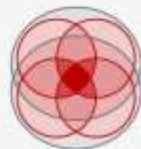


# Understanding The Geography of Opportunity

How mapping the changing landscape of opportunity can contribute to community equity and sustainability



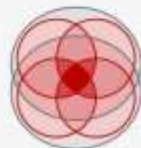
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# Our Society's Opportunity Narrative...

“Biologists often talk about the “ecology” of an organism: the tallest oak in the forest is the tallest not just because it grew from the hardest acorn; it is the tallest also because no other trees blocked its sunlight, the soil around it was deep and rich, no rabbit chewed through its bark as a sapling, and no lumberjack cut it down before it matured.

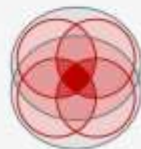
We all know that successful people come from hardy seeds. But do we know enough about the sunlight that warmed them, the soil in which they put down roots, and the rabbits and lumberjacks they were lucky enough to avoid?”

- Malcolm Gladwell “Outliers”



# The American Reality

Not everyone who works hard achieves the dream. Why?





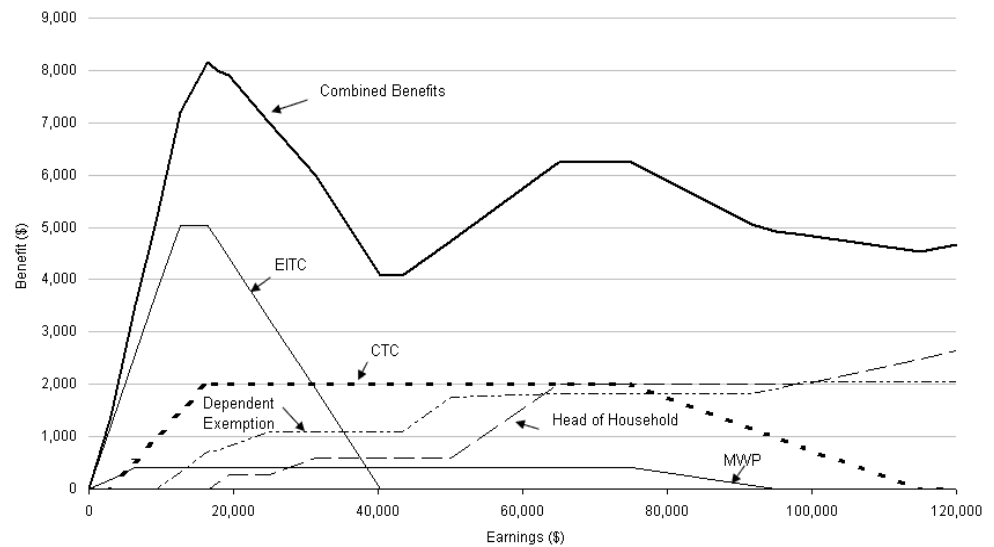
# Systemic Barriers to Opportunity



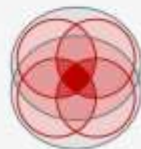
## PERSONAL INFORMATION

Last Name  First Name  
 Address  City  
 Home Phone:  Cell Phone:  Email address:   
 Social Security Number:   
 Are you a U.S. Citizen?  Yes  No  
 Have you ever been convicted of a felony?  Yes  No  
 If selected for employment are you willing to submit to a pre-employment drug screening test?  Yes  No

Value of Child Benefits at Various Income Levels: Single Parent with Two Children (2010)



Calculation assumes all income comes from earnings, both children are under age 17 and are qualifying children for the Child Tax Credit, Additional Child Tax Credit, Earned Income Tax Credit, and dependent exemption. Benefits from the dependent exemption are stacked before head of household filing status.  
 Source: Tax Policy Center



**Transportation**

**Education**

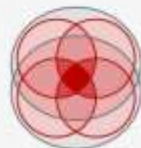
Employment

**Housing**

**Health &  
Safety**

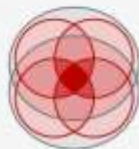
**OPPORTUNITY**

**“Opportunity is a situation or condition that places individuals in a position to be more likely to succeed or excel.”**



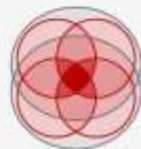
# The Opportunity Framework:

- **Opportunity Matters:** Space, place, and life outcomes
- **Systems Thinking:** We're all situated within "opportunity structures"
- **Place, Race, and Opportunity Structures:** Neighborhoods and access to opportunity
- **Structural Interaction:** The arrangement of multiple variables creates barriers to opportunity
- **Systems are Dynamic:** The creation of feedback loops



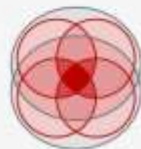
# Opportunity Mapping: more than just maps!

