Ideas RoundUP

The Ideas RoundUP conversation series was an effort to explore our land use agenda at RMLUI, taking into account what we are learning about our policies as they relate both to containing a pandemic and promoting a socially just and sustainable community. Thanks to the many who joined us in self-reflection and conversation.

These conversations were intended to be opportunities for the entire RMLUI community—land development professionals, community leaders, academic partners, and students—to come together in thoughtful dialogue about the problems we're facing and how we improve our land use system to better address the inequities in our society.

Graduate students analyzed all of the breakout sessions and summarized the emerging ideas in each topic. The introduction provides a brief summary for each session is to highlight key themes and points, with more details provided in the summary for each session.

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Introductions
Race, Equity, and Land Use

The Race, Equity and Land Use Ideas RoundUP session was kicked off a powerful introduction from Tom Romero and Erin Clark, both presenting about the intersection between race, class and land use policies. Tom Romero provided a look at the legacy of racist land use policies in Colorado and established the central concept of "Color Consciousness," or the idea that race must be centered in discussions of inequity and land use, thus pushing back color-blind policies which are all too common. Clark expanded on these ideas and focused primarily on detailing the experience of the black Americans and how they are confronted with the structural and societal inequities on a daily basis.

The breakout sessions that followed bounced between topics of historical racist land use policies such as redlining, and their implications for modern issues such as gentrification, access to resources, and quality of life associated to land use. Because G**entrification** was found to be a central component of the discussions, it will be defined here as: "the process whereby the character of a poor urban area is changed by wealthier people moving in, improving housing, and attracting new businesses, typically displacing current inhabitants in the process" (Oxford Languages, n.d.). There were two subthemes directly related to gentrification also observed within the discussions: **Zoning and Housing Bias and Affordable Housing and Housing Deplanement.** The other major themes observed in the sessions were: **Community Involvement and White Privilege and General Racism**, the later with two subthemes, **Environmental Racism and Disparity of COVID-19.** The comments within the discussions seemed to fall into two categories, either being focused on identifying problems or solutions related to the previously stated themes. Below you will find an analysis of the discussions.

Civic Engagement and Public Participation

The Civic Engagement and Public Participation conversation identified three basic themes for improving upon, these were: accessibility, inclusivity, and retention. **Accessibility** was limited by the timing of meetings, the time commitment necessary to participate, and the location of the meetings; the "digital divide" has meant that recent online meetings may have helped some people attend, but prevented others**.** The need to improve **inclusivity** was highlighted by women, BIPOC individuals, and renters being conspicuously absent from meetings. If individuals can and do attend, how do we encourage **retention** so that they continue to remain involved and invested? Some pointed to the need to recognize that the process is potentially unfamiliar and threatening to many, and that a priority must be placed on making sure that newcomers are made to feel welcome.

Developing strategies for **hybrid online** and in person meetings**,** with a cell phone based **alert to tell people when they were up next on the docket, mobile wifi hotspots, alternative meeting locations** directly in the neighborhoods**, language justice,** and **childcare** were all key solutions for accessibility. Building **leadership teams that are more diverse** and representative of larger communities, actively exploring **new strategies for outreach** and communication to community members, as well as r**elationship building with community organizations** and **transparency about how histories of racism, segregation, and exclusion have led to the current composition of neighborhoods**. The current planning process is confusing, threatening and unwelcoming, several things contribute to this including the location, courthouses and government buildings can be intimidating to many people, and **difficult to understand language** tied to zoning and policy that is embedded within the process. There is no reason that a priority cannot be placed on effective communication.

Zoning and Racial Bias

The Zoning and Racial Bias Land Use Ideas RoundUP centered around **affordable housing** and the extant **legacy of racism** which continues to be a factor in who can access housing. The **housing supply** available to **communities** throughout the United States does not reflect the **demand of housing** affordability or/and accessibility. Attendees identified **barriers** to this issue of many **zoning processes** that need to be changed or/and reviewed to **improve inclusion** and transparency of impacted communities. Many existing communities appear to be the result of histories of segregation, racist policy, and the fear of loss of communities' *character* and *charm.* The subconscious bias held by the members do not realize that they are reinforcing racist housing policies. The commissioners and committee members or decision makers need to **educate** themselves on their districts' demographics. The **market** remains as another barrier by providing low incentives for higher-density residential development and increased property values that further marginalize, exclude, and enforce institutional racism.

Solutions or opportunities that were offered included education to the privileged or stakeholders of how histories of redlining, segregation, structural racism, and white privilege have established the housing markets and neighborhood demographics. Open space is preventing more housing opportunities, rather than preserving space as a luxury to be enjoyed by the wealthy. Attendees went on to highlight other areas to push for **policy changes** including the definition of family, rules regarding how a property can be subdivided **(ADUs – Accessory Dwelling Units)**, broad protections of s**ingle-family housing**, and low-density residential development in places that would benefit from **mixed-use development**. **Transportation** needs to be complimentary to type of residential area. Enforcing **community involvement** or **buy-in** brings the movement of **YIMBY,** (Yes, in my backyard) will allow for strategies and changes.

Housing Part I

Conversations in the first part of the Housing segment looked at **affordable housing at the intersection between market driven production and consumption**, **and the existing policy/zoning landscape**. It was recognised that there were important ways in which rather than effectively influencing and regulating individual economic interests that negatively impacted access to affordable housing, it was clear that individual economic interests were informing policy. A thorough **evaluation of the planning process, existing zoning, and approval procedures** is necessary with strong attention to implementing identified opportunities for improvement. Certain key concerns included the need for larger strategy, just encouraging construction is not sufficient because the current market system does not create an incentive to make or keep housing affordable or accessible.

Housing Part II

Racial equity and racism were large focal points of this discussion. More specifically, the *lack* of discourse regarding race and racism was emphasized. A consensus was reached that race is simply not explicitly talked about enough. The importance of starting with the most vulnerable populations in mind, including people of color, was emphasized as a way policy and regulation of funding should be prioritized in order to ensure fair and affordable housing for those most in need. Some potential steps that were suggested to dismantle racism in affordable housing were pointed out, including **undesigning the red line, and focusing on truth and reconciliation: face history with courage.** Ultimately, more tools are needed to present policies that are not "color blind" and instead focus on directed demographics in places where gentrification is present.

