneath each overarching goal to help OEI accomplish these improvements. Not only does the information included in this report aim to improve the quality of the data collected, but it also aims to improve the Roadshow experience for volunteers that help to conduct the survey and the County residents that participate. This brings OEI one step closer to its goal of creating an equitable and inclusive Albemarle County.

Introduction

Background

On November 28th, 2018 Albemarle County announced the creation of its Office of Equity and Inclusion (OEI), with Siri Russell as its first director. OEI was formed with the goal to “further the county’s commitment to the provision of quality services to our entire community.” (Albemarle.org) In the months since its formation, one of OEI’s projects has been to conduct the first “Equity Roadshow” in the county’s history. The Roadshow was designed in collaboration with an equity work group, which consists of Albemarle residents from diverse backgrounds. The first iteration of this innovative outreach method was conducted in fall 2019, when over a 12-week period, county staff and volunteers traveled across Albemarle County to speak with community residents in locations they were likely to visit in their daily lives. After completing the Roadshow, OEI began compiling and reviewing survey results. As the office looks to the future of its work engaging individuals in the county, it seeks to build upon successes and address challenges experienced in the Roadshow’s first iteration. In addition, OEI is interested in serving as a model for other communities that are also seeking to evaluate equity and engage individuals who have been historically overlooked.

Equity Roadshow Mission and Goals

The Equity Roadshow sought to connect to residents where they were— at coffee shops, gas stations, workplaces, libraries, or school— and gain valuable insight into the Albemarle County community. OEI intended to use the information gathered from the Roadshow to inform a more equitable and inclusive Albemarle County, and to share the findings back to the community.

In addition, the Roadshow was described by staff and volunteers as seeking to:

- fill gaps in the county’s knowledge about how to best meet resident needs;
- capture perspectives from diverse residents by reaching more and different people than were likely to have been represented in outreach methods that the county has used in the past;
- generate robust, qualitative content that could be used in the Albemarle County Equity Profile; and
- provide a format to gather valuable local knowledge without tokenizing participants or pathologizing perspectives.

Premise of This Report

In this Report, unless otherwise indicated, “Student Consultants” refers to University of Virginia students Carolyn Heaps, Kevin Kask, Nick Wittkofski, Mikayla Woodley, and Tyler Hinkle providing in-kind technical assistance to the Albemarle County Office of Equity and Inclusion (OEI). “Community Partner” refers to Siri Russell (or her designated

contact) at the Albemarle County Office of Equity and Inclusion who will work in partnership with the Student Consultants.

Purpose

This report provides a summary of the Equity Roadshow to date, including the methods and processes utilized, the results gathered from participants, and recommendations for continued outreach. It was developed by the Student Consultants in close collaboration with the Community Partner.

Data Collection Methods

The Student Consultants began their research process by conducting meetings with the Community Partner to gain a complete picture of the Equity Roadshow outreach goals and vision, previous community engagement methods utilized, perspectives on successes and challenges of the Roadshow, and future anticipated resources available. From there, Student Consultants employed a variety of data analysis methods:

- Students analyzed qualitative data gathered during the Equity Roadshow conducted in fall 2019.
- Students conducted archival research and compiled case studies from similar communities focused on equitable engagement of residents. These case studies provided useful information about what other, similar communities have found successful when assessing equity and engaging populations that are typically left out of the public participation process.
- Students conducted six semi-structured interviews with individuals who attended the roadshow as volunteers or employees in order to collect survey responses. These interviews were conducted between March 11, 2020 and March 27, 2020, in person or via Zoom online meetings.

Using the findings from these analyses, the Student Consultants built recommendations for methods of continued community engagement in Albemarle County.

Impact Due To COVID-19

On March 10, 2020, as a result of the rapidly spreading COVID-19 virus (Coronavirus Disease 2019), the University of Virginia announced that all courses would be transitioning online for the foreseeable future. Shortly thereafter, the decision was made to move the rest of the spring 2020 semester online in order to avoid further transmission of the virus and protect employee and student health. As a result, the Student Consultants worked with the Community Partner to adapt the original work plan, transition remaining interviews online, and ensure that check-ins and a final presentation could occur virtually. All other work and methods of achieving stated work remained the same.

Equity Roadshow Methods

Materials

The OEI Roadshow set-up centered around a table, at which volunteers and staff employed a variety of methods throughout the 12-weeks of outreach to record responses to the survey, including pen and paper, a large touch screen, and iPads for mobile entry. Earlier in the process, pen and paper and the touch screen were used more often because the iPads had not yet been obtained by OEI. However, according to those individuals interviewed by our team, the touch screen was often challenging to use, and by the end of the Roadshow staff had a preference for recording responses on behalf of residents using iPads. Additionally, a large printed map was used to capture locations spatially which participants identified in their responses. Residents and staff/volunteers would together place colored sticker dots on the map during their conversation. OEI also provided candy and other snacks to individuals who participated, and on some occasions provided hand-outs with information about ongoing county programs.

Intake process

The Roadshow aimed to meet people where they were, and for that reason, survey intake required engaging individuals in-person, on the spot, who were almost certainly not already familiar with OEI and the survey. Factors dictating the intake process varied by location, and included the number of visitors, the type of location, and the placement of the OEI Roadshow table. One individual interviewed by our team highlighted that the Scottsville library outreach was successful, in part, because they were able to capture the attention of each person coming in and out of the library as a result of the size of the building and the central location of the Roadshow table.

Furthermore, intake relied on human power to engage residents in a discussion and convince them that a conversation was worthwhile. Several people interviewed by our team noted that, for this to be successful, the OEI staff and volunteers needed to be friendly, approachable, and outgoing. Often, staff and volunteers would start the conversation by asking people if they had a few minutes to talk, and reassuring those passing by that the amount of time required to complete the survey was minimal.

Survey Questions

The Roadshow centered around the use of survey questions designed to give residents the opportunity to talk about their access to resources. The survey included 17 open-ended questions. It focused on understanding the amount of time it takes for the respondent to access resources, the respondent's perceptions of community assets, the respondent's perceptions of barriers in the community, and finally, the respondent's definition of equity. Some survey questions built upon each other; for example, after

asking residents if they would like to live somewhere different from where they were currently living, the survey asked where this alternative location would be.

OEI volunteers and staff played an important role in gaining the qualitative, in-depth responses that the Roadshow aimed to capture. This included going “off script,” and receiving and recording information and stories about the participants’ experiences in the county that were not explicitly requested in the survey questions. As staff and volunteers guided participants through the survey in person, they had the opportunity to read participants’ interests and limitations in responses, asking follow-up questions that might not have been on the survey, but that elicited more information on residents’ lived experiences and their perceptions of equity. In tradeoff for entering into longer conversations on particular topics, certain residents did not make it all the way through the survey. In cases where residents were not disposed to share information or go off script, the volunteers and staff also played an important role in cutting the conversation and survey short when the participant reached the limit of their time and interest.

Locations visited

A primary goal of the Roadshow was to meet people where they were. Therefore, the locations the Roadshow visited were those in which Albemarle County residents were most likely to frequent during their daily routines. OEI visited 20 locations in total, all varying in services and target clientele. The Roadshow visited numerous public buildings including libraries, schools, and the post office. Private locations visited included gas stations and cafes, such as Baine’s Books and Coffee and Mudhouse Coffee. The Roadshow also experimented with visiting residential locations like Southwood Mobile Home Park. The selected sites are widely dispersed throughout the county, which allowed OEI to collect data from a variety of perspectives. The maps on pages 8-10 demonstrate the locations visited by the Roadshow during fall 2019, as well as additional locations the team planned to visit in future iterations.