- Goal: To create “iterative space” where collaborative conversation can happen
- Maps bring together diverse stakeholders around the opportunity frame
- Common purpose: To increase access to opportunity across city/metro/region
  - Opportunity framework brings equity into the conversation
  - Identify structural barriers to opportunity, community assets



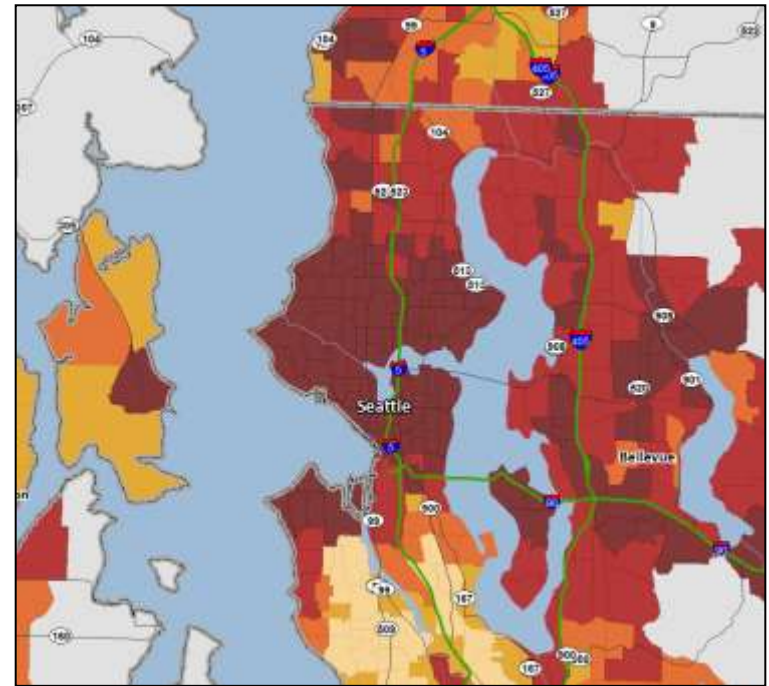
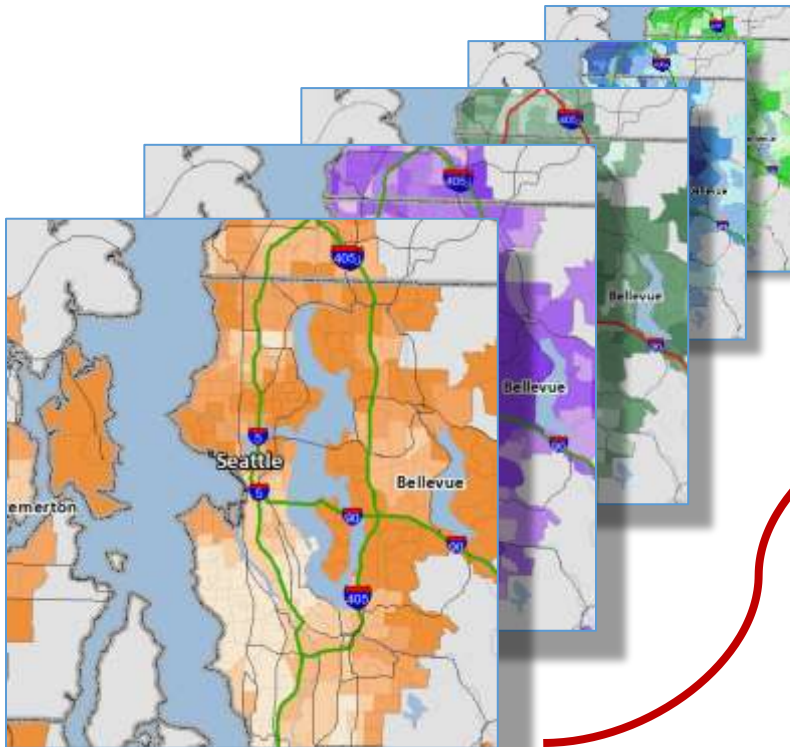
# Building Capacity with an Eye to Equity

Opportunity mapping provides a framework and “space” for engaging a broad number of community stakeholders, while simultaneously focusing on the equity concerns of marginalized communities.

