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Our Diversity is Our Strength: Explaining Variation in Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Emphasis in Municipal Arts and Cultural Plans

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Abstract

Problem, Research Strategy and Findings: Municipal arts and cultural plans direct significant amounts of public investment and set far-reaching policies, as arts and culture investment becomes an increasingly widespread economic development strategy. While these plans frequently advertise the city's diversity, they often lack specific strategies for supporting diversity, equity, and inclusion. In addition, the creation of these plans often does not involve urban planners, nor do the plans often connect to the city's comprehensive plan or contain the types of fact bases and commitments to equity that comprehensive plans do. In this study of 64 US municipal arts and cultural plans, we investigated what kinds of cities are producing arts and cultural plans that do a better job of integrating concepts of diversity, equity, and inclusion

(DEI), and what factors can explain these differences. We also investigated which specific policies were present that addressed DEI in arts and cultural plans. We found that newer plans more strongly emphasized equity and plans with more robust public processes and those in more diverse cities more strongly emphasized equity and DEI overall, while plans in cities with lower median household incomes more strongly emphasized equity and inclusion. Overall, plans were much more likely to talk about diversity and inclusion than the specifics of equitable distribution of arts and cultural resources.

Takeaway for Practice: Planners need to get involved in arts and cultural planning to ensure that planning processes for arts and cultural plans work to achieve the same standards we expect for comprehensive plans. They must be based on inclusive processes, understand the range of diversity of people in the city, and commit to specific, targeted place-based and people-based public investment to improve equity. Planners can also expand their typical approaches through alignments with topical arts and cultural plans.

Keywords: equity, diversity, inclusion, arts, culture

Introduction

Arts and cultural planning is a growing planning subfield that intersects with economic development, placemaking, and multicultural planning. Many municipalities have created arts and cultural master plans to guide arts and cultural policies and public investment in the arts. These policies and investments can have significant impacts on city form and function. Yet, planners are often not involved at all in creating municipal arts and cultural plans. This is a missed opportunity: in the context of public planning, "carefully planned cultural action is essential for the achievement of sustainability and wellbeing" (Hawkes, 2001, p. 2), to which planners share a commitment (American Planning Association, 2019b). Planners should be involved in and care about arts and cultural planning because it involves important community assets that may not be on planners' radar; involves investment that could advance planning goals; and engages in place-based strategies for economic development and revitalization. Public arts and cultural activities may represent a "Third Space" (physical or not) where "hybrid

identifications are possible and where cultural transformations can happen" (Antener, 2019, Glossary, para. 1; Bhabha, 2006; Soja, 1996). Arts and cultural committees could likewise benefit from the involvement of urban planners because they have expertise in creating a fact base, can help ensure investments are directed efficiently as part of the city's overall land use, transportation, and economic development strategy (Berke et al., 2006), and, most importantly, are accustomed to engaging the public to think comprehensively about a shared vision for the future.

In this study, our specific area of inquiry is diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) in arts and cultural plans. Spurred in part by recent calls for social justice from the Black Lives Matter movement, many organizations, including planning organizations and education programs, have expressed commitment to ideals of diversity, equity, and inclusion (American Planning Association, 2019b; Idaho Chapter of the American Planning Association, 2020; Loh & Kim, 2020; Sen et al., 2017) and have made tangible, if incomplete progress in implementing DEI policies (Qadeer & Agrawal, 2011). Arts and cultural organizations have also asserted their commitment to DEI (Americans for the Arts, 2019; Greater Philadelphia Cultural Alliance, 2020; PolicyLink, 2019). Indeed, there is reason to believe that the arts and culture sector at large might set an example about how to be inclusive, embrace diversity, and advance equity (Ashley et al., 2021; City of New York, 2017; Los Angeles County: Arts and Culture, 2018; Rose et al., 2017). Yet there is evidence that many municipal arts and cultural plans include DEI cursorily, if at all, and are vague about what diversity means in their city's specific context (Alvarez, 2005; Ashley et al., 2021).

Diversity, equity, and inclusion matter in arts and cultural planning for three key reasons. First, the American Institute of Certified Planners' (AICP) Code of Ethics tasks planners with planning for the needs of the disadvantaged and expanding choice for all persons (American Planning Association, 2016). Arts and cultural planning, while a subfield, is still planning and should uphold the same ideals as other kinds of planning. In addition, arts and cultural planning is increasingly intertwined with economic development planning, another planning subfield, and directs public investment, which means that it is important to ensure such investment is distributed equitably, embraces all residents, and results in arts and cultural opportunities that are inclusive and accessible to all. Finally, even if one is unpersuaded by these first two arguments, diversity is critical to arts and cultural plans by their own internal logic. Arts and cultural plans commonly use the city's "diversity" as a selling point, but often fail to talk about what that diversity looks like and how people of different backgrounds are included (Ashley et al., 2021). In this study of 64 US municipal arts and cultural plans, we ask, what kinds of cities are producing arts and cultural plans that do a better job of integrating concepts of diversity, equity, and inclusion, and what factors can explain these differences? And, which types of DEI-supportive policies do the plans include? This study, which takes a quantitative approach, builds on work previously published in the *Journal of Urban Affairs* in which we investigated the ways in which municipal arts and cultural plans conceptualize and operationalize diversity, equity, and inclusion.