SURVEY LOCATIONS

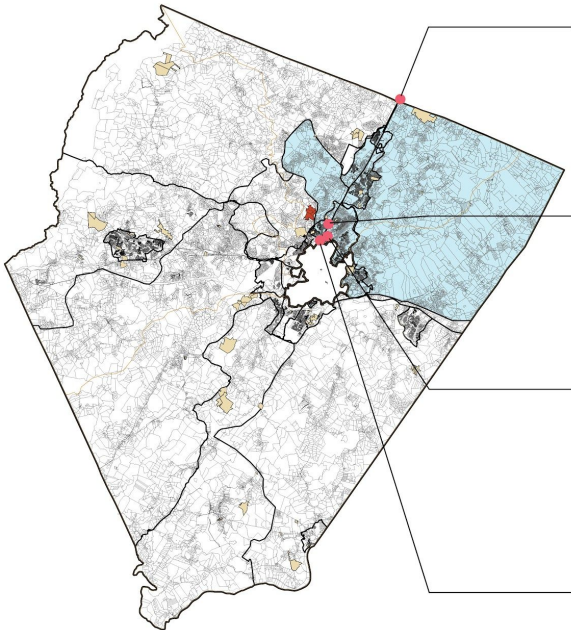
WENT



SCOTTSVILLE



RIVANNA + RIO



Anytime Fitness



Indian Bazar

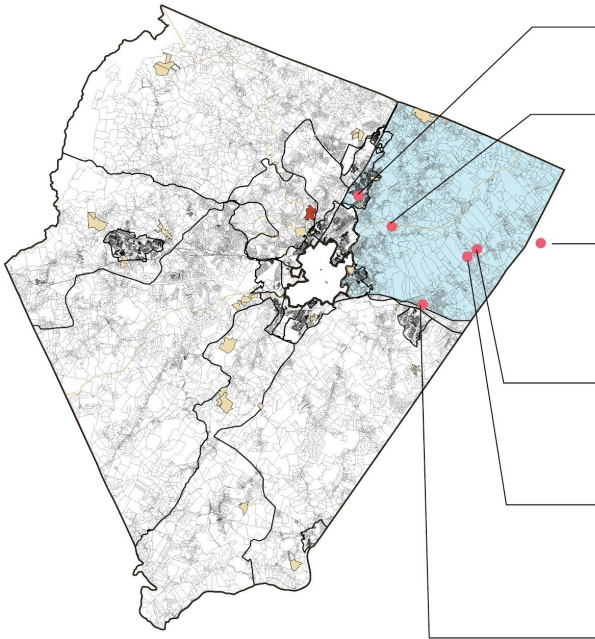


Church of the Incarnation



Civille Oriental

RIVANNA



Forest Lakes Farmers Market



Forest Lakes VA Community Center



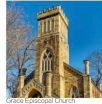
Green Leaf Farm



Green Leaf Farm



Carroll Market



Christ Episcopal Church

JACK JOUETT



PLAN TO GO



OEI Roadshow staff and volunteers

The Equity Roadshow relied on human interaction to engage survey participants and facilitate gathering survey responses. The individuals conducting outreach for the Roadshow included OEI staff, Albemarle County staff from other parts of the government, and volunteers. In total, more than 15 different individuals supported Roadshow implementation, and more than half of those individuals worked for Albemarle County. The majority of volunteer participants were UVA students who were familiar with OEI and the Equity Roadshow as a result of their coursework or research at the University.

The number of staff and volunteers present for outreach on a given day varied, and was driven by staff/volunteer availability. Two individuals we interviewed for this report were present at the same outreach location where there were a total of five staff/volunteers throughout the course of the Roadshow stop supporting the survey. However, this seemed to be an outlier; in most instances only one or two staff/volunteers were present.

The volunteers interviewed by Student Consultants for this report were familiar with OEI and the goals of the roadshow prior to conducting outreach, and had been in touch with Siri Russell and/or Ginny Brooks about the general logistics of the event. However, these volunteers did not receive any formal training or guidance prior to arrival at the outreach regarding how to conduct the survey.

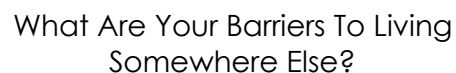
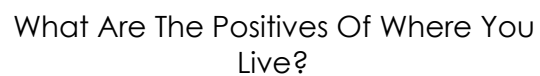
This section demonstrates the results of the questions asked to Roadshow respondents. In total, the Roadshow spoke with 105 residents. The results from the survey questions with these residents are presented here as word clouds, and the five most common responses received for each question are highlighted. These results can be used in future Roadshows and visioning related work as they are able to serve as points of unity and a means of directing discussions. While only the most common responses are highlighted, the county may find other responses useful for guiding future discussions and informing visioning processes.

The second word cloud examines the question **“Would you rather live somewhere else? If yes, then where?”** Most individuals responded in some form of no. Those who were interested in living somewhere else most commonly responded with *Charlottesville*, *Keswick*, and *Crozet*. In future engagement efforts, the county may consider including additional questions to address what individuals find attractive in these three locations, as well as any additional

[illegible]**ALBEMARLE COUNTY'S EQUITY ROADSHOW**

The third word cloud addresses **“What are the negatives of where you live?”** The top results from this question were *traffic, people, housing, development, and transportation*. The responses from this question may lead to future questions addressing what about traffic individuals do not like, what do they see as negative about people and development, and what are the issues they see with the current conditions of housing and transportation.

The next word cloud addresses, **“What are your barriers to living somewhere else?”** Responses to this question overwhelmingly reference *affordability*, but also reveal barriers including *transportation*, *school*, *money*, *house*, and *traffic*. These results may lead to future questions involving what needs to be more affordable, and how could living arrangements and school conditions be accommodated when performing a move.



[illegible]

Do You Feel Unwelcome In The Places You Avoid? If Yes, Why?

[illegible]

ALBEMARLE COUNTY'S EQUITY ROADSHOW

To coincide with the previous question, the proceeding word cloud addresses the question, **“Do you feel unsafe in the places you avoid? If yes, why?”** The results reveal that the majority of individuals identified that they avoided *Charlottesville* and *downtown* specifically. It also becomes clear that the main reasons for feeling unsafe are *people*, *the night*, and *areas that are dark* in addition to many other reasons such as *vandalism* and *being alone*. These results may lead to future questions around what might make places that are unsafe be more safe, such as improved lighting, and what do people do which makes individuals feel unsafe.

The word cloud to the right reveals six main responses to: **“Can you define what an equitable community is?”** According to respondents, an equitable community has *services*, *resources*, *people*, *access*, *opportunities*, and *community* for everyone.

The following question directly asks whether Albemarle County is an equitable community. The results, shown to the right, demonstrate that the majority of individuals feel that Albemarle County is not an equitable community. The question following this addressed, **“Why is albemarle county not an equitable community?”** The word cloud for the question reveals that the major reasons Albemarle County is not equitable are *community*, *housing*, *people*, *diversity*, *resources*, *opportunities*, and *segregated*. The results from these three questions focused on equity may lead to future questions about how the places where people live, and where they travel, can become more equitable. Additionally,

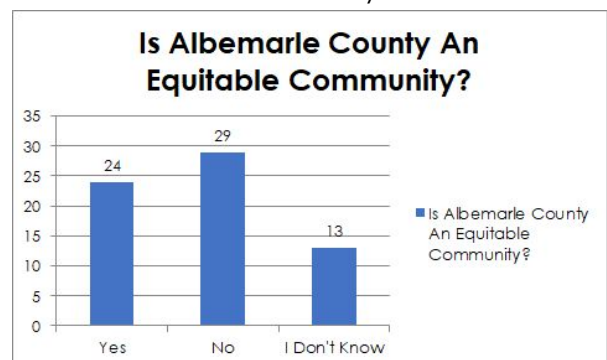
Avoid? If Yes, Why?