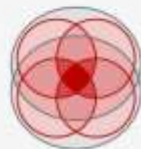




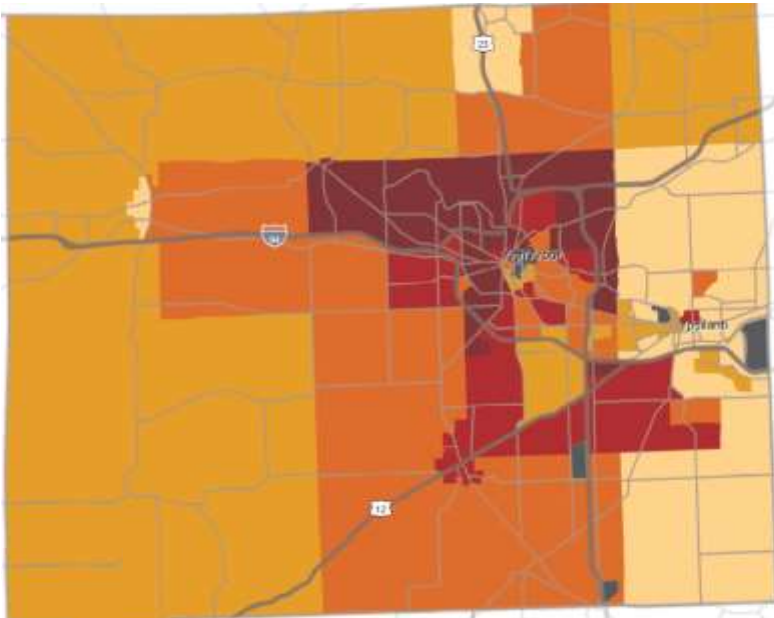
# Building an Opportunity Map



All measures rolled into a single index value (Opportunity Index)



# Opportunity in Washtenaw County



Health



Job Access



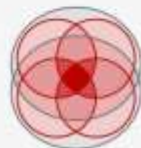
Economic Well-Being



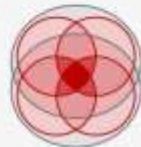
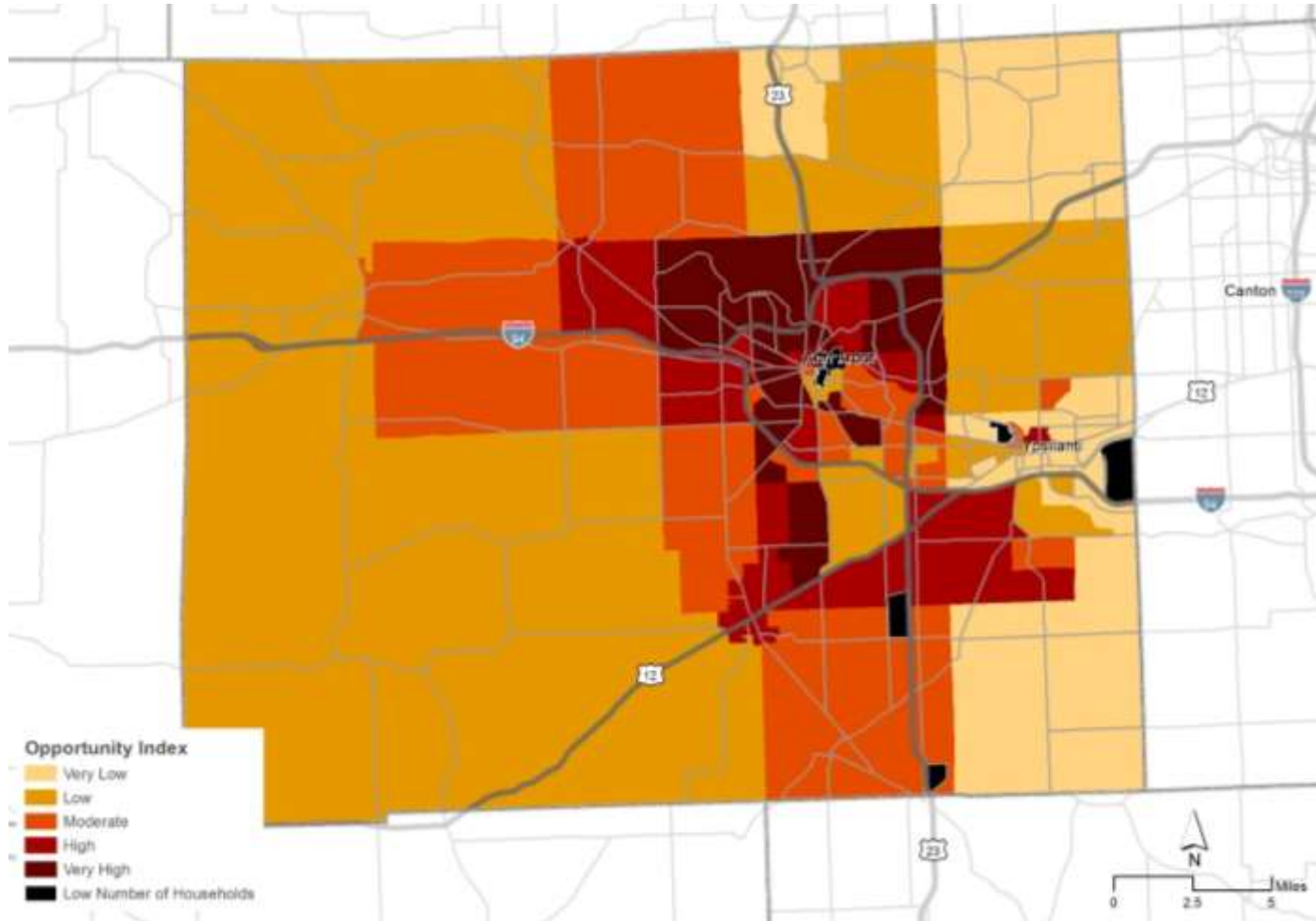
Education & Training