Transportation Equity

The Transportation Equity RoundUP was largely focused on issues of **equity** in public transportation. Conversations ranged from discussions about **accessibility**, whether that be **cost**, **affordable housing in relation to transit**, **community outreach**, and the implications of **COVID-19**. Outside of issues of equity, participants also spoke about public transit in general, **what influences people to use it, efficiency**, **how to improve it, policy and funding and transit construction,** and public opinion. Across the board, the sense that public transit ought to be considered a right, and that there needs to be a greater emphasis on the construction and management of a strong transit system, were both quite common. Based on the discussions, affordable housing and efficient public transit are necessary to have true equity. For this reason, local governments and organizations such as the Denver Regional Council of Governments, need to focus their attention on providing robust public transit with a focus on equity. Below you will find a breakdown of the prominent themes identified throughout the Ideas RoundUP discussions.

Public Spaces

Public Space introductions and discussions focused primarily on the equity of parks and open spaces. While most communities have some access to public spaces, the quality of said spaces are not equal along racial and economic lines. On top of this, access to the highest quality parks is often difficult and dependent of specific modes of transportation and often the parks themselves are not culturally responsive to a wide-breadth of park-goers. Identified issues of equitability in open spaces were **accessibility, affordable housing in relation to parks, community involvement, land acknowledgment and history,** and **safety of public spaces for people of color.** Also discussed were the hurdles of **land development** that must be overcome to create more equitable spaces. Solutions to the problems above were generally centered around: **better data collection, land development,** and **culturally responsive planning and outreach.** Participants and opening speakers alike, were keenly aware of the inequities that public spaces face. Communities of color are largely more concerned with their safety in public spaces than their white counterparts because of systemic racism and police violence and have accessibility challenges such as transportation and linguistic differences to contend with, when engaging with parks. For this reason, equity solutions should be focused on addressing such issues, as well as a whole host of other challenges posed in the breakout sessions.

Public Health

The Public Health session breakout groups focused mostly on *Access*, referring to access to mobility, healthy food, and outdoor recreation, *Health Equity,* and *Collaboration and Partnerships.* Within *Access,* participants identified a lack of walkability around their communities, healthy, fresh produce that is inexpensive for the general public as well as in schools, and infrastructure to support outdoor recreation either in city parks or public trails, especially for residents with varying disabilities. These areas were also decided to be three of the most important aspects of having positive health outcomes in a community. Some solutions to the issues that were brought to light include a free shuttle service for individual cities to improve mobility, creating community garden corridors, and providing ways for community members to give feedback about unsafe infrastructure or inaccessibility in the city. *Health Equity* or inequity was discussed through the inaccessibility of healthy food because of its comparative cost to processed food, as well as the disproportionate effect of COVID-19 on communities of color. Many people of color are essential workers and are therefore, at a higher risk of contracting the virus; they then return home to dense areas which do not allow for the ability to self-quarantine, inherently spreading it to others. The spaces they live in also have adverse health consequences

further endangering them of severe COVID-19 infections. *Collaboration and Partnerships* depicts the need for different departments to work together to improve public health and equity. Through Health Impact Assessments and other forms of audits, the public health sector, water planners, housing developers, and other city officials may work together to create decisions that make the community holistically more equitable.

Race, Equity, and Land Use, June 30, 2020

Identified Problems:

Gentrification

Gentrification dominated most of the conversation whether that being referenced explicitly or implicitly. As there was a wide breadth of participants from several areas of the United States, and it is clear that a similar phenomenon has occurred throughout most major metropolitan areas. Land use policies and redlining have created inequitable housing prices and access, thus leading to white flight during the 20th century, and the displacement of communities of color in the 21st century, as the same urban neighborhoods that white people had previously left have become more desirable to places to live. This process was identified by contributors who have witnessed it firsthand in cities such as Austin, Denver, and Minneapolis. Even more specific, issues of zoning, housing bias, affordable housing and housing displacement were all major problems identified within the breakout sessions.

- **Zoning and Housing Bias**

  Zoning restrictions can segregate an area as well as define the community or a particular area by determining the number of households allowed, the specific use of the land, and possible Accessory Dwelling Units on said land which can perpetuate displacement of non-White communities or support them. Zoning is often reflective of racial bias and many zoning decisions are centered around white, middle to upper class tastes and preferences. For this reason, affordable housing is often not on the radar of developers or city officials responsible for zoning policies and decisions.

- **Affordable Housing and Housing Displacement**

  White suburbanites are resistant to change to increase affordable housing for people of color who are being displaced from their neighborhoods due to a rise in housing costs. For areas that cannot provide inclusionary zoning, it seems that policy change may not be the way to solve this problem. This is also seen through density bonus programs that don't necessarily provide more affordable housing or decrease gentrification. Yet, there is community pushback to change in Denver as well as other metropolitan areas in the U.S. which only adds to the challenge of finding solutions to increasing affordable housing. HOA's further complicate the creation of affordable housing, specifically in middle to upper class white communities where the inhabitants and their HOA's are often designed in a way that pushes back against the construction of cheaper living spaces. The long-term effects of all these policies can be seen in the way that white privilege and environmental racism has manifested in urban settings.

Community Involvement

White people are making policy decisions around zoning, infrastructure, access to affordable housing, and community space which does not represent the people whose communities are being affected severely by these issues. Some neighborhoods do not have access to technology in order to provide their opinions through online surveys and forums around policy and community initiatives. In other public spaces, initiatives don't necessarily reflect the desires of the Black or Brown community members but only the White members. Generally, it appears that White voices are being heard and considered more than voices from people of color, even if those white voices are well-intentioned.

White Privilege and General Racism

- **Environmental Racism**

  In the past, environmental organizations have not pushed initiatives that are socially and environmentally just, though there is an acknowledgment that that essential to their work that this must be addressed going forward. A lack of access to necessary natural resources is linked to redlined communities and the equitable distribution of these resources, as well as access to transportation and amenities. Conservation land trusts have also served as a problem and barrier to supporting equitable land use rather than providing community land trusts that balances the conservation of nature as well as supporting affordable space to use in marginalized communities.

- **Disparity of COVID-19**

  There was an acknowledgment that COVID-19 disproportionately affected people of color, especially friends of participants who have shared their stories, but no further explanation of why or how was provided. It seems plausible that communities of color have a lack of access to resources needed for organizations, internet and technology, and to healthy spaces resulting in the disproportional effect of COVID-19. It was also identified that White privilege also affects the types of voices involved in policy decisions and change related to issues of environmental racism and access to affordable housing.

