



Equitable Engagement Initiative & Findings

Presentation to City Commissions

City of Ann Arbor – Systems Planning Unit

www.a2gov.org/A2EquitableEngagement



Project's Aim

Develop a shared understanding of what **equity means** and **what policies, guidelines, and practices** could be implemented to help Ann Arbor be the inclusive city it desires to be.





Prework: Staff Education

Prior to an external launch, staff researched:

- Promising practices from other communities,
- Local and regional conditions related to equity.

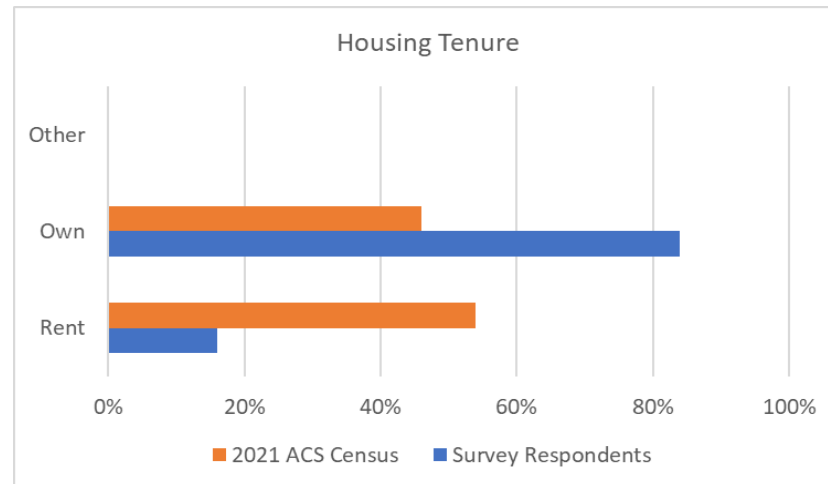
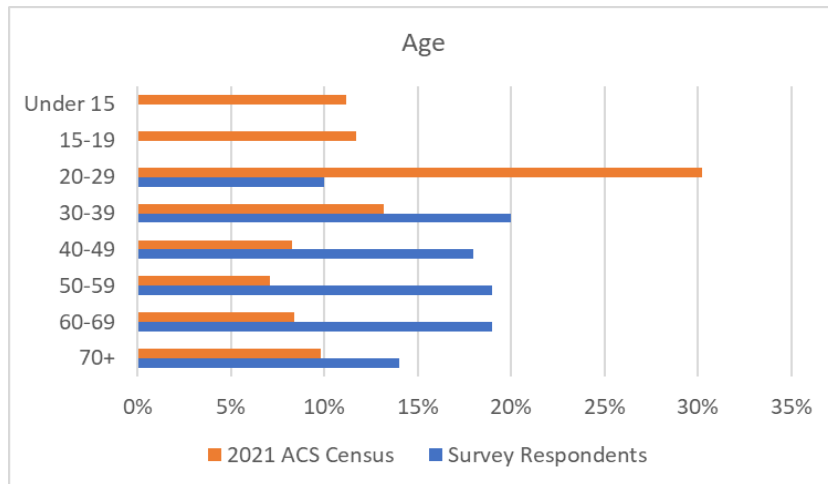
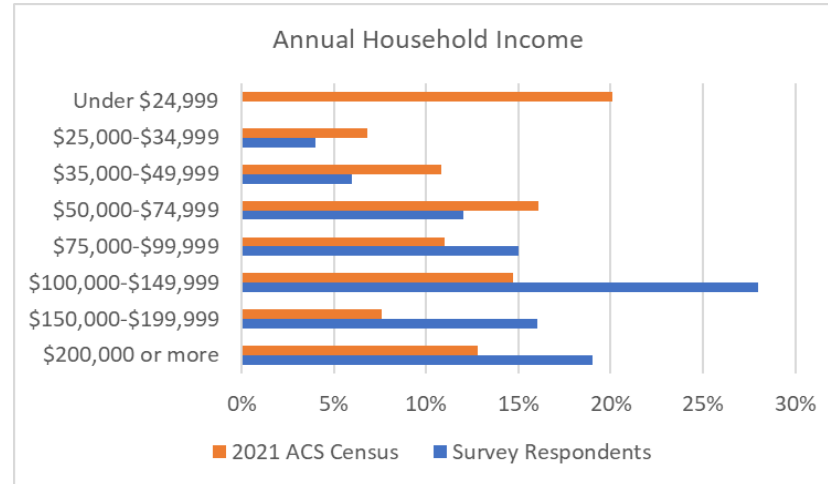
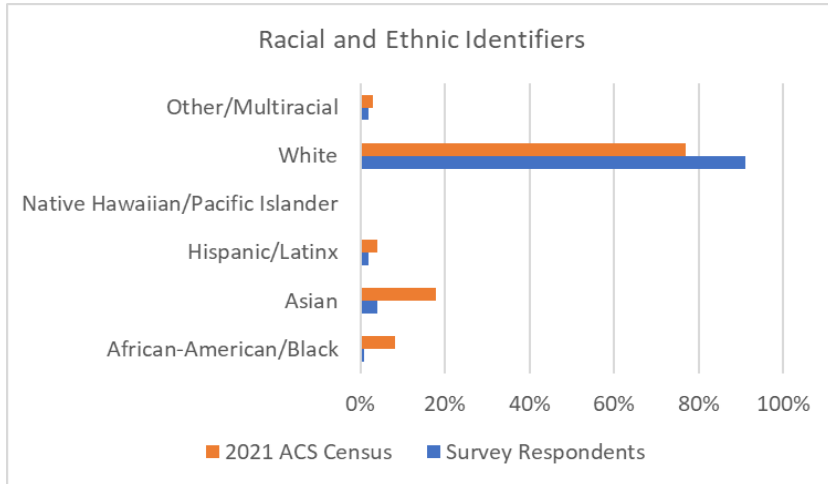


