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Creatively Transforming Transportation: Collaborating with Artists as a Model Towards Reparative Planning in Transportation

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Collaborating with Artists as a Model Towards
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A thesis submitted in partial satisfaction of the requirements for the degree

Master of Urban and Regional Planning

by

Lilith Daphne Saphire Winkler-Schor

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ABSTRACT OF THESIS

Creatively Transforming Transportation: Collaborating with Artists as a Model Towards Reparative Planning in Transportation

by

Lilith Daphne Saphire Winkler-Schor

Master of Urban and Regional Planning

University of California, Los Angeles, 2024

Professor Amada Armenta, Chair

This thesis finds that integrating artists into transportation agencies can fill a key gap in between traditional planning methods and reparative planning ideals. Using a comparative case study model, this paper examines two Transportation Artist in Residence (TAIR) programs in two American transportation agencies, Los Angeles Department of Transportation and Minnesota Department of Transportation, to understand how cross-sector collaborations between artists and transportation planners offer new tools for reparative justice. Many planning scholars and practitioners have called for the field to address its legacy of racial harm. In practice, many agencies have taken on this charge via deepened community engagement efforts. Yet, scholars have found the limits of these methods. Meanwhile, organizational theorists have studied the impact of incorporating artists into institutions to develop new modes of thinking. State and local

transportation agencies specifically have begun to experiment with these cross-sector collaborations, through which they hire artists to creatively approach challenges in the transportation landscape. This thesis develops a reparative planning framework based in the literature, and then, through semi-structured interviews with transportation planners, artists, and program administrators, this thesis examines how two transportation agencies' TAIR programs, and analyzes the result in processes and outcomes through a reparative planning framework. I find that artists bring a key relational approach to transportation planning processes, and that institutions struggle to institutionalize this approach, despite their appreciation for the new tools it provides them. I argue that this inherent tension between artists' relational approach and traditional transportation methods is at the crux of racial harm and healing. I propose that TAIR programs offer this field a unique model for how transportation planning can take reparative planning approaches to address racial harm and build more just futures. Ultimately, this thesis suggests that reparative justice is a cross-sector effort and invites agencies at the highest level to continue exploring collaborating with artists in the pursuit of authentic racial redress and equity.

The thesis of Lilith Daphne Saphire Winkler-Schor is approved.

Karen N. Umemoto

Evelyn A. Blumenberg

Amada Armenta, Committee Chair

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Introduction

The urban planning profession is at an inflection point. As the profession reaches its centennial, the role of urban planning is being questioned, often from planners themselves. In her book, *Unlearning the Colonial Cultures of Planning,* Libby Porter (2010) calls for a critical conversation among planners about the violent histories to which the planning profession is tied. Building on a series of critical scholarly voices in the 1990s, she writes that urban planning is at the nexus of colonialism and the dispossession of Indigenous land through its efforts for political and economic growth, specifically arguing that, "in the context of settler states this has meant that planning has been, and remains, integrally involved in dispossession" (Porter 2010, 51). Since the 1990s, urban planning scholars have continued to call for a reflexive examination of its role in racial injustice (Giamarino et al. 2022; Goetz, Williams, and Damiano 2020; Roy 2006; Sandercock 2004)

Transportation planning is no exception to the larger critiques of urban planning. In the United States, the legacy of racial harm in transportation is most acutely felt via the Federal Highway Act's implementation of freeways through communities of color in the twentieth century, damaging the social and environmental fabric of Black, Chicano, Asian, and Native areas in cities like New Orleans, San Diego, Houston, Boston, and across Hawaii (Avila 2014). Further, the presence of state highways and less-pedestrian friendly infrastructure in these neighborhoods are correlated with higher rates of traffic death and severe injury, making this legacy a lethal one (Barajas 2021). In a 2017 report, *Beyond Traffic: 2045*, USDOT's Secretary Foxx formally acknowledged the agency's history, mandating that the agency not only "acknowledge its historical role in furthering opportunity gaps," but also "embrace its role in closing them" (Foxx 2017, 92).

Since Secretary Foxx's call to action, transportation agencies across government levels have embarked on racial redress projects and equity initiatives. At a local level, the City of New Orleans has been working to repair the damage of I-10's erasure of the city's historic Black commercial district via the Claiborne Cultural Innovation District initiative (Colloqate, The Network for Economic Opportunity, and City of New Orleans 2017). St. Paul Minnesota's ReConnect Rondo brought together a variety of partners, including state-level MnDOT, local partners, and national nonprofit leaders to "right the wrongs of the devastation caused by the original I-94 construction" (ReConnect Rondo n.d.). The Congress for New Urbanism's Freeways without Futures initiative has documented dozens of state highways removal projects since 2008, ranging from Oakland to Albany (Mayer 2023). Building on these local projects, the USDOT recently launched the Reconnecting Communities pilot program, a "first-of-its-kind initiative to reconnect communities that are cut off from opportunity and burdened by past transportation infrastructure decisions" (USDOT 2023, n.p.). This program invests $185 million in federal resources to address racialized transportation policies of the past. Of the initial 80 recipients of the pilot program, 14 have included some form of arts component into their Reconnecting Communities project (Lovelee, Nezam, and Taylor 2024).

In recent years, some transportation agencies have also experimented with embedding artists into specific transportation divisions and departments to bring catalytic thinking to deeply entrenched transportation problems. For example, through MnDOT's participation in ReConnect Rondo, they collaborated with the national nonprofit Smart Growth America (SGA). SGA later pitched them on piloting a Transportation Artist in Residence (TAIR) program, a cross-sector collaborative model in which state and local transportation agencies have contracted artists to serve in fellowship-like positions in order to creatively approach challenges in the transportation

landscape and better connect with hard to reach communities. Different from public arts programs, which seek artwork for transportation *projects,* TAIR programs seek to incorporate artists as collaborators into transportation agencies' planning *processes*. MnDOT's TAIR program ran from 2019-2023. Similarly, Los Angeles' DOT (LADOT) hosted two artists as a part of the Los Angeles Creative Catalyst program from 2016-2021. In this thesis, I compare LADOT's and MnDOT's Transportation Artist in Residence programs—the former program developed outside of a reparative planning context, the latter a result of a reparative project partnership—to understand if this emergent practice offers transportation agencies new possibilities for reparative planning. While not designed specifically for racial redress, I find that the artists' approaches and program outcomes at both MnDOT and LADOT are aligned with reparative planning theory. Thus, I argue that the TAIR programs offer transportation agencies a new mechanism to approach reparative planning.

I begin this argument with a review of the current literature on reparative planning theory. Synthesizing the proposed frameworks, I develop a framework through which to analyze the TAIR case studies. Moving from the theory to praxis, I then discuss the state of public participation, as public participation is often put as the antidote for a history of top-down planning and racial inequity. Detailing the emerging efforts to integrate creative approaches into urban planning and governance, I discuss why artists are the right collaborators to reimagine bureaucratic processes. This is where I introduce the TAIR programs and the skills that artists bring to the transportation planning table. Lastly, I conduct a comparative case study of two TAIR programs—LADOT's collaboration with the City of Los Angeles Department of Cultural Affairs' Creative Catalyst program and MnDOT's collaboration with national nonprofit Smart Growth America's Transportation Artist in Residence pilot program—to explore how

transportation agencies' collaboration with artists in transportation planning process ultimately offers new pathways in reparative planning. Ultimately, I find that both agencies have been seeking to address racial harm and promote equity and have unconsciously leaned on artists to provide new tools towards a reparative planning framework.

Ideological Changes: From Traditional Planning to Reparative Planning

The American urban planning field developed among the elites, with its roots steeped in racial control over property and exclusion (Freund 2007). However, scholars over the last century have called for new theoretical approaches for how to design our cities, including Advocacy Planning, Equity Planning, and Therapeutic Planning, among others (see Davidoff 1965; Krumholz 1982; Sandercock 2004). In the last decade, scholars and practitioners have continued to develop a more explicitly anti-racist theory and praxis that acknowledges the field's roots in racism and white supremacy (Goetz, Williams, and Damiano 2020; Porter 2010; The Untokening 2017; D. A. Williams et al. 2023; R. Williams and Steil 2023).

In developing explicitly anti-racist planning practices, scholars and practitioners are proposing frameworks that reimagine the planning process to be more equitable, just, and accountable to the past. Specifically, Williams (2020) called for a "planning appurtenant to the reparations movement" (8) to address the historic, ongoing, and multifaceted racial harms that Black Americans have endured at the hands of the State. Williams and Steil (2023) then develop a "reparative planning" framework as an "opportunity to focus on collective repair of collective harm" (586-587). This process-oriented approach builds on reparations scholarship to transform the way that the planning field functions. In putting forth a theoretical model for reparative planning, they offer the disclaimer that reparative planning is "distinct from reparations and the

critiques of reparations," (586) though they say the model "can take place before or in conjunction with reparations themselves," (586). In this disclaimer, they essentially argue that alongside reparations, we must imagine institutions that offer space for repair. To achieve this repair, Williams and Steil (2023) root their theory in a tradition of Black radical thinkers. They first offer three widely discussed pillars of 1.) public recognition, 2.) material redistribution, and 3.) social and spatial transformation and repair. They then build out the final point *social and spatial transformation and repair* category, to include a more process-oriented perspective that includes 3a.) value Black community and joy, 3b.) advance economic democracy, 3c.) recognize intersectionality, 3d.) critique state violence and build democratic institutions, and finally 3e.) build environmental justice.

Song and Mizrahi (2023) connect reparative planning with transportation to discuss how transportation infrastructure—or the outcomes of transportation planning—could serve as a site of repair. In their analysis of Act LA's *Metro as a Sanctuary* report, they "conceptualize reparative planning as a continuum encompassing reparations measures occurring within institutionalized venues and social practices" (570). Within this cyclic process, they use the U.N. principles of "Right to a Remedy and Reparation" which include aiding those who have been harmed in seeking a) restitution, b) compensation, c) rehabilitation, d) satisfaction, and e) cessation/assurance of nonrepetition" (570). Within this system, we see how narrowly the international community thinks about reparations, focusing more on redress of a specific incident. The framework offers little for a systematic reimagination.

Outside of the academy, movement leaders have also provided frameworks for thinking about anti-racist and reparative work (Cullors 2019; Lugo, Doerner, and Szczepanski 2016). Specific to transportation and equity, a group of justice advocates of color founded The

Untokening collective, which put forth a series of principles regarding mobility justice within planning. Their ten principles can be seen in Table 1 below (The Untokening 2017).