Identified Solutions:

Gentrification

In order to create more inclusionary zoning, affordable housing, and reduce the impacts of gentrification, some suggested eliminating single-family zoning and allowing for more duplexes and multi-family dwelling units. Through policy, the city could also provide density bonuses in some zones for developers to build more units that are closer together and smaller which would serve to increase affordable housing. Another solution that was provided in the dialogue was establishing more community land trusts. Elevation Land Trust in West Denver is one example in which it provides affordable housing, allows homeowners to earn equity, and protects the space from outside interests because it is community owned. Additionally, transit-oriented development is another way to increase affordable housing. The Urban Land Conservancy works to develop land around public transit centers for affordable housing or a percentage of affordable housing, rather than luxury apartments and similar types of complexes. It is also possible to subsidize housing through retail included in the development in order to bring down the cost of housing. Therefore, many unique solutions were brought forth in the conversation that could lead to specific action on providing affordable housing and reducing the impacts of gentrification.

Community Involvement

One very clear way that was discussed throughout breakout groups to establish more equity is increasing community involvement and amplifying the voices of color. Several suggestions entailed the enablement and inclusion of community members to serve on local decision-making boards that decide on land use solutions, thus providing better and more equitable community space options. In one specific case, the transportation planning group in Westminster has hired a more diverse staff to tackle these issues around transportation affecting citizens of color; Arvada's local government has a similar team structure that has produced positive results in the community. For other organizations, it was suggested to go physically into communities to get feedback on project ideas that directly impact the people that the organization is working for. No matter the means of getting more voices of color, to which participants provided many, it

was conclusively decided that one of the single best ways to improve equity in our cities is to receive more insight from community members being affected.

White Privilege and General Racism

While the problems of white privilege and general racism were identified and discussed quite thoroughly throughout the breakout sessions, solutions that addressed such issues were not provided at the levels that they were for gentrification and community involvement. There was a great deal of general suggestions such as the need to "start conversations" or to center new policies and thinking around inclusive language and equity, but the actual nuts and bolts of how to do so was not provided. One area of focus that did get a fair amount of attention is the idea that white suburban families, especially those living in communities with HOAs, lack the knowledge or desire to create change in their communities because of their white privilege. For that reason, reaching said communities and educating them about issues of equity in housing seems key to shifting the way that HOAs specifically prevent the building of affordable housing in white suburban neighborhoods. The most salient suggestion about changing perceptions about housing equity came in the introduction with Tom Romero's discussion about "color consciousness." Color consciousness is the idea that because race has real and powerful socio-economic implications, race must be discussed openly and addressed directly in conversations about equity. This idea, that color-blind policies and ways of thinking have failed to create real equitable change, could be felt in most of the discussion about white privilege and general racism.

References

Oxford Languages. (n.d.). Gentrification. In *Oxfordlanguages.com dictionary*. Retrieved November 18, 2020 from https://languages.oup.com/dictionary/gentrification

Civic Engagement and Public Participation, July 14, 2020

Identified Themes:

Accessibility

- Planning and Zoning meetings must be accessible to everyone who is impacted by decisions, however at present many people either are not effectively notified or are unable to attend for logistical reasons.

Inclusivity

- The leadership and attendees at planning meetings need to be representative of the demographic makeup of the community who will be impacted by the decisions. Conspicuously absent from the process are women, BIPOC individuals, and renters. Furthermore, there is a discrepancy between who attends meetings, and who participates--how to prevent a few loud (and often privileged) voices from dominating the process?

Retention

- Meaningful participation in the process involves continued participation. How to keep attendees engaged and invested? Why would people be likely to stop being involved?

Identified Challenges:

Barriers to Access

- Meetings a large time commitment that not everyone can afford to invest, and the timing of meetings can prevent working people from attending.
- Meetings often take place outside of the neighborhoods being impacted in courthouses and other government buildings which create transportation and parking difficulties, not to mention that these locations can be intimidating for many non-white individuals due to high security and large police presence.
- During the pandemic online formats have been necessary. These have removed certain barriers but created new barriers (digital divide). Not everyone has access to highspeed internet, sufficient technology, or is comfortable using the online platform

Barriers to Inclusivity

- Process is complicated by a history of segregation, racism, and exclusion; how can planners cultivate meaningful engagement? Community members who already feel disenfranchised may not feel like they will be heard/valued in process.
- Renters may not see a place for themselves in the planning process because of the perception that they aren't seen as having a stake that homeowners have in the long term future of the neighborhood.

Public Sentiment

- The **public is often angry** when they arrive at meetings, and bureaucrats tend to see the anger as a lack of respect for authority or the process. Also angry people can drown out other voices present. Effective process cannot transpire when the public is upset.
- There is a lack of clarity and transparency that makes the **process hard to trust** and this must be addressed.

Solutions:

Making Meetings More Accessible

- In the future community members can be provided the choice to attend in person or virtually. This will involve dealing with potential logistical issues to implement but could be effective. Also look into strategies for providing WiFi access, perhaps using school busses as mobile hotspots?
- Language justice is needed, not just providing access to a person's language of choice, but also recognizing that much of the language used in zoning, policy and planning meetings is not accessible, and thus not effective for communication.
- Follow up on the success that others have had having meetings where people are (one example was in a laundromat).
- Providing childcare options for parents.
- There is no reason that attendees have to wait through the entire meeting (whether in person or remotely), a cell phone alert system could let them know when they are next on the docket.

Training for Planning Staff

- What skills should staff members of the planning process have related to building inclusivity and public engagement? Where are they expected to learn these skills, and how will they be held accountable for effectively using them?

Public Engagement and Outreach

- Low turnout is evidence of shortcomings in outreach and engagement, one key strategy to improve this is more effective communication between teams--what has been working for other planners in other places? Specific areas were identified for improvement including: timeframe for public comments; finding new ways to reach out to and communicate with community members. Acknowledging that we are past the question of if change is need--we are at the point of action; integrating a moral obligation to openly acknowledge why our communities look the way they do (Color of Law, American Apartheid, composition of leadership on the staff level).

Addressing Public Sentiment

- Trust can be built by building relationships with community leaders before there is an issue, and by giving trust to communities as experts in their needs and well being. Trust also requires transparency and honesty. For people to trust the system they must feel that their voices matter and are heard, that they can contribute to change on a timeline that they can observe. And importantly, it is incumbent on the developer to participate in the trust building.
- Anger must be allowed to be vented before transitioning into the process but anger can also be directed and focused onto specific agenda items rather than toward the entire process. Also having more diversity within the governing process will help to diffuse anger and build trust.

