



Equity and Community Outreach Report to Board of County Commissioners

September 26, 2023

Presentation Agenda

1. Overview of Equity Work, 2021-2023
2. Outcomes
3. Theory of Change
4. Next Steps



Day 3 - Deeper Dive into Stories, Data and Priorities

Equity Onboarding Workshops for Alachua County's Core Strategic Leadership Team

Dr. Diedre Houchen, Alachua County &
Dr. Jennifer Arnold, Reciprocity Consulting LLC



January 18, 2023

Objectives

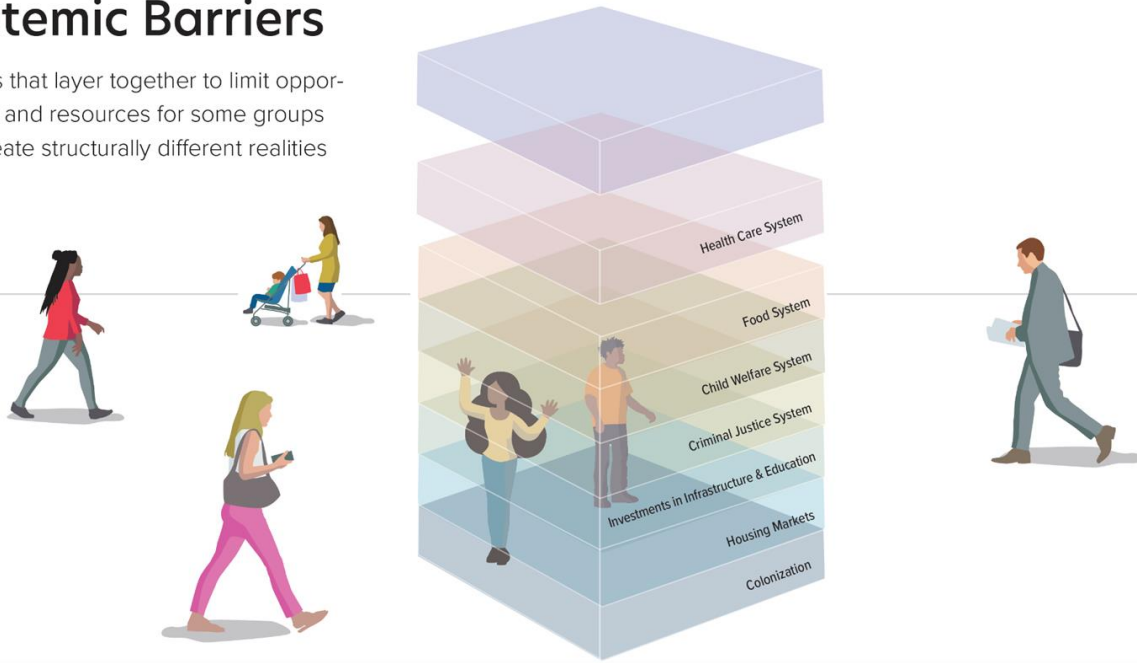
- Learn about **EQUITY, RACE, RACISM, PRIVILEGE** and other terms related to our work
- Tell the story of **INEQUITIES in ALACHUA COUNTY**
- Understand the **ROLE of SYSTEMS CHANGE**
- Work through **DISCOMFORT** and **EMOTIONS**
- Apply new **KNOWLEDGE**
- Support **YOURSELF** and **OTHERS**
- Build **TRUST** and **COLLABORATION**
- Systematically **REFLECT** on **PROGRESS**



Onboarding: How do the equity concepts apply?

