Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission
Environmental Justice Task Force Retreat

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CONSTITUTIONAL ASPIRATION
Declaration of Independence
July 4, 1776

"We hold these truths to be self-evident: that all men are created equal; that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights; that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness."

Thomas Jefferson
THE AMERICAN PARADOX
HISTORY OF INEQUALITY
How Did We Get To Where We Are?
1600’s to 1940’s

• Colonization and Dispossession of Native Americans’ Land (Colonizes Founded in 1607)
• Beginning of the Brutal Period of American Chattel Slavery (1619)
• Post Civil War-Failure of Reconstruction (1865-1877) due to White fear and angst and lack of Federal Government Support lead by Andrew Jackson
• Peonage and Black Codes—Debt Slavery or State sanctioned Convict Leasing (1865-1940), the precursor to the Prison Industrial Complex
• Patriarchy (subordination of Women and no right to vote)
• Power and privilege to landed White Men (only group that could vote, own property and have a role in government)
How Did We Get To Where We Are?  
Post 1940’s

- Jim Crow Laws – De jure forms of Discrimination
- Relining, Steering, Zoning and De Facto forms of Discrimination
- Lynching and State sanctioned violence
- Governmental Policies and Practices deprived Individuals of governmental supports and opportunities, i.e., 1935 Social Security Act, VA, FHA,
- Separate and Unequal Schooling/Education
- Employment Discrimination
- Over Policing, Police Violence and Hyper-incarceration
National
Social and Economic Factors Impacting the Stability of Vulnerable Communities of Color

• Segregation and isolation from economic opportunity (legacy of governmental policies and maintenance of “White Space” Dr. Elijah Anderson)
• Growing economic inequality (restructuring of the economy and tax policy)
• Proliferation of temporary jobs with no benefits (impacts of globalization and mobile capital - promoting “right to work” and marginalization of labor unions)
• High rates of unemployment and under-employment
• Educational disparities (legacy of separate and unequal)
• Limited economic mobility (ongoing systemic discrimination)
• Hyper-incarceration of Black Men and Boys (The New Jim Crow)
• Police violence and hyper-policing (The New Jim Crow)
• Lack of affordable housing (inequitable neo-liberal growth focused economic development practices-Gentrification of Neighborhoods)
• Municipalities debt producing practices, i.e., DOJ Report on Ferguson, Mo. (Peonage: Slavery by Another Name)
Wisconsin & the Milwaukee
Unemployment soaring among Milwaukee’s black residents

17.3% unemployment for blacks

4.3% unemployment for whites

SOURCE: NATIONAL URBAN LEAGUE, STATE OF BLACK AMERICA
Milwaukee’s blacks have fallen far behind whites

- **Blacks**
  - Median household income: $25,600

- **Whites**
  - Median household income: $62,600

*Source: National Urban League, State of Black America*
WISCONSIN AND MILWAUKEE DISPARITIES

• A report from UCLA finds that K-12 schools in Wisconsin suspend black high school students at a higher rate than anywhere else in the country and has the second-highest disparity in suspension rates between white and black students. Milwaukee, the state’s biggest city, suspends black high school students at a rate nearly double the national average.

• The state also has the largest achievement gap between black and white students in the country.

• 4-out-of-5 black children in Wisconsin living in poverty.

• The state budget now allots more funding for corrections than it does for higher education. Wisconsin also incarcerates the most black men in the country, and in Milwaukee County, more than half of all black men in their 30s and 40s have served time. In the 53206 Zip Code alone, 62 percent of all men have spent time in an adult correctional facility by age 34.

• Milwaukee County is divided along racial and political lines, and the city is one of the most segregated in America.
Assuming There is Equality, It Does Not Mean There is Justice

Equality = SAMENESS
Equality is about SAMENESS, it promotes fairness and justice by giving everyone the same thing.

BUT it can only work IF everyone starts from the SAME place, in this example equality only works if everyone is the same height.

Equity = FAIRNESS
EQUITY is about FAIRNESS, it’s about making sure people get access to the same opportunities.

Sometimes our differences and/or history, can create barriers to participation, so we must FIRST ensure EQUITY before we can enjoy equality.
Manifestations of Systemic Racism

“we can be involved in a society’s or organization's troubles without doing anything wrong and without being bad people. We don’t have to think...racist thoughts in order to participate in a system through which...racist trouble happens...”

