My Dream For Lou: Project Report

This report is a summary of the policy development process and recommendations from community members which were developed during the *My Dream For Lou: Policy Summit* hosted by the Center for Health Equity from October 6-8, 2016 in Louisville, Kentucky.

Center for Health Equity

Louisville Metro Public Health & Wellness

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A Division of Public Health and Wellness

Table of Contents

Acknowledgements

The *My Dream For Lou: Policy Summit 2016* is a project of The Center for Health Equity of the Louisville Metro Department of Public Health & Wellness. The goal was to engage a wide-range of Louisville residents, elected officials, community organizations and Louisville Metro Government employees to develop community-driven, actionable policies to advance equity across the Louisville community. This work was made possible by community members who gave of their time and energy to share where they saw hope in their communities through photovoice submissions which helped to set the agenda for the summit. Our thanks go to the many dedicated residents who shared their experiences and dreams for a more equitable Louisville over the course of the summit and who worked to develop the recommendations presented in this report. A special thanks to a group of young people at Louisville Metro Youth Detention Services (YDS) who contributed written narratives about their dreams for Louisville which were also used to frame the issue area themes which structured the summit. Additional thanks go to YDS coordinator Sytisha Claycomb for coordinating that effort.

The Center for Health Equity is grateful for the support of many community partners who helped to make *My Dream For Lou* a success. Our thanks go to the Muhammad Ali Center, our longtime partner in community work; the Greater Louisville Project for its planning and financial support of this effort; the University of Louisville School of Public Health and Information Sciences—Office of Public Health Practice for facilitation and note taking support from faculty, staff and students; and our many colleagues across the Louisville Metro Department of Health & Wellness (LMPHW) who provided considerable support throughout the planning process, especially Danielle Waninger who provided graphic design support and to Carrie Field, summer intern, who aided our planning process.

Planning and management of this project was overseen by the Center for Health Equity (CHE) staff team, including:

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Recommendations Summary

The Center for Health Equity works to achieve health equity and improve the health and well-being of all Louisville residents and visitors. Community engagement and participation in policy development are central to making this a reality. The vision of the *My Dream for Lou: Policy Summit* was to create a space where members of the community could come together to set priorities for Louisville Metro Government; this summit was designed to create a community agenda for change. In order to do this, we sought to initiate a forum for residents of all ages and sectors to identify, illustrate, and critique—from their perspectives—areas in need of social planning and policy change around issues of health and equity.

Two important project components occurred before the *My Dream For Lou: Policy Summit* held on October 6-8, 2016 at the Muhammad Ali Center. First, a photovoice project was completed by community members responding to the question, "where do you see hope in your community?" Second, a participant policy training video was made available to all summit registrants in an effort to help attendees better understand the hoped for outcomes of the summit. We detail later in this report the photovoice project process and the facilitated process which was used in each of the four issue areas rooms to arrive at the following policy proposals.

The photovoice project revealed four themes which became the issue areas summit participants gathered to discuss and work on during the summit work day, October 7. The following are the recommendations presented by participants on the final day of the summit. Please note that the recommendation language included below is the proposal language submitted by community members at the conclusion of the summit. In any policy development, adoption and implementation process, concepts and ideas will change; we think it is important to reflect in this summary report the proposals exactly as they were presented at the *My Dream For Lou: Policy Summit*.

The issue area policy proposals each have four components: issue, statement of significance, vision and action. Each group was provided the same guiding questions to respond to and policy proposal outline to complete.