Can You Define What An Equitable Community Is?



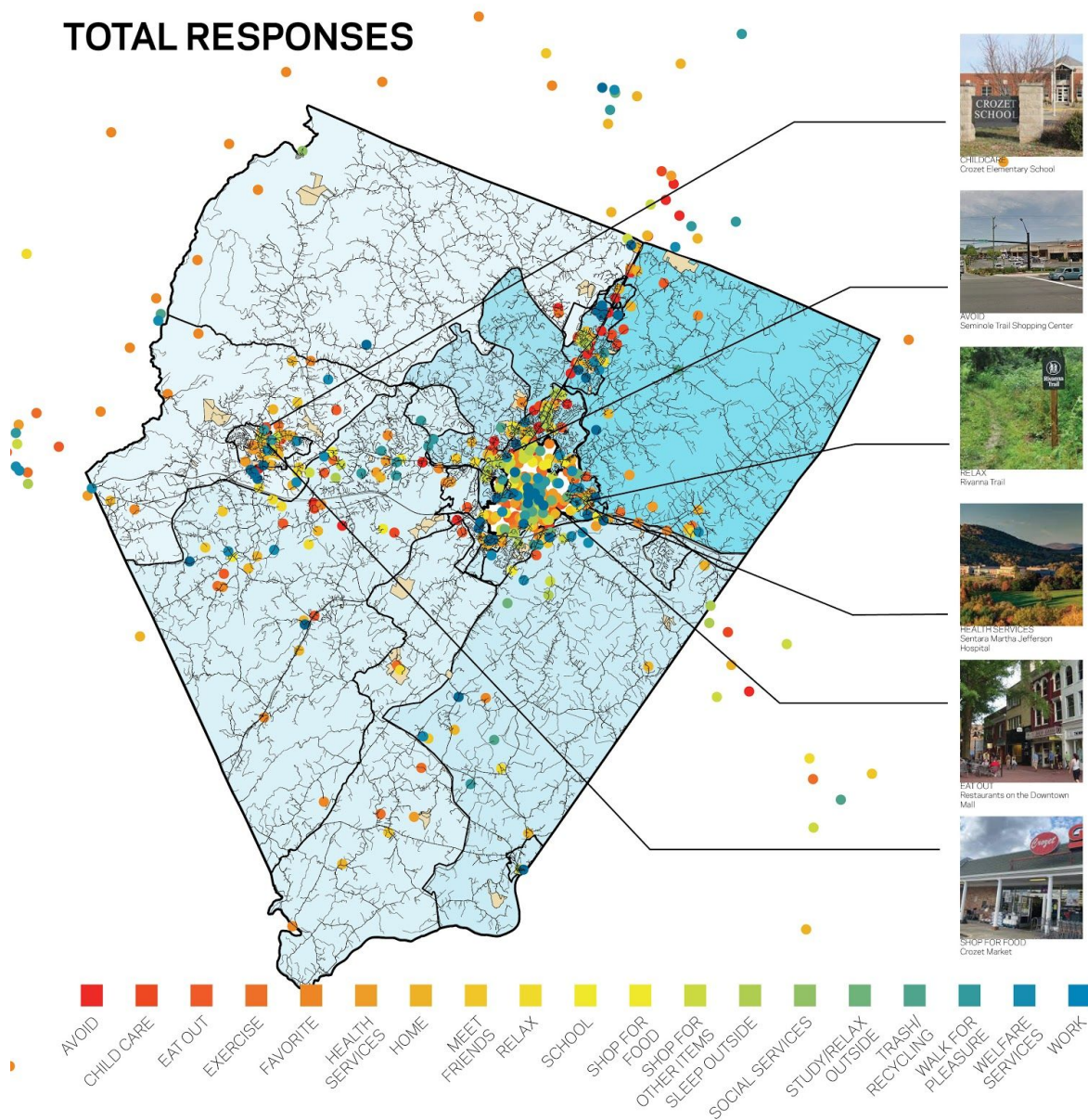
Is Albemarle County An Equitable Community?



Why Is Albemarle County Not An Equitable Community?

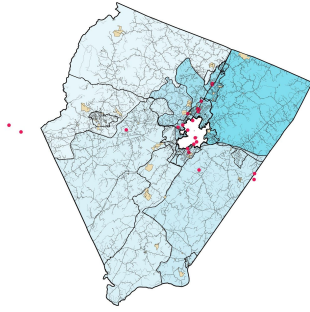
the county may consider asking additional questions to address equity in the context of housing, diversity, and segregation.



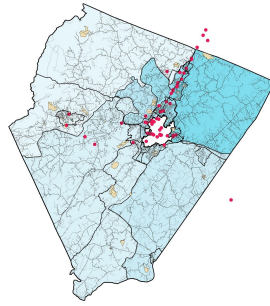


The locations spatialized by respondents on the physical map were consolidated in GIS. These responses were broken down into categories highlighting assets (such as locations of childcare, preferred shopping centers, recreation, etc.), as well as locations respondents preferred to avoid (generally high traffic areas, such as Route 29). The map above shows the compiled responses color coded by category. The responses generally reflect patterns of population density, which are located along major corridors such as Route 29 and Route 250, and the population centers of Crozet and Charlottesville. Each category has been extracted to individual maps, seen on the following pages.