Bureaucrats can expand what is perceived as "acceptable" communication and stop rejecting "emotional" responses.
- Bureaucrats must let go of the idea that they can expect to receive respect from the community that they haven't earned.
- Making the process more welcoming and less confusing, unfamiliar and intimidating is important. Part of relationship building will take time, but consider making the language used more accessible and selecting more comfortable locations (meeting people where they are).

Diversity of Voices

- The same type of outreach in the same communities will bring in the same type of people, in order to attract more diverse participation, it is important to use new tactics in new places. Churches and youth groups can provide valuable, diverse, and knowledgeable bases.
- Diversity in representation in leadership in the form of genuine representation would show community members that leadership shares similar values and will make decisions based on the needs of the community as a whole. Will lead to a better democratic process.

Building a Sense of Community

- This theme was touched on by many attendees and many of the solutions discussed so far are important steps in the process of developing a sense of community, but the attention to the holistic vision is an important factor as well. Building trust, equitable power dynamics, connections between community members and decision makers that are made informally, creating a welcoming space for newcomers, and prioritizing diversity at every level will all help to reach successful outcomes in political participation.

Zoning and Racial Bias, July 28, 2020

Identified Problems:

Affordable Housing
- **Housing supply must meet demand:** Attendees identified a missing range of housing options matching actual needs within the community across income range. We need diversity of housing—how do we get to the point where what is being built is what is needed?
- **Making or Keeping Housing Affordable:** A diverse and equitable neighborhood is always better. Maintaining affordability is a necessary part of the discussion about creating affordable housing, but solutions are not universal or one-size-fits all. Might be density and rent control, inclusionary zoning, one creative strategy was to offer cash [to help make housing more accessible?] instead of building new units.

Racial Equity
- **Legacy of Racism:** Within the context of zoning and housing, there is a great deal of history associated with racism, segregation, and inequity that must be attended to.

Inclusivity
- **Improving Inclusivity:** Attendees identified a clear need for including more diverse demographics into a process that has been defined by being historically exclusive. Those with time and resources are able to attend meetings, while people who don't have time and means are not able to attend.

Communication
- **Effective communication between planners, developers, and community is lacking:** Policy codes can be hard to understand, how do we help people understand documents? There is also a breakdown in successful communication by the zoning boards, planning committees, and developers with regard to the communities that are being affected by decisions. Meetings are not effectively publicized, often the same people regularly attend. Strategies for more representative participation is important, it can help to include talking points that are important to various communities. There can be a feeling that people in low-income communities are not treated as first-class citizens.

Community
- **Individual or Institutional Resistance:** Change won't happen until there is buy-in from cities and individuals. Research into the arguments against increasing housing density is a start.
- **Community as Barrier to Racial Equity and Affordable Housing:** Attendees identified community members as the source of opposition to zoning or policy changes that would increase the availability of affordable housing, more so than resistance from planning and zoning commissions. Some community members will say "I am all for affordable housing but…", but it seems when it comes down to actually making a change that are not interested in it forming the construct of "community character." Similarly, parking concerns can sometimes be thinly veiled racist statements. However, even non-white neighborhoods can be concerned about putting more housing into the community. In suburban areas pushback can come from the desire to protect open spaces. It was highlighted by participants, that the goal should not be to silence the voices against racial equity and affordable housing development, rather to engineer change. Both gentrification and densification create similar fears in community members' of loss of neighborhood character. The key to work to solve this issue is RNOs

Process
- **Process Needs Change or Review:** There are concerns about the current public process used to make zoning decisions; attendees identified a variety of challenges and opportunities to improve inclusion, transparency, and impact-fulness. The priority needs to be on engineering more diverse

communities intentionally. Introducing an outside partner into the process that provides a report on inequality in local codes or comp plans. Commissioners and committee members have been in their respective positions for many years, and in the past, they have mostly focused on short term goals exclusively. These members need to recognize that different neighborhoods, from their own, have different politics and priorities. Working people or the working class have little time for county commissions or planning committees. These communities need to represented in the proper way. We need to create more policies, strategies, forms of planning, new codes that focus on making diverse communities. Participants mentioned that proper representation could be achieved through subsiding affordable housing and requiring housing fair share to become state law.

Market
- **Market as Barrier to Affordable Housing:** Attendees identified market-based challenges such as low-economic incentives for creating higher-density residential developments, or increased property values that eventually make housing less accessible. Several participants experienced that neighborhoods aren't marketed to the correct demographics. The capitalist market is deeply rooted in institutional racism, which does not offer marginalized communities the ability to enter the market.

Identified Solutions:

Education
- **Educational need:** Shortcomings of knowledge were identified as a problem both for members of the public at large and also for planning or zoning board members. A top concern was how to communicate histories of redlining, white privilege, and institutional racism to planners and neighborhood members. Individuals with Caucasian heritage spoke that they need to be educated on biases that they are unintentionally unaware of, and they need to understand the implications of the decisions they make. Also, there is concern that planners are not receiving all the information needed when they are given a 'packet' to review. Warm cookies for the revolution was cited as a valuable educational partner/resource.
- **Questions/Requests for Data:** Attendees identified several lines of inquiry that they felt were important to develop plans for addressing barriers and limitations.

Policy
- **Zoning Issues and Policy Issues:** Attendees identified several points: open space regulations can reinforce segregation by forcing higher prices and creating a negative impact on zoning's impact on equity. If open space cannot be used for housing, it must be created elsewhere. Also, open space needs to have a specific emphasis being examined through an equity lens. The working class has less of an opportunity to enjoy this space, so open space is mostly benefiting upper-class individuals that often tend to be Caucasian. Attendees acknowledged that the affordable housing act has a civil rights component and guaranteed access to an economic opportunity. Forcing communities to spend less money on social programs that address affordable housing. Intensification is also important, not just in housing; people need to be able to walk to what they need. Entry points for everybody need to be created on the housing continuum. Examples of these policies, once again, are inclusionary zoning being illegal in Austin, and applying this type of law all across the country could lessen this issue. Also, allowing conditional use permits, for citizens to be able to state their opinion about projects at a public hearing.
- **Definition of Family as a Barrier:** the definition of family needs re-evaluation, attendees identified it as an outdated policy from the past.
- **Resistance to Subdivision of Dwellings:** rules that govern how property can be divided can be a barrier to housing needs.