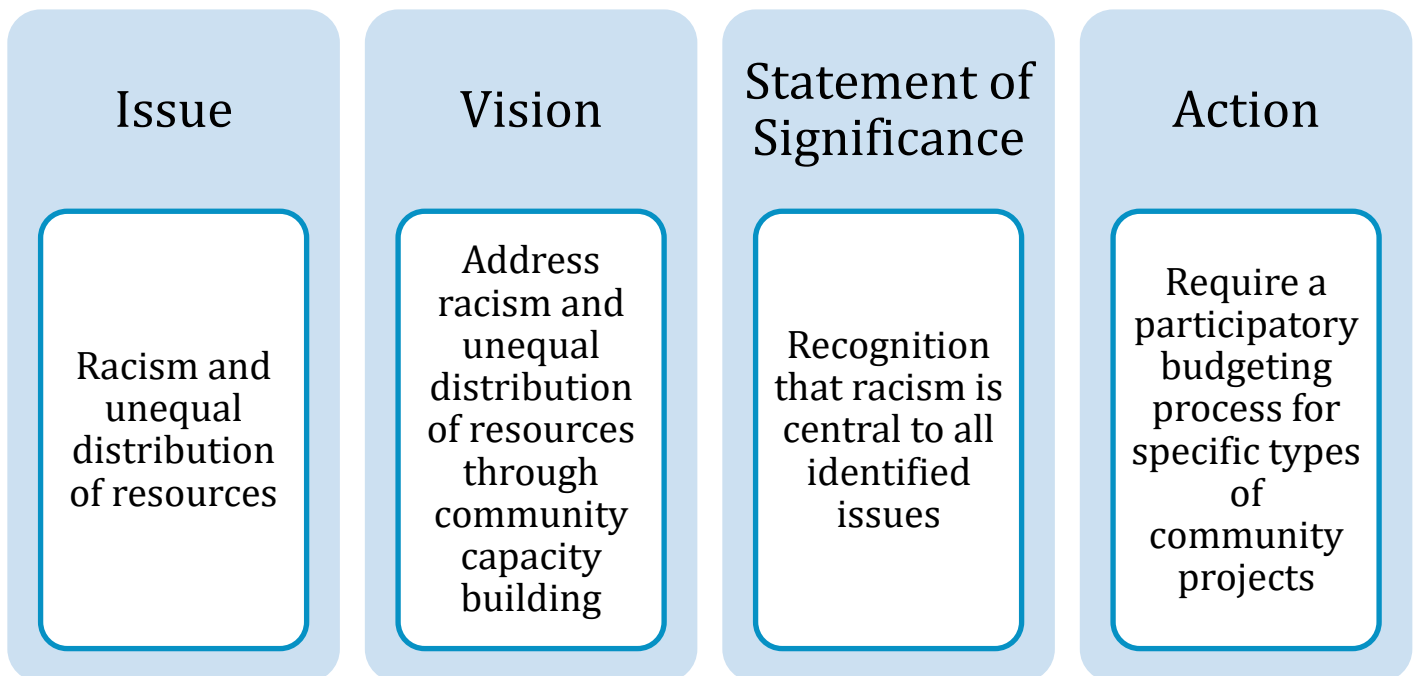| Issue	Statement of Significance	Vision	Action
Identify the imporant issue or problem your policy seeks to remedy	Why is this issue important for Louisville to address? Who is affected by the issue?	What goal should Louisville be working toward to solve the issue you have identified?	What is your policy proposal? What steps should be taken to address the issue?

Community Capacity Building

What opportunities exist in Louisville for residents and communities to overcome barriers to create a better life for themselves and others?

This theme focused on photovoice narratives which highlighted individual and organizational efforts to solve problems in the community and achieve better outcomes by having all people included in our community's decision-making processes. Photos in this theme specifically focused on enhanced opportunities for women and girls, young people and senior citizens. Additionally, across many of these photovoice narratives, people expressed pride in the city of Louisville, as well as their cultural heritage, while calling for action to improve the quality of life for all residents.

Policy Proposal

The community capacity building group had a wide-range of conversations about access to community decision-making processes and spaces for residents across Louisville. The group's conversations focused on inequitable distribution of resources, a lack of resources and opportunities for marginalized populations to participate in policy-making, and how structural racism impacts and holds up these factors. The group decided to elevate structural racism to a central theme/focal point through the policy development process, and specified an anti-racist and racially equitable policy solution.