Here, we find that newer plans and plans that incorporated multi-faceted public participation processes are more likely to emphasize DEI broadly, but that plans are more likely to describe diversity than to recommend place-based or people-based arts and cultural investments that would create more equitable access. We think that municipal planners have a role to play in arts

and cultural planning and that they should emphasize a high-quality fact base, inclusive processes, and actionable implementation steps that increase equity. Further, plans need to be much more explicit about how they are ensuring investment of public money will benefit underserved residents as well as traditional arts and cultural investment targets. In the next section, we explore how arts and cultural planning connects with urban planning more broadly and how both fields conceptualize issues of diversity, equity, and inclusion. We then present our methodology and the findings from our analysis and provide examples of policies in the plans that address DEI. Finally, we discuss the implications of our results for planning practice.

What is Arts and Cultural Planning?

Arts and cultural planning is a growing subfield of planning at the intersection of arts and cultural policy and municipal planning. Although this particular study is limited to public municipal arts and cultural plans, arts and cultural policy is a broad umbrella under which such activities as arts and cultural planning, programming, urban redevelopment, economic development, community development, workforce development, and public art fall (Ashley, 2015; Kovacs, 2011; Markusen & Gadwa, 2010a; Stevenson, 2004). The practice of cultural planning is often seen as a method of fostering diversity, developing community partnerships, spurring public and private investment in culture, and obtaining political support for cultural initiatives (Stevenson, 2004). The planning process typically begins with structured community engagement processes, usually separate from comprehensive planning community engagement processes, aimed at identifying and mapping neighborhood cultural assets and resources such as cultural facilities, public art, and community centers. Planners then build on these existing resources with strategies to develop local arts, heritage, and cultural organizations and build

neighborhood cultural clusters (Grodach, 2013). Plans range from solely focusing on traditional arts such as performing, visual, and literary arts to those that address urban planning issues such as place-making, economic development, cultural tourism, and creative industries. Cultural plans may also address festivals and events, local heritage, commercial arts, and cultural districts (Kovacs, 2011).

A municipal arts and cultural master plan may be undertaken by a number of entities, including a city arts and culture department, an appointed arts commission, the mayor's office, a parks and recreation department, a general city planning department, or some combination of these (Ashley et al., 2021). Seventy-four percent of the plans we evaluated were written by consultants who specialize in arts and cultural practice or combinations of consultant teams. The aim of these plans is often threefold: to inventory local arts and cultural infrastructure and assets, to plan future programming and investment, and to market the community as an arts and cultural hub to attract knowledge economy firms and workers (Americans for the Arts, 2019).

Therefore, it is often difficult to separate arts and cultural plans and planning from economic development activity, including cultural tourism, cultural amenities to attract knowledge workers, cultural industries and clusters, artist workforce development, creative placemaking, and community development (Ashley, 2014, 2015; Currid-Halkett, 2008; Florida, 2002; Markusen & Gadwa, 2010b; Markusen & Schrock, 2006; Sagalyn & Ashley, 2014; Stern & Seifert, 2010; Zitcer, 2018). Arts and cultural organizations in the nonprofit, civic, and private sectors, supported by local civic boosters and economic development offices, have championed the arts for their transformative creative placemaking potential driven by federal and

foundational grant opportunities (e.g. National Endowment for the Arts, Kresge Foundation) that elevate the arts as a mechanism for re-imaging public space (Redaelli, 2018). Yet scholarly and community advocates have pushed back against many of these creative placemaking efforts for what appeared to be practices of inauthenticity, potential for gentrification and artwashing,[i] and a push for new-ness rather than an effort to support those already in these targeted places through a practice of place belonging (Bedoya, 2013; Zitcer, 2018).

Despite the linkages between planning, economic development, and arts and cultural planning, there are clear organizational divisions between a city's planning department and where arts offices may sit, which contributes to the bifurcation between most city planning and cultural planning. In an American municipal corporation, planning is usually an independent department that manages services such as permitting, building codes, land use and zoning, private development, right-of-way issues, and comprehensive and neighborhood planning. The responsibility for arts and cultural planning varies widely from city to city. Most common is a volunteer arts commission that may or may not have accompanying staff. For example, Oklahoma City has an Arts Commission located in the Planning Department; it does not have professional staff. In Kansas City, the city architect oversees the Municipal Art Commission and the City's percent-for-art program under the General Services Department. A second structural example is where the arts and culture management function is nested under another department such as parks, economic development, or tourism. Tacoma has a volunteer arts commission and a separate Office of Arts & Cultural Vitality and Special Events that is under the Tacoma Venues and Events office. Jointly these two entities are responsible for cultural planning. The third and least common example is when a city has a stand-alone arts department which is staffed with

cultural planners, public arts project managers, grants managers, and other related professional roles, such as in Boston and Boise.