Systemic Barriers

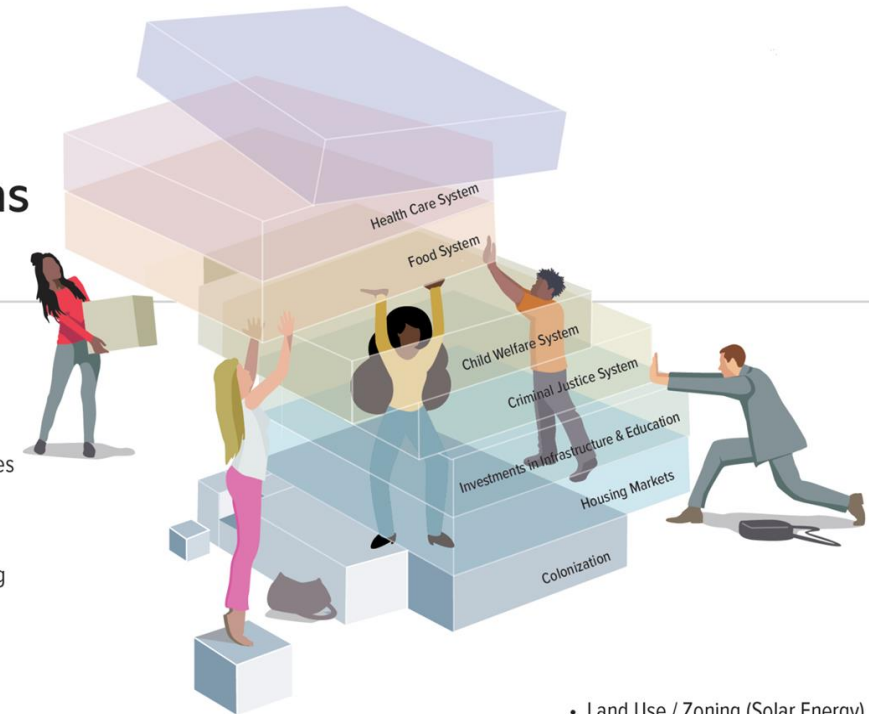
Policies that layer together to limit opportunities and resources for some groups and create structurally different realities



Disrupting & Dismantling Unjust Systems

Alachua County Equity Process

- Investments that counter disparities
- Intentional relationship building
- Reflection & historical analysis
- Meaningful engagement, including capacity building
- Collaborative decision-making



Alachua County Board of County Commissioners Strategic Guide Areas

- Land Use / Zoning (Solar Energy)
- Food Systems
- Affordable Housing
- Economic Development
- Equitable Access to Health