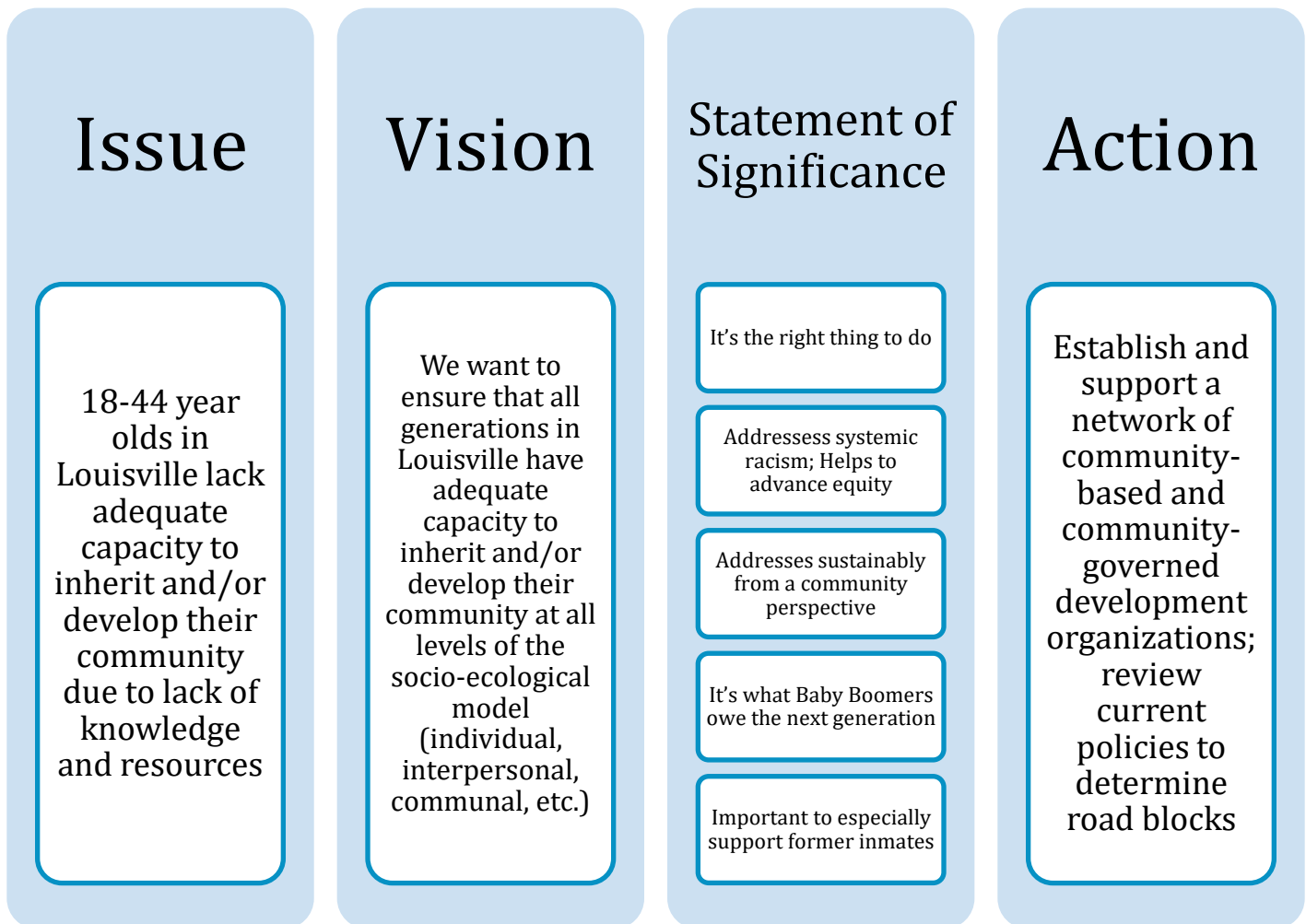| Issue	Vision	Statement of Significance	Action
Racism and unequal distribution of resources	Address racism and unequal distribution of resources through community capacity building	Recognition that racism is central to all identified issues	Require a participatory budgeting process for specific types of community projects

Economic Development & Investment

What are the impacts that economic development and investment have on our community?

This theme arises out of photovoice narratives which highlight the ways in which government dollars are allocated, economic development projects are prioritized, and how and where small businesses thrive. Photos in this issue area included a sign for the Syringe Exchange Program at the Louisville Department of Public Health & Wellness and the value in prioritizing disease prevention. Several photos which informed this theme development included images of local businesses, in particular restaurants with narratives describing the attractiveness of neighborhoods with both residential options and the presence of small businesses alongside one another.