Table 1: Comparing Reparative and Justice Frameworks

Article	**Williams & Steil (2023)**	**Song & Mizrahi (2023)**	**Untokening (2017)**
Name	Reparative Planning	UN Framework	Mobility Justice Framework
Reparative Focus	Black Americans	Those Harmed	BIPOC
Scope	Offers an opportunity to focus on collective repair of collective harm	Institutional and social practices that centers those who have been harmed in seeking:	New vision that lays the foundation necessary to pursue mobility justice
Tenets	1.) Public Recognition 2.) Material Redistribution 3.) Social and spatial transformation and repair a.) Value Black community and joy b.) Advance economic democracy c.) Recognize intersectionality d.) Critique state violence and build democratic institutions e.) Build environmental justice	A. restitution B. compensation C. rehabilitation D. satisfaction E. cessation/ assurance of non-repetition	1. Seek to repair harm, not erase history 2. Identity influences vulnerability 3. Prioritize people 4. See structural barriers 5. Discard “best practices” to respond to local need 6. Value community voices as essential data 7. Co-create new decision making processes 8. Reject policing as a street safety solution 9. Address environmental racism 10. Cultivate collective, cross-community power

In comparing the three reparative frameworks put forward by Williams & Steil (2023), Song & Mizhari (2023), and the Untokening (2017), we see some overlapping themes including acknowledging harm, material repair, people-centric approaches, process transformation, institutional critiques and change, and environmental justice. These categories echo the framework leading urban design scholars Giamarino et al. (2022) Just Design framework,

developed to assess prevailing urban design theories towards their conceptualization of social justice. Though not a reparative framework, as it is not focused specifically on race nor repair for past harm, they categorize justice elements into four concepts: distributive, procedural, interactional, and recognitional. Table 2 categorizes each framework to show overlapping themes and tenets. I indicate the alignment between these categories and those from Giamarino et al. (2022) by listing the latter's terminology in parenthesis under the Shared Values column.

Table 2: **Categorizing Reparative Frameworks**

Shared Value	Williams & Steil (2023)	Song & Mizrahi (2023)	Untokening (2017)
Acknowledge Harm (Recognitional)	● Public recognition of harm	● Restitution and compensation inherently require acknowledgement of harm	● Seek to repair harm, not erase history
Material Repair (Distributive)	● Material redistribution	● Restitution ● Compensation	
People-Centric Healing (Interactional)	● Value Black community and joy ● Recognize intersectionality	● Rehabilitation ● Satisfaction	● Identity influences vulnerability ● Prioritize people
Process Transformation (Procedural)	● Recognize Intersectionality (in engagement process to challenge intersecting oppressions)	● Cessation/ assurance of non-repetition	● Discard best practices to respond to local need ● Value community voices as essential data ● Co-create new decision making processes
Institutional Change & Power Distribution	● Critique state violence and build democratic institutions ● Advance economic democracy	● Cessation/assurance of non-repetition ● Institutionalized practice	● Cultivate collective, cross-community power ● See structural barriers
Environmental Justice	● Build environmental justice		● Address environmental racism

For the rest of this study, I use a synthesized reparative planning framework, shown in Table 3, that brings together the frameworks from these scholars and practitioners. I use this synthesized framework because I find each framework contributes something important for this study. Williams and Steil (2023) centers the discussion most specifically in reparative planning and focuses on the harm committed against Black Americans. Song and Mizrahi (2023) provide an internationally used framework that takes the perspective of agencies and institutions that have committed harm. Untokening (2017) offers operationalizable tenets for agencies and practitioners to undertake, most notably in the area of what process transformation should look like. Lastly, Giamarino et al. (2022) provide discrete categorizations to approach this work that help clarify an actional rubric for agencies to use.

In the synthesized reparative planning framework (Table 3), I propose a six-pronged approach for reparative planning justice that is 1.) recognitional, 2.) distributive, 3.) relational, 4.) procedural, 5.) institutional, and 6.) environmental. I opt to use the term *relational,* rather than Giamarino et al's (2022) *interactional* for two reasons. One, I believe it better captures the people-centered approaches that the reparative planning scholars draw upon, including community and joy (per Williams & Steil 2023). Here, I also borrow from Sandercock (2004) who calls for a therapeutic approach that allows for the "possibility of social transformation, of a process of public learning that results in permanent shifts in values and institutions" (139). Two, I believe that "relational" speaks more to the healing, or rehabilitation per Song & Mizrahi (2023), and ethos of repair required for reparative planning than does *interactive*.

The above-mentioned authors are providing new concepts for racial equity in transportation planning via theory for racial redress and repair. However, within practice, current efforts and discussion on racial equity are largely framed through an assessment of community

engagement. Thus, in the next section, I discuss the literature on public participation generally, and transportation planning specifically.

Table 3: Synthesized Reparative Planning Framework

Category	Attributes	Framework
Recognitional	Acknowledgement of past and current racial harms as the starting point for reparative planning. Prioritization of the cultural claims of marginalized social groups within spaces and institutions.	William & Steil (2023); Untokening (2017); Giamarino et al. (2022); Song & Mizrahi (2023
Distributive	Outcomes that provide material redistribution, compensation, and restitution to communities that have been dispossessed or excluded.	William & Steil (2023); Giamarino et al. (2022); Song & Mizrahi (2023)
Relational	Approaches that heal past relational harms and build strong relationships that value the communities that have been harmed, including their joy, intersectional identities, priorities, and expertise.	William & Steil (2023); Giamarino et al. (2022); Untokening (2017); Song & Mizrahi (2023); Sandercock (2004)
Procedural	Processes that respond to local need through collaboration, valuing community voices as essential data, and co-created decision making processes, such that community is ensured of non-repetition of past harm.	William & Steil (2023); Untokening (2017); Giamarino et al. (2022); Song & Mizrahi (2023)
Institutional	Institutionalized reparative practice, such that as an institution staff and leadership own and atone for past racial harm, ensure non-repetition, advance democracy and build cross-community power.	William & Steil (2023); Untokening (2017); Song & Mizrahi (2023)
Environmental	Climate solutions that prioritizes those most harmed by environmental racism in their solutions to mitigate the climate crisis becoming the latest arena for racial dispossession and harm.	William & Steil (2023); Untokening (2017)

A Stuck Praxis: Can Public Participation Deliver?

In practice, the call for racial equity and redress in planning has often looked to solutions rooted in better inclusion of those historically excluded. For example, in Secretary Foxx's statement about past racial harms and embracing a role in fixing them, he goes on to say:

> When communities *lack a voice* in the transportation planning process and infrastructure is designed with solely mobility in mind, a child's neighborhood is divided by transportation infrastructure in a manner that segregates one area from another, personal connections are cut, local businesses lose their customers, opportunity is lost [emphasis added]. (Foxx 2017, 92)

Indeed, community voice is often placed as the antidote to the history of top-down planning. However, public participation has its limits for institutionalizing change. Arnstein's (1969) seminal work starts the argument among planners and public administrators that citizen voice should belong in government. She argued that not only should the public be included in decision-making and implementation of government projects, but it must be meaningful. In her critique of top-down approaches to urbanism, Arnstein (1969) develops the first participation model for urban planners. To Arnstein (1969, 216), "citizen participation is a categorical term for citizen power. It is the redistribution of power that enables the have-not citizens, presently excluded from the political and economic processes, to be deliberately included in the future." While more recent scholarship (see Bratt and Reardon 2013; Wilson 2018) provide critiques and adaptations to Arnstein's framework to account for the increasingly complex community development landscape around privatizate-public partnerships and funding structures, it launched a conversation about the role of residents, particularly the "have-nots," in shaping the policies and programs that affect them. Her call for citizen control demands a shift in paradigm of how residents are valued and empowered within governance.

Since Arnstein (1969), practitioners have worked to adapt traditional processes into more community-centric processes. Wilson (2018) offers us an overview of the roughly dozen community-oriented design subfields that have emerged in the world of practice, placing them on two axes, one of *community*- versus *expert-driven* and the other *product*- versus *capacity-driven*. While Wilson (2018) illustrates the growth of a more community-driven urban design field, it is noteworthy that these practices have largely remained in the nonprofit sector, and have not found

their way into planning agencies that wield disproportionate power over our larger built environment, particularly in transportation planning.

The conversation around the inadequacies of public participation in urban planning is ongoing, particularly in the transportation sector. Lowe and Jones (2023) succinctly state that, "within transportation, participation does not seem to be at top levels of Arnstein's ladder, despite some mandates for public hearings and transparency in federal rules" (4). Due to its technical approaches, transportation planning, more so than other areas of urban planning, continues to contend with the tension between how to balance technical knowledge and what might be produced via the meaningful public participation required for *relational*, *procedural*, and *institutional* justice. Arguing for a move away from a purely technical-rational approach of transportation planning that grew over the late 20th century, Vigar (2017) outlines four different bodies of knowledge that transportation planners should draw from: technical/codified, embodied/localized, political, and practice-centered. These bodies of knowledge echo key elements in our reparative planning framework, including *valuing localized knowledge as essential data*. In evaluating embodied knowledge, Lowe, Barajas, and Coren (2023) found that incorporating lived expertise can add nuance and complexity to the key transportation accessibility concepts, particularly around interlocking barriers for riders of color. However, whether better engagement and *procedural* justice truly leads to *institutional* justice is still unclear. Nostikarsari and Casey (2020) found that transportation professionals tended to shape resident feedback to support engineering models and expert knowledge, rather than letting resident experiences shape alternative, opposing, or nuanced understandings of how transportation plans should come together.

As public participation scholars show, traditional community engagement in transportation has struggled to meet the demand of a reparative planning paradigm. While Secretary Foxx's comments suggest that transportation planning can right its past wrongs through culturally sensitive and responsive community engagement, the efforts will undoubtedly fall short. Further, focusing on community engagement-focused solutions leaves planners in the present. Racial redress will rightly have to start at where the harm occurred in order to build into more just presents and futures.

Emerging New Methods: Artists as Collaborators in Transportation Planning

Why artists? Artists can be catalysts for change. Often, they work to frame, or reframe, cultural perceptions of pressing social issues and current structures (Bukowiecki, Wawrzyniak, and Wróblewska 2020; Koren 2020; Olsen 2019; Richardson 2018; Selz 2006). Within organizations such as businesses and bureaucracies, they can spark new ways of thinking (Antal and Strauss 2016; Barry and Meisiek 2010; Meisiek and Barry 2016; Skoldberg, Woodilla, and Antal 2016). In this section, I outline the growth of cross-sector artist collaborations—a model of hiring artists to be embedded in a non-art context—as a tool for innovation within organizations, and how the findings from cross-sector practice illustrate the power of artists to be key collaborators for reparative planning. Before I expound on the role of artists, in Table 4 I first summarize how I use language around cross-sector collaborations with artists. As an emerging and interdisciplinary practice, much of the language is uncodified.

Table 4: Terms and Definitions

Term	Type	Definition
Cross-sector Collaboration	Model	A model of practice in which artists work in non-arts private, nonprofit, and government sectors to collaborate with non-arts practitioners.
Artist in Residence (AIR) Also: CAIR or TAIR	Program	An agency's program to embed an artist in an institution. AIRs are a broader term in the art-world than can describe non-civic placements, thus, I typically use "civic" artist in residence (CAIR) program to describe general public-sector programs, or transportation artist in residence (TAIR) to specify a placement in a transportation agency.
Civic Practice Arts	Genre	An art genre focused on civic systems and civic transformation. This is different from Civic Arts, which includes all public-sector art, including art in the public domain, such as metro stops and public buildings, as well as publicly funded programs such as City Poet Laureates.
Civic Artist	Profession	The professional artists that make work in the genre of Civic Practice Arts.
Resident Artist/ Embedded Artist	Role/ Position	The relationship of the practitioner artist to the agency while they are embedded in the institution during the time of the residency.