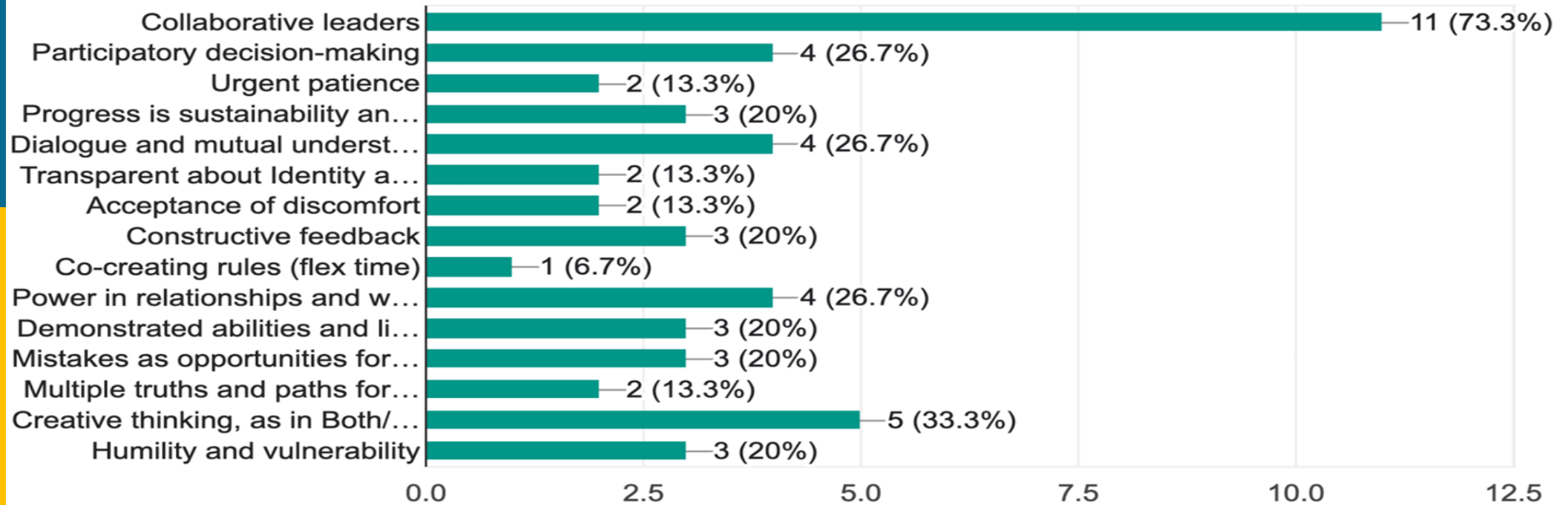
Onboarding

We are a complex blend of all of these traits.

| | |
|--------------------------------|---|
| Strong “hero” leaders | Collaborative leaders |
| Closed door decision-making | Participatory decision-making |
| Sense of urgency | Urgent patience |
| Progress is bigger and more | Progress is sustainability and quality |
| Debate and linear thinking | Dialogue and mutual understanding |
| Objectivity | Transparent about Identity and Values |
| Right to comfort | Acceptance of discomfort |
| Fear of open conflict | Constructive feedback |
| Following rules | Co-creating rules |
| Power of written word & images | Power in relationships & witnessing |
| Professional credentials | Demonstrated abilities & lived experience |
| Perfectionism | Mistakes as opportunities for learning |
| Only one right way | Multiple truths and paths forward |
| Binary thinking: Either/Or | Creative thinking: Both/And |
| Pride and martyrdom | Humility & Vulnerability |

Which of these traits of inclusive culture do you notice most in Alachua County government?

15 responses



Onboarding

Community Guest Speaker

Commissioner Jiana Williams

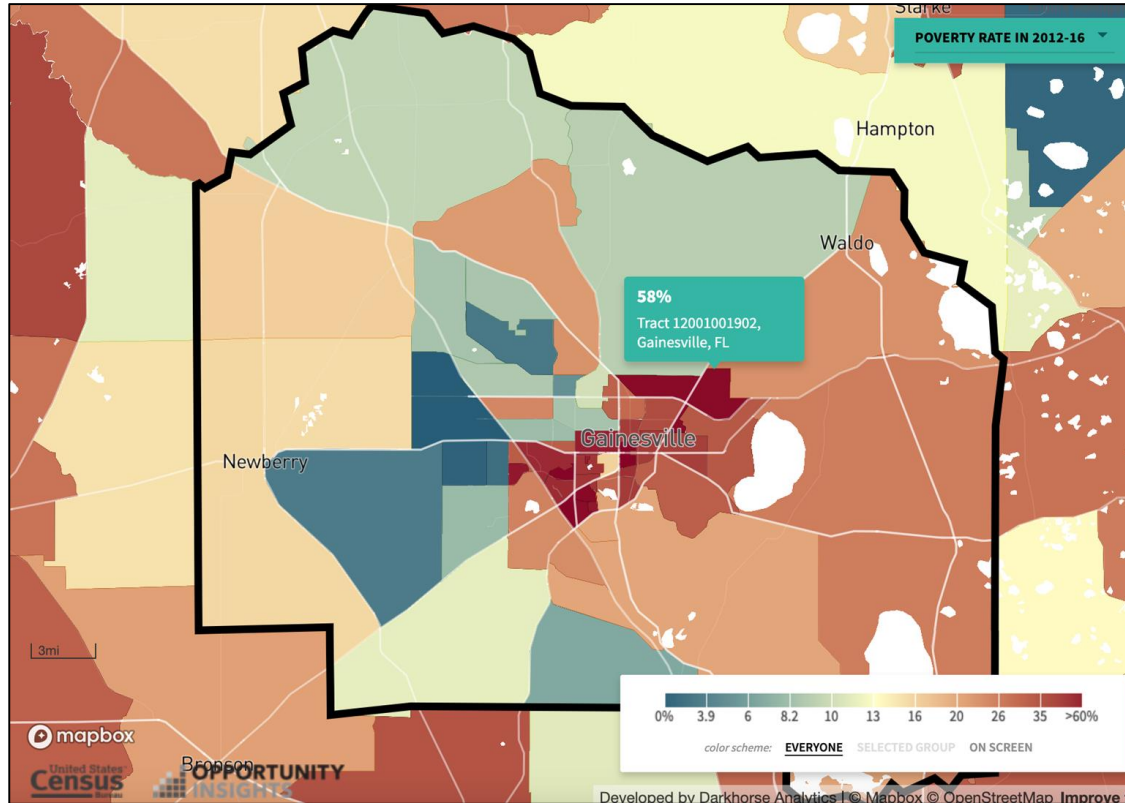
What are you most proud of with your community, thinking of strengths, culture, history, etc.?