Policy Proposal

A small group discussion which occurred in this group centered on the economic power of younger adults and their opportunities for employment, home purchasing power, and their ability to participate in the development of the communities to which they belong. Central to the concerns of this policy recommendation are the opportunities and capacity of young adults to develop, inherit and influence their communities and Louisville on the whole.
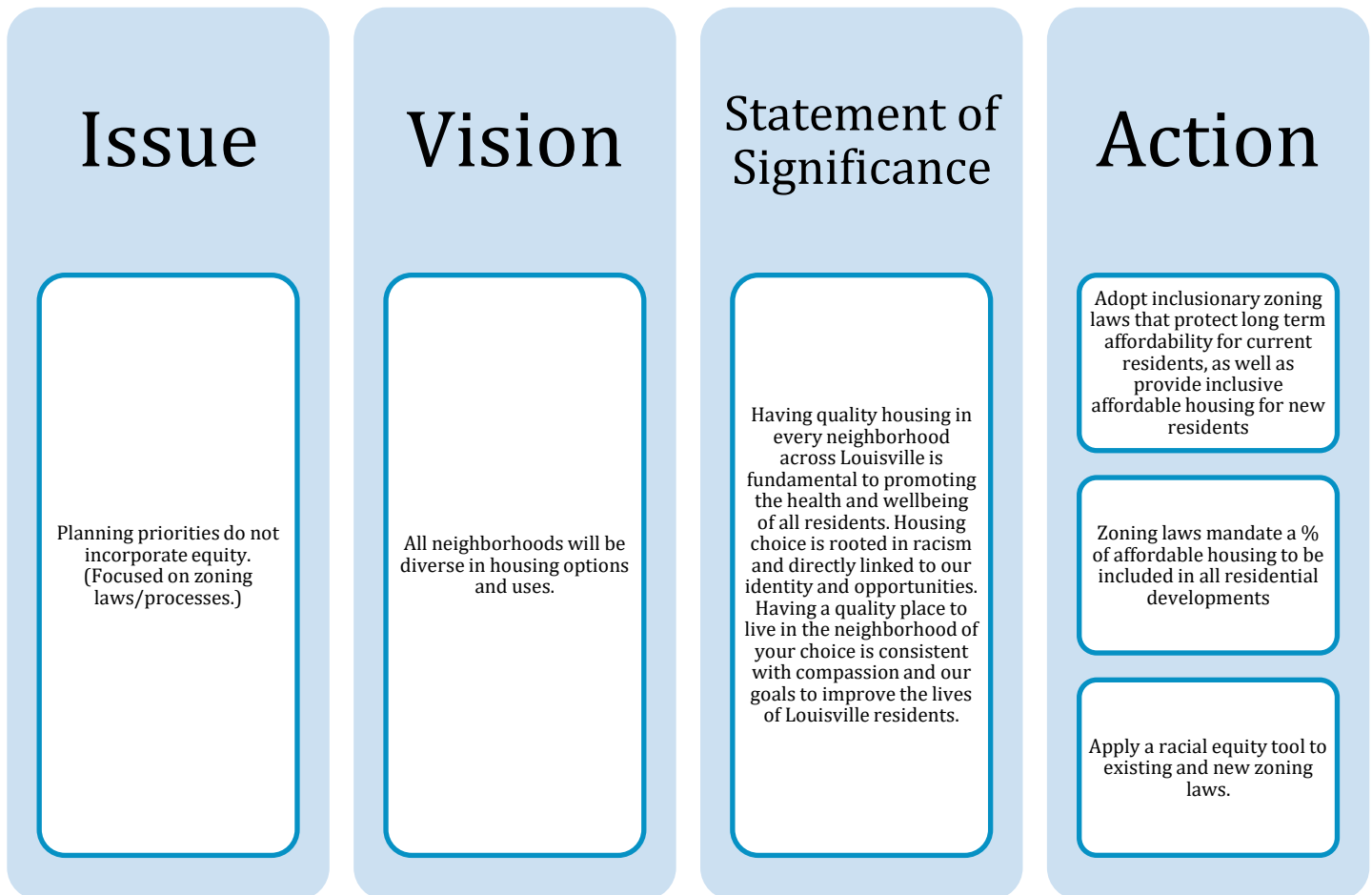
Issue	Vision	Statement of Significance	Action
18-44 year olds in Louisville lack adequate capacity to inherit and/or develop their community due to lack of knowledge and resources	We want to ensure that all generations in Louisville have adequate capacity to inherit and/or develop their community at all levels of the socio-ecological model (individual, interpersonal, communal, etc.)	It's the right thing to do Addressess systemic racism; Helps to advance equity Addresses sustainably from a community perspective It's what Baby Boomers owe the next generation Important to especially support former inmates	Establish and support a network of community-based and community-governed development organizations; review current policies to determine road blocks

Quality Housing (of Choice)

What can be done to ensure quality living conditions for all people living in Louisville?

This theme arises out of photovoice narratives which explored a desire for neighborhoods and housing complexes that were both socioeconomically and culturally diverse. Additionally, this thematic area addressed concerns about the quality and condition of the housing in our community, referring to both the upkeep of properties and the affordability of rent and mortgages. Finally, these narratives brought attention to neighborhoods in our city undergoing development leading to the displacement of longtime residents, naming their experience as a result of gentrification.