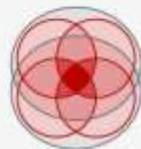
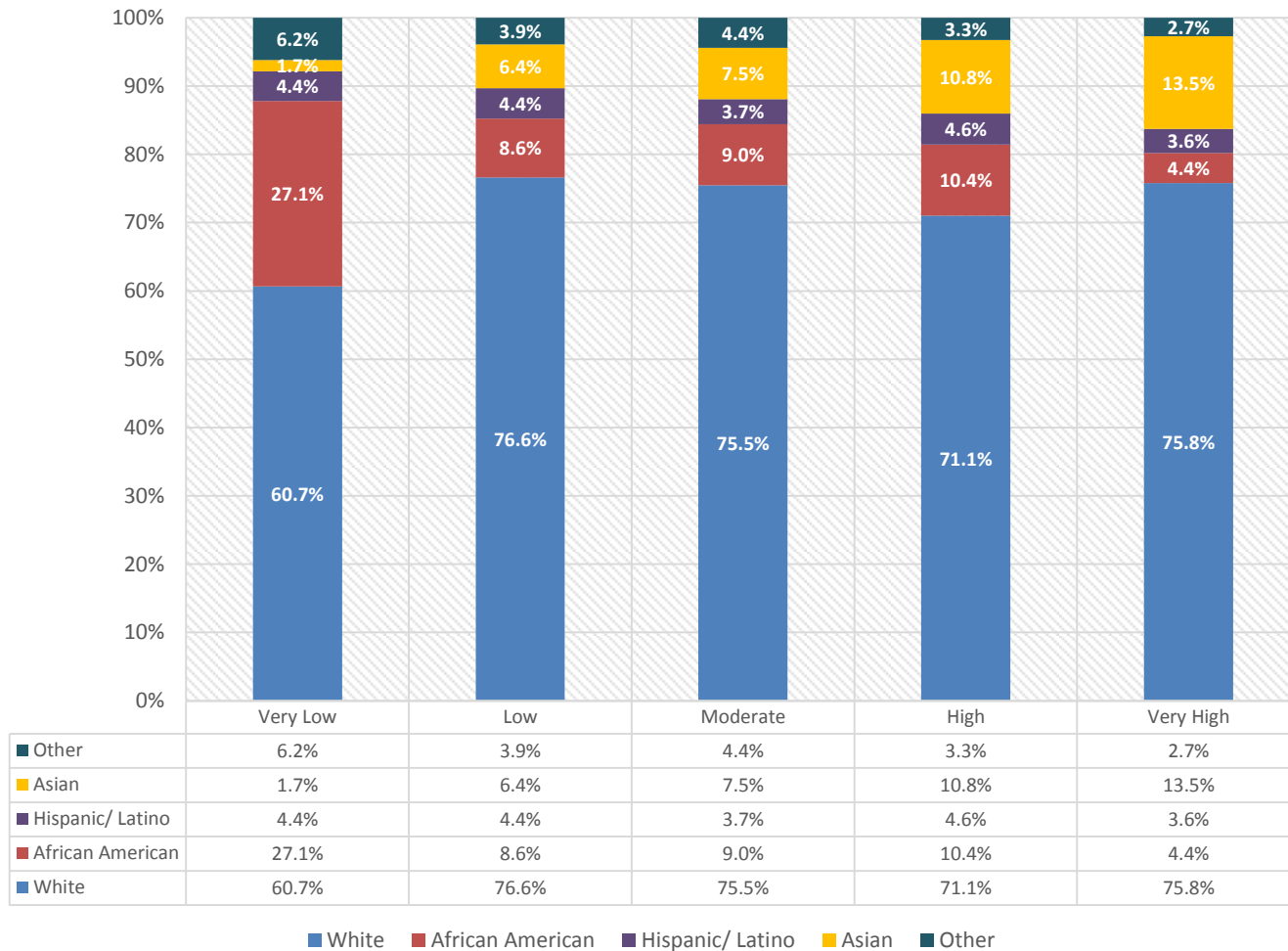
Neighborhood Safety & Stability