- **ADUs:** ADUs can be a solution in areas that are otherwise resistant to multi-family dwellings or other high-density residential solutions.
- **Single-Family Zoning and Low-Density Residential:** Important not to appear to be calling for the end of ALL single-family housing to avoid losing the support of communities. Small lot single-family housing can be a potential compromise. In some places, the status quo may be large plots and low-density residential. In other cases, a large number of small-lot single-family housing can be a solution; but the exclusivity of single-family housing zoning prevents other types of housing that may have been traditionally employed in those neighborhoods.
- **Mixed-Use Development is Needed:** While communities need a mixture of housing types and a blend of residential and commercial zoning to ensure food access. This also can create resistance to this is from white, affluent residents.
- **Transportation:** Transportation infrastructure and access must accompany affordable housing. In suburban development transportation infrastructure may not be part of regional planning due to the lower population density. Parking issues go hand in hand with transportation.

Community (buy-in)
- **YIMBY:** In response to a lack of action on the part of commissioners and council members, there is a grass-roots movement called: Yes In My Back. How can we cultivate a stronger YIMBY movement in Denver?
- One solution proposed is to get advisory groups and supporters to the table, such as churches and non-profits. As an example, the city of Littleton uses lists that inadvertently reflect exclusively homeowners from their public utility lists for outreach.

Process (review)
- Increase transparency and clarity of process.
- introducing an outside partner into the process that provides a report on inequality in local codes or comp plans; the priority must be on engineering more diverse communities intentionally; commissioners and committee members have been in their respective positions for many years but working people have little time for county commissions or planning committees; must stop thinking that the legislator will step in and make the necessary changes; stop planning for short term goals exclusively; recognize that different places have different politics and priorities; need to look at things that are being framed in ways that aren't exactly true. We need to create more policies, strategies, forms of planning, new codes that focus on making diverse communities. Many participants mentioned subsiding affordable housing. A participant offered up requiring housing fair share to become state law.

Action
- **Recommended Action:** Explicit calls for action that emerged from the discussion.

Identified Themes:

Building Affordable Housing

- While there are tools, incentives and allowances provided by the city, builders are not building products to meet the missing middle and affordable needs without mandates. Instead, it appears that much of the new housing is actually as expensive or more expensive than older smaller houses. One long held assumption is that multi-unit housing leads to traffic and parking congestion--is this assumption accurate, how is it different to have a related household with multiple cars vs same number of unrelated people also with multiple cars living on the same size lot?
- Current housing situation is a failure of the market, wage disparities, supply demand discrepancy in the housing market, the free market is not designed to treat housing as other than a commodity and is thus not effective at working toward equity. Need structural changes, a shift toward seeing community wealth building as the desired outcome rather than individual wealth.

Identified Barriers:

Personal Financial Interests

- The system is structured to build individual profits, and indeed, policy continues to be driven by personal financial interests. Processes such as flipping property for rapid profit accelerates the loss of affordable housing.

Gentrification/flipping houses

- Urban gentrification leads to the process of suburbanizing poverty; the legacy of redlining, segregation, and divestment of communities of Color makes these communities vulnerable to displacement.

HOAs/HBAs/RNOs

- HOAs, HBAs and RNOs concentrate too much power without necessarily being demographically representative of the entire community. These organizations can be important, but there are barriers to equitable participation in decisions that affect the community broadly. However covenant restrictive communities are identified as being problematic, negating sound zoning policies and regulations, can also drive up costs.

Environmental Sustainability

- In Colorado, water access is an essential concern that is only expected to grow in importance. Consumers are also becoming less favorable to large yards that need watering. Access to clean water is necessary when considering development.

Race and Housing

- Race neutral strategies not only ignore the racist histories that created the situations that must be addressed, they also ignore persistent racism, for example the prevalence of coded racialized speech such as *neighborhood character, charm, property value-ism etc.* Neighborhood

organizations leadership and participation reflects these racial legacies, and arguments that support racial segregation can be put forward by well-meaning individuals who don't realize what their reluctance to change their neighborhood really means.

Covid-19

- The economic fallout from the pandemic is resulting in a rash of foreclosures and reinvestment [who is being impacted most by foreclosure vs who is likely going to be controlling foreclosed properties?].

Identified Solutions:

Bureaucratic Process

- Zoning/Rezoning to align with community needs and vision for housing affordability and type. Reduce requirements that don't impact health, safety, or welfare. Widening parameters of what can be developed or narrowing requirements or narrowing requirements if development falls within a particular category of uses.
- Consider policies preventing "house flipping" such as two-year minimum waiting period before owner can sell houses.
- Prevent personal financial interests from structuring policy.
- Need metrics highlighting economic benefits of fair housing.
- The planning process needs to be evaluated and reformed, and with a renewed commitment to engagement and comprehensive planning; many times conversations are happening at the wrong time and the wrong place. And specifically, development, review, and approval needs to be streamlined, particularly in retrofit/infill projects in order to support smaller builders with limited resources.

Transportation

- Transportation is an essential part of the discussion and planning for affordable housing, both for the sake of individuals who need to remain connected to work and community, and also to address NIMBY reactions to higher density development.

Creating and Keeping Housing Options

- ADU's are effective if they can be done for a reasonable cost.
- Capping profit on selling affordable units to keep them affordable, and requiring buyers to wait two years before selling to prevent "flipping".
- Effective neighborhood level modeling can lower the amount of affordable development that any single neighborhood has to absorb, but these strategies have to be effectively communicated on the community level.
- Land conservancy can buy land when others cannot and save land from up-market developers.

Housing Part II, August 25, 2020

Racial Equity

Racial equity and racism were large focal points of this discussion. More specifically, the *lack* of discourse regarding race and racism was emphasized. A consensus was reached that race is simply not explicitly talked about enough. The importance of starting with the most vulnerable populations in mind, including people of color, was emphasized as a way policy and regulation of funding should be prioritized in order to ensure fair and affordable housing for those most in need. A large barrier to access regarding resources such as the CARES act funds is racism imbedded in policy. Not requiring SSN for assistance programs is one way to break down that potential barrier. Documentation is a large issue for accessing these resources and spans farther than simply identification documents. The consequences from employers or landlords regarding the information that they would need in order to access these funds is an added layer of difficulty. These positions of power add a layer of potential problems when it comes to people of color accessing this necessary information. Some potential steps that were suggested to dismantle racism in affordable housing were pointed out, including **undesigning the red line, and focusing on truth and reconciliation: face history with courage.** Ultimately, more tools are needed to present policies that are not "color blind" and instead focus on directed demographics in places where gentrification is present.