Policy Proposal

The systemic factors which shape Louisville's housing quality and options are complex and dynamic. The quality housing group discussed numerous issues of importance which relate to housing, including: homelessness, vacant and abandoned properties, investment in urban neighborhoods, and a lack of budgetary and planning commitment to diverse, mixed-income, mixed-use neighborhoods across Louisville Metro. The focal point of the housing group eventually centered on needed changes in zoning laws and a call to assess existing zoning laws for opportunities to advance equity.
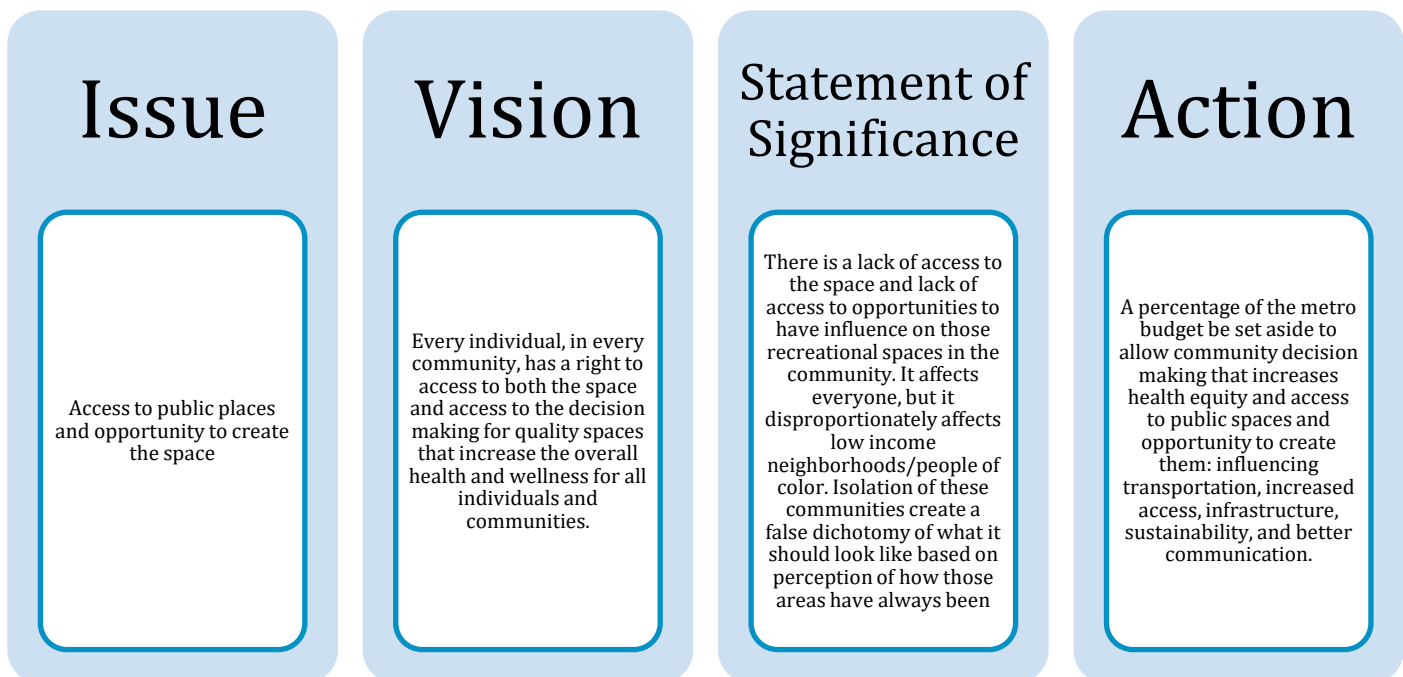
Issue	Vision	Statement of Significance	Action
Planning priorities do not incorporate equity. (Focused on zoning laws/processes.)	All neighborhoods will be diverse in housing options and uses.	Having quality housing in every neighborhood across Louisville is fundamental to promoting the health and wellbeing of all residents. Housing choice is rooted in racism and directly linked to our identity and opportunities. Having a quality place to live in the neighborhood of your choice is consistent with compassion and our goals to improve the lives of Louisville residents.	Adopt inclusionary zoning laws that protect long term affordability for current residents, as well as provide inclusive affordable housing for new residents Zoning laws mandate a % of affordable housing to be included in all residential developments Apply a racial equity tool to existing and new zoning laws.

Recreation & Public Space for Healing & Social Change

What is the impact on community health when residents have public and recreational spaces that encourage healing and social change?

This theme was identified through photovoice narratives which named spaces in our community such as the Big Four Bridge, youth camps, and parks. These places are considered welcoming for residents, allowing them to feel safe, comfortable and relaxed. For many residents, they felt invested in and found meaning while engaging in activities in these places. Additionally, many named these public and recreational spaces as avenues for healing and social change through their ability to bring communities from all walks of life together.

Policy Proposal

There were many topics discussed in the recreation and public space group, including: access to public spaces, opportunities for public input on the design and use of public space, the use of recreational spaces to address toxic stress (especially in children who have higher levels of exposure to violence), and public and recreational spaces serving as learning spaces for children. As this group's work progressed and neared the selection of a singular issue, a participant requested that others take the opportunity to review the previously presented concerns for a common thread; participants then integrated the issues together rather that voting on one issue and excluding others. That process resulted in the following proposal:

Issue	Vision	Statement of Significance	Action
Access to public places and opportunity to create the space	Every individual, in every community, has a right to access to both the space and access to the decision making for quality spaces that increase the overall health and wellness for all individuals and communities.	There is a lack of access to the space and lack of access to opportunities to have influence on those recreational spaces in the community. It affects everyone, but it disproportionately affects low income neighborhoods/people of color. Isolation of these communities create a false dichotomy of what it should look like based on perception of how those areas have always been	A percentage of the metro budget be set aside to allow community decision making that increases health equity and access to public spaces and opportunity to create them: influencing transportation, increased access, infrastructure, sustainability, and better communication.

