Better Communities through Transportation Planning: Strategies for Equity and Empowerment

Melissa May, SSFM International
June 29, 2020
ITE Annual Meeting 2020 – Session on Equity
THE WHY

INEQUALITY IS A PLANNING PROBLEM

Source: A Measure of America, A Portrait of California, 2011

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The equal and accessible public space created by streets is the most essential infrastructure of all...the public spaces of the internet are laughably impoverished when compared with a simple sidewalk.

Nicholas de Monchaux, NY Times, May 12, 2020
THE WHY

HEALTHY, SUSTAINABLE, RESILIENT COMMUNITIES

Source: Project for Public Spaces
EQUITY IN A HAWAIIAN CONTEXT

Pono = Righteousness, right action

Aunty Pilahi Paki’s principles of Pono:
• Good intentions
• Justice, equality, fairness
• Hope

‘Hope is the deepest layer of Pono. It is about finding where hope lies for people and communities.’

- Puanani Burgess
  “Aunty Pua”

Image credit: Hawai‘i Business Magazine
EQUITY vs EQUALITY

Equity

Equality

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Source: Robert Wood Johnson Foundation
EQUITABLE ENGAGEMENT

KEY INGREDIENTS:

Trust
Transparency
Inclusivity
Knowledge Exchange
Power Sharing

Source: International Association for Public Participation (IAP2)
Ask along the way: Who’s not at the table? And adjust course as needed.
QUESTIONS TO ASK:

- Who’s affected?
- Who’s interested?
- How does this community engage?
- What do they treasure?
- What are the relationships and power dynamics?
- Who has barriers to participation?
- What resources and assets exist?
- How can community input impact the results?
BUILD TRUST AND TRANSPARENCY

MEET PEOPLE WHERE THEY ARE
Disrupt expectations – require people to come and be creative. The goal is to produce and hold a sense of curiosity, not necessarily agreement.

- Aunty Pua
BUILD TRUST AND TRANSPARENCY

CULTIVATE COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

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Image Credit: Vincent Ricafort
Engage in conversations about the past, present, and future.

“You have to be able to see where you are going, what it looks like, who will be there. Otherwise, you can’t build the right canoe, or bring the right crew, or get the right supplies.” - Aunty Pua
VISIONING & ISSUES IDENTIFICATION

SEE WHAT THEY SEE, CREATE SHARED EXPERIENCES
The concrete bulb-outs in Chinatown are now much less of an eyesore.
SHOW, NOT TELL

DATA, DISCOVERY, & CO-CREATION OF SOLUTIONS

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DEMONSTRATE THE IMPACT OF INPUT

>300 EMAIL SUBSCRIBERS

6 POP-UP EVENTS

2 NEIGHBORHOOD BOARD PRESENTATIONS

>500 PARTICIPANTS

250 COMMENTS

WHERE DID You COME IN?

1 BIKE TOUR

3 BULBOUT DEMONSTRATIONS

10 COMMUNITY CALENDAR POSTS

3 MONTH OUTREACH CAMPAIGN

WHERE DID You COME IN?

6 LUNCH AND LEARNS

24 PRESENTATIONS & MEETINGS

235 FACEBOOK FOLLOWERS

7 TV & RADIO INTERVIEWS

165 BUILDING OWNERS, ASSOCIATIONS, TENANTS & BUSINESSES REPRESENTED

DOWNTOWN/CHINATOWN COMPLETE STREETS IMPLEMENTATION

Share your thoughts:

Appreciate you making the streets safer for pedestrians and cyclists. Honolulu is the perfect place to be cycle-friendly.

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At the end of the day, equity is about uniting PEOPLE and co-creating healthier, more resilient PLACES in every zip code.

“Real people do real things. A collective of a whole bunch of people, Who do things in their own locale, In their own neighborhoods – The sum is bigger than the parts, and The parts will grow.”

Carlton Douglas Ridenhour, aka Chuck D of Public Enemy