Artists have a unique set of skills that position them well for engaging in social commentary, particularly about the interlocking nature between past and present (Bukowiecki, Wawrzyniak, and Wróblewska 2020; Richardson 2018)**.** These skills lend themselves well to recognitional justice. Artists not only determine what constitutes their art, as well as make something from nothing, but also make meaningful things that shape perspective and stand out in noisy landscapes (Koren 2020). Through their artistic approach, artists have the potential to shape collective memory. Within contexts of entrenched colonialism or oppressive structures, artists also reshape collective memory and reinterpret familiar institutions (Bukowiecki, Wawrzyniak, and Wróblewska 2020; Richardson 2018). Smith's (2021) exemplifies the power of arts in his examination of how stories of slavery get told in the U.S. During a visit to Whitney Plantation, he describes Woodrow Nash's art piece, *The Children of Whitney.* Nash created a

series of slightly smaller-than-life statues of children which are spread throughout the preserved plantation. In his telling, Smith shares that the director of operations describes that the art piece forces visitors to confront the realities of slavery, "and the reality of slavery is child enslavement" (Smith 2021, 62). Here, an artist was able to offer a recognitional justice through drawing attention to the enslaved children who are often overlooked in our national memory.

Though artists act from outside of social systems, artist movements also have experimented with reimagining their role as insiders through cross-sector collaborations (Barry and Meisiek 2010; Skoldberg, Woodilla, and Antal 2016)**.** This repositioning from agitator to instigator allowed artists to affect *procedural* and *institutional* aspects of organizations. In the 1970s, a group of UK artists began the Artists Placement Group, which embedded artists into different workplaces, "to provide artists with access to the problems and realities of industrialized societies" (Barry and Meisiek 2010, 1513). In an American business context, Xerox famously hosted an Artist in Residence in their Research and Development division, PARC (Skoldberg, Woodilla, and Antal 2016). Within these embedded residencies, artists used the workplace as their medium and inspiration. For example, conductor Peter Hanke compared business management to conducting music, pushing leaders to examine their workflow practices as they led their employees in a choir. In their residency with Xerox Parc, artist Stephen Wilson used the recently developed internet search function as metaphors for life choices. In his resulting residency project, he paralleled omitted search engine responses with the "what-if's" of different paths (Barry and Meisiek 2010).

Similarly, the firms sought these artists to transform their organizations through new ideas and imaginations (Barry and Meisiek 2010; Lithgow and Wall 2019; Skoldberg, Woodilla, and Antal 2016). By incorporating artists, workplaces suddenly had new tools for meaning-

making in the workplace, shifting perspectives and pushing employees to "reconceive their work practices" (Barry and Meisiek 2010, 1515). Darsø (2016) describes the benefit to businesses as "constructive disturbances" (22), arguing that the right collaboration will balance the disturbance to the status quo with the appropriate amount of constructiveness. Excited by their potential for innovation, Sweden, Denmark, and Spain collectively sponsored over 100 embedded artist placements in the early 2000s (Barry and Meisiek 2010). Organizational model scholars describe the potential for *procedural* and *institutional* elements of organizations, citing hopes for both new processes, but also for new organizational cultures of innovation.

While the early movements of cross-sector collaboration took place in the private sector, government entities also have enlisted the power of artists within public-sector work (Lithgow and Wall 2017, 2019; Meisiek and Barry 2016; Taylor 2021, 2023)**.** Looking for a solution for institutional change, in 2009 a Danish governmental agency established the department for Innovation and Knowledge Sharing to address extremely siloed work between law making and citizen services. Within this initiative, the agency sought artists as communicators, tasking them to facilitate creative conversation around the problems within this tense environment. Seeing positive but short-lived results, the agency went on to develop an arts space in the agency which they called an "organizational studio" in order to integrate this cross-sector work more deeply. Through their pilot workshop, artists were able to uncover key *institutional* challenges, including, for example, how the law department had implicitly conceived their role as "outside" of constituent services, much to the surprise of their colleagues who saw them as key players in service delivery (Meisiek and Barry 2016). In the US, government agencies have similarly sought artists to improve communication and constituent relationships, albeit with a more traditional arts model. The National Park Service founded an artist in residence program in 1916,

followed by NASA's art program in 1962 Taylor (2021). While early residencies, such as at NASA and NPS were developed to communicate outward with the public, Taylor (2021) finds similar results to the private-sector collaborations, such that more recent cross-sector residencies in the government sector produces idea generation within departments, as well as shows promise for culture shift.

Over the last couple decades, leaders in the planning and community development fields have advocated for the integration of arts as a multi-faceted approach to better connect with residents (NASAA 2023; Transportation for America 2017; VanderSchaaf and Kayzar 2021). Often, these field leaders advocate the arts as a means for better *relational* planning. Within the transportation sector, field builders such as Smart Growth America have called for incorporating art as a tool for innovation, safety, organizing advocates, inclusive engagement, local stewardship, alleviating disruption, and healing (Transportation for America 2017). Similarly, the American Planning Association saw unique potential for the role of integrating arts into Rail Transit Corridors, including around physical infrastructure development, creating regional identity, and strengthening relationships with community—particularly as it relates to ethnic and cultural identities (VanderSchaaf and Kayzar 2021). An APA handbook highlights that integrating arts can bolster community identity, engagement efforts and build trust within communities (VanderSchaaf and Kayzar 2021). Similarly, in Antal and Strauss' (2016) meta-study of private-sector placements, they found that participants appreciated the ways that arts activations allowed them to better incorporate emotions. Taken together, practitioners and scholars describe the ability for arts and artists to encourage a more *relational* approach that, per the synthesized framework definition, *values the communities that have been harmed, including their joy, intersectional identities, priorities, and expertise.*

More recently, local governments across the US have looked to deepen the role of arts in planning by embedding artists into various government departments. Resident artists from Oakland to Fargo to Boston have been placed in public libraries, offices of violence prevention, voter registrars, and departments of public health, transportation, race and equity, and more (Asleson, Cunningham, and Ingram 2015; Bissell and Sen 2024; Eden 2016; Garcia 2021; Hanzlik 2020; NASAA 2023; Sherman, Montgomery, and Bruck 2018). Field builders have promoted these civic artists in residence programs to contribute to both the external facing processes, such as public engagement, but also internally by focusing work on personnel and departmental culture (NASAA 2023). A recent 18-month evaluation of Oakland's Cultural Strategist-in-Residence program found that their twelve embedded cultural workers, all of whom were Oakland residents of color, allowed for an increased risk tolerance and improved civic engagement, brought value to government practice, and built trust between residents and governments (Bissell and Sen 2024). These results echo Antal and Strauss's (2016) meta-analysis, which found that managers had increased levels of courage to try new things through the presence of artists in their workplace.

Scholars describe the ability for artists to challenge the status quo in multiple ways, including describing their practice as "constructive disturbance" (Darso 2016, 22) and artists as "problem finders" (Whitehead 2020, 17). While many departments have developed artist in residence programs to increase creative problem solving in agencies (much like the private businesses that sought artists in the century prior), Whitehead (2020) argues that artists reframe the proposed problems to find new ones. These new problems, viewed from a non-bureaucrat perspective, can create a "decolonization of knowledge through Epistemic Disobedience," (Whitehead 2020, 36). Epistemic Disobedience, she says, has been critical to her work with

Black communities in post-industrial Gary Indiana, and indigenous Maori communities in New Zealand.

Whether called problem finding, epistemic disobedience, or constructive disturbance, artists' ability to break from the status quo make them natural allies in pushing the planning field toward a new, and reparative, paradigm, particular for areas of *procedural* justice. For example, when the Oakland Department of Transportation brought on filmmaker Walter Wallace, he pushed the department to ask deep questions about the purpose of community engagement within the agency. Through his approach and community-filmmaking project, he challenged his bureaucratic peers to view the project as internal departmental learning, rather than community engagement. This ultimately reframed the task from an awareness campaign about DOT services "to increasing trust, responsiveness, and accountability of OakDOT to Oakland residents" (Bissell and Sen 2024, 59). Thus, as a civic artist, Wallace not only created film-based art with constituents, but he also intervened in the civic system. He reframed the power dynamics, pushing for a new *procedural* approach that, per this thesis' framework, could better r*espond to local need through collaboration, valuing community voices as essential data, and co-created decision making processes.*

Metzger (2011) and Sandercock (2004) provide theoretical arguments for incorporating artists into the urban planning process. Metzger (2011) argues that artists have the ability to transform typically routine and boring processes into something new. While the role of the planner is "expected to be prosaic," artists, he argues, are afforded artistic license, or permission to "make strange" (Metzger 2011, 223). By including artists in the bureaucratic processes, planners, however, can maintain their predictability, consistency, and transparency, while

balancing the frustrations that can come with those features—slowness, roteness, and restraint—with the excitement, discovery and creativity that artists can provide.

Sandercock (2004) takes the integration of artists and planners further, arguing for an entire reimagination of planning in the 21st Century to become "political, audacious, creative, and therapeutic" (134). In her diagnosis of the ails of 20th century planning, she calls out the risk aversion in bureaucracies and how this is linked to an "obsession with control and certainty" that comes into conflict with listening to the "voices of multiple publics" (Sandercock 2004, 136-137). Oakland's evaluation provides some initial evidence that artists can directly combat this risk aversion (Bissell and Sen 2024). Ultimately, Sandercock (2004) suggests that through these adaptations, "there is the possibility of social transformation, of a process of public learning that results in permanent shifts in values and institutions" (139). This sounds a lot like reparative planners' call for repair.

The potential for artists to provide *distributive* justice is absent in the literature. However, future studies could and should study the government-funded salaried positions targeted for local BIPOC artists as a form of *distribution* justice. For example, cohort-based programs in Oakland, Sacramento, LA County, and Boston select an overwhelming majority of BIPOC artists (Bissell and Sen 2024; City of Sacramento 2023; Garcia 2021; Sherman, Montgomery, and Bruck 2018). Similarly, future studies could examine whether government attention and resources are redistributed differently when artists participate in planning processes, especially when they come from historically excluded communities themselves.

While this study does not focus on *environmental* justice, as that dimension requires a deeper dive into the robust body of environmental justice literature that is outside of the scope of this thesis, it is worth noting the artists discussed environmental justice and activism (Selz 2006).

Within cross-sector residencies, civic artists have undertaken extensive projects that tie together climate, environment, and racial justice (See Asleson, Cunningham, and Ingram 2015; Whitehead 2020). Similar to *distributive* justice, future studies could examine transportation artist in residence programs entirely through an *environmental* justice lens.

Lastly, while research suggests that one of the goals of cross-sector collaborations is *institutional* transformation through residencies, scholars frequently question whether these programs have lasting impact once the residencies have ended (Antal and Strauss 2016). Long-term change can be hindered by structural failures such as a lack of committed time from the organization or the lack of a plan for intellectual transfer (Antal and Strauss 2016; Raviola and Schnugg 2016). Further, Antal and Strauss (2016) argue that for organizational transfer of learnings to occur, institutions, not the artists, must build the structures for reflection and internalization. Ultimately, as Styhre and Fröberg (2016) assert, cross-sector collaborations are under-theorized. By offering the theoretical lens of reparative planning, my hope is that scholars and practitioners can develop new understanding for embarking on this work with new motivations. Racial repair is long overdue. In our attempt to rectify past wrongs, the planning field must think boldly and intentionally about how to do this work justice.

Methods

This study uses Yin's (1994) approach to comparative case studies to compare the Los Angeles Department of Transportation's (LADOT) collaboration with the Creative Catalyst Program and Minnesota Department of Transportation's (MnDOT) artist in residence collaboration with Smart Growth America, referred to as the "Transportation Equity Fellowship". The methods combine qualitative semi-structured interviews and document review of government documents, policies, program documentation, evaluations, and public presentations to triangulate interview and document data.