Key Definitions and Concepts

Equity is the absence of avoidable or remediable differences among groups of people, whether those groups are defined socially, economically, demographically, or geographically[1].

Individual Racism is any prejudgment, bias or discrimination by an individual based on race.

Institutional Racism is any policy, practice or procedure that works better for white people than for people of color, often unintentionally or inadvertently.

Intersectionality is the overlapping of social identities, such as gender, race, class, and others. These elements of identity do not exist independent from each other, but instead intersect, mutually creating complex identities and experiences. People can experience oppression and discrimination from multiple systems, either over time or simultaneously.

Policy is a law, regulation, procedure, administrative action, incentive, or voluntary practice of governments and other institutions. Policy decisions are frequently reflected in resource allocations. Health can be influenced by policies in many different sectors[2].

Social determinants of equity "govern the distribution of resources and populations through decision-making structures, policies, practices, norms, and values, and too often operate as social determinants of in-equity by differentially distributing resources and populations. They include racism, sexism, heterosexism, capitalism, and able-ism".

Social determinants of health are conditions in the environments in which people are born, live, learn, work, play, worship, and age that affect a wide range of health, functioning, and quality-of-life outcomes and risks. Conditions (e.g., social, economic, and physical) in these various environments and settings (e.g., school, church, workplace, and neighborhood) have been referred to as "place." In addition to the more material attributes of "place," the patterns of social engagement and sense of security and well-being are also affected by where people live. Resources that enhance quality of life can have a significant influence on population health outcomes. Examples of these resources include safe and affordable housing, access to education, public safety, availability of healthy foods, local emergency/health services, and environments free of life-threatening toxins.

Social Justice is the fair distribution of society's benefits, responsibilities and their consequences. It focuses on the relative position of one social group in relationship to others in society as well as on the root causes of disparities and what can be done to eliminate them.

Systemic Racism is the history and current reality of institutional racism across all institutions, combining to create a system that negatively impacts communities of color.

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[1] World Health Organization
[2] Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

Policy Process: Creating a Community Agenda for Change

The policy summit structure was conceived as and designed to be a space to support the development of a community-driven agenda for change. The objectives for this process included the use of photovoice as community engagement tool and to determine key areas to target policy change, enhancing intergenerational and multiracial participation in policy change discussions and work, and to have participation from across all of Jefferson County. The vision of the policy summit and policy proposal process was to have the thematic proposals, issues discussed, and the policy recommendations be determined by community members.

Photos

In order to initiate a community-driven process, the photovoice method was used for community members to share their dream for Louisville by responding to the question, "Where do you see hope in your community?" Community members were invited to respond to this question out of their own understanding of what 'hope' and 'community' mean.

Photovoice is a type of participatory action research which is used as a tool to create change in communities and is an alternative way of gathering information about a community. This tool allows people to pair photos with narratives to tell a story about their environment and community. The goals of photovoice include providing an avenue for community members to record their personal and community strengths and concerns, enhance knowledge about issue through group discussion of photographs and to reach policy makers.
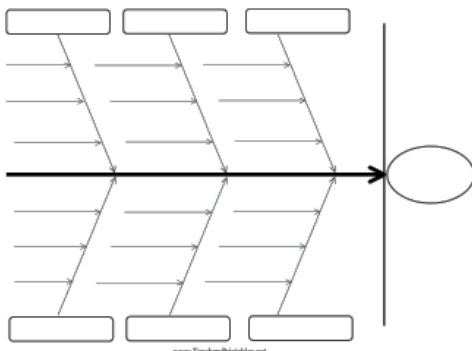
Thematic Proposal

The process of analyzing the submitted photographs for shared themes began once participants submitted their photographs and narratives. In order to discern themes from submissions, several rounds of coding were performed to identify key words and subject matters present in each of the narratives—eventually linking these concepts together into thematic proposals. Thematic proposals in the *My Dream For Lou* policy process are identified as visions the community holds for Louisville—meaning these themes serve as the answer to any number of possible issues or concerns residents might raise as needing a community response. Community capacity building, economic development and investment, quality housing (of choice), and recreation and public space for healing and social change were the four themes to emerge from the photovoice analysis process.