Prework: What are we doing now?

- Community Engagement Toolkit
- Demographic data collection
- Staff training on engagement best practices
- Youth engagement
- Developer public participation requirement



Prework: Demographic Data





Steering Committee

80 applicants, 30 representative members selected

- Met monthly for 1.5 years
- Defined equity and core values
- Developed recommendations



The City of Ann Arbor is working to become a more inclusive community, and you can help. An effort is under way to overcome Ann Arbor's history with racism and prejudices incorporating:

- Community engagement policies.
- Community engagement tools.
- Community engagement practices.

Do you want to be a part of the conversations and decision-making processes? Apply today to participate as an ANN ARBOR EQUITABLE ENGAGEMENT STEERING COMMITTEE MEMBER!

The Ann Arbor Equitable Engagement Steering Committee will unite community members and representatives of organizations in the area that are currently working to advance equity. Further, the steering committee will:

- Help shape the approach to equitable engagement.
- Play an active role in developing the city's community engagement strategy.
- Serve as connectors to the community and organizations.
- Ensure quality and delivery of outcomes.
- Meet on a scheduled, regular basis, as agreed upon by committee members.

Interested? Please complete the online application, which is due by Monday, June 7, 2021. Some funding is available to compensate committee member(s) for time on this effort, which will be prioritized based on need.



Go [online](#) for the application to participate, for more information and to sign up for initiative updates as they become available at www.a2gov.org/A2EquitableEngagement or call 734.794.6430, ext. 42590.



Some qualities that we will be looking for in steering committee members are:

- Diversity across race, ethnicity, gender, ability and sexual orientation.
- Commitment to racial and social justice.
- Experience and knowledge of equity and race issues.
- Collaborative and willing to engage in shared exploration.
- Humility and curiosity to continually learn and engage in self-reflection.
- Resilience to engage in deep, challenging work.



Equity vs. Equality

Equity the fair and just practices that ensure all community members can thrive. Equitable practices acknowledge and address structural inequities – historic and current – that advantage some and disadvantage others.

Equality treats everyone as if their experiences are the exact same.





Topics Covered with the Steering Committee

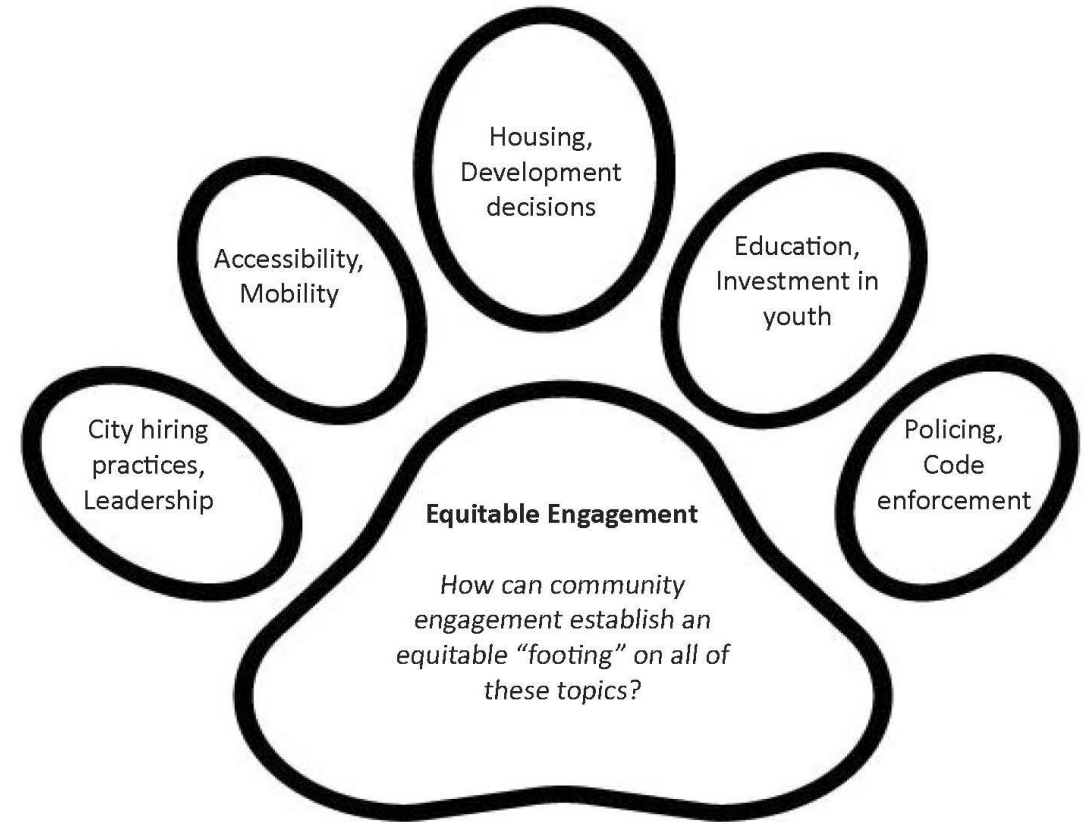
- Opportunity Index
- Review demographic data of engagement participants.
- The Engagement Toolkit
- Reflect on engagement efforts (e.g., American Rescue Plan Act funding and the Water Treatment Plant project)
- Land use planning
- Affordable housing
- City hiring practices
- Sustainability efforts
- Building blocks of meaningful engagement