How Planners Think About Diversity and the City

The American Planning Association's 2019 *Planning for Equity Policy Guide* defines equity as "just and fair inclusion into a society in which all can participate, prosper, and reach their full potential" (American Planning Association, 2019b, p. 3). APA defines diversity as "an inclusive concept that encompasses, but is not limited to, race, ethnicity, class, gender, age, sexuality, ability, educational attainment, spiritual beliefs, creed, culture, tribal affiliation, nationality, immigration status, political beliefs, and veteran status" (American Planning Association, 2019b, p. 5). Lastly, APA defines inclusion as that which "demonstrates an environment in which all individuals are treated fairly and respectfully; are valued for their distinctive skills, experiences, and perspectives; have equal access to resources and opportunities; and can contribute fully to the organization's success" (American Planning Association, 2019a, p. 1).

Planners and geographers widely view ethnic and cultural diversity as one of the premier assets of successful cities (Amado et al., 2009; Florida, 2002; Young, 2011) yet have not always agreed on how to address it in plans. Especially in an era when firms and individuals have a great deal of choice about where to locate, social and cultural diversity can confer a comparative advantage on a city (Bradford, 2002; Maré & Poot, 2019; Nathan, 2016). Relocators tend to choose cities where it is clear locals value diverse cultures and ideas, which can foster innovation in food, the arts, and business (Hall, 1998; Papillon, 2002).

Yet this valuable cross-pollination also brings with it challenges. The differences that make cities so rich and interesting can also mean that conflicts arise between people of different backgrounds as cities and neighborhoods change (Sandercock, 2000). Further, the ability for the city to be more than the sum of its parts cannot occur if immigrants and visible minorities are segregated in space and relegated to a permanent underclass, which is a particular risk in American cities compared to Canadian ones (Forster, 2006; Thomas & Darnton, 2006). If this division and exclusion is the case, the conversation around diversity quickly becomes one about safety and control (Davis, 1998).

The important question, then, is how to create inclusion, which in practical terms means social, political, and economic access (Madanipour, 2015). Inclusion, and how to achieve it, is contested, however. Too often, planners contend that issues of diversity and inclusion are outside their remit of land use, transportation, and economic development (Ameyaw, 2000). Local planners may be a step behind in "planning for difference" (Burayidi, 2015, p. 4). They may focus on the "public interest" without acknowledging that differences among their constituents mean that treating everyone as though their backgrounds, interests, and needs are the same can result in exacerbating inequality. Planners may be uncomfortable talking about racial and ethnic diversity, thinking it outside their purview (Harwood, 2005, p. 366).

Even if planners agree that diversity is relevant to planning and that inclusion is central to achieving a sustainable city, there are differing opinions as to how to approach inclusion, with differing beliefs about the right balance between differentiation and de-differentiation (Fainstein, 2009). Young (2011) argues that some voluntary neighborhood racial and ethnic differentiation makes for an interesting and authentic city. Sandercock suggests that people may

prefer to organize themselves spatially alongside those with similar backgrounds, which is fine as long as everyone has the same freedoms to "appropriat[e] spaces and "creat[e] places" (1998, p. 214). However, others critique a multicultural approach to planning both for creating a balkanized society where there is no common ground and for keeping minorities separate and placating them without allowing them full participation and true equality (Burayidi, 2015). A proposed alternative, appreciative planning, means not just inclusion but celebration of diversity, which requires networking and listening to individuals' experiences of living in the community (Amado et al., 2009; Ameyaw, 2000; Burayidi, 2015). Furthermore, it is a two-way process in which the majority culture appreciates and assimilates some aspects of other cultures (Papillon, 2002), and "responsiveness to culture is accompanied by the incorporation of common interests in community cultures" (Qadeer & Agrawal, 2011, p. 138). At its most successful, this type of planning fosters "hybridity" or living with an identity between cultures as well as being a member of both (Ylanne-McEwen & Coupland, 2000). This is the type of approach to diversity and inclusion, then, that we would hope to see in comprehensive plans.

Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Planning Processes

Planners have not always prioritized diversity, equity, and inclusion in plans and planning processes: in fact, for many years these were not widely accepted planning goals at all (Lane, 2005). Pushed to consider these issues by civil rights leaders starting in the 1960s, planners have devoted increased energy to diversity and inclusion, primarily in the public participation phase of the planning process. However, that first push around equity, which led to advocacy and equity planning, existed at a particular historical moment during which federal resources were directed at inclusive inner-city planning processes (Davidoff, 1965; Krumholz, 1982; Thomas, 2008). Equity remains a neglected angle of the planners' triangle, often overridden by environmental

and especially by economic issues (Campbell, 1996; Fainstein, 2010; Loh & Kim, 2020; Schrock et al., 2015).

By the 1990s, collaborative, inclusive planning built around intensive stakeholder engagement, as conceptualized by Healey, Innes, and others, had become the dominant paradigm of the planning process (Brownill & Parker, 2010; Godschalk et al., 2003; Purcell, 2009). Critics assert that collaborative planning processes fail to overcome power imbalances because they ask all participants to compromise regardless of how much or how little power they had prior to the collaboration (Fainstein, 2009; Purcell, 2009). Better representation, and possibly a different, more creative process would be necessary if such processes were to adequately counter the default of the unitary public interest (Sandercock, 2004). Our own exploratory research has found that planners often do not evaluate whether or not public participation processes adequately include representatives from all demographic groups (Ashley et al., 2021; Loh & Kim, 2020). However, in their study of US and Canadian cities, Qadeer and Agrawal find, encouragingly, that planners may be outpacing theorists in recognizing and promoting well-functioning multiculturalism (Qadeer & Agrawal, 2011). They find that, in particular, most large, diverse Canadian and US cities have made considerable efforts to include residents from many cultural backgrounds through practices such as language access and creative public participation methods. Elected and appointed leadership, however, remains dominated by whites.