# A Snapshot of Opportunity Across Washtenaw County

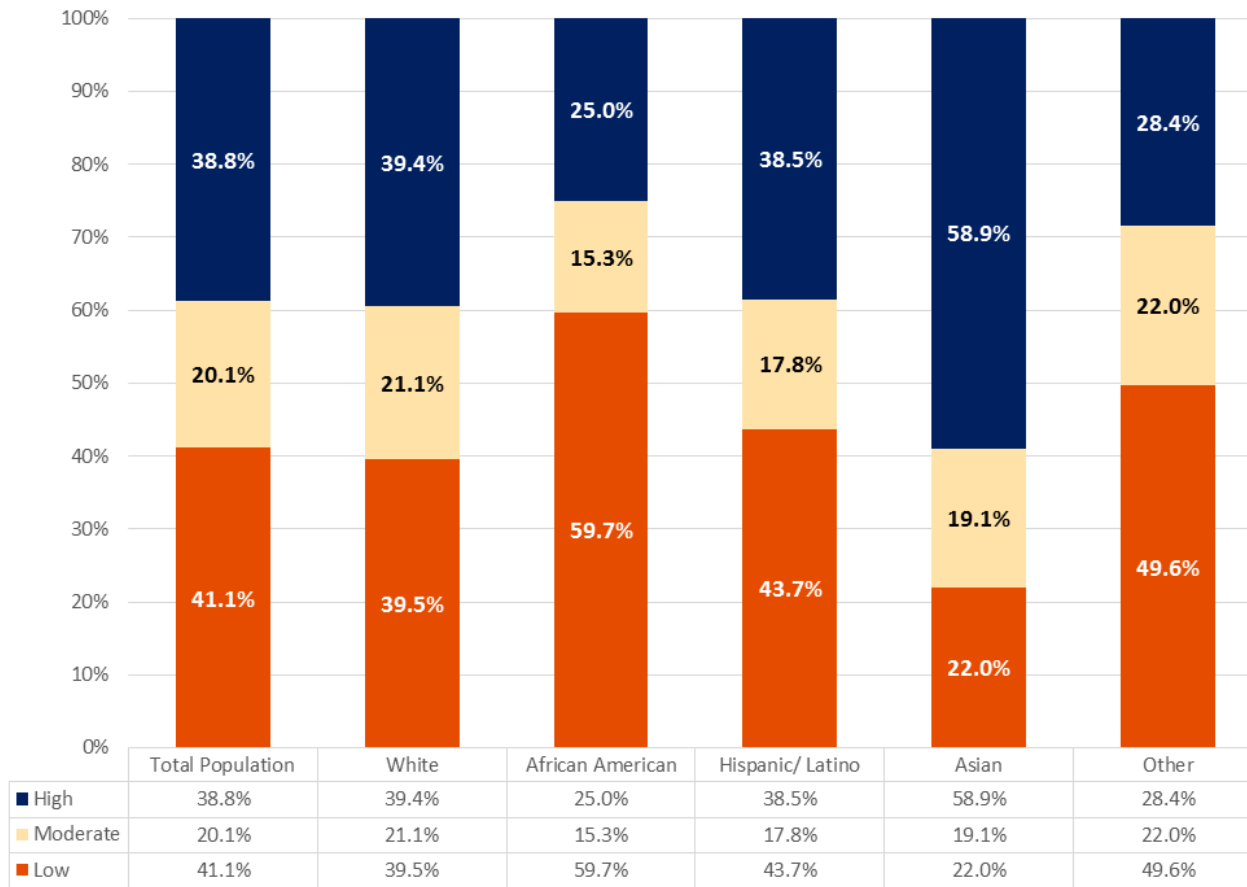


## Opportunity Index by Race