What do you wish the County understood better?

Is there a specific challenge or issue you would like the County to address?



Onboarding: Data to Develop Goals and Track Progress



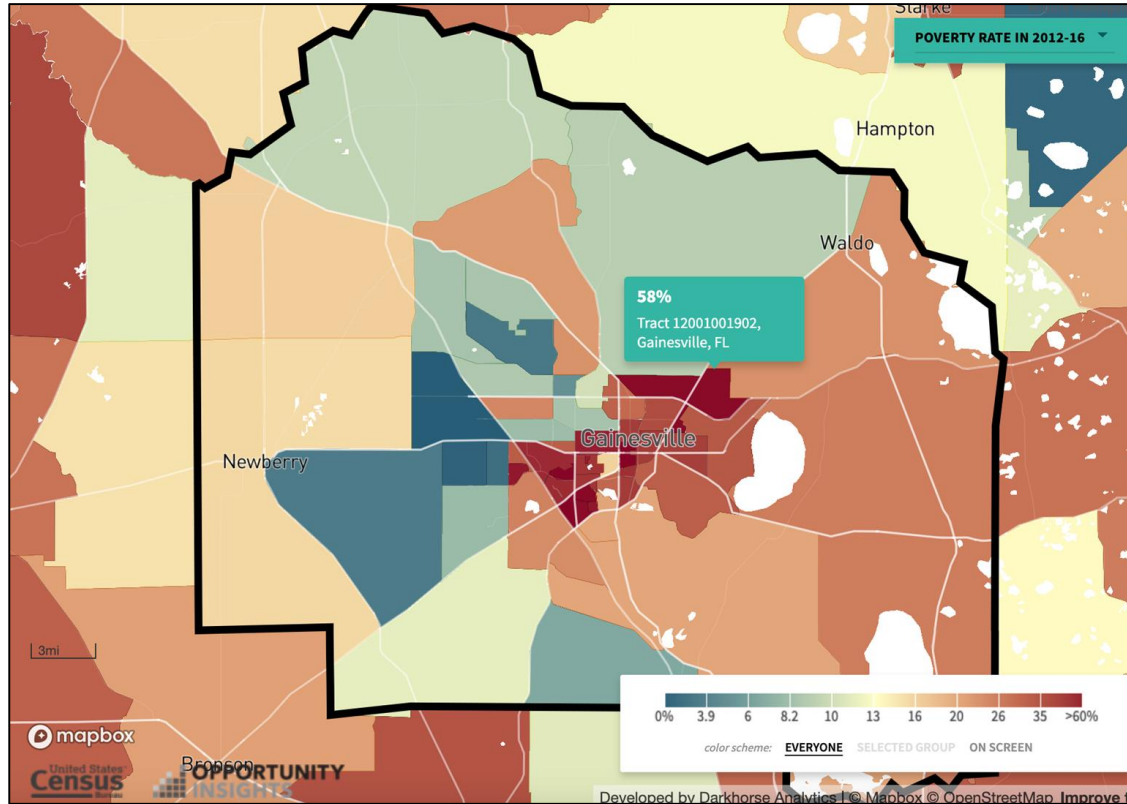
BoCC Equity Focus Areas

- Land Use/Zoning (Solar Energy)
- Food Systems
- Affordable Housing
- Economic Development
- Equitable Access to Health

Poverty rates from 2012-2016 are 58% (dark red) in areas with greater than 40% Black population. Predominantly white areas in the County have poverty rates as low as 1-4% (dark blue-green).