I draw from interviews with 16 participants, 10 of which are transportation planners, four artists, and two program administrators, which took place between October 2023 and January 2024 and typically lasted between 60-90 minutes. The shortest interview lasted 30 minutes; the longest lasted two hours. I conducted all interviews over Zoom, and am a White female graduate student. I recorded all but one of the interviews using Zoom's record function. I used Zoom's closed caption feature to generate transcripts. I then rewatched interviews to edit transcripts for accuracy. For the interview that took place over the phone, and therefore was not recorded, I took word-for-word notes. I was unable to re-watch this interview.

The interviews focused on understanding the impact of TAIR programs on transportation agencies at large, with each containing five segments: professional background of interviewee, experience of agency, experience of TAIR program, perceived impact of the program, and reflections of the practice. I produced two versions of the interview guide, one tailored to planners/administrators and the other for artists. See Appendix A and B for both interview guides.

I selected these two programs due to their placement in transportation agencies, the number of completed residence iterations, level of operation (city and state), and access I had to practitioners. I used snowball sampling within each case study, originating with the interviews of the primary participating artists and planner teams, and then interviewing additional planners and collaborating program administrators as recommended by interviewees. For confidentiality reasons, I have given all interviewees pseudonyms.

I did not prioritize a racially representative sample, but rather to comprehensively interview all planners, administrators, and artists involved in these small programs within the agency. This resulted in a sample that largely skews White, particularly for the MnDOT case (see Table 5). Of LADOT planners, three were people of color, three were White. At MnDOT, all planners were White women. Of the 19 program participants that I contacted, six declined to partake in the research. Two LADOT staff members could not participate due to scheduling challenges. Three MnDOT participants opted out, two of whom cited a lack of participation in the TAIR program overall. However, I identified all contacted non-participants to be White. Without agency employee demographic data, I cannot determine whether this sample is skewed relative to the overall workforce demographic composition of the agency.

I interviewed all four of the participating artists, two from each program. The selected artists for both programs happened to include an Asian male artist in the first iteration and a White female artist in the second. The absence of Black or Indigenous, and Latinx artists in this case should not be taken as a norm of civic artist in residency programs, however. Cohort based programs in Oakland, Sacramento, LA County, and Boston select an overwhelming majority of BIPOC artists (Bissell and Sen 2024; City of Sacramento 2023; Garcia 2021; Sherman,

Montgomery, and Bruck 2018). Despite the lack of racial diversity in this sample, racial equity, harm and redress arose as prominent themes nonetheless.

Table 5: Study Participants by Role and Race

LADOT (n=9)			**MnDOT** (n=7)		
Name	**Race**	**Role**	**Name**	**Race**	**Role**
Ted	White	Admin	Adam	White	Admin
Owen	Asian	Artist	Brian	Asian	Artist
Irene	White	Artist	Julia	White	Artist
David	Latino	Planner	Rebecca	White	Planner
Keiko	Asian	Planner	Tara	White	Planner
Amanda	White	Planner	Samantha	White	Planner
Ade	Black	Planner	Trisha	White	Planner
Eric	White	Planner			
Evelyn	White	Planner			

Data Analysis

I took a highly iterative approach for this thesis. To code transcripts, I used a flexible coding approach, as outlined by Detering & Water (2021). For this process, I index the semi-structured interviews using codes based on the question in my interview guide's five segments: professional background, experience of agency, experience of TAIR program, perceived impact of the program, and reflections of the practice. I then conducted thematic indexing on broader categories including professional motivations, public service, innovation/risk, racial equity, artist qualities, community engagement, staff/bureaucracy, collaboration, and humanization. After indexing the transcripts, I determined key areas of interest including this study's specific research question of "What can TAIR programs offer reparative planning?" which arose from

the interviewees' focus on race, redress, and project outcomes. Thus, the research question is an emergent theme of the study, rather than a predetermined focus of the interviews. While I cannot know how my race, age, and gender as a White woman affected respondents, there is potential that my Whiteness presented a sense of "neutrality" around race and my gender allowed respondents to assume a sympathy towards racial and social issues.

Because the research question was an emergent theme, and called upon a return to the literature, I developed the reparative planning framework after I conducted the interviews. Thus, I matched the emergent codes from the transcripts with their appropriate framework category.

Comparative Case Study Context

Table 6: Case Study Comparisons between LADOT and MnDOT

Agency	**LADOT**		**MnDOT**	
Level of Gov.	City		State	
Employees	1,300		5,190	
Program Name	Creative Catalyst		Artist in Residency Pilot	
Arts Partner	LA Department of Cultural Affairs		Smart Growth America	
Residency	**Artist 1**	**Artist 2**	**Artist 1**	**Artist 2**
Dates	Mar 2016 - July 2017	Sept 2019 - June 2021	Summer 2019-2021	March 2022 - June 2023
Duration	16 months	20 months	24 months	15 months
Status	Part Time	Part Time	Part Time	Part Time
Stipend	$50,000	$52,000	$40,000	$40,000
Material Stipend	$20,000	$18,000	$10,000-$15,000	$10,000-$15,000
DOT Focus	Vision Zero	Vision Zero & External Affairs	Community Vitality, Office of Land Management (Y1), Transportation Equity (Y2)	Sustainability and Public Health Division

LADOT's Creative Catalyst Artist in Residence Program

In late 2015, The Garcetti Administration announced The Creative Catalyst artist in residence program. Administered by the City's Department of Cultural Affairs (DCA), they placed the first artist in residence in LADOT's new Vision Zero Department in early 2016 (America for the Arts 2019). An agency made up of 1,300 civil servants, LADOT leads the City of Los Angeles' "transportation planning, project delivery, and operations," and runs 52 transportation services for the city's 3.8 million residents and its many millions of visitors each year (About n.d.). According to multiple interviewees, the origins of the Creative Catalyst

program at LADOT stemmed from the newly appointed General Managers of LADOT and DCA meeting at the swearing in ceremony and expressing interest in collaborating, thus the Creative Catalyst program started at LADOT with support from the highest level of leadership.

Ultimately, the Creative Catalyst program funded two iterations of artists in residence, both placed at LADOT. While the Creative Catalyst program was not specifically intended to be a transportation-specific residency, the program was sunsetted before artists were placed in additional departmental placements. However, LA County Arts rolled out their very similar Creative Strategist artist in residence program in 2017, largely based on the Creative Catalyst program. The County has placed a variety of artists in County departments over the last six years.

To launch the Creative Catalyst program, the Department of Cultural Affairs, which offered the program's administrative support, put out a national call for a part-time, two-year artist in residence contract position. The contract was for a $50,000 annual stipend and $20,000 to cover artist fees, insurance, taxes and project expenses for a year. The artist was assigned a member of the Vision Zero leadership team, who served as their point person. The second year of the residency was predicated on receiving a federal grant to extend for an additional year. Without the additional grant, the first iteration of the residency ultimately lasted from March 2016 - July 2017.

The contract for the first iteration stated that, "The Creative Catalyst will use a three-step process to leave a lasting legacy of art, design and culture at LADOT," referencing the three steps of "Research, Develop, Use." Additionally, the resident was to "fully document the three-step process," and "interview no fewer than ten (10) LADOT employees." Additional requirements included attending internal LADOT meetings, providing social media content,

producing artwork, facilitating public classes and workshops, and engaging LA stakeholders about the importance of Vision Zero. Additionally, the artist was asked to "recommend a path forward for an internal art program/strategy for LADOT, [and] support the transition phase for the next AIR." The initial call shows a desire for the artist to bring *relational* skills to engage with the public.

Ultimately, the selected artist developed roughly a dozen projects, which included a podcast series with LADOT transportation planners and engineers; a storytelling training workshop with The Moth LA; a drawing collection from his bus commute; collaborations with the grassroots community organization Ghost Bikes LA; two zine projects; and a World Day of Remembrance event, which commemorated those who have been killed by traffic; two creative traffic signage projects; a short animated film project and screening; a "caffeine tour," in which he hosted office hours at coffee shops in each district; and a street perfume installation at three bus stops. He additionally became involved with bike and pedestrian community groups through Facebook, and regularly took part in group meetings and events even after his residency.

The second iteration of the Creative Catalyst launched over a year after the first ended, with the call for artists released in September 2018. This time, the part-time contract was signed for two years, though with a delayed start date, it ran from September 2019 to June 2021. The contract came with a $52,000 annual stipend and an $18,000 annual material budget (LA Department of Cultural Affairs 2019). While the second artist residency started out in the Vision Zero program, the assigned LADOT point person moved into LADOT's External Affairs department. The second artist continued to focus on "safe streets," but through the reorganization, broadened the scope to focus outside of Vision Zero specifically. The Call for Artists stated the objectives for the second Creative Catalyst were to:

> Enhance the presence and appreciation of creativity within one or more civic departments and/or public services by stimulating "outside the box" thinking, planning, and action; inspire residents and visitors to interact more distinctively, experientially, and progressively, and; document/report quarterly outcomes [...] toward one specific theme within LA's overall character as a safe, prosperous, livable and efficient City.

This second call introduces ideas of a "progressive" approach and explicitly calls for "outside the box" ideas and approaches, echoing Antal & Strauss (2016). The second residency occurred during the course of the COVID-19 pandemic, causing the artist and agency to adapt the planned projects. Ultimately, she completed five projects from seven proposals, included a performance art and installation event staged at crosswalks around MacArthur Park to raise awareness about the dangers of reckless driving and the impact it has on Los Angeles youth; two mobile Town Hall Tour events; and the "Safer LA" Hotline and its telethon launch event. While LADOT discussed extending the second residency for a third year, it ultimately ended in 2021 against a backdrop of pandemic-era austerity measures and agency layoffs.

While the Creative Catalysts has been discontinued, LA County has developed and implemented a successful Creative Strategist program, with artists placed in a variety of county departments, including the Department of Public Health's Vision Zero program, which the DPH has extended into its third year.

Smart Growth America Artist in Residency Pilot with MnDOT

The origin story of Minnesota DOT's artist in residence program greatly contrasts with the Creative Catalyst program; the program grew out of a national dialogue among major actors in the creative placemaking space. In 2017, ArtPlace—a 10-year creative placemaking funding initiative—commissioned Smart Growth America (SGA)—a national nonprofit that provides technical assistance, advocacy and thought leadership on climate resilience, racial equity, and

community health—to produce a field scan of creative placemaking within transportation (Transportation for America 2017). From this report, SGA developed the concept of the first state-level artist in residence programs in government, and approached MnDOT and Washington DOT to participate.

As a state transportation agency, MnDOT is a much larger agency than LADOT, with roughly 5,000 employees. With 5.7 million Minnesotans, MnDOT serves a slightly larger population than LADOT, but over a distance that's almost 200 times as large.

The selected artists—which MnDOT referred to as "fellows" to avoid criticism about spending tax-payer money designated for transportation on artists, according to a staff member—were hired by and partially funded by Smart Growth America, which also served as the program administrator. The fellows were then "embedded" into MnDOT. SGA additionally led the selection process (with participation from MnDOT staff), crafted the Call for Artists and oversaw the process, placement, and administration of the fellowship. Through the pilot program, MnDOT sought to understand:

- How do art and placemaking fit within our vision for context sensitive solutions and visual quality of transportation projects?
- How can project managers integrate art and creative placemaking into projects?
- What policy enhancements are needed to support art and placemaking?
- How can thoughtful public engagement of historically underserved communities influence the outcome of projects during project development and construction phases?