Policy

In the breakout groups, policy both served as a challenge to increasing affordable housing and a solution. There was a focus on the need for education about past zoning and policy that have redlined communities in order to encourage more people within their neighborhoods to support change around affordable housing. Education may also break down the current perception that cities only care to develop, not necessarily to support communities, which is changing. There seemed to be a lack of consensus around how to enforce inclusionary zoning in different metropolitan areas in order to hold developers accountable. One suggestion, however, was a requirement for a certain percent of each new development to be set aside for low- and moderate- income housing.

Funding

Investment in Civic Infrastructure was a large theme when it came to the discussion of expanding access to affordable housing. In addition to trying to get the word out to at risk communities, more funding for people at low and moderate incomes was suggested. Partnerships with organizations which allot funding to these causes, such as leveraging the CARES act funding to help offset upcoming challenges was identified as an opportunity. An additional benefit of increased funding would be the ability to allocate some toward providing some fiscal support for individuals navigating the application process. There seems to be a diverse array of small businesses and organizations that are reachable to partner with, which was suggested multiple times during the meeting. Investment in community connectors, networkers, and organizations such as Meals on Wheels are critical in solidifying these partnerships. Additionally, investment in organization is important; a continuation of grassroots organizing is needed. This could take the form of infrastructure investments in redlined communities as a form of reparations and affirmative action. If a city were to come up with a strategy for Affirmative Action in housing at the state level would be an increased focus on the Community Recovery and Reinvestment Act, this could tranform the system.

Fear and Trust

Fear from community members around a variety of issues seems to be a large barrier to connecting residents in need with providers of better housing options. In Austin and Denver, many of the hesitancies stem from fear of ICE acquiring personal information and threatening deportation or giving an unknown official power over your home and life. The type of help for those living in poor housing conditions was left relatively vague, but there were some references to acquiring emergency rent assistance funding and other types of grant funding that could be helpful to vulnerable people. Reaching out to community connectors such as non-profits like Meals on Wheels, community doctors, and other trusted providers who have established relationships to provide information about better housing opportunities to those that need them. This also breaks down the language and cultural barriers that may exist. Therefore, creating trust through organizations and people who are integrated into communities in need of better, affordable housing will allow vulnerable residents to let go of fear and improve their livelihoods.

Transportation Equity, September 8, 2020

Themes:

Equity and Transit

- **Cost**

  The costs of utilizing transit creates inequities in many communities. A number of conversations discussed cities' inability to provide affordable service for all communities. Transit systems need to be more affordable, leading to greater equity. As our systems currently operate, we don't think of transportation as a right. There was even mention of making public transit free, either universally or based on income, solidifying transportation as a right. Many cities also have troubles meeting the needs of poor, Black, Brown, and Indigenous communities. Instead, there is more of an emphasis on servicing 9 to 5ers and those that utilize transit to commute to work, as opposed to individuals that rely on transit for everyday needs.

- **Housing in Relation to Transit**

  Transit systems tend to influence the housing around them. There was conversation about the lack of affordable housing near and around transit corridors. Historically speaking, we know that housing and transportation are inextricably linked, and their ties are riddled with systemic racism. There are two key ways to address inequities in housing in relation to transit: create routes and lines that reach more Black, Brown, Indigenous, and poor communities, while also providing equitable housing near transit corridors that already exist.

- **Accessibility**

  Accessibility was discussed as a major issue facing almost every city in some capacity. Transit was often mentioned as being accessible to some and inaccessible to others. Transit is not readily available to those that need it most. Access can also be used as a tool to keep transit users out of certain areas. One attendee spoke to people's fears about "riff-raff" in neighborhoods becoming a concern. Sprawl can also play a role in access, as some transit lines only allow movement from city to suburb, while other lines don't provide suburban dwellers access to city centers.

- **Outreach to the Community**

  Outreach to the community was spoken of as a major necessity before, during, and after the decision-making process. During this outreach, it's also important for those doing the outreach to look like the neighborhoods they are working with. This builds trust with the community and makes the engagement and participation more genuine. Essentially, community input during development should be a requirement, as transit systems are falling short of community needs, however it is possible that public input can remedy that going forward.

- **COVID-19, Health, and Transit**

  COVID-19 has affected our cities in several ways. There is an overwhelming amount of fear of contracting the virus while using public transportation, but the data does not validate such fears. Regardless of what the data shows, these fears have translated into reductions in ridership nationwide. Equity issues begin to arise when folks that rely on public transportation aren't willing to use it because of fear of the virus. This forces Black, Brown, Indigenous, and poor communities to make difficult decisions about how they move about the city. And a reduction in

transit options will have greater effects on communities and individuals that don't have other mobility options. COVID has also strained cities financially, resulting in tighter budgets for transit systems, making expansion of infrastructure next to impossible to afford.

Although not discussed in detail, there was acknowledgment that transportation can be detrimental to air quality. The shift toward cities that are less dependent on automobiles is the most favorable outcome. As cities continue to see growth and expansion, keeping that growth environmentally sustainable is key, and can be done, in part, through good public transit systems.

What Influences Transit Use

- **Efficiency of Transit, How to Improve Transit and Overall Use**

Through issues of equity dominated the conversations, there was some analysis of what factors influence transit use and how to improve the transit system overall. The main determining factor in whether or not people use public transit is if it is efficient. Specifically, in Denver, it appears that RTD is not necessarily known for its efficiency. Long wait times, several indirect routes, and a "peanut butter thin" spread method, means that for most neighborhoods, robust public transport is still not an option. Especially with the light rail, neighborhood to neighborhood connection, or travel within a neighborhood is also lacking. This challenge does, however, provide an opportunity for innovative thinking and alternate forms of public transit.

In places like Salt Lake, they adjusted to all day schedules as opposed to focusing on peak-hour service, and in Portland, PBOT has created a transportation wallet, as well as have initiated free electric scooter rides to make up for gaps in traditional transportation. Evaluating and improving busing routes, with the possible integration of new routes themselves would also improve neighborhood travel. Finally, going forward, municipalities need to consider transit going forward, with more affordable housing, walkable spaces and better access to public transport access in places with affordable housing.

