

## DEI Stakeholder Roundtable Notes

April 14, 2022

### Inequities/Disparities

1. Housing
  - a. Affordable housing for the minimum wage earner
  - b. Young families cannot afford to live in this town and help it grow and thrive.
  - c. Homeless not served
  - d. City spends money on roads but not homeless or affordable housing
2. Transportation
  - a. No transportation for elderly
  - b. Dial-a-ride needs more drivers
  - c. Lack of transportation for families
  - d. Lack of transportation for disabled
3. Healthcare
  - a. Not everyone has health coverage
  - b. Coverage is very convoluted, there are many exclusions
  - c. It can be difficult to access care.
  - d. Eligibility for federal healthcare assistance is the same across the country
  - e. CA cost of living is not the same as Mississippi, so standards for eligibility should be adjusted according to the cost of living in a particular region
  - f. Accessing healthcare can be especially difficult for medically fragile people.
4. K-12 Schools
  - a. Students with disabilities don't really have a pathway to college or employment.
  - b. Parks and Recs programs can be helpful (Homework Helpers ?), but high school graduation is often just to the couch.
  - c. Language Issues in schools
  - d. Many kids end up taking ESL classes at the expense of being in classes with regular/normal curriculum/subject matter.
  - e. Many parents are not English speakers so can't help kids with homework, etc.
  - f. K-12 system was designed for white people and isn't good at accommodating differently-abled people or people of other colors.
  - g. As a student, if your teacher doesn't look like you, you may tune-out.
  - h. ESL, hearing impaired, visually impaired – kids being routed to ESL or other "special" needs then not given the same opportunities

- i. How teachers route P.O.C. to regular classes while white students are routed toward A.P. classes
  - j. Limited and different access for different groups of kids. Gaps in service for students in need.
  - k. Kids live in a bubble (and not in a good way). It's shocking how NOT curious and unconcerned kids are in this community. There is no substantive dialog and incidents at school are covered up
  - l. No one at TO High to speak Spanish to Spanish speaking parents
5. Racism
- a. Racism becoming more acceptable in community, Breeding ground for racism due to political views.
  - b. Harder for black males to get jobs, internships, resources.
  - c. Lack of belonging for blacks
  - d. Rising Nationalism and Fascism and not enough outrage.
6. Minimum Wage
- a. Federal minimum wage isn't sufficient to cover living expenses
  - b. People who have disabilities don't have to be paid minimum wage
7. Digital Divide
- a. Banks, employers, schools, etc are using digital platforms for almost everything
  - b. Many people aren't able to engage digitally because they can't afford an Internet connection.
  - c. HR Applications
  - d. Data point access (ex: Library Catalog)
8. Law Enforcement
- a. They (agency personnel) feel like they not doing the things people criticize them about, but statistics show that they are (racial profiling, etc.).
  - b. POC still getting pulled over
  - c. Racial crimes under reported
  - d. Racial aggression not addressed
  - e. incidents and details are swept under the rug if it will tarnish the City's image. The City's unwillingness to acknowledge and address blatant racism and racist incidents.
  - f. Criminal justice pipeline from playground to prison
9. City Elected Officials
- a. Lack of representation
  - b. The City's efforts to be inclusive, why only bilingual Spanish communication? What about all the other languages that are spoken here? Could we use available technology to expand multilingual services?
  - c. Racism denied by City Council members

## 10. Community Attitude

- a. Don't care attitude: Turning a blind eye and a hard heart. NIMBY attitude. What does it mean when people say "We don't want to become the next valley."
- b. Disparity between truth/reality of the Thousand Oaks (some things are ugly) and the image that is projected to the public.
- c. Bring awareness to saying "Presumed Competence – Nothing About Us Without Us"

## 11. Disabled Community

- a. Disability in community is not considered ever – there is no housing, jobs for disabled. People may have to move 'from' 7 to 6 people from room, this does not solve problem. There are no group homes in TO. 'disabled' Kids born here 'TO' and have equal Rights as others and people in power don't factor disabled people.
- b. Have daughter with intellectual / developmental disability in 7<sup>th</sup> grade and she is not in a physical classroom. There are about 500 'disabled' adults and 90% live at home due to no options / programs for them – what is going to happen when parents gone?
- c. Lack of transportation for disabled
- d. Disabled people have caps on how high the balance can be in their savings accounts (\$2,000?)

## 12. LGBTQ

- a. Want gender LGBTQ to get accessibility – 'they are' discriminated based on paper gender – need gender neutral bathrooms to allow comfort for those individuals – transgender community
- b. Look at people as humans and how to be equitable regardless of how people identify 'LGBTQ'
- c. Don't make assumptions based on what look like, need to increase listening 'to people'
- d. People need to identify with pronouns, allow people to self-identify without assuming 'gender' based on looks.
- e. Lack of LGBTQ visibility

## **SPOT Analysis**

### **STRENGTHS**

1. A lot of people care in this community
  - a. They are willing to give time and money.
2. A highly educated community
3. Internationally recognized industries and businesses.