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion in Arts and Cultural Planning: What We Know So Far

Arts and cultural planning may engage in innovative approaches to inclusion, such as mandating DEI statements from arts and cultural granting recipients; requiring a diverse makeup on arts and

cultural boards as well as including DEI training (Ashley et al., 2021); promoting cultural asset mapping with a DEI focus; using arts and cultural investment not just for economic but community development (Stern & Seifert, 2008); emphasizing placekeeping over placemaking (Bedoya, 2013); surveying formal and informal arts activity across different sectors (Alvarez, 2005); or specializing in cultural equity planning (PolicyLink, 2019). However, arts and cultural planning, as well as placemaking, may elide, erase, or edit aspects of local culture to make it attractive to visitors and investors, especially indigenous cultures that predate the city formation (Alvarez, 2005; Bedoya, 2013; City of Oakland, 2018; Kahne, 2015; Moss, 2012; Zitcer, 2018). Place-based arts and cultural planning can reproduce existing power structures and value only particular kinds of artistic and cultural expression (Kovacs, 2011; Redaelli, 2018). Plans do not emphasize diversity, equity, and inclusion to the extent they should (Markusen, 2014). As our previous research has indicated, municipal arts and cultural plans often describe their city's diversity as an important asset, yet many do not include demographic analyses or qualitative descriptions about what that diversity means in the city's specific context and population (Ashley et al., 2021). Most plans do not discuss the equitable allocation of public arts and culture investment. Plans are largely silent as to whether and how the planning process was made to be inclusive. Thus, we seek to understand in which kinds of places and under which circumstances cities prioritize diversity, equity, and inclusion goals in their plans.

Methodology

In this study, we investigated the question of what kinds of cities are producing arts and cultural plans that do a better job of integrating concepts of diversity, equity, and inclusion, and what

factors can explain these differences. We focused on plans because they are publicly available documents that reveal community or organizational priorities around arts and culture, including DEI. We assembled a list of all of the arts and cultural plans from US municipalities we could find, developed a content analysis protocol, analyzed the plans, and created four statistical models to help us explain the plans' variation in DEI orientation.

Plan evaluation

We first conducted a detailed content analysis of 64 municipal arts and cultural plans from US cities. We began with a list of arts and cultural plans from Americans for the Arts and supplemented it with two internet searches in 2019 and early 2020. While our list is likely not exhaustive, it is fairly comprehensive. We developed a plan content analysis protocol, which is a standard tool with which to assess planning documents (Berke et al., 2006; Loh & Kim, 2020; Norton, 2005). Our protocol asked questions about diversity, equity, and inclusion-related goals, processes, and implementation steps. Table 1 gives a list of some of the most important questions we asked. Two coders separately evaluated every plan, then one of the authors and a research assistant reconciled every instance of disagreement between coders. Our average intercoder reliability was 71%, the median was 70%, and the range was 44-98%.

Table 1: Dependent variable construction

Plan Element	Percent of Plans That Included the Element
Diversity	
Does the plan include the word diversity?*	96%
Does the plan define diversity?	34%
Does the plan describe what diversity means in that city's context?	53%
Does the plan include high quality images related to DEI	20%
Does the plan contain a demographic analysis	47%
Does the plan explain how demographics informs the goals or recommendations?	46%
Does the plan identify marginalized groups?	72%
Inclusion	
Does the plan include the word inclusion?	75%
Does it define inclusion?	20%
Does the plan mention efforts to include marginalized groups in the process?	30%
Does the plan mention whether or not actual participants reflected the city's diversity?	17%
Equity	
Does the plan include the word equity/equitable development?	30%
Does it define equity?	14%
Does the plan identify areas of the city in need of arts and cultural investment?	41%
Does the plan identify groups of people in need of arts and cultural investment?	83%
Does the plan recommend housing for artists from marginalized backgrounds?	6%
Does the plan recommend work space for artists from marginalized backgrounds	9%
Does the plan recommend public art that goes to less resourced areas?	25%
Does the plan recommend artist-in-residences in low resourced areas?	8%
Does the plan recommend supporting artists and arts education in low resourced K-12 schools?	5%
Does the plan recommend sponsoring events for marginalized groups?	34%
Does the plan recommend more marketing support for marginalized programming or artists?	19%
Does the plan recommend free or low-cost events to improve accessibility?	47%
Does the plan recommend grants that go to organizations that support marginalized programming, tickets, etc.?	36%
Does the plan recommend business incentives for artists from marginalized backgrounds or for artists to work with marginalized populations?	8%
Does the plan recommend artist workforce development connections to public universities?	25%
DEI Total = All of the above, plus:	
Does the plan mention DEI in its table of contents?	34%
Does the plan include a goal that deals with DEI?	73%

*not included in dependent variable because all but one plan included it
Source: Arts and Cultural Plan data (2020). N=64

Data and models

To investigate our research question, we developed four models. The first three models have diversity, equity, and inclusion as their respective dependent variables. Diversity, equity, and inclusion are not interchangeable concepts, and we were interested in seeing whether or not there

were situations in which cities emphasized certain of these concepts to a greater and lesser extent. The fourth model combines DEI into one dependent variable.