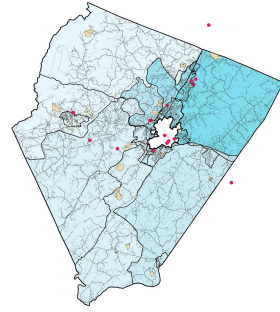
SHOP FOR OTHER ITEMS



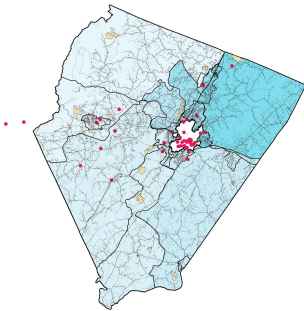
AVOID



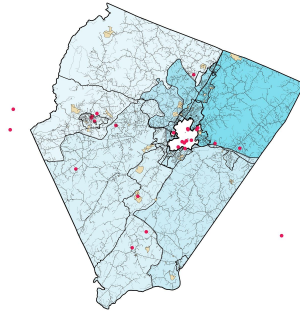
CHILD CARE



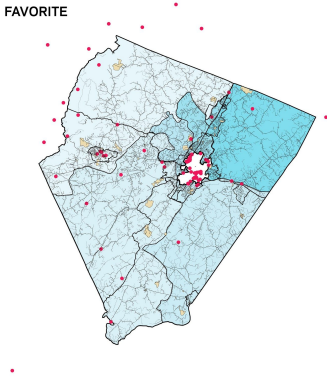
EAT OUT



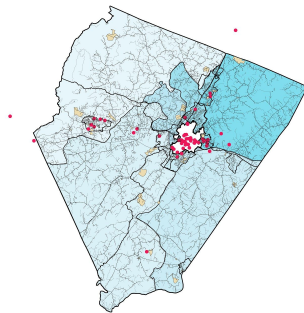
EXERCISE



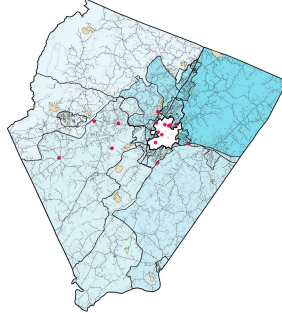
FAVORITE



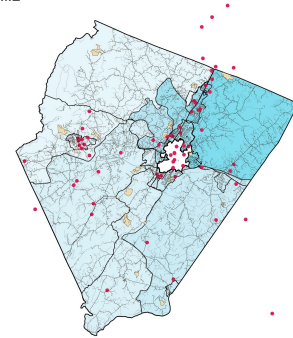
HEALTH SERVICES



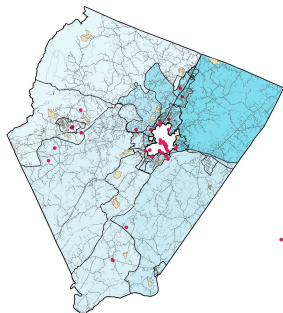
SCHOOL



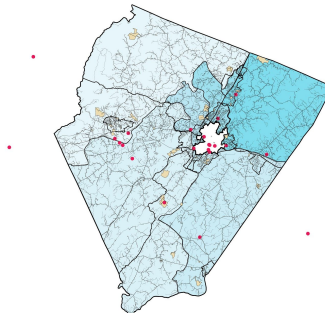
HOME



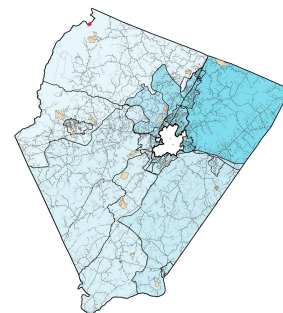
MEET FRIENDS



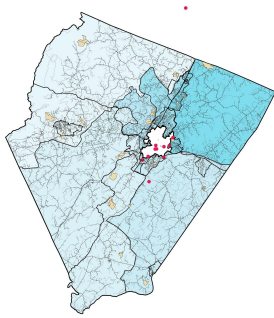
RELAX



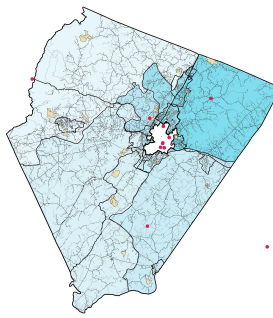
SLEEP OUTSIDE



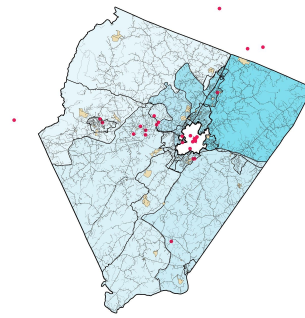
SOCIAL SERVICES



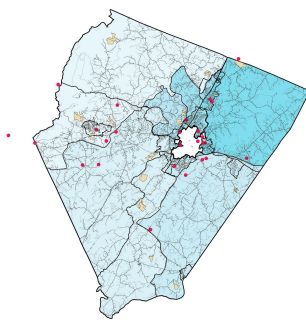
STUDY/RELAX OUTSIDE



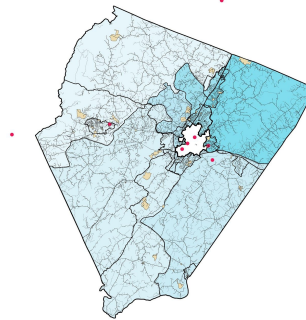
RECYCLING SERVICES



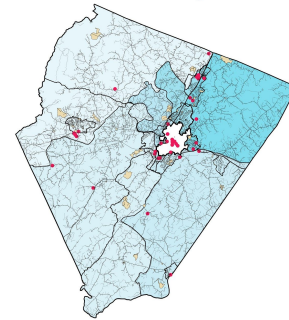
WALK FOR PLEASURE



WELFARE SERVICES



WORK



Accomplishments

In addition to the direct results collected via survey responses, staff and volunteers interviewed for this report highlighted numerous indirect accomplishments of the Roadshow outreach.

Meeting residents where they were

The Roadshow aimed to engage residents where they were, going to them instead of waiting for residents to come to the county. This method was generally deemed as successful by those we interviewed. Multiple volunteers and staff interviewed highlighted that one of the Roadshow's successes was that it tried out a new (for Albemarle County) method of engaging with the community. One interviewee noted that this created a precedent upon which the county could build in the future.

Collecting in-depth, qualitative information

The Office of Equity and Inclusion did not aim to collect quantitative data that could be statistically analyzed and used to represent the county as a whole. Rather, they aimed to capture individual residents' perspectives that are not already captured through existing quantitative data, and which could be used to give further depth to

information the county understood about residents, particularly regarding equity (through the lens of access). The individuals we interviewed thought that the roadshow was generally successful in gathering in-depth, qualitative information from people they spoke with who were interested in sharing that information. Certain questions seemed to resonate with particular residents who were then eager to elaborate and spend time on that topic. This was best accomplished when the environment conveyed to participants that the OEI staff and volunteers had plenty of time for a conversation.

Gathering spatial information

By integrating mapping into conversations, the Roadshow was able to acquire a spatial view of patterns of movement in the county. Specifically, identifying geographic places of interest to individual residents allowed communities, commutes, and travel to resources to emerge from the conversations. Further, one individual interviewed for this report noted that by incorporating mapping into the survey, it was possible to better understand what residents aimed to convey. When speaking with a respondent who was referring to the “mall,” the volunteer initially thought the respondent meant Charlottesville’s “downtown mall”, but quickly learned through mapping that the respondent was referring instead to the Fashion Square Shopping Mall.

Providing useful context to staff and volunteers

The Roadshow enlisted the support of Albemarle County staff from outside of the OEI team, as well as student volunteers from the University of Virginia. All of the individuals interviewed who were not directly employed by OEI were working on issues that were, in some way, related to the topic of equity and outreach in the county. By having the opportunity to engage in the Roadshow, participants gained useful information and context to support their own work.

Case Studies

This section presents key takeaways from three case studies examined to identify best practices in conducting equity assessments and innovative community engagement methods. In total, we reviewed and assessed 10 case studies which are detailed in Appendix A.

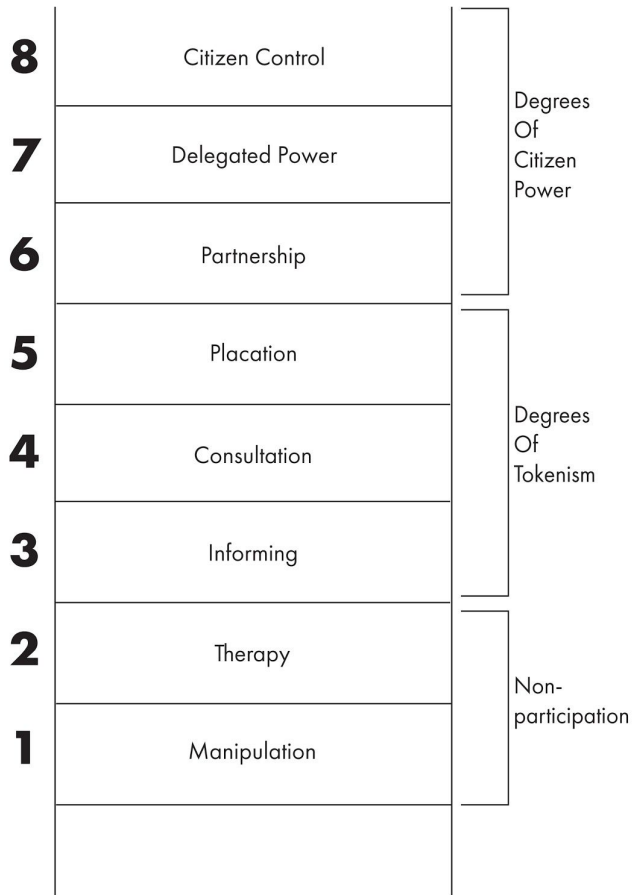
The case studies were assessed with two measures: (1) a matrix developed from the CDC's 9 Principles of Community Engagement (1997), further explained below, and (2) Arnstein's Ladder, pictured on page 22. Case studies were ranked from 1-9 based on the matrix, and from 1-8 based on Arnstein's Ladder.