Identifying Issues and Root Causes

The *My Dream For Lou: Policy Summit* operated with the understanding that there are any number of issues and concerns across the Louisville community which are worthy of considerable and immediate attention. Facilitators who helped to guide the policy proposal process aimed to affirm concern for these issues and passions while guiding participants through a process whereby one issue would eventually be identified and which the collective could work on together. Participants in each of the issue are rooms heard from subject matter experts (SMEs)—community, organization, and government leaders—who briefly shared about their respective organizations and the related issues they are currently working on and focusing their work. The SMEs also detailed for participants the ways in which current policies, or the lack thereof, impact their work.

My Dream For Lou attendees were invited to review the issue area photovoice images and narratives which informed the thematic proposals, to have conversations with each other, to reflect on what they had seen and heard, and then to share with their group members what community issues were concerning to them and why. Small groups were encouraged by facilitators to come up with as many issues as they could think of for the first part of their conversation and then to work together to begin narrowing down to one issue of concern. Once small groups had selected a single issue they presented it to the larger group for consideration; this handful of issues were then voted on by all participants in the room. The selected issue from this process became the stated issue in the final policy proposals which were presented to the rest of the policy summit and are found in the proposals in this document.

After an issue was selected, participants worked together to identify the root causes of the issue. Root causes were generated with the use of a fishbone (Ishikawa) diagram as a method of finding the source or sources of a problem; it is a systematic method of looking at various causes of a problem. The process of identifying a root cause to an issue is important because it allows for the brainstorming solutions process to focus on the source or core of the issue in an effort to have a more precise solution with a greater impact. Eventually, one root cause was identified for which to generate solutions.

Action & Vote with Your Feet

Participants went through a similar process of identifying multiple solutions and then together narrowed down to one solution to include in their policy proposal. In each round of brainstorming, attendees were encouraged to determine whether the solutions were practical and doable, whether it met the critical requirement of being a policy or the potential to be crafted into a policy, and if it could have a long-term, beneficial impact on Louisville. Small groups again presented their ideas to the entire group for consideration. The larger group considered all solutions by asking questions of each presenting group and then voted on an action for the policy proposal by moving to different parts of the room to show support for the action item they supported most. These action items are presented in each of the policy proposals included in this report.

Evaluation

The purpose of this evaluation was to assess the objectives and goals of the 2016 My Dream for Lou Policy Summit. This evaluation assessed the following areas of My Dream for Lou:

- Age, Race, and Community Sector Representation
- Intergenerational Participation
- Multiracial Participation
- Engagement with Elected Officials
- Youth Engagement
- Familiarity with Photovoice Method
- Importance of Equity

Evaluation Methods

In order to measure the areas listed above, a pre and post evaluation were conducted. Upon registering for the 2016 My Dream For Lou: Policy Summit, registrants were emailed a pre evaluation survey to complete online. Approximately 60% of the summit registrants completed the pre-evaluation survey and approximately 75% of summit registrants were in attendance on at least one out of three days of the summit. All summit registrants were emailed a post evaluation survey after the conclusion of the summit and approximately 43% of summit attendees completed the post evaluation survey. The graphs below provide a brief overview of evaluation results*.

Note: All pre and post evaluation measures (i.e. intergenerational participation, multiracial participation, engagement with elected officials, youth engagement, familiarity with photovoice method, importance of equity) were analyzed in SPSS statistical program using a matched pairs t-test (n=49). Results for all measures did not show any significant change between pre and post evaluation scores (all p-values were greater that .10).

PARTICIPANT DEMOGRAPHICS

Age Representation

Based on the results from the pre and post evaluation survey, majority (approximately 52.1%) of the policy summit attendees that completed the evaluation were between the ages of 25 and 45 years old. Overall, summit attendees ages ranged from 13 to 62+ years old*.

Participant Age	Number of Participants	Percent
16-18 years old	4	4.3%
19-24 years old	6	6.4%
25-45 years old	49	52.1%
46-61 years old	21	22.3%
62+ years old	14	14.9%

n= 94 (total number of responses)

Note: Summit attendees under the age of 16 did not complete the pre or post evaluation.

Race Representation

Majority of summit attendees that completed the evaluation identified as White/Caucasian (approximately 52.7%) and the second most represented group came from summit attendees identifying as Black/African American (approximately 37.6%)*.

Participant Race	Number of Participants	Percent
Asian	6	6.5%
Black/African American	35	37.6%
Hispanic/Latino	1	1.1%
White/Caucasian	49	52.7%
Other	2	2.2%

n= 93 (total number of responses)

Note: Racial categories were labeled based on open-ended responses collected during the pre-evaluation.

Community Sector Representation

The policy summit evaluation asked participants to share what organizations and/or community sectors they worked in. While the nonprofit sector had the most representation (approximately 21.4%), government, health, and education sectors had similar representation (approximately 15.6% for each sector).