We measure DEI in the following ways, based on how our plan content analysis topics fit into the APA's definitions of diversity, equity, and inclusion. Table 1 shows the questions that make up all four dependent variables. For each dependent variable, the plan gets a point for each "yes." Table 2 shows descriptive statistics about the dependent variables. The first dependent variable, *Diversity*, reflects the plan's demonstration of awareness of difference. It measures the background work reflected in the plan that shows recognition and awareness of who lives in the city, its unique cultural mix, and specific mention of how demographics informed goals and recommendations. The second dependent variable, *Inclusion*, reflects the plan's demonstration of access and contribution of the city's diverse residents. This variable measures whether or not the plan demonstrates that its organizers employed strategies to get a wide range of people involved in that particular arts and cultural planning process and whether or not actual participation reflected the city's diversity. A plan could demonstrate great awareness of the diversity present in the city, but at the same time fail to actually involve a diverse group of people in the planning process. The extent and type of public participation varied significantly across the plans in the sample. Table 3 shows what percentage of plans used each type of public participation tactic and Table 4 shows how many public participation methods the plans used.

Table 2: Dependent variables descriptive statistics

Variable	Mean	Standard Deviation	Range
Diversity	9.25	2.64	4-14
Inclusion	5.94	1.69	4-10
Equity	7.53	3.60	2-17
DEI total	25.75	7.06	15-42

Source: Arts and Cultural Plan data (2020). N=64

Table 3: Frequency of use of public participation methods

Public participation type	Percent of plans reporting
Large public meeting	80%
Survey	80%
Smaller focus groups/charrettes/design workshops	84%
Educational presentations/expert training	13%
Social Media	22%
Other	17%

Source: Arts and Cultural Plan data (2020). N=64

Table 4: Plans' use of public participation methods

Number of methods used	Percent of plans reporting
0	8%
1	5%
2	6%
3	42%
4	22%
5	16%

Source: Arts and Cultural Plan data (2020). N=64

The third dependent variable, *Equity*, reflects fairness in policy. It includes a long list of plan elements that reflect a commitment to geographically and demographically equitable arts and cultural investment, programming, and training. This variable captures the practical operationalization of a general commitment to DEI. While we expect that most equitable plans rest on a foundation of awareness of diversity and inclusive processes, it is possible that a plan could do little investigation of demographics and not much in the way of public participation, but still plan for equitable investment and programming. Our final dependent variable, *DEI Total*, combines *Diversity*, *Equity*, and *Inclusion*, and adds whether or not the plan mentioned DEI in its table of contents and whether or not it included a DEI-oriented goal. Only these last two questions asked about content in specific locations in the plan; we looked for and recorded all

others wherever they appeared in the plan and tried to be as generous as possible when considering whether a plan element met the spirit of the question. For example, in many instances the recommendations we record below did not appear in the goals and objectives section, but still seemed to be endorsed by the plan.

Table 5 describes the independent variables in our models, which include variables both internal to and external to the plans. In general, we tested in our model whether or not arts and cultural planners and plans exhibit the emphasis on DEI to which general urban planners and plans aspire and whether an association between the two types of plans was beneficial in promoting DEI. The internal plan variables include the year the plan was adopted, whether or not the plan mentions the comprehensive plan, and a count variable of the number of different types of public participation methods used during the planning process. Our previous work (Loh & Kim, 2020) has indicated that newer plans and plans with more varied public participation tools emphasize equity more strongly; for this study we hypothesized that these factors would be associated with a DEI focus more broadly. Given planners' strong professional commitment to equity and institutional norms of demographic analysis (American Planning Association, 2016, 2019b; Berke et al., 2006), we expected that arts and cultural plans that displayed a connection to general urban planning, in this case by referencing their cities' comprehensive land use plans, would demonstrate a stronger commitment to DEI.