The guidelines for the matrix are defined by the following nine principles:

1. Be clear about the population/communities to be engaged and the goals of the effort.
2. Know the community, including its norms, history, and experience with engagement efforts.
3. Build trust and relationships and get commitments from formal and informal leadership.
4. Collective self-determination is the responsibility and right of all community members.
5. Partnering with the community is necessary to create change.
6. Recognize and respect community cultures and other factors affecting diversity in designing and implementing approaches.
7. Sustainability results from mobilizing community assets and developing capacities and resources.
8. Be prepared to release control to the community and be flexible enough to meet its changing needs.
9. Community collaboration requires long-term commitment.

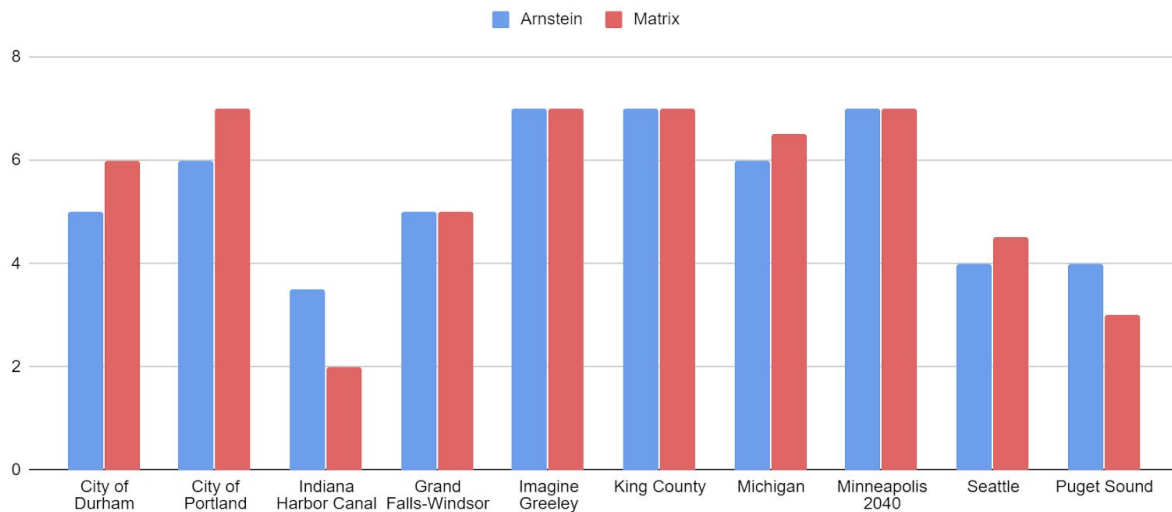
Arnstein's Ladder As A Model Of Measurement

Sherry R. Arnstein's Eight Rungs On A Ladder Of Citizen Participation



The 10 case studies selected for this report were chosen to demonstrate the varying degrees of community involvement and power in community engagement initiatives across localities and agencies, as well as the importance of maintaining a critical eye when analyzing engagement efforts. The chart entitled “Scoring of Case Studies” on page 23 presents each example's rankings against both the matrix and Arnstein's Ladder. Of the selected case studies, three scored high in community involvement against both measures: Imagine Greeley, Minneapolis 2040, and King County, WA Equity and Social Justice Strategic Plan. We identified certain common strategies employed in these examples that were absent from lower-ranking case studies. Additionally, we have identified particular strategies that each of the three high-ranking examples employed which were of relevance to their success. These key takeaways may present opportunities for the Roadshow to explore in future iterations.

Scoring Of Case Studies



Key factors differentiating case studies with high citizen power from other case studies included:

- The detail with which plans of engagement were outlined.
- The degree to which groups to engage were specified.
- The variety and depth of engagement methods.
- The ease with which groups could engage and the number of opportunities for engagement provided.
- An acknowledgement of tokenism and a desire to strive toward paradigm shift.

Key takeaways from Imagine Greeley for the Equity Roadshow:

- Required 4-6 citizen groups to be formed
- Clearly defined which community partners needed to be included
- Focused on transparency

Key takeaways from Minneapolis 2040 for the Equity Roadshow:

- Presented a variety of community engagement methods in two broad categories: in-person and technology-based
- Employed outside-the-box, non-alienating engagement methods

Key takeaways from King County for the Equity Roadshow:

- Attempted to establish an equity baseline
- Included an awareness of tokenism
- Took the time to review demographic data, and determined the locations of spatial inequalities

Recommendations

The Equity Roadshow was successful in accomplishing its goals of pursuing forms of outreach and community engagement which were novel to Albemarle County as recently as last year. The Roadshow collected residents' stories and perceptions of equity that provide valuable insight to the county. It also proved to be an important opportunity to learn about conducting this type of outreach, and those involved in conducting the Roadshow learned many lessons that can be applied by OEI to future Roadshow iterations. Many of these lessons are captured here.

However, the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic makes replicating the Roadshow impossible. While some of the recommendations included in this report can be advanced before the situation changes, speaking to residents in person - a condition upon which ultimately the recommendations for replication are founded - is not feasible. The situation necessitates alternative forms of gathering information from county residents until the health risk of the virus lessens, and social distancing measures are reduced. And, even without the impact of the virus, engaging a variety of approaches to capture resident feedback may prove successful to ensure a diversity of responses - from a variety of ages, races and ethnicities, income levels, geographies, and abilities - are captured. Several alternative forms of community outreach, some of which could be adopted for remote participation, are included in this section.

Recommendations for replicating the Roadshow

1. Reaching a more diverse cross-section of county residents.

Work with established community organizations to reach residents

Several individuals interviewed for this report conveyed that the positionality of OEI as a government entity complicated their ability to interact with potential survey respondents. For some, this positionality can make it intimidating for community members to approach the OEI staff/volunteers. For others, the County of Albemarle's complicated history with community engagement is still a point of contention, making individuals less willing to participate. Further, individuals interviewed noted that similar points of contention existed between community members and the University of Virginia, of which many volunteers were students. OEI can begin to address these barriers to survey participation by connecting with residents through trusted organizations and individuals: church leaders, community advocates, educators, and nonprofit employees. These liaisons will be important in helping to relay OEI's goals, easing skepticism, and most importantly, vouching for OEI as a trustworthy organization. Through its partnerships with community leaders and organizations, OEI can foster more authentic and inclusive conversations.

Build in outreach at different times of day

Of the 19 outreach days listed on OEI's planning document ("Equity Roadshow.Planning Doc"), only three were planned to occur after 5:30pm or on the weekend. Individuals interviewed for this report communicated that they spoke with many retired individuals during these daytime outreach occurrences, and believed it likely that the timing of the Roadshows contributed to speaking with a skewed representation of the overall county population. We recommend that OEI vary the timing of future Roadshow outreach events to include evenings and expand weekend outreach when possible. This will broaden the base of responses the office is able to collect by accommodating a more diverse array of community members' schedules.