4. Robust set of existing Community Based Organizations (CBOs)
  - a. It's a double-edged sword when CBOs fill in gaps that the government isn't covering.
5. Good school system
6. General awareness
7. Great nonprofits
8. Good public school system
9. CLU and Moorpark College
10. Open space and parks
11. Passionate groups such as the people in this room
12. Excellent community services
13. TO has money to allocate therefore allocate to other places 'of need'
14. Great leaders who are willing to have 'these' conversations
15. Have community who will come together in moments of crisis
16. TOPD Support of homeless

## PROBLEMS

1. We're a City of extremes
  - a. Wealth vs. poverty
  - b. How do we create equity?
  - c. Choir at Westlake High includes a \$1,000 fee (apparently to cover the cost of attending competitions).
    - i. Poor kids can attend choir classes but aren't able to participate in competitions because they can't afford that fee.
2. Lack of representation at the decision-making level
3. City Commissions should be more diverse
  - a. Traffic Commission, etc.
4. Ignorance: not being a racist is not the same as being anti-racist
5. Resistance: Why should I have to change there is a disconnect. Many feel they are losing something by giving others an opportunity.
6. Assimilation- If you can't beat them join them, white culture assumed to be the "norm"
7. Lack of diversity in leadership
8. Lack of regional representation in leadership due to at-large voting for council members, ensuring status quo
9. Diversity is not valued (fear and hostility towards it)
10. Lack of organized progressives
11. Power is with few and the wealthy
12. Generational knowledge gap of older vs younger – older is not comfortable with conversation whereas youth is
  - a. Difficult things are swept under rug in older generations – this is changing with youth
  - b. TO community can leverage inequity issues to engage TO youth

13. Barrier to overcome: people need to be willing to change and TO is older community (of adults). We need to be willing to say this is how it has been but this is how and why it needs to change
14. Racists are welcome
15. Denial/lack of discussion about racism
16. Tokenism
17. Mayberry mentality
18. Black experience in TO with Police

## OPPORTUNITIES

1. Can the City and CRPD work more collectively together on these issues rather than passing the buck?
2. If you bring in assisted living facilities, that entity should also provide housing for the minimum wage earners they depend on.
3. Developers need to provide housing for minimum wage earners in their developments.
  - a. General Plan should include incentives for developers to do the above.
4. Incorporate "Universal Design" concepts in architectural standards
  - a. the building will be more usable to a variety of people (eg. disabled) and will last longer.
5. Biotech companies are wealthy
  - a. Can they contribute to providing housing, or contribute to a housing fund?
6. Youth is a great asset, but they are not staying in the community
7. Money, this community has it needs to be redirected
8. Coalition of DEI supporters
9. Organize non-profits to create a more collaborative community (arts, music, services, etc.)
10. Mandated increase in minimum wage
11. Inclusionary housing ordinance
12. Regular community events that bring people together
13. Everyone has prejudice; if we continue to have these conversations, we have platform / opportunity where people get to know each other
14. Need education in difference between racism and prejudice – racism is an institution, it is built upon. Prejudice is within, it exists in everyone.
15. Teaching conversations. Ability to ask questions.
16. Enlist DEI professionals

## THREATS

1. Social media
2. Disinformation
3. If economy sours, competition for resources will become stiffer

4. Aging population of TO
5. TO is too expensive for young families
6. Declining tax base
7. Declining school enrollment
8. Biased attitudes
9. External perceptions of racism in TO
10. Existing racism in TO – it's very pervasive
11. Safety – not everyone feels safe in one of the country's safest communities.  
There is aggression towards certain groups
12. Perception that a diverse community will reduce property value
13. Declining sales tax due to declining number of businesses and residents
14. Status quo (fear for change), NIMBY attitude
15. Rising cost of housing
16. Uncomfortable with discussing racism/diversity
17. Community in denial
18. Check box effect
19. National/Statewide culture has trickledown effect on locals
20. Lack of resources

### **Bold Ideas**

1. Companies that require minimum wage earners should provide housing for them.
2. Homelessness/addiction/mental health are intertwined issues.
  - a. We need a new task force comprised of individuals who are trained to deal with these issues and who can de-escalate situations
    - i. Traditional law enforcement staff lack these skills
3. Developers need to be required to include minimum wage housing in their developments
  - a. "Affordable housing" is not housing that minimum wage earners can actually afford.
4. Acknowledging and responding to existing racism.
5. Traffic and Planning Commissions should be more diverse.
6. Create "Internet Pods" to help address the Digital Divide.
7. Create "on-ramps" for access
8. Workshops for education, cultural activities, concerts etc.
9. An "Anti-racist" contact person at each agency
10. Dinner with a stranger
11. 25% of all housing must be affordable (less than 30% of income)
12. Free and robust public transportation system, with better routes and the ability to have on-demand service.
13. Civilian oversight commission for law enforcement
14. Sanctuary city status

15. Monthly gathering with food, music, and arts of diverse cultures
16. The way it has been is not the way it has to be, learn to be comfortable in the uncomfortable.
17. Wish we could have more conversations with larger groups of people to diffuse misinformation which spreads like wildfire and the only way to combat it is DEI.
18. Celebrations of diverse cultures like weekly newsletter highlighting various cultures with educational strategy.
19. Start important DEI education now in school and by parents. Start educating younger kids not wait until High School, integrate a DEI curriculum so that when kids walk into school, already are aware.
20. Have diverse staff so feel represented instead of “talked to”.
21. TO having a City DEI Officer or coordinator to focus on these aspects.
22. Have a Mainstreet Connect model where 75% affordable housing and 25% people with different needs like disabilities.
23. Model of affordable inclusive community living with people with disabilities
24. On-demand transportation that can accommodate large equipment for disabled people.
  - a. Moorpark has similar service
25. Need unified effort by all, not just Public Organizations
26. Need LGBTQ youth housing for those who get kicked out of homes and create an opportunity of some place for them to go
27. Cultural event hosted by City with booths hosted by different organizations
28. Teach anti-racism in schools
29. Representation on City Council and City Commissions
30. Communication of DEI efforts
31. Measurable goals
32. Land trust for homeless population
33. Presentation of community education
34. City Hall needs DEI Representative
35. DEI Consulting – Inclusive Culture