Table 5: Independent Variables

Variable	Description/Source	Range	Mean	Std. Dev.
Plan variables				
Public participation	Count of number of public participation methods used	0-5	3.14	1.34
Year	Year plan was adopted	1998-2019	2013	4.65
Link to comp plan	Whether or not the arts and culture plan referenced the city's comprehensive plan	Yes/No	1.59	0.50
City variables				
Creative economy	Composite of Census NAICS codes 71, 51, 54 and 55 (S2403: Industry by Sex for the Civilian Employed Population 16 Years and Over, 2018 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates)	593-666,456	37761.19	88,301
Percent minority	Calculated by subtracting white alone from total population (DP05: ACS Demographic and Housing Estimates, 2018 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates)	7%-64%	.31	0.14
Population size (/100,000 in model)	(DP05: ACS Demographic and Housing Estimates, 2018 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates)	8,574-8,443,713	484,834	1,123,735
Pre-1939 housing	Percent of housing built before 1939 (DP04: Selected Housing Characteristics, 2018 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates)	0.4-55.6%	15.27	16.1
Median household income	Median household income in 2018 inflation-adjusted dollars (DP03: Selected Economic Characteristics, 2018 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates)	$35,674-$142,413	$67,161	$22,346
Educational attainment	Percent of population 25 years and over with a bachelor's degree (DP02: Selected Social Characteristics, 2018 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates)	12%-44.2%	26.0	6.95
Non-profit sector	Calculated by dividing population (DP05: ACS Demographic and Housing Estimates, 2018 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates) from exempt organizations coded as Arts, Culture, and Humanities by the National Taxonomy of Exempt Entities (IRS Exempt Organizations Business Master File Extract, updated 02/08/2021) and multiplied by 100,000	9.55-227.80	63.56	40.86
Arts self-employment	Composite of self-employed in own incorporated business workers and self-employed in own not incorporated business workers and unpaid family workers in Census NAICS codes 71, 72, and 51 (S2407: Industry by Class of Worker for the Civilian Employed Population 16 Years and Over, 2018 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates)	3.4-44.4	15.83	7.26
Political orientation (dummy)	2016 presidential election returns by county (MIT Election Data and Science Lab, "County Presidential Election Returns 2000-2016," updated 10/11/2018); New York City (New York City Board of Elections Statement and Return Report for Certification, General Election 2020 - 11/03/2020, updated 12/1/2020)	1-2	1.19	0.39

As for external, or city variables, we expected that well-resourced, politically liberal, well-educated, racially and ethnically diverse cities with strong creative economy sectors would produce plans with a higher emphasis on DEI. Valuing diversity, equity, and inclusion is more often associated with the political left and with higher educational attainment, especially in recent years (Mellow, 2020; Pew Research Center, 2016). Commitment to equity is an element of comprehensive plan quality insofar as it aligns the plan with planners' professional commitments (American Planning Association, 2019b; Fainstein, 2010). Planning capacity and comprehensive plan quality are often correlated (Berke & Godschalk, 2009), so in this case we wanted to test whether larger cities, which would generally have more capacity, would have higher quality plans that emphasized DEI more strongly. These cities would have more resources that would allow for planning processes that included more extensive demographic and other data analyses and public participation processes.

We expected that plans in cities with strong creative economy sectors would emphasize DEI, especially since these plans often double as marketing tools for cities to attract knowledge economy companies (Currid, 2008; Florida, 2002). We measured the creative economy in three ways, by NAICS codes, by IRS-reported arts sector self-employment (to capture people in the arts sector who do not work for a business or nonprofit), and by number of registered non-profits per 100,000 people. Given that a great deal of civil rights progress in planning and other sectors has come from residents and planners of color advocating for greater equity and inclusion (Thomas, 2008), we wanted to test whether or not cities with more racial, ethnic, and cultural diversity would emphasize DEI to a greater extent. Finally, we included variables for median household income and pre-1939 housing to see if plans in older, poorer cities or newer, wealthier

cities would exhibit a stronger commitment to DEI, as prior research has suggested (McCormick, 2017).

Analysis

After conducting tests for autocorrelation, we tested the relationships between our independent and dependent variables using four regression models, one for each of our dependent variables. We used robust regression for this analysis since a few cities acted as high-leverage outliers for some of the variables. Robust regression drops the most overly influential cases and down-weights cases with large absolute residuals (UCLA Institute for Digital Research and Education, 2020).

Results: DEI in Arts and Cultural Plans

Robust Regression

The results of the robust regression are shown in Table 6. The independent variables explain diversity, Model 1, the least well. Only the total number of public participation tools is predictive of the plan's emphasis on diversity and the model itself is not significant. Model 2, equity, suggests that newer plans and those cities with a higher percentage minority population have a stronger emphasis on equity, as do plans in cities with lower median household incomes. In Model 3, inclusion emphasis in the plan is higher in cities with lower median household incomes. Although we expected that public participation would be significantly correlated with inclusion, in this model it is not. Finally, Model 4, DEI Total, combines the dependent variables from the first three models plus the existence of a DEI goal and whether or not the plan mentioned DEI in its table of contents. Newer plans and those that used more public participation

methods demonstrate a significantly stronger emphasis on overall DEI, as well as plans in more diverse cities.

Overall, the variables most consistently correlated with DEI emphasis in our analysis were the recency of the plan, the robustness of the public participation process, a higher percentage minority population, and a lower median household income. It is encouraging that newer plans generally emphasized DEI more strongly, which suggests that, like general urban planners, arts and cultural planners are paying more attention to these issues. The correlation with public participation robustness is consistent with other work (Loh & Kim, 2020), yet the nature of the causal relationship is not entirely clear. Cities with an otherwise strong commitment to DEI may invest in more extensive public participation processes. In these cases, the plans may have featured a commitment to DEI even without an inclusive process. Alternatively, the feedback from the public participation process may drive the emphasis on DEI in the plan. Our measure of public participation, a simple count of types of public engagement methods used, is admittedly superficial, yet the results suggest that there is value in using multiple methods: the more types of engagement planners try, the more different people they may be able to reach. This is an area that needs further investigation and would benefit from in-depth interviews or a more targeted survey of participants.