Create opportunities for youth to share their opinions

Individuals interviewed for this report and responses to OEI's Roadshow Debrief form by staff and volunteers revealed that children were present at numerous outreach locations, and particularly at public libraries. However, the survey as currently formulated is not appropriate for young children who do not initiate their access to resources like grocery stores, health care, and child care. Nevertheless, youth do have experiences and perceptions of equity that may be useful to OEI in pursuit of its mission to improve the county's provision of quality services to its entire community. We recommend that OEI consider creating a second survey with questions accessible to children, or alternate activities - drawing, for example - to engage children in providing their perceptions of assets and barriers in their communities.

Ensure some outreach staff/volunteers have fluent Spanish-language abilities

Several surveyors reflected in interviews that it would be helpful to have bilingual Spanish speakers on site during the Equity Roadshow. It is recommended that OEI make it a policy to have one bilingual speaker present during Roadshows hosted in the vicinity of Latinx communities, such as Southwood. It is also recommended that OEI aim to have at least one bilingual speaker attend each Roadshow. At approximately 6%, the Latinx community is the third largest minority population in Charlottesville, Virginia (U.S. Census, 2019). OEI cannot make effective interventions for the County, if it is missing input from part of the community. By removing this language barrier, the organization will be better equipped to collect data from Spanish speakers and propose more influential solutions.

OEI could recruit volunteer interpreters through the University of Virginia (UVA), which offers a Spanish language degree program; it is also the home of several Latinx and Spanish language-based student organizations. OEI could find bilingual speakers by partnering with these organizations or offering internships to individual students. For more professional services, OEI should consider hiring interpreters through the International Rescue Committee (IRC) in Charlottesville. Their trained interpreters assist several for-profit and non-profit organizations that work with bilingual clients.

Further Reading

- The **Imagine Greeley** Community Engagement Plan identified specific groups of residents that it aimed to engage through its processes to ensure diverse perspectives were included, for example individuals with limited-English language skills, underserved populations, and youth. The team behind the plan then worked to ensure these groups were engaged. While it operated on an outlined schedule for community engagement meetings, it also planned in “flex time” during which activities to engage hard-to-reach populations would be conducted.
- The **City of Durham** Belt Line Equitable Engagement Plan is an example of a success story for involving a diverse group of individuals in a locality. Their plan focused on the desire to be more inclusive through ensuring renters and low-income homeowners, communities of color, and persons with limited English proficiency had a chance to sit at the table.
- The **Puget Sound** Regional Council Public Participation Plan was successful in terms of partnering with existing communities and organizations to both develop a survey and ensure it was distributed across the community.

2. Enhancing survey tools

Utilize iPads or similar hand-held tablets to collect responses

In the first iteration of the Roadshow, a variety of survey collection methods were used, including pen and paper, interactive touch screens, printed maps, and iPads. The surveyors interviewed for this report suggested that the deep, qualitative perspectives and stories sought by the Roadshow were most effectively gathered if surveyors could enter into a conversation with residents. To accomplish this, we recommend that the Roadshow expand the use of iPads as a survey tool, which can be managed by surveyors who shepherd participants through the survey questions and help to record responses, with input and feedback from residents. This will allow surveyors to hone in on particular concepts that seem to be of interest to an individual, fostering more flexibility in creating a natural conversation.

Build in question “skips” based on responses received.

Some of the Roadshow Survey questions built upon each other, for example, the survey asked participants if they would like to live somewhere else in the county, and the next question prompts residents to indicate where they would prefer to live. However, if the respondent indicates that they would not like to live somewhere else in the county, the second question becomes irrelevant. If the host platform permits it, we recommend the survey be enhanced to skip questions like this that become irrelevant due to previous responses.

Accept long-form responses and audio recordings.

Several surveyors interviewed for this report mentioned that they received long, detailed responses from some residents. While this was viewed positively when viewed through the lens of the Roadshow goals, surveyors ran into challenges when attempting to transcribe the information provided. A primary concern voiced with the online survey format was that a character limit existed, which in some circumstances prevented surveyors from typing full responses. We recommend that OEI revise the survey capabilities to accept more characters in response to each question. Surveyors also found it challenging to transcribe a resident's full story or response in real-time. Doing so required choosing the most appropriate wording and salient points while maintaining a conversation with participants. Several of the individuals interviewed suggested that having audio recordings of the survey responses would help OEI gain a more thorough understanding of residents' perceptions. However, these individuals also believed many residents they spoke with would not consent to being audio recorded. We recommend that the survey be configured with an option to record audio responses in addition to text responses. In that way, if the respondent seems open to being recorded, surveyors can ask for respondent consent and quickly transition to audio recording, if consent is provided.

Allow participants to opt-in to follow-up on their responses

The Roadshow survey questions were hosted online, and therefore the responses could be made accessible to a variety of audiences, including to the specific individuals who shared their responses. This format would permit respondents to both receive a copy of their answers, as well as retroactively revise survey responses. It may be worthwhile to consider giving participants the option to provide their email address in order to receive their responses via email, and allow individuals to edit their responses retroactively. This could achieve benefits such as allowing individuals who had limited time when approached with the survey in person to provide additional information, and allowing individuals who felt uncomfortable responding to some questions in person to provide this information at a later time.

Further Reading

- **Minneapolis 2040** identified the goal of conducting follow-up interactions and connecting people to resources post-engagement. Additionally, the technology-based outreach methods employed enhanced survey tools through websites, interactive applications and social media.
- **Imagine Greeley** called for follow-up meetings with individual stakeholder groups to facilitate "more in-depth discussions on specific elements" of the proposed comprehensive plan.

3. Creating an engaging survey environment

Promote a more mutually-beneficial exchange

In addition to collecting data from residents, it is recommended that OEI also make informational materials, such as postcards and pamphlets that detail equity, available to the community at Equity Roadshows. Surveyors reported that a number of participants were very eager to learn more about diversity and equity in Albemarle County, as well as more broadly. Having informational postcards or pamphlets that interested participants can take will allow OEI to give back to the community in a much more immediate manner. These materials may even help residents to better understand their own movement in equity as they take the survey. Moreover, they would help to better position OEI for what it is designed to be - an advocate and resource for equity in the county.

Improve surveyors' skills in conducting the Roadshows

Because the Roadshow centers around staff- and volunteer-resident interactions, surveyors play an important role in creating a comfortable, engaging environment for potential respondents. Surveyors' approaches are important for ensuring that residents are willing to engage in answering questions, and feel comfortable providing their opinions. However, none of the surveyors interviewed for this report received training prior to attending their first Roadshow event. When asked about the Roadshow's goals, staff and volunteers interviewed provided comprehensive responses that indicated an understanding of the Roadshow's core objectives. However, some respondents did not feel confident in their answers, and some expressed lack of a concrete understanding of their particular role in conducting the Roadshow. We recommend that OEI design online and/or in-person training for staff and volunteers to eliminate any ambiguities and communicate expectations and best practices. The training would be especially useful due to frequent surveyor turnover (many only volunteered at one Roadshow). Training materials should clearly define the Roadshow's goals, volunteer roles and expectations, provide best practices for conducting in-person outreach, and review a range of scenarios volunteers may encounter. By improving volunteer preparedness and comfort, volunteers will be better positioned to effectively engage residents. Moreover, utilizing training materials would help ensure that OEI is sending informed and professional collaborators into the community.

