Speaking With One Voice
Civil Rights Virtual Symposium

Gaining the Competitive Edge

March 13 - 15, 2018
Public Involvement - Effectively Serving and Understanding all Communities
Introduction

HELLO

my name is

Moderator: Yvette Rivera
Presenters:
  Gloria Jeff
  Brenda Thomas
  Alex Karner
Achieving Transportation Equity Through Meaningful Public Engagement

Alex Karner, PhD
Assistant Professor
Graduate Program in Community and Regional Planning
School of Architecture
The University of Texas at Austin
Transportation Equity

• Encompasses a *fair distribution* of the benefits and burdens of transportation investments

• Is supported by civil rights law (Title VI), executive agency guidance (Executive Order 12898), and related policies (e.g., FTA circulars)

• Its achievement remains elusive
How to achieve transportation equity?

Quantitative performance assessment

• Known shortcomings
• Results rarely reveal evidence of inequity
  (Karner and Niemeier 2013; Karner and London 2014; Karner 2016)

Public engagement

• Emphasis on legal compliance
• More advanced methods rely on extraordinary conditions for success
How to realize meaningful engagement?

Ask the communities what they need.

“The MPO shall ... [seek] out and [consider] the needs of those traditionally underserved by existing transportation systems, such as low-income and minority households, who may face challenges accessing employment and other services.” 23 CFR §450.316(a)(1)(vii)

each Federal agency shall make achieving environmental justice part of its mission by identifying and addressing ... disproportionately high and adverse human health or environmental effects ... on minority populations and low-income populations. Executive Order 12898 (1994)
Case Studies

**California SB 535**
(distribute cap-and-trade revenue)

- Devote 25% of revenue to benefit disadvantaged communities
  - A benefit “meaningfully addresses a community need”

- seek out and consider the needs; identify and address impacts

**California SB 375**
(reduce transport GHGs)

- Community-defined transportation and land use scenarios
  - Increase transit
  - Provide workforce housing
  - Guard against displacement

Seek out and consider the needs; identify and address impacts
Equity, Environment, and Jobs Scenario

- 3.5 million fewer miles of car travel per day
- 165,000 more people using transit per day
- 1,900 fewer tons of CO2 emissions per day
- Energy savings amounting to 600,000 gallons of gasoline per day
- Aggregate savings in rent for low-income households of $79M per year
Lessons Learned

• Leading with equity can result in broader sustainability improvements

• Dedicated funding increases the salience of the process, drawing out potential participants

• A priori definitions of “equity” are not helpful
A NEW MODEL FOR TRANSPORTATION EQUITY
Step 1

Identify current priority unmet needs

• Traditional public involvement approaches can play a role in facilitating necessary conversations

• Authentic engagement likely to come from known community-based organizations that have trusted relationships with protected populations

• Such organizations must be resourced to participate effectively
Step 2

Allocate funding to meet Step 1’s needs

• A fair share of funding dedicated to meet Step 1’s needs can dramatically increase the salience of public engagement efforts

• Discretionary funding varies widely by agency—possibilities include:
  – CMAQ funds
  – Local option sales taxes
  – …
Step 3

Tailor metrics and measure progress

• Quantitative or qualitative methods can be used
  – Not independent of, but follow from the community-led process

• Track progress over time to ensure that goals are met

• Such expertise is well within the purview of large and small planning agencies
Key Takeaways

• Existing approaches for achieving transportation equity do not work well

• Our model avoids many past pitfalls, providing dedicated funding to meet community needs

• Its application would be likely to result in investments and policies that advance equity goals while improving conditions more broadly
Acknowledgements
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Managing Attorney
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Contact
Alex Karner, PhD
Graduate Program in Community and Regional Planning
The University of Texas at Austin
alex.karner@utexas.edu
Twitter: @AlexKarner

Links to Papers
• Publication in Public Works Management & Policy
• Publication in Progressive Planning
Additional Questions
Rethinking I-94

Gloria Jeff, AICP Project Director
Brenda Thomas, Engagement and Strategy Director
How Did We Get Here?
I-94 Corridor

Rethinking Interstate 94

1.75 million people live in Hennepin and Ramsey counties. Of these, 250,000 live within one mile of I-94 from Broadway Avenue to Highway 61. Along this corridor, there is a rich and diverse community.

- 13 farmers markets
- 15 cultural centers
- 23 neighborhoods
- 32.6% of households live in poverty
- 150,000+ vehicles per day
- 80+ lane miles of pavement
- 59 places of worship
- 70 schools
- 24 theaters
- 7 municipal & county libraries
- 10 stadiums/arenas
- 54 parks/green spaces
- 145 bridges
- 2 tunnels
- 2 million+ transit riders use I-94 every year, without counting those using the Green line

African American/Black: 28%
Asian: 8%
Hispanic/Latino: 7%
Design an engagement process that will:

• Engage MORE voices in transportation planning
• Focus on those IMPACTED by the project (communities in the corridor)
• Improve diversity and INCLUSION of underrepresented voices
• Engage the impacted EARLIER in the process
• Engage with purpose to BUILD RESILIENT RELATIONSHIPS
Historical Approach

Process → Outreach → Project
Rethinking I-94 Approach

Human Centered Design

Vision

Projects

Engagement

Scoping

Process
Public Engagement Process
What We Did

- Baseline Survey: 2,200+ completed surveys
- Listening Sessions: 75+ people from over 50 organizations
- One-on-Ones: 150+ meetings
- Listening for “Values” Segmentation of Corridor: 800+ phone interviews and 1200+ online surveys
- 6 Visioning Workshops and 15 Community Events: 443 comments
- Online Engagement: Interactive Map (250+ comments) and email correspondence

Goals for underrepresented voices were met in ALL areas
What We Learned

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How will this allow us to do our work better

1. Engagement Planning Toolkit
2. Community Overviews and Culture Maps
3. Zone Profiles
   - Demographics
   - Quantitative and Qualitative Assessments
   - Organizations
   - Events
   - Stakeholders: Media, Neighborhoods, Elected Officials
Thank You

Gloria Jeff  
Gloria.jeff@state.mn.us

Brenda Thomas  
Brenda.Thomas@state.mn.us
Thank you very much!

Request additional information or pose questions to the following:

Departmental Office of Civil Rights
(202) 366-4648
crlc@dot.gov