Plans in more diverse cities did better on equity and overall DEI emphasis, but not diversity or inclusion. This suggests that, as we discuss above, in many cities there is a disconnect between who lives in the city and whose voices and views are included in the plan. Confoundingly, the plan may recommend what looked like to us an equitable distribution of resources, and include a

DEI goal, without having gotten meaningful input from the whole spectrum of city residents. Plans in cities with lower median household incomes more strongly emphasized equity and inclusion, suggesting that planners are sensitive to issues of access both to the planning process and to arts and cultural resources in cities with larger populations of lower income residents. Finally, we were surprised to find that none of the creative economy variables were significant in any model.

Table 6: Regression results

	Models			
Variables	**Diversity**	**Equity**	**Inclusion**	**DEI Total**
Constant	75.86 (159.50)	-257.65 (178.15)	-131.99 (94.41)	-647.96 (386.16)
Plan variables				
Public participation	0.67*** (0.30)	0.56 (0.33)	0.11 (0.18)	1.40* (0.72)
Year	0.04 (0.80)	0.12* (0.09)	0.07 (0.04)	0.33* (0.19)
Link to comp plan	0.90 (0.83)	1.37 (0.92)	0.79 (0.49)	2.83 (2.00)
City variables				
2016 Democratic winner	1.13 (1.01)	1.82 (1.13)	-0.37 (0.60)	2.46 (2.45)
Creative economy	0.11 (3.11)	0.20 (3.47)	-1.19 (1.84)	0.88 (7.52)
Arts self-employment	0.02 (0.07)	-0.08 (0.35)	-0.00 (0.04)	0.07 (0.18)
Non-profits/100k	0.02 (0.07)	0.01 (0.01)	-0.01 (0.01)	0.04 (0.03)
Percent minority	3.08 (3.14)	11.13*** (3.51)	1.99 (1.86)	17.62** (7.60)
Population size	0.04 (0.24)	0.06 (0.27)	0.13 (0.14)	0.08 (0.59)
Pre-1939 housing	-0.04 (0.03)	0.00 (0.03)	0.01 (0.02)	-0.03 (0.07)
Median household income	0.00 (0.00)	-0.00** (0.00)	-0.00* (0.00)	-0.00 (0.00)
Education	-0.11 (0.08)	0.08 (0.09)	0.06 (0.05)	-0.01 (0.20)
R-squared	0.30	0.45	0.30	0.39
No. of observations	64	64	64	64
Prob > F	0.1118	0.0004	0.0359	0.0053

Standard errors are reported in parentheses.
*, **, *** indicate significance at the 90%, 95%, and 99% level, respectively.

Descriptive results: What DEI elements did plans most often include?

We found that while many plans mentioned aspects of DEI, fewer recommended policies or actions that would make meaningful differences in expanding access or investment to underserved city residents. As Table 3 shows, 96% of the plans (all but one) mentioned the word diversity and 75% mentioned inclusion. Most of the plans touted diversity as a city asset. Many

also talked about inclusive processes or inclusion in arts participation. Equity, which we conceptualize as involving the nuts and bolts of redistribution, seems to be a more difficult concept, however. Only 30% of plans included the word equity or the phrase equitable development.

When we asked about specific policies that would advance equity in arts and cultural investment, access, and programming, we found that certain policies were much more prevalent than others. The most commonly recommended policies were free or low-cost events to improve access, grants for organizations that support programming for marginalized communities, and sponsoring events for marginalized groups. Plans demonstrated less awareness of how arts and cultural resources are distributed than we might have hoped. Only 25% of plans recommended locating public art in less resourced areas, and while 83% of plans identified underserved groups in need of arts and cultural investment (who was included in this category could vary between cities), only 41% of plans identified underserved geographic areas of the city. This focus on equity as access to events, without thinking about how geography influences that access, may leave significant gaps. For example, if an organization offers free or low-cost events, but the events are located far away from underserved neighborhoods, access is still limited. And the interest in diversity as a standalone concept, without specific and geographically targeted commitments to invest in implementation actions that would increase equity, may mean that the plans are not honoring the diversity of their cities in the way they may intend.

Examples: High and low scoring plans

In our content analysis of the plan texts, we looked for several characteristics to determine if a plan ranked as strong, mediocre, or weak from a diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) perspective. Out of the 64 plans we reviewed, the highest ranked plans were all completed after 2015. Some examples of these plans include New York City (2017), which identifies equity and inclusion, social and economic impact, and affordability under its strategies; Oakland (2018), which identifies equity as the driving force behind the vision of the plan; and Dallas (2018), which has Spanish versions of the plan available and lists equity and diversity as the plan's two top visioning priorities.

Plans that we identified as mediocre had no mention of DEI in their community priorities or vision but could identify DEI under areas identifying where they have work to do or only listed DEI under a single category such as referencing the strengthening of neighborhoods. For example, Boulder, CO's 2015 plan includes some demographic information and identifies findings regarding the failure to serve the Latino community of Boulder. But it limits addressing DEI to "an exploration of the challenges and opportunities that exist for engaging underserved communities," without better strategies for truly engaging the Latino population. Providence, RI's (2009) plan contained no demographics and the words Black, Hispanic, or Latino are never mentioned in the entire plan, even though the 2018 census lists the area's population as 53% white, 42% Hispanic, and 16% Black. Other than pictures representing people of color, their presence was not communicated in the text of the plan.