Similar to LADOT, MnDOT aimed for artists to use their arts practice to develop new modes of thinking and relating to community. However, per language around "sensitive solutions" and "thoughtful public engagement of historically underserved communities," the program had an explicit focus on equity and inclusion.

MnDOT's pilot program, like LADOT's, consisted of two consecutive artists. The first artist was hired on as the "Community Vitality Fellow", with the goal to "to promote economic vitality, improve safety, support multimodal transportation systems, and create healthier communities". Following the first year, MnDOT relaunched the program as the Transportation Equity Fellowship, conducting a new selection process, but ultimately selected the same artist to continue the residency. Focused more internally within the state agency, the artist's first project, titled the Land Acknowledgement Confluence Room, aimed to "reckon with challenging histories and to elevate the voices of our community members and our staff and those that we serve in new ways," according to an agency staff member describing the project. His second project, "Turn the Highways to Rivers: An Art Appendix" was developed from a series of storytelling convenings with the "Council of Old and New Wisdom", and explores "the possibilities for pushing the state plan beyond traditional boundaries to explore fictional thinking and planning" (Smart Growth America 2022).

In 2022, MnDOT launched the final iteration of the pilot program, selecting a Sustainability and Public Health Fellow, which lasted one year. The second artist's project focused more externally than the first resident. Selected to focus on the agency's future, need to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and encourage people to drive less and increase walking, biking, and transit, the artist conducted an iterative engagement project to connect agency goals with resident realities. She used a website, survey, game template, and workshops to understand people's mobility habits and why they make the mobility choices they currently do. She also developed a poster campaign to drive less, which included coloring worksheets and community engagement tools. While MnDOT has expressed that they intend to continue working with artists, they have sunsetted their partnership with SGA to implement the TAIR program.

Results

In this thesis, I find that LADOT's and MnDOT's TAIR programs provide a new avenue for transportation agencies to address reparative planning. I layout these findings in two parts. The first part of this argument hinges on transportation planners' call for reparative planning approaches. While planning staff members did not use the specific term of reparative planning, Part I illustrates that current DOT staff members at both agencies conceptualized their roles to be connected to past racial harms and current calls for racial equity. This view is bolstered by the ways that the resident artists also perceived transportation planning to be tied to racial justice and harm. Within this section, I show that these bureaucrats find themselves with an understanding that the field must operate differently than it has in the past, and a desire to be a part of that change, albeit with an unclear understanding at times of how to get there.

The second part of this argument is that the Transportation Artist in Residence programs offer agencies a potential model to address the gaps in traditional planning towards racial redress work. First, I find that resident artists approach both their artistic practice generally and their residencies specifically using skills that are integral to reparative planning theory. Second, I find that DOT staff members experienced their residencies as departures from the transportation planning norms that make reparative planning challenging. This challenge offers a window into new ways that they and the agency could align more with a reparative planning framework.

It is important to clarify that this thesis does not argue that the residencies transformed either agency into sites of reparative planning. Both of the case studies were pilot programs that ran for two iterations with two artists each. It is an impossible charge for two artists to transform large transportation bureaucracies in only a year or two. Rather, I argue that the artists' skills and

projects provided collaborating planners with a model of how they might reimagine transportation agencies into sites of reparative planning moving forward.

Part I: The Call for a New Planning Paradigm

When speaking with DOT staff interviewees, the topic of racial equity and the field's history of racial harm frequently arose. This is notable for a couple of reasons. Firstly, interviewees were not specifically asked about racial equity, nor legacies of harm. The interviews were interested in the Transportation Artist in Residence Programs and began with a discussion about the interviewees' professional background and their experiences of the agencies. Secondly, as discussed in the methods section, this sample was not selected for its involvement in racial equity work, nor was it a particularly racially diverse group of staff members. At MnDOT, for example, all interviewed planners were White women. Thus, the emergent theme of racial equity and the field's connection to past racial harm is salient. Planners, regardless of their personal identities, perceived their professional roles to be tied to racial equity and its racialized history. Similarly, the resident artists picked up on these themes; they similarly reflected on the connection between transportation and race.

Due to the scope of this paper, and the method of sampling, the following section is not meant to be an evaluation of the state of racial equity and understanding of past racial harms in the DOTs at large, though some interviewees do serve in agency roles directly charged with equity work and planning. Rather, this section offers a perspective on how these planners have conceptualized their professional roles to be inextricably linked with racial justice and past racial harm. It is notable that almost all interviewees did describe both LADOT and MnDOT as rather

progressive agencies, many admiring their work to be change agents in the transportation field regarding race.

Recognitional Justice: Invoking History in Present Planning

Participants at LADOT and MnDOT generally described their respective agencies and the field of planning in terms that align with the standard of recognitional justice. Planning staff and resident artists at both agencies openly addressed transportation's legacy of racial harm, divided communities via infrastructure, and named a current moment of change within the field.

In the case of MnDOT, participants and artists described the agency as a "innovative" and "progressive" agency that is actively contending with the transportation industry's history of harm and agency inequities. Interviewed planning staff members at MnDOT, all of whom are White women, primarily focused on racial harm towards Minnesota's Indigenous residents and tribal nations. Additionally, participants mentioned ReConnect Rondo, a project to repair the divide in a historically Black neighborhood in St. Paul created by the implementation of I-94. All MnDOT participants spoke affirmatively of these redress efforts with calls for increased equity, understanding of residents' historical distrust of the agency and pride in the agency's work on this topic.

Rebecca is a senior-level planner in her late forties at MnDOT, who has been in transportation planning for 5 years following a career in other community development sectors. She speaks candidly and often moves between an idealist vision for the field and the realities of it. Rebecca spoke directly to the moment of change in the field, saying:

> When former Secretary Foxx of USDOT acknowledged [...] very directly the harm that transportation investments caused in communities and communities of color, I think that was a turning point for transportation to reckon with those histories, but to then also understand what the future looks like…

Rebecca describes herself as “an advocate of equity driven work”, and proudly shares information about additional projects that address racial equity at the agency. As the staff member tasked with the TAIR program, she shares that the TAIR program aligned with these other equity initiatives and saw that “equity would be an important component.” Expanding on these connections, she described an additional research project she’s leading, titled “Utilizing Arts and Culture to Mitigate the Negative Impacts of Transportation on Communities.” Within this context, MnDOT, which many participants labeled as innovative and progressive, acknowledges its historical actions, and seems to be actively working to address this history via multiple projects, some connected to arts and culture.

When discussing the agency’s approach to equity, Rebecca speaks directly to a racial context, stating emphatically, “we take our work with tribal nations in government to government consultation very seriously. [...] That is a major value of our agency and in Minnesota from the very top from our governor.” In talking about the origins of the TAIR pilot, Rebecca mentioned that the relationship between the sponsoring agency, Smart Growth America, and MnDOT formed during their past ReConnect Rondo collaboration.

Two other MnDOT planners, Samantha and Tara, share a similar understanding of how the agency exists within a historical context of racial harm. Samantha, a newer planner hired to focus on sustainability framed the context of the agency and its work rather implicitly, stating that there are “a lot of historical experiences” and that “in a bureaucracy, those things can be slow to evolve to match the needs and and preferences of the users of the system.” Samantha does not specifically outline which historical experience, and seems to reference both social and environmental issues by tying the conversation to community advisory boards and her department’s goal to reduce car usage. Through her comments, we see that even as a newer

employee who “fell” into the transportation space, she senses the historical dimension to the agency’s work, and that the past is impactful in the present day.

While Samantha speaks vaguely, Tara speaks explicitly, albeit with some internal conflict. Tara describes MnDOT as a progressive agency, even sharing a story of her department’s equity approach being publicly recognized for being “leaps and bounds ahead of other people,” by another peer State agency. She also candidly shares that she realized “earlier in some of the equity work at MnDOT [that] we're not even coming from an honest place,” when describing the State’s highway system’s Indigenous origins. She described a sense of erasure, stating that “we're also not even telling like all the good, the bad and the ugly of how we even got the system that we have today.” Tara’s comments highlight the tension between progressive bureaucracies’ forward movement and their continued struggle to meet the moment fully.

Both of MnDOT’s embedded artists also addressed MnDOT’s role and efforts in racial redress. MnDOT’s first embedded artist, Brian, shared how after Rebecca reminded her colleagues that “‘this is Dakota land,’” when working on a project around unhoused encampments, “someone from these [DEI] equity groups said that this was the first time [they] heard someone say that in a presentation.” Similarly, Julia—MnDOT’s second artist—shared that she was impressed that the agency “seem[ed] to be trying to repair relationships that they've damaged in the past.” Like Tara, Julia described a complex landscape for this work however, added that residents were still distrusting of new projects and work. The artists sensed that there was still work to be done in the area of racial redress.

Rebecca, her colleagues, and the artists place MnDOT as an active participant within the conversation of racial redress, both within the source of the harm, but also in their current attempts to rectify them. Participants share a series of examples of the agency’s *recognitional*

efforts towards past racial harms. While interviewees speak highly of MnDOT's efforts as an agency attempting to rectify past wrongs, there is a sentiment that the process for redress is far from complete.

Recognition of racial harm and inequity among LADOT participants varied from MnDOT in several ways, yet the theme of race was equally present. Firstly, LADOT planners largely spoke of racial harm and redress in more personal terms as they described their understanding of the field. Notably, about half of LADOT participants are people of color, identifying as Black, Latino and Asian. Secondly, when describing the agency efforts, participants were more likely to describe efforts towards equity without explicitly mentioning race or racial redress. This difference, however, could be a result of timing. LADOT's TAIR program began much earlier, and thus interviewees discussed their experience at the agency during that time. For some participants, this was as early as 2015-2016. Therefore, language around racial redress may be less contemporary than the planners at MnDOT, all of whom are current employees and who participated in the residencies spanning 2019-2022.

When asked about their professional background, multiple interviewees at LADOT cited specific personal examples of seeing racial inequity in their environment, particularly through historic planning choices, which led them into urban planning. Within the same breath, they additionally share how they see planning as a means to address those past racialized interventions. Ade, an African immigrant, shared that seeing societal inequities in his home country in his adolescence shaped his perspective when he transitioned to urban planning. His guiding professional principle has been to reverse the social injustices "created by racist policies". He specifically cites freeway construction and resulting displacement as an early

influence on his work. Directly tying racial redress with racial equity, Ade shares that he believes:

> The same way it was a very, very deliberate policy to disenfranchise communities, it should be a deliberate process to reverse that right? [My] guiding principle has always been equity, and making sure that we use city policies to reverse some of the harm that was created. So that's always been my north star.

He specifically names the City of Los Angeles as a perpetrator of past harm, while expressing a mandate to repair that harm, using the City of Los Angeles as a platform.

Like Ade, Keiko—a LADOT staff member of Asian descent who has also been involved in the agency's equity strategy work—described seeing racial policy in action during her childhood, sharing that she "grew up in an area [...] that was severely affected by redlining." Like Ade, she specifically points to transportation's legacy in Los Angeles. She still lives in the same neighborhood and is surrounded by freeways on all sides. She mentions there are a lot of "environmental issues because of that." Echoing Tara's call for honesty at MnDOT, Keiko "really appreciate[s] LADOT being really upfront about historical redlining and how we all need to work to reverse all of that." Similarly to Ade, she shares that historical racial redress makes her work as a bureaucrat feel meaningful to her.