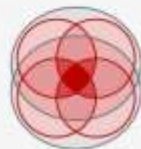




## Race by Opportunity Index

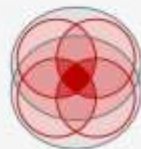
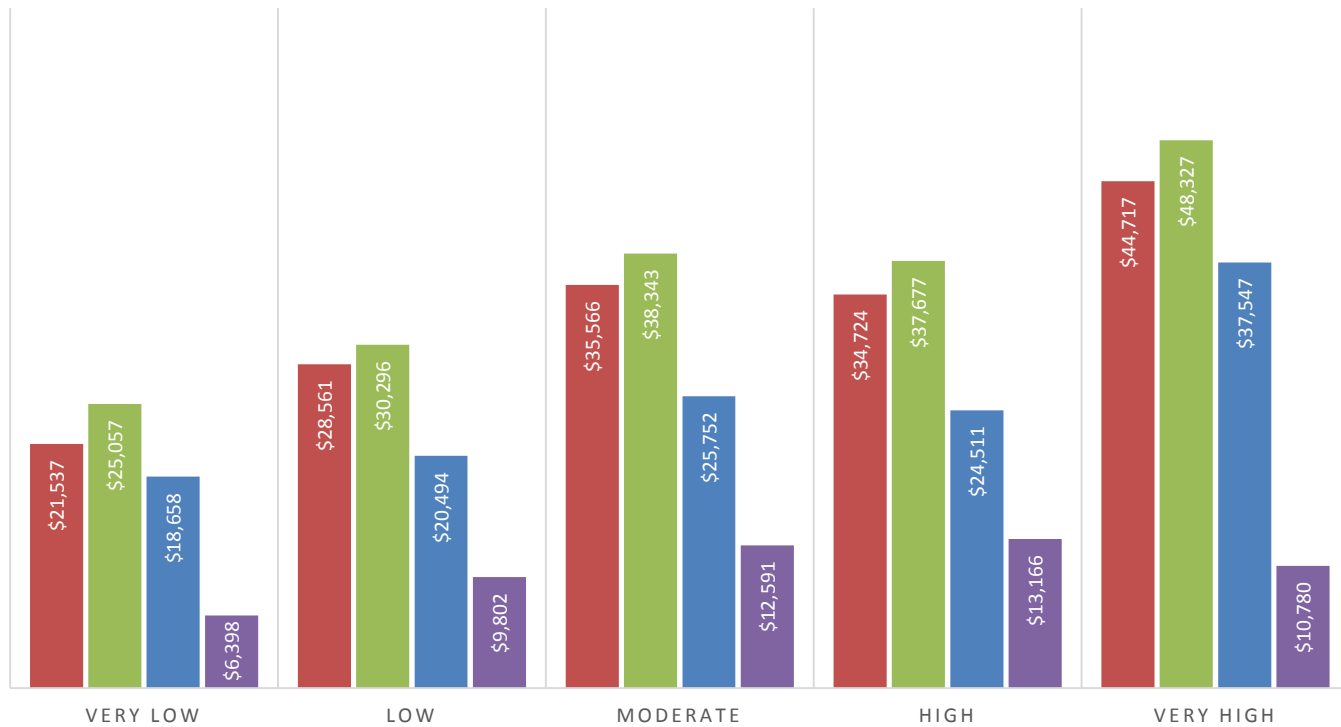