Broadly, the plans that registered as weak did not include diversity, equity or inclusion in their goals (or really talk about them at all), lacked demographic information, and had little to no

mention of underserved participants engaged in the planning process. The weakest plans were mostly produced prior to 2010. For example, Oklahoma City's (2009) plan only mentions African American, Hispanic and Asian cultures under a strategy focused on celebrating the city's assets as a way of enticing and entertaining residents and tourists.

How Can We Explain Differences in Arts and Cultural Plans' DEI Emphasis?

We originally had high expectations for how well arts and cultural plans would incorporate DEI content and goals, not least because they almost universally use diversity as a selling point. But, as it turns out, so often the people who make up those "diverse" cities are erased from the narrative, or are minor players, at best. To illustrate with a few examples, Springfield, MO's plan says, "Minority citizens have an increased sense of pride in public memorials that display a history of their ancestors' struggles" (City of Springfield, 2014, p. 34). Which minority citizens? Which struggles? What about noncitizens? Do we only care about dark periods in history or do we want to represent the full range of human experience of people of all backgrounds? In many cases, there is no mention of the history of these communities or groups that had lived there before. Reno, NV's plan says, "it is important that all members of the diverse Reno community are welcome to participate" and mentions that "about 30-35% of the Reno population is non-Caucasian" (City of Reno, 2011, p. 12). The plan never mentions who the non-Caucasians are. The Census says that about 25% of Renoites are of Spanish-speaking descent, yet the words Hispanic or Latino/a/x never appear in the plan. Many plans attempted to display the city's diversity through images of musicians and dancers of color. However, in most plans these images lacked even captions explaining who the artists were, let alone meaningful connections to the text. The effect is that the images are decoration, rather than inclusion.

Diversity, equity, and inclusion matter in arts and cultural plans for all the reasons they matter for plans in general: planners are supposed to emphasize equity issues and "expand choice and opportunity for all persons" (American Planning Association, 2016). Planning is still largely a white profession: 79% of 2018 APA salary survey respondents reported that they were white (American Planning Association, 2018). This means that planners in the majority need to work even harder to be inclusive. It should not be the responsibility of underserved city residents to ensure that the plan represents and serves them equitably, nor should it be the responsibility of planners of color. Municipal arts and cultural plans should both include and reflect back the cultural, racial, and ethnic backgrounds of city residents. However, an emphasis on DEI matters in particular for these plans because it would help them achieve their own internal goals.

Many of these plans come across as essentially marketing plans for the city, written with the goals of bringing in more people to participate in the arts, capitalizing on the city's diversity for participation/marketing/tourism purposes, and emphasizing what makes that city unique, rather than identifying and solving problems. Perhaps these types of plans' authors find it expedient to be vague about the details of what that diversity actually looks like. However, creating an inclusive plan that represents the entirety of the city's population, honors and celebrates diverse cultures, and makes explicit how investment and programming will be equitably distributed, has value from a process, implementation, and effectiveness standpoint. This goal, again, is a reason for planners to be involved in creating these types of plans.

Finally, although we consider the r-squared of the equity and DEI total models, especially, to indicate that these models do a reasonable job of capturing a very complex phenomenon, these

variables all reflect the environment rather than the characteristics of individual leadership, which can strongly affect the direction of a plan.

Conclusion

In this paper, we investigated the factors that could help explain why US municipal arts and cultural plans' emphasis on DEI varies. We found that newer plans and plans in cities with higher minority populations and cities with lower median household incomes emphasized equity, while plans with robust public participation processes in more diverse cities emphasized overall DEI. Plans in cities with lower median household incomes more strongly emphasized inclusion and plans in cities with robust public participation processes had a stronger emphasis on diversity. Plans were much more likely to talk about diversity and inclusion than the specifics of equitable distribution of arts and cultural resources. This result is not entirely surprising: it requires a small amount of commitment to DEI to identify who lives in a city, a somewhat larger commitment to involve people of all backgrounds in both public participation and authorship, and a much larger and more overt commitment to actually redistribute public resources in a way that most benefits the people who need them. There is not a template for how to make an equitable arts and cultural plan, nor is there even a consensus among elected and appointed leaders in the US that DEI or its individual elements are valuable. It is also important to reiterate that municipalities may be undertaking arts and culture-related DEI initiatives that do not appear in these plans. While overall, plans did not emphasize DEI to the extent we had hoped, the fact that newer plans increasingly emphasized DEI is positive. These findings raise several questions for future research. What are the implications (both for DEI and in general) of getting planners more involved in arts and cultural planning? What are the elements of a robust public process

that translate to best practices for a DEI centered public process? How might small, less diverse cities improve DEI in their communities using cultural planning practices? Most importantly, do DEI-oriented plans produce more inclusive and equitable outcomes? We hope future research will help provide answers to these questions.

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[i] Artwashing can be defined as "using the veneer of cultural engagement to whitewash tyrannical behaviour, often towards the very cultural sector it makes use of" (Dalley 2018).