David, a Latino planner in his thirties, became interested in the field by "really just looking at the built environment and my immediate community." While more vague than Ade and Keiko, he also connects past harms with current actions, sharing that he sees his work as a means to use his privilege of "being sort of a local here, having an education, and having certain expertise and contributing and giving back to [his] community."

Eric, a White urban planner from the East Coast, also saw inequity in his own childhood hometown. Eric does not describe his positionality in this inequity, but he does describe how the inequitable conditions of his hometown provoked questions in him that led him towards the

planning profession; he shares that his worldview was shaped by growing up in "an inner city in a very wealthy state" with "traditional chronic urban issues". He directly ties transportation infrastructure to these disparities. He elaborates that the area, which had high poverty rates and high concentration of people of color, was shaped by the "classic freeway construction in the mid-century," cutting the city in half, and separating it from the river. In reflecting on his experience, he adds that, "when I was a kid, I didn't have the language of institutional racism, right? But like those were, that's sort of where my mind was going as a young adult."

These participants describe a unique tension in urban planning: they see the field as both a past tool of harm, but also a profession for those committed to social justice. Participants saw the power of urban planning in their surroundings, and therefore were attracted to the field to address past wrongs. Further, this diverse set of planners all held a personal understanding of urban planning generally, and transportation specifically, as tied to past racial harms. Thinking back to our framework, this would align with *recognitional* justice, but at a personal, rather than agency level.

While MnDOT participants spoke about an agency-level acknowledgement of past harm, LADOT participants spoke about agency-level work more in terms of present-day equity. Keiko was the only participant to mention the agency directly discussing past harms when describing the General Manager's statement about redlining. Other planners still spoke positively about the direction of the agency's work on racial equity. Ade evidenced the agency's efforts via their recent strategic plan, which was the first "rooted in equity." While critical of the broad definition the agency used, Ade says he felt that "it was still something that [the General Manager] cared about. [...] She was very forward looking." Mirroring sentiments of futurism and equity, David also described LADOT as focused on the future of transportation planning, "while also having a

very sharp equity focus." David's sentiment highlights a similar inflection point that Rebecca expressed. He ties equity into the the latest paradigm of planning, but also distinguishes a forward-thinking perspective of planning from equitable planning, rather than tied together.

Meanwhile, in discussing the agency's early efforts to become more equity oriented, Amanda, a White planner who came to the work through a design background, described the LADOT's learning curve in their early engagement work:

> I think all of us weren't totally aware of [the power imbalance] and were kind of, still, you know, in a pretty early stage of our journeys of really understanding some basic concepts around social justice [and] racial equity. [...] That was very early conversation in the profession at that time so you know I think a lot of us were just [...] learning and grateful to be able to have that learning experience,

Amanda and her colleagues, both at LADOT and at MnDOT, describe a profession in flux—one with a history of harm, a current effort to operate differently than in the past, and with a workforce interested in redressing it.

Linking Past Harm with Current Equity Work

Participants fluidly moved between discussing past racial harm with present-day equity efforts. Though sometimes a blurry line, this connection is critical for reparative planning's "insurance of non-repetition." Planners at both agencies readily described the agency's equity plans, tying the work to both past and present racial inequity. MnDOT participants specifically discussed the agency's leadership in the area of racial equity. In describing their transportation equity work, Tara shared:

> We have been doing this work since 2017, so we're a little bit longer in the pursuit than a lot of state agencies and before the murder of George Floyd, which is notable since a lot of people picked it up after that.

Tara's timeline mirrors that of Rebecca's, and more specifically aligns with US DOT Secretary Foxx's published statement on transportation's legacy of racial harm. Firstly, this statement shows the potential power for federal leadership to shape state agency actions. Secondly, it illustrates MnDOT's commitment to transportation equity as a response to an acknowledgement of racial harm, rather than a reaction to the national racial reckoning of 2020. Nonetheless, Tara connects their initial pursuits to further equity within contemporary racial justice issues to highlight that their efforts expand beyond racial redress for past racial harm, but attempt to address past and present racial injustices simultaneously.

Keiko, an agency administrator who has done extensive work with LADOT's Equity Plan discussed the agency's present strategy:

> The former GM in our orientation, she talked about redlining, historical redlining, and sort of like the issues of race and policy within the city and how we're all working to fix that. But it really became heightened when George Floyd happened in 2020. [...] It was right around the time that we were also planning our strategic plan for the next 3 years. So all of that was like, kind of really lucky. [...] The timing was right to put in an equity pillar in the strategic plan.

Like many of the other participants, Keiko brings together historical harms with present day racial injustice and disparities. Similar to Tara, she addressed George Floyd's murder as a flashpoint in racial equity for the agency. She pointed to that event as a catalyst for racial equity to take center stage in LADOT's multi-year strategic plan as its own pillar. When I examined LADOT's strategic plans for mentions of equity, I quickly found that under Mayor Garcetti, it was a key topic. However, when I looked at older strategic plans, "racial equity" was not mentioned. The 2018 plan, for example, referenced "low-income" communities readily, and only a few times "minority" communities. Despite the agency's history of focusing on equity, and even Keiko's recollection of the General Manager's mentioning of historical redlining and other

racial issues, the national movement to address the tragedy of George Floyd more explicitly brought racial equity to the fore.

The discussion of present day racial equity ranged from acknowledging current challenges, as well as the agencies' solutions and efforts towards racial equity. Conversations were far ranging, addressing links towards community engagement, capacity for community-based work, and internal equity work as it related to staffing. While the bulk of this thesis will discuss how the TAIR programs fit into calls for racial redress and reparative planning, this next section will give an overview of how participants linked past racial harm to current agency solutions outside of the artist in residence programs to highlight the current gaps that planners are facing.

Community Engagement as Procedural Justice

First and foremost, participants discussed racial harm and equity through discussing the agencies' public participation frameworks. An interesting logic model emerged, with planners directly connecting racial reckoning and community engagement to suggest that community engagement was the proposed solution to redress past harms. For example, when Rebecca referenced Secretary Foxx's statement on racial redress, she continued on to share that the statement was, "a turning point for transportation to reckon with those histories, but to then also understand what the future looks like and what [...] public engagement really means," She then explained that, in the years since this statement, the agency has made, "extensive investments in public engagement infrastructure". Rebecca implicitly tied together the need for racial reckoning with the solution of better community engagement. This echoes Arnstein (1969)'s argument for public participation as the framework to assess citizen control, and thus citizen agency within governance systems.

When discussing how MnDOT approaches community engagement, Rebecca describes a much more dynamic approach to community engagement. It is worth noting that the terms innovation and culture change are both in Rebecca's job description. She shared that the agency is attempting to "maximize our investments [in public engagement] and make them more catalytic, be more responsive to community feedback and really to seek more opportunities to improve outcomes…". She describes the agency's public engagement infrastructure as follows:

> MnDOT is structured with the central office, and then eight districts, is how we do the work, breaking it up across the state. [...] Our main [public engagement] office has multiple staff that [...are] going deep in, you know, equity driven community engagement and partnering with community-based organizations, [...] but then each district also has a public engagement as well.

Tricia, another MnDOT planner, shares that meaningful public engagement is in fact a challenge for the agency. When discussing the potential for artist involvement within MnDOT's work, Tricia surfaced the need for more authentic engagement that takes on a *relational* approach:

> Where we haven't been very successful, and don't have a lot of the resources, [...] is partnering with local community organizations, like different cultural organizations where, we're just listening or where we're getting to know each other, versus, you know, when we have a project and we're coming in and we need to communicate something. So that space of community building and relationship building, we're trying and we want to do that. But it's hard as a statewide organization.

Within Tricia's comment, we also see a discussion of power. Tricia is describing a system where the agency approaches community groups or cultural organizations when the agency needs something, rather than authentic relationship building, mirroring the findings from Lowe and Jones (2023) that current practice falls short of Arnstein's (1969) public participation ideals. Within Rebecca's description of public engagement, she also hints at varying levels of participation by describing, "what public engagement *really* means" (emphasis added). Beyond formal structures, Rebecca says the agency "take[s] the formal models of government public engagement very seriously and train our staff on them," sharing that the staff use the

International Association for Public Participation's (IAP2) Spectrum of Participation model, which is "designed to assist with the selection of the level of participation that defines the public's role in any public participation process" (IAP2 n.d.). However, Rebecca shares that the agency heavily relies on consultants to do engagement work, describing the process as "these large firms that get public engagement contracts with us who then do the work on the ground for specific projects." The firms, she adds, are "excited about innovating in these spaces. They want to see more engagement. They're tired of the same old same old." Both Rebecca and Tricia are both calling for a more rooted and authentic public engagement process that is more *relational,* such that it can provide meaningful *procedural* justice that can affect racial equity outcomes.

At LADOT, planners Ade, Keiko and David also spoke fluidly about past racial harms and current calls for community engagement. Ade most explicitly ties past harms with community engagement, stating that "the historical aspect is always a foundation of every community engagement approach that I've had," and that his strategies have "always been rooted and grounding it in in the understanding that these harms were made by policies." Within his statement, we see Ade's logic behind connecting past and present. He further describes why he is linking past policy and present engagement by clarifying that "over time people have been disenfranchised, so to say, they haven't been part of this decision making process." Ade presents the challenges of past racial harm with current injustices as a continuum of equity challenges, rather than two distinct points. Ade surfaces the fear of harm repetition without proper *procedural* justice, adding "if people that do not have the lived experience in these issues, if they continue making policies, we're just going to repeat the same thing right?" Within this conceptualization of racial harm, Ade presents a reparative planning framework that acknowledges the past, while also not isolating this past from present inequities.

Like his MnDOT counterparts, Ade is also expressing a call for public participation to address power dynamics. However, Ade presents public participation on a continuum with *institutional* justice. Firstly, he describes engagement as a means to include those previously disenfranchised into the decision making processes, akin to *institutional* justice's call to "build cross-community power. Unlike his counterparts at either agency, however, he presents public participation as a means to address *institutional* injustice by filling gaps in staffing knowledge. This framing shifts public participation from a resident "empowerment" strategy to solution strategy for the agency's inadequacies. Ade also ties this strategy towards assurance of non-repetition; he asks how planners will not repeat the same mistakes if the agency does not have lived experience at the table. He concludes his call for representation more explicitly sharing, "I was the only Black male planner in the department, so that tells you, you know, where some of the gaps are, right?" While he goes on to discuss staffing challenges for equity, which I will discuss later, his framing of public engagement is ultimately to:

> make sure that you bring [in] people that have the right voices. [...] If the city does not have the necessary staff that's gonna automatically think about equity when doing projects, we need to amplify the community's voice in that decision making process.

What Ade describes mirrors Vigar (2017) discussion on the four areas of planner knowledge. Specifically, Ade is demonstrating that current staffing models do not provide adequate embodied/localized knowledge for planning projects to promote racial equity due to the lack of Black planners in the department. Therefore, he is arguing, community engagement must be robust to compensate for this embodied knowledge gap.

Ade's colleague David shared that racialized planning also affected his personal life and community. Yet, he presents the role of public involvement in a much different light, despite

having shared rather similar roles at LADOT and outside of their tenure together. When asked about community engagement, David shares that:

> I think we look to the public to scrutinize our methodology, and say, *are we getting this right?* [...] Are there things that we [LADOT] have historically had a role in harming or dividing a community, right?