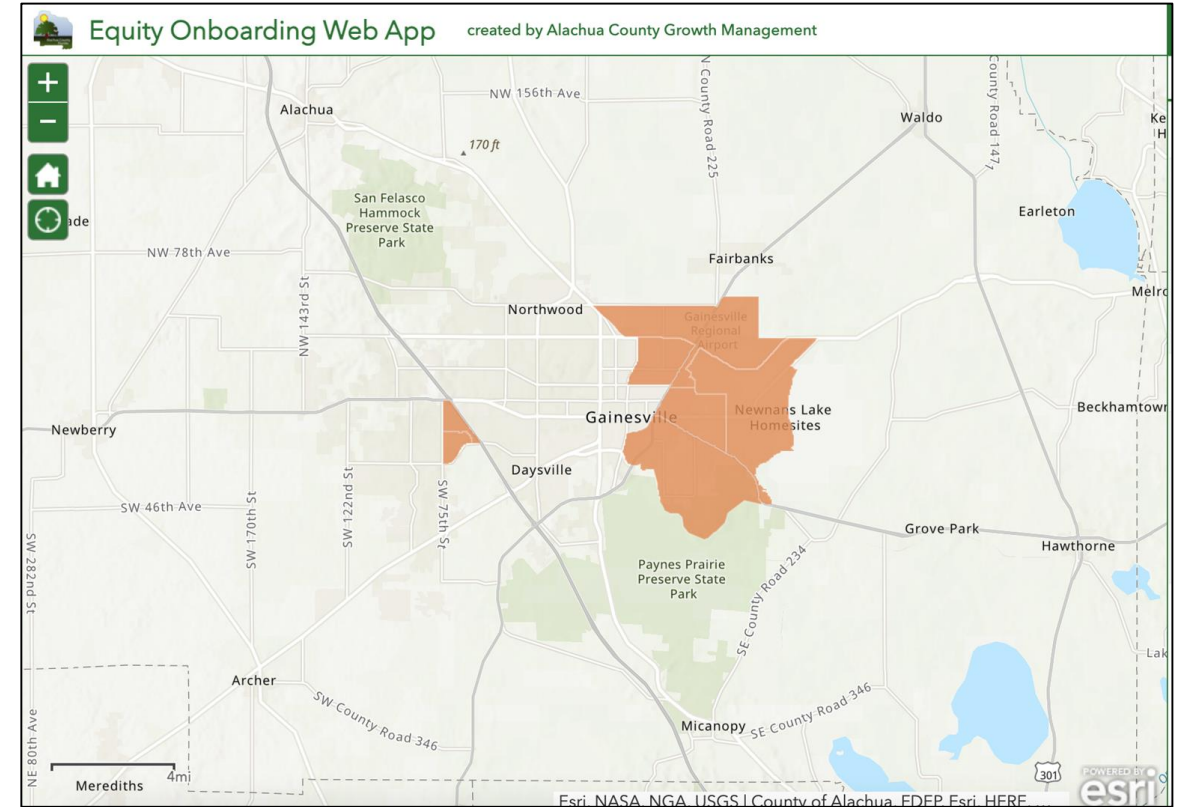
<https://www.opportunityatlas.org/>

Structural Racism



Poverty rates from 2012-2016 are 58% (dark red) in areas with greater than 40% Black population (reference map on right). Predominantly white areas in the County have poverty rates as low as 1-4% (dark blue-green).

<https://www.opportunityatlas.org/>



Shaded orange indicates population is greater than 40% Black (2020 Census).

<https://acgm.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=fcbe10544a5d41e5be219e3251b1c94b>



Bi-Weekly Structure Framing

01

Background and 'Problem of Practice'

What are you working on?

02

What are you learning?

If possible, share challenges or new approaches you are using and what influenced or inspired you.

03

How do the equity concepts apply?