Racial Equity Lens Required

• When we can no longer use race to predict life outcomes
• When all have the choice to live full, healthy, dignified lives where they are
• When our institutions are places where all have a sense of belonging and can thrive
• When our full humanity is recognized and honored
• Evenly shared benefits & burdens
• Shared power & representation
• Decisions are equity values-driven
SOLUTION BUILDING
TO
PROMOTE EQUITY

• FOCUS ON THE DEEP HISTORICAL AND ONGOING DISADVANTAGE BEING PERPETUALLY REPRODUCED BY EXISTING SYSTEMS RATHER THAN FOCUS JUST ON INDIVIDUAL ADAPTIVE RESPONSES

• PROGRAMS ARE IMPORTANT TO ADDRESSING THE IMMEDIATE NEEDS OF VULNERABLE COMMUNITIES OF COLOR, BUT IN THE ABSENCE OF ADDRESSING THE SYSTEMATIC REPRODUCTION OF DISADVANTAGE, PROGRAMS CAN ONLY NORMALIZE INEQUALITY
Racial Equity Impact Assessment GUIDE

Below are sample questions to use to anticipate, assess and prevent potential adverse consequences of proposed actions on different racial groups.

1. IDENTIFYING STAKEHOLDERS
   Which racial/ethnic groups may be most affected by and concerned with the issues related to this proposal?

2. ENGAGING STAKEHOLDERS
   Have stakeholders from different racial/ethnic groups—especially those most adversely affected—been informed, meaningfully involved and authentically represented in the development of this proposal? Who’s missing and how can they be engaged?

3. IDENTIFYING AND DOCUMENTING RACIAL INEQUITIES
   Which racial/ethnic groups are currently most advantaged and most disadvantaged by the issues this proposal seeks to address? How are they affected differently? What quantitative and qualitative evidence of inequality exists? What evidence is missing or needed?

4. EXAMINING THE CAUSES
   What factors may be producing and perpetuating racial inequities associated with this issue? How did the inequities arise? Are they expanding or narrowing? Does the proposal address root causes? If not, how could it?

5. CLARIFYING THE PURPOSE
   What does the proposal seek to accomplish? Will it reduce disparities or discrimination?

6. CONSIDERING ADVERSE IMPACTS
   What adverse impacts or unintended consequences could result from this policy? Which racial/ethnic groups could be negatively affected? How could adverse impacts be prevented or minimized?

7. ADVANCING EQUITABLE IMPACTS
   What positive impacts on equality and inclusion, if any, could result from this proposal? Which racial/ethnic groups could benefit? Are there further ways to maximize equitable opportunities and impacts?

8. EXAMINING ALTERNATIVES OR IMPROVEMENTS
   Are there better ways to reduce racial disparities and advance racial equity? What provisions could be changed or added to ensure positive impacts on racial equity and inclusion?

9. ENSURING VIABILITY AND SUSTAINABILITY
   Is the proposal realistic, adequately funded, with mechanisms to ensure successful implementation and enforcement? Are there provisions to ensure ongoing data collection, public reporting, stakeholder participation and public accountability?

10. IDENTIFYING SUCCESS INDICATORS
    What are the success indicators and progress benchmarks? How will impacts be documented and evaluated? How will the level, diversity and quality of ongoing stakeholder engagement be assessed?
Racial Equity Impact Assessment

What are Racial Equity Impact Assessments?
A Racial Equity Impact Assessment (REIA) is a systematic examination of how different racial and ethnic groups will likely be affected by a proposed action or decision. REIAs are used to minimize unanticipated adverse consequences in a variety of contexts, including the analysis of proposed policies, institutional practices, programs, plans and budgetary decisions. The REIA can be a vital tool for preventing institutional racism and for identifying new options to remedy long-standing inequities.

Why are they needed?
REIAs are used to reduce, eliminate and prevent racial discrimination and inequities. The persistence of deep racial disparities and divisions across society is evidence of institutional racism—the routine, often invisible and unintentional, production of inequitable social opportunities and outcomes. When racial equity is not consciously addressed, racial inequality is often unconsciously replicated.

When should it be conducted?
REIAs are best conducted during the decision-making process, prior to enacting new proposals. They are used to inform decisions, much like environmental impact statements, fiscal impact reports and workplace risk assessments.

Where are they in use?
The use of REIAs in the U.S. is relatively new and still somewhat limited, but new interest and initiatives are on the rise. The United Kingdom has been using them with success for nearly a decade.