Policy and Public Transportation

- **City Planning and Public Transport, Barriers to the Construction of Transit, Funding for Transit**

Perhaps the largest sticking point to effective public transport is policy, and said policy also provides some of the greatest opportunities for improvement. There was a great deal of conversation about what role the Denver Regional Council of Governments has historically played in public transit and what they ought to do going forward. While DRCOG and its Metro Vision Transportation Plan does have strong goals, some of the burden falls on suburban Municiple members to focus on issues such as greenhouse gas emissions. It was also called upon policy makers and city planners to think harder about how to maximize the value and equity of transit corridors, especially on providing walkable spaces and affordable housing, a mentioned above. Perhaps the largest factor in what sort of projects are taken on and completed comes down to funding.

Without question, funding was large part of the policy discussions. Generally, tax revenues, fairs, and federal funding all fall short of transportation goals. Increasing the price burden on riders, whether that be in fares or through taxes, also present major issues of equity and access. One possible solution offered was to shift the focus of CDOT funding from highway-building to public transportation. While funding is one of the largest barriers to transportation, it was by

means not the only presented. Public support, trust and usage of RTD is especially widespread. This is further complicated by COVID-19 and the fear of transmission on busses and the light rail. Large projects are often shot down during the voting process, especially in smaller and more suburban communities. In Atlanta, there is a total lack of public transportation available to the suburbs, and any initiative put forward has been shot down for the last 19 years.

Closing Remarks and Benefits of Public Transport

While strong public transport faces a lot of challenges in Colorado, its importance was never understated during the discussions. Transport provides great opportunities for equity: it can connect families, places of work to people's homes, different parts of the city, and helps combat the climate crisis and improves air quality. It is also a necessity for a growing economy and the movement of people to urban spaces. As best put by one of the participants during the discussions, the "freedom of movement drives progress."

Public Spaces, October 6, 2020

Themes

Equity of Public Spaces

This discussions during the Open Space, Race and Equity breakout sessions were largely focused on just that, race and equity in open spaces. The predominant message was that parks, especially in Colorado, are often not equitable spaces, whether that be because of their location, access, or cultural relevance. Several issues of equity emerged during the discussions, however, there was the general sense that parks are often predominantly white spaces with just a few exceptions. This is tied a several issues identified; however, it is clear the challenge of addressing issues of equity in parks and open spaces will have to centered around making them less white-dominated spaces.

- **Accessibility**

  Accessibility is a complex problem that open spaces and parks both face. The first way that they are often inaccessible to communities of color is that is because of their location. Parks are often driving locations, especially in Colorado, and do not have strong public transit options. For example, in Denver there are very few locations where the light rail system connects directly to parks and open spaces. If certain communities do not have reliable transit, they are less likely to be able to access parks. Secondly, a huge focus of parks in Colorado are centered around things like biking and climbing, two activities that are somewhat cost prohibitive, not to mention the cost of entry. Then there's the general lack of cultural inclusion and sensitivity. Parks might include signage or advertising that are only in English, with very little emphasis put on design that is suitable for people from multiple cultural backgrounds. This is especially important for the indigenous community who see very little acknowledgement or appreciation, despite parks and open spaces often taking up land of historical importance to said communities.

- **Affordability of Housing in Relation to Parks**

  There was also the sentiment that the cost of housing in any given area directly related to the quality of parks and open spaces available. In areas with strong transport options, a "higher quality of life," and more expensive homes, parks are generally nicer, and a greater emphasis is placed on their construction. Lower-income areas often have less access to nature and outdoor spaces, and the environmental conditions are less ideal.

- **Community Involvement**

  Much like in the case of many development projects in urban centers, parks and public spaces often do not involve the input of community members, specifically those of diverse backgrounds. During the breakout sessions, participants agreed that there was a large gap in the input of communities of color, specifically the Latinx community, about public space projects. While participants didn't necessarily offer better strategies for engaging community members, it was established that open space projects should involve community members in co-creation of parks and open space. This more direct communication would facilitate the construction of parks that better meet the needs of communities of color, such as having more soccer fields, or not bolting picnic tables to the ground, a practice that was identified as prohibiting large family gatherings.

- **Land Acknowledgement and History**

A large focus of the introductions, an acknowledgement of the history of the land being used for parks and open spaces was highlighted. Parks are particularly inequitable for indigenous communities, as they occupy historically indigenous land without being very accessible to said communities. An emphasis was placed on the acknowledging the lands that public spaces are constructed on both throughout their creation and when the parks are completed. As part of "fixing historical mistakes" public spaces and their histories, should be organized around and consider the indigenous perspective.

- **Safety of Public Spaces for People of Color**

    Overwhelming, participants of color stated that measures need to be taken to make parks feel or safe for communities of color. This, in particular, appeared to be one of the largest hurdles to create more equity in public space use. Open spaces feeling unsafe for people of color for varied and complex reasons. Police brutality and violence against black bodies, a general sense of feeling unwelcome, and overt and unconscious acts of racism and bias all keep people of color from feeling safe in public spaces. The safety non-white park-goers needs to become a focus going forward to create more equitable spaces.

Issues of Land Development

Issues of land development hinder steps towards creating more equitable spaces. This is especially apparent in rural and "higher value" areas. For example, county votes in rural communities often ensure that those places stay rural. Locking land from being developed, prevents opportunities for the construction of equitable open spaces. In Boulder County, landowners have strict restrictions about how they can use their land, with a focus on the preservation of nature and wildlife habitats. Obviously, conservation efforts are important, but the relationship between nature and land development does pose complex issues around equity. Preserving nature and giving people access to enjoy said nature has shown to not be completely equitable. Oftentimes, there are no public transit options access nature reserves, and such parks are often focused on activities like mountain biking which often have a higher barrier to entry. The entry fee to nature-focused parks can also be cost prohibitive for many park-goers, again limiting access for some groups of people.

Plans for Action

- **Better Data Collection**

    Across the board, there seems to be a lack of data about the cultural backgrounds of park-goers. While there is the sense that most open-space users are white, participants emphasized the importance of gathering more useable data about the demographics of people who go to parks. One participant was especially interested in gathering tax data in relation to parks use. To get a better sense of the equity picture, more demographical data needs to be gathered, and the methodologies of this collection needs to be diverse.