He presents community voice as an accountability metric to redress past harms. When explaining why he became a planner, he connected his experience looking around at his immediate community, and his desire to "elevate the voices of the folks within a particular neighborhood" through his work. While certainly less explicit than Rebecca or Ade, David presents a connection between the need for community voice and the racial inequity within the built environment, again echoing the tenets of *procedural* justice. However, he presents power dynamics between agency and community, particularly through engagement quite differently. Rebecca, Tricia and Ade all share a sense of community engagement working integrated into the process, and increasing power-sharing through the act of engagement. David, however, describes the dynamic as internal vs. external. Community is meant to be an external force that holds the agency accountable, rather than working in collaboration with the agency to achieve equitable outcomes.

While David and Rebecca describe their agency's community engagement structure in similar ways, they articulate different roles for community engagement in the process of planning. David describes the formal community engagement mechanism at LADOT as follows:

> There is always some sort of outreach component that's being conducted on, like, a project kind of level. At the same time, we do have district offices, which break up the city of LA into, I wanna say five or six different districts in which people can raise issues or traffic concerns about neighborhood traffic safety, you know, *I think we need to put a stop sign here.* Stuff that won't necessarily rise to the top after doing that huge data analysis, but that people know is going on in their neighborhood.

In this description, he paints the public as providing that sense of embodied/localized knowledge (Vigar 2017), as well as providing the contextual nuance that Lowe, Barajas, and Coren (2023)

describe. However, from a power-analysis, David describes the community as needing to approach the agency to provide input. This directionality of resident-approaching-agency is repeated when David said that the agency is "look[ing] to the public to scrutinize" their approach to equity in projects, framing the public as a quasi-watchdog. This directionality runs in conflict with *institutional* justice, which calls for the agency to own and atone for its harm and ensures non-repetition. When asked about specific mechanisms for community input, David shares that "it really depends on the type of intensity that level of outreach that LADOT needs to do and that's part of, like, sort of, a statutory requirement." He goes on to add that due to LADOT's intention to "better connect with our stakeholders and constituents [...] there is always some sort of outreach." Within these statements, David presents an opposite vision of Ade, positioning the agency and the community as distinct entities, interacting through directional and discrete "input" or "outreach" processes. When discussing the agency's status quo, there is little discussion of transformative change via engagement.

Echoing Tricia at MnDOT, Amanda discussed LADOT's early capacity issues for deep community engagement as well as the power dynamics between agency and community. She reflects on when the department first started to build relationships with community organizations, sharing that "some of the other organizations [...] were not as comfortable at working with us because that's a power dynamic." She went on to clarify that as a staff, they weren't "totally aware of that [power] dynamic," and that they were in "a pretty early stage of our journeys of really understanding some basic concepts around social justice [and] racial equity." Here, Amanda presents the relationship building aspect of authentic community engagement as a skill and capacity. In the early phases of LADOT introducing this work,

Amanda describes the gaps in ability for LADOT to properly translate engagement into racial equity work that would meet a reparative standard.

Though Amanda was referencing early work in this, participants described the leaps and bounds that LADOT has gone through to develop their community engagement practice for racial equity. When referencing a similar timeframe at LADOT, Eric described how the agency was attempting to create more structure for community engagement, sharing that "we really did try to invest in [...] policies and procedures for community engagement." Specifically, LADOT tasked LADOT team member Dr. Destiny Thomas, who holds a PhD in anthropology, with developing a framework for the Departments' community engagement approach. Built upon Arnstein's Ladder of Participation, the model that Thomas put forth was called Dignity Infused Community Engagement, or DICE. Ade described the model as "centering [engagement] around dignity and centering it around people." Both Eric and Ade described the framework as highly thoughtful. Ade described Thomas as, "very, very, very deliberate, even more deliberate than I could ever be about making sure that community engagement is centered around people." Ade went on to share that the method of working has stuck with him, "even the work that I came to do afterwards in community engagement was all built—based on the foundation that she left." Speaking to the power dynamics that Amanda raised, Ade described the model as:

> We're respecting people's participation. [...] So it moved from just, like, being like a check the box kind of approach to be, like, more of a comprehensive approach where people give their opinions. You follow up. [...] We're notorious for just using people's time and input without compensating them. The DICE model is the one that started emphasizing that.

Ade went on to describe the sorts of systemic changes that the model led to, such as hiring street teams, providing childcare, making sure engagement was thoughtful about meeting times and

providing content in different languages for increased accessibility. These changes speak to a movement towards *procedural* justice.

In talking about more recent efforts of engagement, Keiko echoed the effects of this model. Though an agency administrator not a planner, Keiko still discussed the impact that racialized planning had on her community and later, issues of accessibility to planning. She spoke with pride about how LADOT works to make engagement more accessible for harder to reach resident populations. Specifically, she shares her role in making the agency's work more accessible by sharing that she "help[s] the department set up translation access for employees. [...] we have like interpreters available, we have a graphic designer to create flyers for the events and also get them get that translated as well." While less explicit of a connection between community engagement and racial equity, Keiko's comments showcase how different LADOT's approach to community engagement is since Amanda's experience when they first started working with community.

Ultimately, staff at both MnDOT and LADOT first and foremost described approaches to racial equity through a lens of public participation. Planners at both agencies conceptualized community engagement within a framework of altered power dynamics from historic practices, and tended to tie past racial harm to current activities around participation. While some planners, such as Ade, placed the community on a continuum of knowledge gatherers for the agency, others, such as David, placed community members on the outside of the agency as an external force of accountability. Participants' comments also aligned with the literature on public participation, suggesting agencies' need for increased embodied/localized knowledge (Vigar 2017), the ability to provide nuance to transportation planning models (Lowe, Barajas, and Coren 2023), and internal/external forces of community action (Karner et al. 2020). Through their

comments, participants also began to highlight connections between public participation and other areas of equity, particularly areas of staffing, which I will discuss next.

Workforce as Institutional Justice

Second to public engagement, planners connected racial equity to internal agency functions such as including workforce and representation issues at their agencies. Sometimes this was connected to staff capacity within community engagement, however, sometimes representation and workforce equity was a topic within itself. Of note, participants at both MnDOT and LADOT mentioned internal policy initiatives around equity within the agency, mentioning specific equity-oriented strategic plans. This area could be defined as *institutional* approaches to justice that examine *owning past racial harm* and *ensuring non-repetition.*

When discussing her role at MnDOT, Tara shared that she had been tasked with developing a Transportation Equity Plan for the agency. When asked what kinds of initiatives that work took on, Tara shared that the plan, “kind of runs the gamut and I think those [do a] pretty good job of showing a multi-dimensional perspective of how transportation equity shows up.” The plan covers internal issues such as increased equity training and workforce issues as well as includes elements around project delivery and working with Tribal nations. She notes that since “the murder of George Floyd, a lot of people take a race based perspective and it's more complicated than that. ” Tara presents equity as a multifaceted concept. While Tara extensively discussed racial harm toward Tribal Nations and a lack of honesty in planning about the racial history of transportation across the state, her racial equity focus and interests within transportation focuses more internally on racial equity in the agency via workforce issues.

Similarly to Tara, the more Keiko discussed the racial equity strategy at the agency, the more she focused on racial equity relative to employment and workforce, separating the concept of equity into two parts:

> One part is like, let's make sure we deliver our projects in an equitable way. Not focusing specifically on just, like, certain council districts that have the most money. [...Let's] rather make it based on need. And then also the [second] part is internally facing work to make sure that DOT internally is working toward equity.

She shares that the second part is where "the racial equity core team comes in," of which she is a part. She describes it as "a selection of LADOT employees that do the work to bring awareness [about equity] to employees internally." Keiko's framework echoes the *procedural* and *institutional* dimensions.

When describing that institutional work, Keiko speaks excitedly about several aspects of the Equity Pillar in the strategic plan. First, she shares the results of their workforce assessment, which illustrated an occupational segregation by race and gender within the agency's 1,300 person agency. Keiko shared that the equity audit highlighted the need to "bring in people of color for engineers. [...] we have to focus intentionally on diversity." When discussing the implications of the analysis, she shares that, though it was not surprising, it was impactful to realize that LADOT's workers of color were concentrated in the lowest paying jobs. In response, the equity team discussed professional development opportunities for low wage workers, and tried to think through ways the City could promote employees more. Additionally, they proposed "developing a team of folks that would change every so often [...] to have equity top of mind."

MnDOT took a similar internal approach to addressing racial equity within the organization. Tara shared she took personal pride in the Transportation Equity Group, because "those planners are directly the legacy of work that I helped to initiate." She says, "it's pretty rare to get an agency to add a bunch of positions [for equity] and we were the first state DOT to have

staff that were wholly dedicated to transportation equity." She shared that those positions focus on, "the change management processes that are required to get into transportation equity," underscoring the tremendous process of change towards equity.

Not all participants saw the internal and external work as so distinct, however. Ade largely perceived community engagement, consultants, and staff diversity to all be a part of one larger challenge for capturing embodied knowledge within transportation planning. He positioned each mechanism—community engagement, procurement processes and staff demographics—as potential tools, or barriers, to include the people most directly affected by the issues at hand. When discussing the role that community members played in providing this representation and embodied knowledge, he pointed to two staffing challenges. Firstly, he discussed the lack of planners of color hired by the department. He shared this was not the fault of LADOT's leadership at the time per se, but rather described a structural issue related to the City's HR department and their testing process. He shares that "it's not so much a department problem, but [...] a systemic City structure where we're not getting people that represent communities to be able to help address problems. Ade's sentiment echoes Keiko's in that structural issues at the city-level play a key role in the internal equity challenges. However, Ade's framing shows how this internal challenge affects equitable output, or "part one" as Keiko had called it. Per Ade, without more equitable hiring practices that position people of color to be planners, the outputs will struggle to produce equitable and just projects and institutions.

Secondly, Ade points to the procurement process as an additional source of racial inequity within planning processes, which, in light of the agencies' reliance on consultants for engagement work, and the internal lack of representation, further hinder representative voices being a part of planning processes. He shares that despite his boss at the time being very

supportive of trying new community engagement processes, procurement often led to contracts with consultants that were not "local enough to be able to get the right people on the table." He goes on to share that, despite lacking the localized knowledge, the process to select firms still favored them over local firms with more localized knowledge, because "those firms have a lot of resources to be able to put in a perfect response to a proposal. You know, they are able to get the contracts that checks the boxes." Conceptually, Ade seems to place *procedural* and *institutional* dimensions of justice on a continuum of representation, placing consultants as somewhere in the middle. He shares that beyond agencies hiring more planners of color, "you also want to make sure that you change your procurement system of contractors." He then describes some of the mechanisms that he sees as key to making the system more equitable, such as "trainings [for] local consulting firms, or just providing them resources, and also just giving them additional points for them to be able to have a leg up in the bidding process." He concludes by sharing how the equity issues in staffing and procurement are larger than just LADOT, sharing "I think those are some of the things that over time, I saw as some of the flaws within the department, [...] but also, I think, how the City is generally structured around employment and contract procurement."

Procurement and the hiring of consultants is a relevant equity issue across transportation agencies, and addresses both procedural and institutional equity outcomes. As Rebecca shared, MnDOT heavily relies on consultants for engagement, placing "large firms" on the ground to capture localized knowledge. Thus, as Ade rightly points out, inequitable procurement processes will lead to inequitable community engagement practices. While Rebecca spoke more optimistically about consultants who were excited about innovative processes, Ade offers us a warning: without the right procurement metrics, the innovative consultants can fail to provide localized knowledge. While these *institutional* efforts show agency initiatives to own and atone

for racial harm in hiring practices, Tribal Nation relations, and project delivery, these results cannot determine if these projects meet a standard of *ensuring non-repetition.* Notably however, conversation around agency efforts did not discuss how either agency aimed to *advance democracy* and/or *build cross-community power* through their institutional initiatives.