EXAMPLES OF RACIAL JUSTICE EQUITY IMPACTS

Equity and Social Justice Initiative
King County, WA
The county government is using an Equity Impact Review Tool to intentionally consider the protection of equity in the development and implementation of key policies, programs and funding decisions.

Race and Social Justice Initiative
Seattle, WA
City Departments are using a set of Racial Equity Analysis questions as filters for policy development and budget making.

Minority Impact Statements
Iowa and Connecticut
Both states have passed legislation which requires the examination of the racial and ethnic impacts of all new sentencing laws prior to passage. Commissions have been created in Illinois and Wisconsin to consider adopting a similar review process. Related measures are being proposed in other states, based on a model developed by the Sentencing Project.

Proposed Racial Equity Impact Policy
St. Paul, MN
If approved by the city council, a Racial Equity Impact Policy would require city staff and developers to compile a “Racial Equity Impact Report” for all development projects that receive a public subsidy of $100,000 or more.

Race Equality Impact Assessments
United Kingdom
Since 2010, all public authorities required to develop and publish race equity plans must assess proposed policies using a Race Equality Impact Assessment, a systematic process for analysis.
Advancing Racial Equity and Transforming Government
A Resource Guide to Put Ideas into Action
SOME CONSIDERATIONS FOR REGIONAL EQUITY PLANNING

- Governmental Fair Housing Enforcement and Affordable Housing Planning and Implementation
- Regional Public Transportation Development
- Local Municipal Zoning Policy
- Municipal Services and Code Enforcement within vulnerable communities
- Policy Initiatives and Regional Cooperation around an Equity Agenda
- Equity Focused versus Growth Focused Economic Development
- Gentrification
- Environmental and Land Use Planning
- Education system
- Organize Planers, Public and Private Organizations, Community Development Organizations, Governmental Stakeholders and Community Members around a Progressive Equity Agenda
Planning for Equitable Development: Social Equity by Design

By Carlton C. Eley

In July 2016, the SDG Index and Dashboard was released to give the 193 member states of the United Nations an instrument to track progress towards achieving the sustainable development goals that were adopted in 2015 by the United Nations (2015). The report card ranked the U.S., 35th, with a score of 72.7 out of 100. In comparison, Canada came in 13th, with a score of 78.6 (Bertelsmann Stiftung & SDSN 2016). The ranking affirms that the U.S. has a significant inequality problem. It is scored in the red or "seriously far from achievement," in 12 of 17 of the sustainable development goals, including: access to water and sanitation; health; education; gender equality; "reduced inequalities" and "peace, justice and strong institutions." The poor rankings reveal the U.S. has too many people below the poverty line, too much adult obesity, too little renewable energy, too many homicides and people in prison, and other failings (Mooney 2016).

Although U.S. cities and towns are directing more attention to advancing sustainability as a planning solution, it is clear that serious questions that require attention remain. Where are the blind spots in addressing social equity alongside the environment and the economy, and how can they be corrected? Equitable development is an approach for meeting the needs of underserved communities through policies and programs that reduce disparities while fostering places that are healthy and vibrant. It complements the goals of previous planning strategies dating back to 1967, including advocacy planning, equity planning, and equity development. In an era where sustainability is gaining traction, equitable development demonstrates sustainable outcomes are socially responsible as well.

This PAS Memo defines equitable development and explores how it can expand choice and opportunity for all. Community planners can be stewards of community trust as well as stewards of the built environment; the two goals are not mutually exclusive. In an era of change, this PAS Memo is a reminder that planners are uniquely positioned to set a higher standard for sustainable and equitable community efforts.

Gentrification: A Shared Problem

"Gentrification" has become as contested as formally acknowledging the cause of the American Civil War (NPS 2013). The term was coined by the London-based urban sociologist Ruth Glass in 1964 (UrbanLab 2013). Her word choice was not arbitrary or mere wordplay. The objective interpretation of gentrification is found in the etymology of the term. The literal translation is "a condition made upper class" or "the action of making upper class." In the U.S., gentrification can be defined as "the process of neighborhood change that occurs as places of lower real

Figure 1. Reggie Witherspoon, Sr. of Mount Calvary Christian Center comments on the impacts of gentrification, such as sharing a property line with a marijuana shop, during a guided tour of the Capitol Hill District of Seattle at the 2013 National Planning Conference. Photo by Carlton Eley.
QUESTIONS?

THANK YOU!