Community Sector	Number of Responses	Percent
Education Sector	27	15.6%
Health Sector	27	15.6%
Government Sector	27	15.6%
Business Sector	8	4.6%
Youth Development Sector	13	7.5%
Religious Sector	10	5.8%
Environmental Sector	5	2.9%
Nonprofit Sector	37	21.4%
Other Sector	19	11.0%

Total number of responses: 173

INTERGENERATIONAL PARTICIPATION

One of the goals of the 2016 My Dream For Lou: Policy Summit was to have community members from multiple generations hold dialogue about issues in their community and how they can be addressed through policy change. Summit participants were asked to report their level of participation in intergenerational conversation about community issues and policy change prior to attending the summit and again after the summit. The results below show that summit participants had a slight increase in their level of intergenerational conversations about community issues and policy change.

Evaluation Question	Pre Mean	Post Mean
I have had conversations about my community where both youth and adults participated.	3.18	3.43
I have had conversations about policy change where	2.87	3.21

| youth and adults participated. | | |

MULTIRACIAL PARTICIPATION

Another goal of the 2016 My Dream For Lou: Policy Summit was to engage community members from different ethnic or racial groups in conversations about equity and policy change. Summit participants were asked to report their level of participation in multiracial conversations about equity and policy change prior to attending the summit and again after the summit. The results below show that there was little to almost no change from pre to post evaluation.

Evaluation Question	Pre Mean	Post Mean
I have had conversations with people who do no share my ethnic or racial backgrounds about creating a fair and just community.	3.90	4.03
I have had conversations with people who do not share my ethnic or racial backgrounds about policy change.	3.68	3.93

ENGAGEMENT WITH ELECTED OFFICIALS

The 2016 My Dream For Lou: Policy Summit hoped to achieve the goal of having community members engage with elected officials through dialogue about equity and policy change. Prior to attending the summit, attendees reported low levels of engagement with elected officials and after attending the summit they reported even lower levels of engagement. Majority of participants completing the pre and post evaluation disagreed that they had engaged in conversations about equity and policy change with elected officials after participating in the summit.

Evaluation Question	Pre Mean	Post Mean
I have had conversations with elected officials about ways to create a more fair and just community.	2.69	2.41
I have had conversations with elected officials about policy change.	2.8	2.35

YOUTH ENGAGEMENT

The 2016 My Dream For Lou: Policy Summit also hoped to uplift the voices of young people by creating space for their thoughts and opinions to be heard at the policy summit. The pre and post evaluation measured attitudes about the importance of engaging youth voices when making policy change. Overall, summit participants agreed that youth voices were important when making policy change both prior to the summit and after the summit.

Evaluation Question	Pre Mean	Post Mean

	Pre Mean	Post Mean
I believe it is important for youth in Louisville to be involved in policy decisions.	3.68	3.8
I believe youth voices are powerful in advocating for changes in Louisville.	3.70	3.70

n=49; 1=Strongly Disagree, 2=Disagree, 3=Agree, 4=Strongly Agree

FAMILIARITY WITH PHOTOVOICE

The 2016 My Dream For Lou: Policy Summit utilized the photovoice method as a community engagement tool to have open conversation about areas of policy change. The evaluation measured level of engagement with and understanding of the photovoice method prior to attending the summit and after. Summit participants agreed that the understood the relationship between the photovoice method, equity, and policy change. The results indicate that there was a slight increase in the level of understanding participants held about the relationship between the photovoice method and equity, but there was little to no difference between understanding the relationship between the photovoice method and policy change.

Evaluation Question	Pre Mean	Post Mean
I understand how photovoice can be used to learn about a more fair and just community.	3.43	3.65
I understand how photovoice can be used to start conversations about where policy change is needed.	3.43	3.48

n= 49; 1=Strongly Disagree, 2=Disagree, 3=Agree, 4=Strongly Agree

IMPORTANCE OF EQUITY

Equity was an important concept during the 2016 *My Dream For Lou: Policy Summit*. The evaluation measured the belief participants held about the importance of equity and their level of comfortability with policy engagement to achieve equity. Summit participants strongly agreed that equity was important to everyone in their community during both the pre and post evaluation. Summit participants also expressed agreement with their comfortability with policy engagement to achieve equity during both the pre and post evaluation.

Evaluation Question	Pre Mean	Post Mean
I believe that making a more fair and just community is everyone's business.	3.95	3.93
I feel comfortable creating policy recommendations that will lead to a more fair and just Louisville.	3.74	3.62

n=49; 1=Strongly Disagree, 2=Disagree, 3=Agree, 4=Strongly Agree

The Center for Health Equity is a division the Louisville Metro Department of Public Health & Wellness in Louisville, KY