The Paw: 5 Focus Areas

- Offers an analogy related to equitable community engagement.
- Visualize how equitable engagement can influence the direction of the “toes.”



1

Recommendation

Demonstrate the city is committed to advancing equity.

1. City intentionally hires minoritized individuals, especially in higher level positions.
2. Create transparent and meaningful pathways for promotion of minoritized individuals.
3. Appoint racially and ethnically minoritized candidates representing impacted community perspectives to boards and commissions.
4. City Council adopts and enforces policies that help ensure decision-making is equitable.
5. Be authentic.
6. Build trust and transparency through continuous outreach and relationship building.

2

Recommendation

Provide both ample and targeted invitations to engagement opportunities.

1. Translate and transcreate meeting notices and content, addressing the most common languages first.
2. Use non-digital ways of getting the word out.
3. Get the word out through places like religious institutions, barber shops, bus stops, and informal networks.
4. Actively recruit Black, Indigenous, and people of color to participate in engagement events.
5. Create an online engagement hub that is easy to find and easy to use.

3

Recommendation

Develop Community Engagement Plans with Care

Provide the resources necessary for staff to conduct meaningful engagement.

1. Ensure a budget for community engagement is scaled appropriately to the issue.
2. Continue and increase staff training in conducting quality engagement.
3. Continue to use and evolve the city's Community Engagement Toolkit.
4. Create suitable measurements and milestones for successful.

4

Recommendation

Make engagement events more accessible and attractive.

1. Offer hybrid meeting options.
2. Provide various ways for people to provide their input – ways that avoid dominant people and narratives from taking over meetings.
3. Hold meetings at various times.
4. Record meetings and make them easily available and provide input opportunities after watching recorded meetings.
5. Hold people to “golden-rule” standards – use and enforce ground rules that support honoring the dignity of people.

4

Recommendation

Make engagement events more accessible and attractive (continued)

6. Understand that the community's time and energy is valuable, especially for people with limited resources – compensate participants in some way, such as with food, stipends, gift certificates, etc.
7. Hire trained and continue to train meeting facilitators and moderators in fields such as social work, psychology, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI), public participation, etc.
8. Create space to listen and heal old wounds using highly trained engagement facilitators.
9. Take time to celebrate and experience joy as a community.
10. When a decision is being made, clearly communicate what the decision is, the decision-making process, who ultimately makes the decision, and the level of influence the community can have over the decision.



Promising Practices

- Community liaisons
- Measure participant satisfaction
- Mix of meeting styles
- Information kiosks
- Surveys and polling
- Engagement hub





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Open

<https://engage.pittsburghpa.gov/>



Last updated: 20 Sep, 2022

Mellon Park Action Plan

A unified vision for Mellon Park based on community and municipal priorities for restoration, development, and activity.

[Learn more →](#)



Last updated: 16 Sep, 2022

Complete Streets

Complete Streets updates the right of way to be safer and more comfortable for diverse and vulnerable users like pedestrians and those riding transit, bicycles, & more.

[Learn more →](#)



Last updated: 15 Sep, 2022

Moore Park Pool Building Renovations

Replacement of roof in kind, repair/replace hundreds of cracked brick throughout the exterior, and replacement of windows throughout the exterior.

[Learn more →](#)



Thank you!

<https://www.a2gov.org/services/Pages/Equitable-Engagement-Initiative.aspx>

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