Continue expanding outreach locations, informed by success in the Roadshow's first iteration

The first iteration of the Roadshow utilized an online debrief form, sent to staff and volunteers, in which information was collected regarding the success of each outreach location in reaching residents. This form revealed that certain types of locations were more successful than others in facilitating an engaging survey environment. For example, gas stations were deemed by one surveyor to be unsuccessful because

individuals were in a hurry and disinterested in having a conversation. Libraries were generally found to be successful, but they tended to attract older crowds during the times at which they were visited. We recommend that OEl, in addition to varying the times of day of outreach, continue striving to vary the types of locations visited, informed by the valuable information gathered in the debrief form.

Further Reading

- **Minneapolis 2040** framed its civic engagement efforts in terms of mutual benefit and prioritized engagement methods that work toward a consensus-building strategy.
- **King County**, Washington based their Community Engagement Report on feedback collected from more than 100 engagement sessions and surveys between county staff in various departments and individuals and groups representing community organizations, businesses, laborers and philanthropies. During this process, questions regarding the current and future state of equity were systematically posed.
- **Imagine Greeley** addressed the trend of marginalized individuals not having the ability to fully participate in typical public meetings through creating a new environment with numerous citizen groups and bodies to make the decisions more local.

Complementing the Roadshow with additional forms of outreach

The Equity Roadshow has been an important and successful method for engaging a broad audience and understanding equity in Albemarle County. If resources exist, we recommend that in addition to continuing the Roadshow into the future, the county complement the Roadshow with additional forms of outreach. These additional methods could serve to provide depth to the data collected during the Roadshow, and to collect types of responses which are not compatible with the Roadshow's survey format. These different formats may result in outputs - like photo stories or online maps - which can be more readily shared back with the community than individual survey responses. Beyond these benefits, additional, alternative forms of outreach could provide an opportunity for Albemarle County to continue to engage residents around equity without requiring face-to-face interaction. Remote outreach is particularly important at present, given that the COVID-19 pandemic has made face-to-face interactions a public health risk. Additional forms of outreach could include oral histories, in-depth participatory asset mapping exercises, photovoice projects, and community workshops. For each of these methods, OEl may find greater participation and depth from engaging with existing community based organizations, and perhaps focusing on particular geographic communities within the county.

Further Reading

- Outreach for the **Minneapolis 2040** Comprehensive Plan utilized both online and in-person methods, a diversity of engagement methods, and a variety of venues to engage a diversity of residents. The outreach included engaging residents in

unconventional ways, such as at street festivals and through art as well as through virtual methods including community mapping, data visualization and augmented reality.

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Appendix A. Case Studies

City of Durham Belt Line Equitable Engagement Plan

The purpose of this plan is defined as, “measurable equitable engagement, increased awareness of City initiatives, minimized adverse effects and maximized benefits for low-wealth communities and communities of color.”¹ The need for this plan originated from the City of Durham’s push for developing and adopting a Belt Line Trail Master Plan which received numerous public comments requesting for more public engagement and a focus on addressing the possible adverse impacts of the proposed Belt Line Trail on communities of color. Residents pointed to the Atlanta Belt Line and the, “inequitable collateral consequences,” that arose from not addressing potential consequences before action was taken.² The new process that is proposed with the Equitable Engagement Plan focuses on renters and low income homeowners, communities of color, and persons with limited English proficiency. The Plan calls for educating residents of past Belt Line Trail engagement, conducting outreach in impacted areas during peak days and times, setting resources aside for child care and Spanish language interpretation as well as other barriers to participation, presenting information about current and related City projects, capturing and analyzing demographic data, and officially adopting equitable principles. While the plan states that relationship building and community partnerships are the first priority before moving forward, the discussion and conversations outlined to occur with the community fall more around consulting rather than partnering. Due to the lack of focus on ensuring power is shared with the community, this plan falls into the category of placation or consultation, under the degrees of tokenism.

Arnstein Ladder Score: 5

Report Matrix Score: 6

City of Portland Citywide Racial Equity Goals and Strategies

The City of Portland Oregon laid out three goals to achieving equity:

1. We will end racial disparities within city government, so there is fairness in hiring and promotions, greater opportunities in contracting, and equitable services to all residents.
2. We will strengthen outreach, public engagement, and access to City services for communities of color and immigrant and refugee communities, and support or change existing services using racial equity best practices.
3. We will collaborate with communities and institutions to eliminate racial inequity in all areas of government, including education, criminal justice, environmental justice, health, housing, transportation, and economic success.

¹ Durham Belt Line Equitable Engagement Plan, pg 1

² Durham Belt Line Equitable Engagement Plan, pg 2

Six strategies were developed to achieve the three goals: use a racial equity framework, build organizational capacity, implement a racial equity lens, be data driven, partner with other institutions and communities, and operate with urgency and accountability. While the goals and strategies have laid out a framework for ensuring that the City of Portland acts in an equitable and inclusive manner, the Racial Equity Toolkit that spurred off of the goals and strategies failed to surpass the level of partnership and bordered on being placation due to the lack of provisions taken to ensure citizen power is protected.

Arnstein Ladder Score: 6

Report Matrix Score: 7

Community Engagement Plan For The Grand Calumet River And Indiana Harbor Canal

The Community Engagement Plan (CEP) was prepared to engage and support the communities affected by the Grand Calumet River and Indiana Harbor Canal projects in East Chicago, Indiana. The purpose of the CEP was to ensure that the public and the local government can work together in order to gather information on what the general desire of the future of the waterways should be. The project was organized between the EPA, State agencies, local government, and minimal citizen participation. This project does not meet the standards of Arnstein's Ladder in terms of citizen power as it falls into the lowest levels of tokenism in terms of informing and consulting.

Arnstein Ladder Score: 3.5

Report Matrix Score: 2

Grand Falls-Windsor - Baie Verte - Harbour Breton Region Community Engagement

The report opens with the statement that, "While there is growing global consensus on the need for community engagement, there is no standard way to carry it out," and that due to the lack of direction the community engagement events that are put on can take the form of tokenism. (Mirza, 4) The report sought to inform the region how to carry out community engagement activities and resulted in developing nine recommendations in order to perform engagement in a way that is inclusive and supports citizen power, rather than tokenism. While the proactive nature of the report is notable, it still fell short of making provisions to ensure citizen power is protected and ensured as the need for community engagement revolved around shortening project timelines and costs.

Arnstein Ladder Score: 5

Report Matrix Score: 5

Imagine Greeley: City of Greeley Community Engagement Plan For A 20 Year Community Road Map

Imagine Greeley was initiated by the City of Greeley to create a “road map” for the City over the next 20 years. The goal was to aid in an update to the City’s 2060 Comprehensive Plan and identification of priority community improvements. The Plan called for 10 different methods of community engagement, including a roadshow. They outlined all stakeholders and groups involved, as well as laid out all the details on the proposed gatherings, activities, and meetings. One of the events that was implemented for the plan was outreach to underserved populations specifically in order to address the issue that while underserved populations are at the highest risk, they are also the population least likely to attend evening meetings and other events. Imagine Greeley stands out not only because it required between four to six citizen groups to be formed, but it also listed exactly which community partners needed to be included in order to make sure that when discussions occurred, everyone had a seat at the table. Imagine Greeley was also highly successful due to the focus on transparency and making sure that as many opportunities as possible were taken to make sure the public was informed on the work performed.

Arnstein Ladder Score: 7

Report Matrix Score: 7

King County, Washington

Between July and September 2015, King County employees from several departments and agencies conducted over 100 engagement sessions with individuals and groups representing community organizations, business, labor and philanthropy. We systematically posed the same questions at each session concerning the current state of equity, existing work and models for achieving equity, and emerging opportunities for King County to partner with others to advance equity regionally. Those involved in the process also collected responses to the questions via a Community Partner online survey. The questions posed were intended to establish a baseline for equity conditions in King County.