Low Moderate High

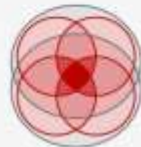


## PER CAPITA INCOME BY OPPORTUNITY INDEX

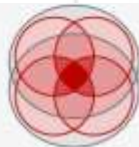
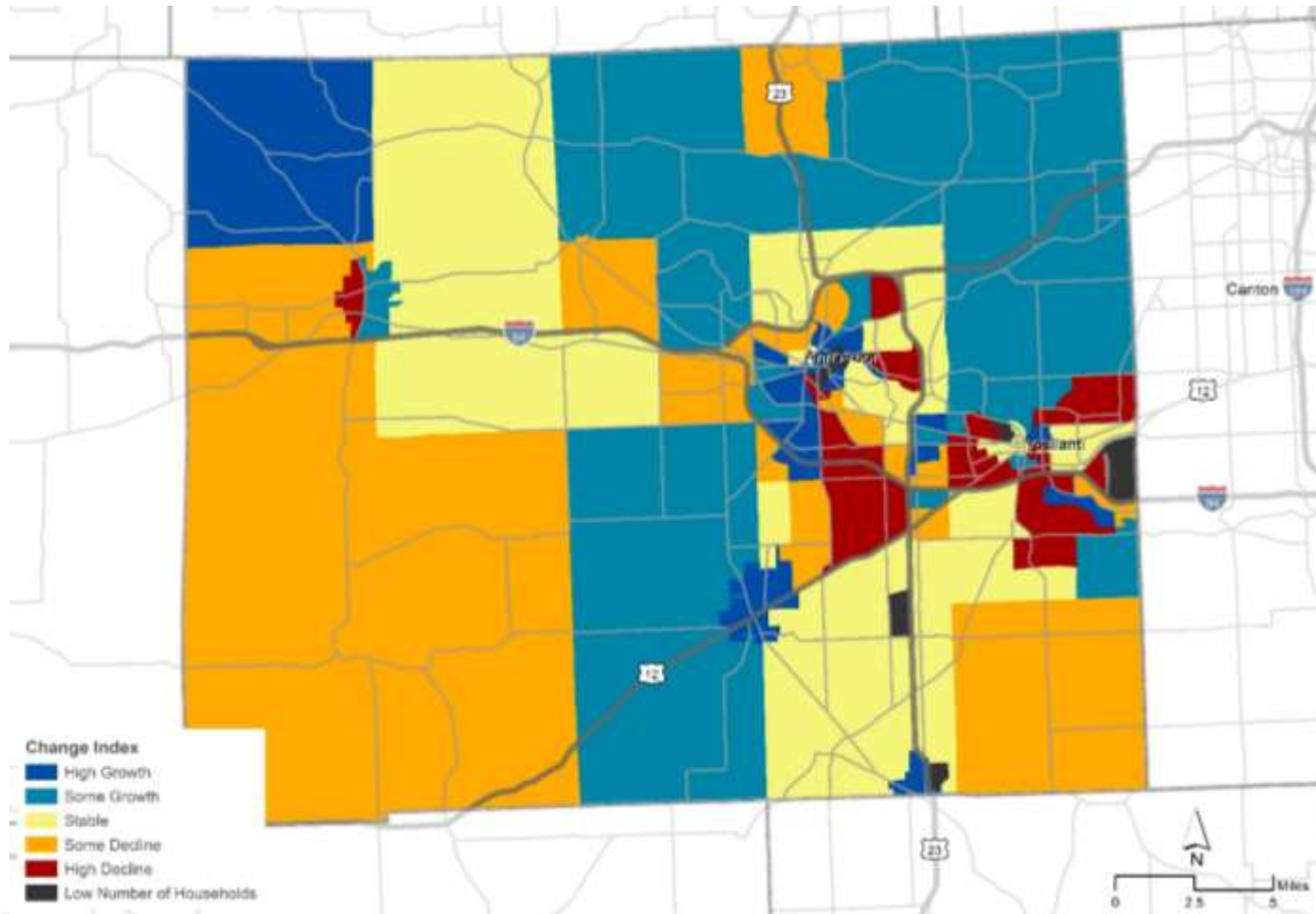
- Avg. per captia income
- Avg. per captia income (White)
- Avg. per captia income (AA)
- difference between African American and White



Place  
Economic  
**Race**  
Spatial  
Legacy  
Persistent  
Inequality  
Systemic  
**Structural**  
Institutional  
Policy  
Disparity



# Trends in Opportunity Across Washtenaw County





# How Can Opportunity Maps Be Used?

- **Housing**

- **siting affordable housing projects (Massachusetts)**
- **directing LIHTC QAP policy (Ohio, Connecticut)**
- **voucher holder counseling (Austin, TX)**

- **Transportation**

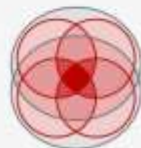
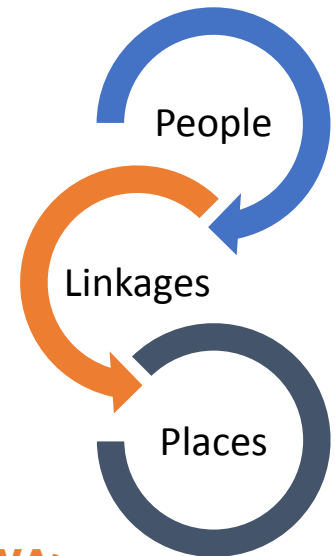
- **TOD planning (Seattle, WA)**
- **capital improvement project prioritization (Austin, TX)**

- **Education**

- **targeting early childhood education investment (Columbus, OH)**
- **coordinating school churn and housing stability initiatives (Tacoma, WA)**

- **Health**

- **infant mortality task force (Columbus, OH)**
- **lead abatement (Toledo, OH)**



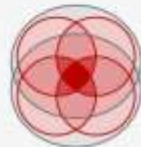
# How to identify opportunity structures

## Look For:

- Incentives
- Disincentives
- Barriers & Opportunities
- Divisive Infrastructure
- “Facilitative Investments”

## Explore the History Of:

- Zoning & Land Use (purpose and impact)
- Municipal/Jurisdictional Fragmentation
- Major Infrastructure (Origin and role)
- “Getting Around Brown” (How?)