Use the concepts from our past workshops to make connections to what you are doing

04

What questions do you have for the group to wrestle with?

Could you use some input?
Can this cohort help you be successful?

Ongoing Cohort Meetings

A commitment to work together to apply equity concepts to our work

- Feb 1, 1-3pm
- Feb 15, 1-3pm
- Mar 1, 1-3pm
- Mar 15, 1-3pm
- Mar 29, 1-3pm
- Apr 12, 3-5pm
- Apr 26, 3-5pm
- May 10, 3-5pm



Photo: Dr. Roy Winkleman, ClipPix ETC <https://etc.usf.edu/clippix/picture/palmate-saw-palmetto-leaf-close-up.html>

Bi-weekly Equity Meeting 4 of 8 Cohort 2

Learn Together -
Community Engagement
March 29, 2023

Dr. Diedre Houchen, Alachua County &
Dr. Jennifer Arnold, Reciprocity Consulting
LLC





BoCC spotlight on Community Engagement



Solar

Growth
Management
Pilot with
Farmworker
Housing

Re-Entry
Hub

Copeland

Request for a Community
Engagement Procedure

Elements of Equitable Community Engagement



Internal alignment and clarity around who the County wants to engage and why, appropriate types of engagement and ideal outcomes

- Acknowledge the historic causes of inequity and government's role in causing harm
- Identify communities that need specific supports or capacity building so they can engage
- Communicate the County's core values for community engagement and decision space for each topic
- Communicate back to communities when decisions are made and explain how input was used or not



County capacity to follow-through on equity goals

- Staff fluency in equity, cultural competency and language access, embedded in systems
- County workforce increasingly reflects the diversity of residents and communities
- Analytic capacity to describe disparities and track progress
- Increased willingness for co-creation in projects, programs, policies and budgets



Resources to support community participation

- Some communities will only be able to engage with supports like childcare, food, stipends, language interpretation, etc. - if not provided, we will miss their voices or only hear from them at crisis points



A Community of Practice for consistent and effective implementation

- A toolkit of creative methods so staff can tailor engagement strategies to meet the specific objectives and community contexts
- Training and teambuilding across departments so staff support each other proactively to implement the County's core values for community engagement and so they can more effectively respond to flash points or crises when they come up

Draft Community Engagement Procedure

Procedure No.:
Revision No.:

Effective:
Review/Revision Date:

Community Engagement

OVERVIEW: This procedure outlines Alachua County's Community Engagement process.

SCOPE: After the County Commission provides direction to proceed with a project/initiative, staff must initiate a community engagement process. Community Engagement increases awareness, allows advocacy, and offers a format to gather advice or guidance based on the community's expertise and experiences.

PROVISIONS: Community engagement will help guide the County Commission in their development of the project/initiative, defining its focus, identifying unexposed information, and creating a network of stakeholders. Stakeholders are educated on the project/initiative and invited to contribute to the process thereby expanding access to available knowledge and skills. When communities are engaged at the beginning and throughout the project/initiative they are more receptive to the outcome, have the capacity to implement change, and long-term partnerships are developed.

While not an inclusive list, and there is not a "one size fits all" approach, Departments/Offices should consider one or more of the following methods in which to engage communities:

What questions do you have for the group to wrestle with?

Small Group Discussion (30 min)

Who is the audience for the Community Engagement procedure?

What do we hope to achieve with it?

What are we hoping to avoid?

Putting on your equity hat, what should the procedure include?

[How can we make it actionable?](#)



Photo: City of Tacoma, Project Peace 2015

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1-5iCW-wNvsJxaDXOddydJmUEjcwVvhGEPmtcFXA5nG7E/edit?usp=sharing>

Next Steps



- Collaborative Community Outreach
- Equity Roundtable
- Equity and Organizational Training and Development
- Onboarding GIS Specialist
- Continued Departmental Goal Setting
- Analyze Data from Bi-weekly Feedback to Present Outcomes
- Board Training? What would you like to see?



THANK YOU

It takes ALL OF US to move this work forward.

Diedre Houchen, Alachua County