- **Land Development**

    As part of the discussion about land development issues, a lot of input on how to achieve conservation while improving access was offered. Because parks in Colorado often interact with streams and rivers, parks need to be better designed to preserve water ways, while also improving the access to the streams and rivers. For such spaces to be equitable, there needs places for groups to congregate or pass through by foot or bike, while also preserving healthy stream corridors. The work of Westminster and Mile High Urban Drainage was offered as a useful example on how this

could be achieved. From the discussions it was also clear that public transportation and the development of greenspace need to be created side by side going forward. Creative open space development options were also offered, such as revamping out-of-date school yards to create public space that is more accessible to the community. This of course would have to involve the direct input of the schools and surrounding neighborhoods.

- **Culturally Responsive Planning and Outreach**

  Perhaps the largest focus of discussions centered around plans of action, was the creation of parks that are more culturally responsive. Making open spaces culturally relevant and accessible to the public with diverse linguistical backgrounds, brings people in "to understand what open space is and what is has to offer, how they can participate." For this reason, counties are starting to implement things like "Culturally Responsive and Inclusion Strategic Plans" which are focused on engaging communities of color about what they would like to see in open spaces and how to make the spaces more accessible to them. This process includes better community outreach, getting diverse people onto decision-making boards, having more inclusionary advertising, working with developers to consider equity, and centering land acknowledgements in the design and function of public spaces.

Access

Mobility

Regarding access, the ability to move around cities and spaces to access destinations was discussed across all breakout groups. Walkability in metropolitan areas needs to be improved to allow residents to walk to grocery stores, public parks, or other public spaces safely and comfortably. One example was provided in which residents of a senior living apartment complex in Lone Tree have been forced to walk across a busy and dangerous intersection to get to Safeway. Another participant brought to light the various hazards on sidewalks for low-vision residents or others with varying disabilities. To improve mobility aside from walkability, Lone Tree created The Link, a free shuttle service throughout the city to bypass the poor sidewalk infrastructure and create access to mobility for those without personal vehicles. In Denver, improving the infrastructure on major transportation corridors like Broadway and Colfax to create bike-friendly and pedestrian-friendly streets would enhance mobility.

Healthy Food

The issues identified around healthy food were not necessarily a lack of access to a grocery store, but the lack of access due to resources or education to fresh, healthful food. For many people, fresh produce is more expensive than processed or canned food, so it is more affordable for some to eat less healthful food. For those who receive food donations such as commodity boxes donated to senior living complexes only contain items that are processed, possibly because they are non-perishable. Community gardens or community garden corridors are some ways to improve this access issue. One participant recommended community gardens with each box containing its own unique type of produce to then be harvested and shared among the community. To support a wider community, garden corridors in which public spaces like schools or parks create room for garden beds a long a greater area. This would feed more community members. Education around healthy food was also discussed. In many public schools across the country, fresh food is not offered to students who get breakfast or lunch from school cafeterias which only perpetuates their preference for processed food from an early age. Therefore, more education in schools and in the greater community would be helpful in getting folks to adopt healthy eating habits and preferences.

Outdoor Recreation

It was identified that access to outdoor recreation of any type is crucial to improving public health; however, accessing the outdoors seemed to be a major issue. For people of varying disabilities, many hiking trails are not friendly for those with disabilities. This is because either they cannot physically get to these spaces without an ADA transit option taking them there directly or because the trails are not safe due to hazards that multi-use trails provide like mountain bikes and the possible inability to sense the riders coming. For other residents in metropolitan areas, the sidewalks and crosswalks used to reach city parks are unsafe. In the instance of Freedom Park in Denver, the community members must cross a large and dangerous intersection to access the park, even though it was developed for this immigrant and refugee community. To address these issues, Health Impact Assessments and other types of audits used to determine access to outdoor recreation in the nearby areas should be implemented.

Health Equity

Inequities

It was brought to attention that complex power dynamics have been shaping and perpetuating inequities when it comes to access to healthy food and mobility. In the case examples that were discussed, there seems to be a large time discrepancy between the creation of inequities and the dismantling of these inequities. "Band-aid solutions" such as only distributing processed foods is a continuing problem, and an increase on distributing fresh produce was suggested as a solution. Another subset of inequities that was emphasized was those resulting from COVID-19. Front-line workers and jobs that cannot be made remote often involve a higher risk of exposure to COVID and less benefits for employees. Neighborhood segregation and overcrowding result in higher concentrations of COVID as a health concern. In terms of affordable housing, zoning was brought up as an issue: there seems to be a lack of community integration on the HOA's which has resulted in an abundance of single-family use. Health communities need to be accountable. In terms of access to nature and the outdoors, finding ways to close the gap between making trails accommodating and considering *all* possible factors is critical. For example, trails in the foothills of CO are blind-accessible, but do not take into account the fact that they are shared trails with mountain bikers which pose a direct threat to vision-impaired hikers. There needs to be separate trails, etc. to address this problem.

Equities

Colorado specifically was pointed out as having done a good job at working across state agencies to help each other out and better address health equity. We seem to have a large body of knowledge to bring tools together across multiple communities. This is something that is taking place at the intersection of public health and land-use planning, as brought up by Susan.

Collaboration and Partnerships

Public health and many other urban issues like housing and transportation were identified as being interconnected. In government spaces that were discussed, members of different departments do not interact much although their outputs in the community affect one another and the larger community. To enhance public health, more is needed than pushing for exercise and healthy diets, rather, ensuring that there is mobility for people to get to a park to work out or have the financial option and education to purchase healthy food. To create this, conversations between urban planners, transportation leads, water planners, and public health officials are necessary to make more equitable and healthful communities. RMLUI has intentionally brought together water planners and city planners to create toolkits for other officials to use when developing an area.

Metrics

In terms of assessing the accessibility of health resources and outdoor recreation, accurate audits of current resources are needed. In terms of outdoor access, this looks like audits of existing trails. The Denver Health Equity index was brought up as a model to inform decisions and land-use planning. In addition to this, robust criteria are needed to evaluate subsequential development projects. Geoffrey suggested that this should then be applied to development projects where a score should be given based on proximity to services, infrastructure, type of neighborhood design, and what is adjacent to the development. Evaluative criteria for projects were emphasized, as well as the need to continuously monitor current development activity. Tools that can allow small community organizations to provide data should be implemented as well. A gap in current measurement strategies is that of the difficulty in measuring elements such as *social connectedness* where we don't have specific metrics defined currently. How can we measure this consistently? When it comes to access to healthy food, defining the term "health outcomes" was used as a means of measurement. Rates of chronic disease, mortality rates, asthma, and heart disease are all good measurements in assessing food-related health outcomes in

communities. For example, how big of a barrier is price when it comes to the average community member accessing healthier foods?