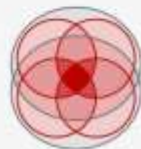
# As our cities and regions revitalize, how do we ensure that our systems ensure access to opportunity and jobs for all communities and the people?

## Ideas

- Recognize and address remaining biases in our systems and thinking.
- Constantly consider accessibility for all.
- Acknowledge the way our systems and structures interact with one another.
- Identify and engage power structures.

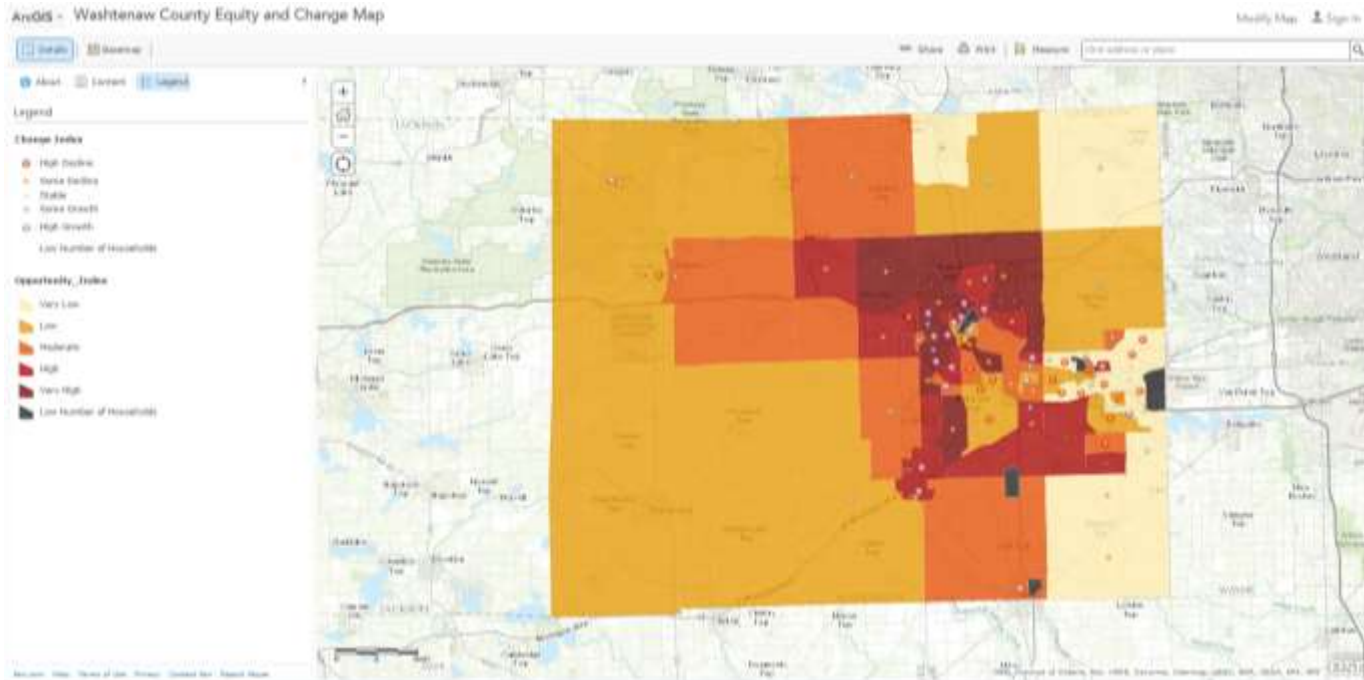
## Examples

- Will light rail improve job access for low-income workers?
- As our regions re-urbanize, how can we improve educational quality and further school integration?
- What tools do we have or need to invent in order to build and maintain mixed-income neighborhoods?

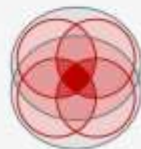


# Accessing the Maps and Data

[opportunitywashtenaw.org](http://opportunitywashtenaw.org)



<http://arcg.is/1KY82x6>



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