King County also took the time to review demographic data of the area in order to determine the spatial inequalities that were already in existence and identifying areas where vulnerable populations resided. The process is also notable for being aware of tokenism and the need to increase citizen power as much as possible for the situation.

Arnstein Ladder Score: 7

Report Matrix Score: 7

Michigan Department of Civil Rights Racial Equity Toolkit

The racial equity toolkit is a compilation of frameworks, strategies, implementation processes and resources from localities working on racial equity. It serves as a step-by-step guide to help municipal governments start their racial equity work. The report points to four dimensions of systems of advantage based on race: internalized as in biases and ideas, interpersonal as in cultural messages, institutional as in groups adopting or maintaining policies, and structural as in norms that perpetuate advantages against race. The toolkit also speaks to the need to develop a common language and understand what terms from equity, racism, diversity, melting pot, and more mean. While this toolbox is commendable for its expansive coverage of issues and methods to address equity, the entire process is top down and there is little bottom up citizen power involved other than the development of partnerships.

Arnstein Ladder Score: 6

Report Matrix Score: 6.5

Minneapolis 2040 Civic Engagement Plan - Minneapolis, Minnesota

This report presents a variety of Community Engagement Methods in two broad categories of in-person and technology based. It prioritizes and provides criteria for engagement methods. "They made it a point to go to communities that tend to be underrepresented—less educated, parents, people without cars, immigrants, young people, and people of color. They made a real effort to provide **many different ways to engage.**"

There were the standard "shouty meetings," says Flisrand. But there were also events at city festivals that met people where they were, instead of the other way around. The city **hired artists to attend and organize events** to gauge citizen feedback; poets would summarize someone's response at a meeting, or improv crews would host game shows, asking contestants to answer trivia soliciting their thoughts about what Minneapolis should look like in 2040. The city also launched an **easy-to-use mobile site to garner feedback, asking for anonymous comments that made people feel comfortable expressing their ideas.** The main thrust of the program was values; residents understood how values informed policy, and vice versa, making it easy to see the value in specific policy. Most importantly, says Flisrand, the city **provided a space for advocates to get involved.**

"We as advocates needed the city to give us space to show up, and I would argue the city needed us to organize to show everyone that there was broad support for a city where all citizens could thrive," she says. "The city recognized there were processes that helped those who were already being served, and designed something for everybody else."³

³ <https://www.curbed.com/2020/2/12/21132190/neighborhood-development-democracy-city-council-local-meeting>

Arnstein Ladder Score: 7
Report Matrix Score: 7

Office for Civil Rights, Community Engagement & Racial Equity Toolkit - Seattle, Washington

The ongoing Community Engagement and Racial Equity Toolkit process uses multiple methods to record, analyze, and share information about the new Community Service Officer (CSO) development and views of community members. The final report will include findings from three sources: ethnography notes from the community engagement sessions, stakeholder interviews, and an online survey. The report was successful in addressing demographic data to identify vulnerable populations and existing conditions of inequity. The community engagement process was more hit and miss as it consisted of hosting a session with the LGBTQ+ community in order to address the equity related issues that people of color faced.

Arnstein Ladder Score: 4
Report Matrix Score: 4.5

Puget Sound Regional Council Public Participation Plan

PSRC selects from an array of options to develop and execute specific public participation programs to inform its major decisions, such as corridor studies, new funding policies or updates to the Regional Transportation Plan. For example, public involvement elements for the Regional Transportation Plan might include working with community-based organizations to cosponsor meetings, news releases, a regional summit, surveys, workshops with interactive exercises and facilitated discussions, or a web page that serves as a ready reference point to track key milestones in the overall development of the plan. A menu of participation techniques follows: public comment capabilities online, public comment periods, open houses, and sharing materials online and in-person. While this plan is successful in bringing all of the key stakeholders and public agents to the table, it fails to address the issue of equitable and inclusive planning practices to ensure that the voices of marginalized individuals are not only included but respected.

Arnstein Ladder Score: 4
Report Matrix Score: 3

Matrix

The below matrix analyzes our 10 selected case studies against the CDC's 9 Principles of Community Engagement (1997).

Case Study Matrix - CDC Principles of Community Engagement (1997)											
Case Study		King County, WA	Minneapolis, MN (Minneapolis 2040 Civic Engagement Plan)	Seattle, WA (Office for Civil Rights, Community Engagement & Racial Equity Toolkit)	Imagine Greeley: City of Greeley Community Engagement Plan For A 20 Year Community Road Map	Community Engagement Plan For The Grand Calumet River And Indiana Harbor Canal	Grand Falls-Windsor - Belle Verre - Harbour Breton Region Community Engagement	Michigan Dept. of Civil Rights Racial Equity Toolkit	Puget Sound Regional Council Public Participation Plan	City of Durham Equity Action Plan	City of Portland Citywide Racial Equity Goals and Strategies
Themes		Holistic, Community Partnerships, Community Capacity, Establish Baseline Equity	Engagement Methods, Identifies Key Audiences, Case Studies, Holistic	Community Policing, Program Development, Police-community Relations	Proactive equity discussions, Proactive Inclusive Practices For Engagement, Racial Equity, Socioeconomic Inequities, Barriers to Participation, Raising Awareness To Demographic Data And Disparities	National, State and Local Government, Intergovernmental Cooperation, Community Input, Informing Citizens.	Tokenism Awareness, Proactive equity discussions, Proactive Inclusive Practices For Engagement, Regional Focus	State-Level, Race, Tool for Local Government, Community Dialogue, Facilitation,	Transportation, Comprehensive Planning, Virtual Public Participation, Public Comment Periods	Proactive equity discussions, Addressing Racial Inequity, Socioeconomic Inequities, Barriers to Participation, Demographic Data And Disparities	Proactive equity discussions, Addressing Racial and Socioeconomic Inequities, Focus on Community Partnership, Continuous Process
Principle 1	Be clear about the population / communities to be engaged and the goals of the effort	X	X		X	X		X	X	X	X
Principle 2	Know the community, including its norms, history, and experience with engagement efforts	X		X	X			X		X	X
Principle 3	Build Trust and relationships and get commitments from formal and informal leadership	X	X	X	X		X	X			X
Principle 4	Collective self-determination is the responsibility and right of all community members		X					X		X	X
Principle 5	Partnering with the community is necessary to create change	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X
Principle 6	Recognize and respect community cultures and other factors affecting diversity in designing and implementing approaches	X	X	X	X	X	X	/		X	X
Principle 7	Sustainability results from mobilizing community assets and developing capacities and resources	X			X		X		X	X	
Principle 8	Be prepared to release control to the community and be flexible enough to meet its changing needs		X	/							
Principle 9	Community collaboration requires long-term commitment	X	X		X		X	X			X

X - Evidence Found

/ - Partial Evidence

- No evidence Found

Appendix B. Timeline / Gantt Chart

Task	Assigned Consultant	
Preliminary Work	CH - Carolyn Heaps	MK - Mikayla Woodley
Report Development	KK - Kevin Kask	TH - Tyler Hinkle
Presentation	NW - Nick Wittkofski	A - All Members

	J	February			March				April				M
Agreements	A												
Background Research	A												
Perform Interviews			MW, CH										
Review Case Studies			KK, TH										
Review OEI Data				NW, TH									
Draft Report						A							
Check Ins		A		A		A		A		A		A	
Interim Check In									A				
Revise Report									A				
Final Additions											A		
Final Presentation													A