Data as Distributional Justice

While most planners discussed equity within the *procedural* and *institutional* dimensions of justice, David of LADOT and Trisha of MnDOT share additional approaches that fall less clearly into the framework. Contrasting his peers, David shared a more data-oriented version of equity that focuses on increasing equitable outcomes, but stops short of reimagining procedural elements of planning. When working on new private/public partnerships, he shares that LADOT plays a large role in correcting private entities inherent inequities, sharing that they "look for ways to not just let the market [...] drive where transportation services were being brought." Rather, LADOT either provides incentives or requires these companies to "provide services more universally" than profit-seeking might inspire. David's remarks may describe a more *distributional* approach to justice, ensuring that neighborhoods and residents historically locked out of material benefits are included in the benefits of new technologies or services. This also serves as a means for non-repetition for past discriminations to compound with present ones.

In another part of our conversation, David expresses a similarly "corrective" distributional lens to equity planning, sharing that in one of his projects at LADOT, he had noticed, "that we were getting kind of the same applicants every year in the same types of neighborhoods." In his role, he then "really took [the issue] on intentionally and was able to enact a change," around who was applying to the program, whose intention was "really to create public spaces everywhere." As previously mentioned, David also shared a perspective that he

saw the public as holding the agency accountable to where there were inequities. Within these three descriptions of equity, David is framing the role of the agency's role in equity as *distributional* to untip the scales that are producing inequitable results.

Tricia at MnDOT also discussed a more intentional *distributional* approach for equity work. In her role, she looks at "the opportunities to infuse health" into the state's multi-modal transportation plan. Borrowing the public health methodology around Public Health Impact Assessments, sharing that they "wanted to pilot something like that on a transportation project, specifically where we have a majority disadvantaged populations." This targeted approach starts from a place of recognition of racial disparities and then focuses resources on addressing them, which we could qualify as *distributional*. Tricia also describes the impacts of this work from a more procedural-oriented perspective, sharing that she "think[s] a lot of what will enable us to center public health in our vision making is centering the human experience." Her description of the shift in thinking illustrates how these reparative dimensions can link together towards deeper transformation. Ultimately, both David and Trisha present ways that data-oriented equity approaches can support the agency to take a *distributional* approach to their programming such that there is a *material redistribution* of implementation and agency attention towards previously dispossessed or excluded groups. However, none of the participants mentioned equity initiatives that meet a standard of *compensation and restitution* to previously disposed and excluded communities.

What's Missing: Relational and Environmental Justice

Notably, we see a large gap for *relational* and *environmental* elements of reparative planning. Ade and Keiko most directly touch on *relational* elements, calling for more embodied knowledge through inclusion of previously excluded voices, and by highlighting the importance

of accessibility through translation services. However, neither the planners, nor artists, discuss current solutions within the agency that present more robust *relational* approaches to transportation planning. This gap provides a key role for artists to play.

Similarly, little conversation took place around *environmental* justice. Only Keiko raised the themes of racial inequity and environmental impact together when describing her experience in her neighborhood. Though Samantha works in a department focused on sustainability, and worked with Julia, who was the Sustainability and Public Health Fellow, she didn't present a larger *environmental* justice schema. Rather, she mentioned equity work, community engagement, and climate goals as distinct categories, seemingly without overlap. Further, no planners connected current work around transportation planning in a larger *environmental* justice framework. I imagine these results could have more to do with the interview focus and questions than the total absence of *environmental* justice work, but it does seem to suggest that current work around *environmental* justice at the agencies is siloed and thought about as discrete issues. A true *environmental* justice lens, per our framework, would be a much deeper and holistic understanding about how climate justice is the next frontier for racial dispossession and harm.

Through these interviews, we see two cases of progressive agencies that have been working to recognize and address past and present racial harm. This is happening at both a personal scale—with individual planners taking on identities as equity planners and taking actions to rectify racial disparities in their programs—as well as at an agency level—with leadership promoting equity-oriented work through strategic plans and new initiatives. As equity-oriented planners, we see their perspectives aligning with the conceptual framework, but taking on specific perspectives:

- *Recognitional* justice has primarily been an internal discussion, rather than a public-facing process.

- *Distributional* justice has been expressed through using data to better provide program resources and service delivery to previously dispossessed and excluded communities. However, no efforts explicitly foregrounded redistribution of material resources, compensation, or restitution due to past harms.
- *Relational* justice seems to be an absent element in the larger conversation about how transportation agencies are approaching racial redress and equity.
- P*rocedural* justice has been most closely linked with current community engagement processes, and is the main vehicle for how planners are thinking about racial redress and equity.
- *Institutional* justice was expressed through internal agency work around equity strategies, workforce, and Tribal Nation relations, but lacked conversation around advancing democracy and power building or distributing.
- *Environmental* justice seemed to be a separate, distinct topic, that may or may not be present in current agency efforts for racial redress and equity.

The next chapter of this thesis will examine how the Transportation Artist in Residence pilot programs at both agencies provided new avenues for reparative planning, particularly due to the strong *relational* approach that artists brought to their residencies, and what this may mean for the role of arts in reparative planning practices for transportation equity.

Part II: Artist Residencies as an Emergent Tool for Reparative Planning

Part II highlights the contributions of the artist residencies in to the two transportation planning agencies around reparative justice. First, I introduce the four resident artists and their practices, showing how their skills made them adept at addressing the different dimensions of the reparative planning framework. In the second section, broken up by case, I describe my findings on how the agencies' conceptualization of the residency program fit the need for expanded tools in reparative planning, and then discuss the artists and their specific projects. In the final section of Part II, I address the challenges that the agencies face in operationalizing these reparative approaches beyond the residency, challenges that exist across many cross-sector residencies (Antal and Strauss 2016).

Artists Skills for Reparative Planning

Like the transportation planners, the selected artists came to these residencies with practices that addressed issues of racial discrimination, trauma and healing, and positive public impact. All four artists can be defined by their *relational* approach to artmaking. They lead with relationships, look to include the overlooked communities and stakeholders in their work, invite joy through their creative interventions, and address intersectional identities through their work—all key tenets of the *relational* justice dimension. Beyond their relational approach, these artists are also "problem finders" who are keen to engage in epistemic disobedience (Whitehead 2020). Through their descriptions of their general practice, we see alignment between their approach and the proposed reparative planning framework. Thus, their selection suggests the agencies had an implicit, if not explicit in some cases, goal for them to address these types of issues within their artist residencies.

Brian—MnDOT's inaugural Artist in Residence—is an established civic artist who can best be described as poetic. An Asian man in his mid-forties, Brian emigrated to Minnesota and has made it his home. He labels himself as a Behavioral Artist, a term that he borrows from Chinese tradition. There, he says, the practice is subversive, embodied, and physical. In China the practice is known for a harshness and physical endurance; he describes his version as "much softer," which suits his own gentle presence. In his work, he looks at things like daily behavior, the mind, and awareness. Describing the values behind his practice, he says he looks at what already exists, operating from a place that does not "assume something is empty and we have to make something to fill it," but rather "space is already full of amazing things." The sentiment of the "hidden" rather than the "empty" echoes Williams & Steil (2023) reparative tenet on valuing Black community and that "Black spaces must be understood as not necessarily or only unjust

vestiges of exclusion but as having an intrinsic value in and of themselves" (586). Brian's description of the spaces in which he operates recognizes their intrinsic value and sees them as spaces already full of value.

Brian goes on to describe a relational aspect to his practice, sharing that participation is essential to his framework. In finding the beauty of the hidden, he seeks to support co-creation, particularly among non-artists. He shares, "I love to create something that assumes that everyone has an amazing creativity within them." He connects the potential of co-creation with systems change, sharing that he "love[s] playing with systems that, once you tweak it, it creates its own art." Again, we hear echoes of Williams and Steil (2023)'s framework. They define their third point of "value intersectionality," as a

> …commitment to participatory, reflective, non-hierarchical collective action that addresses the intersectional nature of multiple oppressions, challenges political violence, and empowers people who are not part of economic and political elites is essential. (587)

Brian's practice certainly challenges the traditional hierarchies of art making, including the economic and political elitism that often surround the art gallery industry. Not only does he say that everyone is creative, and that every space has art, but he has built his career largely in the public sector, serving as a civic artist in residence at the City level prior to his MnDOT appointment.

Building on Whitehead's (2020) positioning of embedded artists, Brian serves as a "problem-finder", which he is able to act on through his government-affiliated roles. He describes his medium as "these systems that can use tweaking." Like Williams & Steil (2023), Brian holds a vision for a deeply transformed world "that desperately needs to be remade." He holds a perspective of art as transformative, saying:

> Art is everywhere, so let's remake this moment, [...] If we can truly remake this moment here, it can reverberate out in ways we cannot predict. That awareness, working on our

> own awareness and how we are together can deeply change many things in an almost indirect way [...] Instead of thinking "liberation" is down the road, let's do it now as well.

His relational approach allows for the co-creation necessary for *procedural* justice, and his vision of total inclusion and power building within systems align with *institutional* justice. Indeed, Brian could be confused for a reparative planner arguing for a healed world.

Julia, MnDOT's second resident artist, is a White woman in her early forties. She, like Brian, has a calm and thoughtful presence. Julia also mentions her interest in systems. She has "been invested in interrupting systems for about almost 20 years" through her art practice. She sees her role as "a wedge" to create new possibilities or question the systems. However, in reflecting on her civic practice, as compared to her personal (studio) practice, she shares that what drew her to the residency was the fact that "it's not often you get a chance to intervene," in the kinds of systems she was invited to address. Julia discussed the opportunity of civic practice as one that had clear implications for *procedural, institutional,* and *environmental* justice, because the role provided "a position of power," to address these things. She however, reframes the power dynamic to add, "you quickly realize that there's no sort of solo power in it, it's all about relationship building," emphasizing the *relational* approach that these civic artists are bringing to the work.

While Julia's previous projects did not focus on race explicitly, she speaks of her work as a tool for empowerment, recognition and validation. She describes her goals as:

> I want to empower people [...] and I want to allow people to be more honest. And to feel recognized, to feel legitimized by the work [...] More than anything I get very excited when people see themselves in the work, or like, "oh this is speaking directly to me."

Her goals speak to a deeply *relational* approach that also offers moments for *recognition*, even if not in an explicitly racial way. Exemplifying these goals, her project prior to her residency focused on trauma and collective healing. In describing her multifaceted installation at a gallery

based in Los Angeles, Julia concluded, "the point was to try to see if we could address or heal personal trauma in a public space through some of these [projects]," saying that she "had been doing a lot of research in the previous like two years [...] around [...] trauma informed healing practices." Outside of her art practice, Julia worked on sustainability issues, making her an apt fit for MnDOT's Sustainability and Public Health Fellowship.

LADOT's first Creative Catalyst, Owen, is a Japanese-American, Los Angeles-based Sound Artist in his late fifties. Similar to his counterparts at MnDOT, he has an incredibly welcoming and kind presence. He smiles while he talks, and looks focused when listening to others. Following Owen's LADOT residency from 2015-2016, he has now established a career as a civic artist, having amassed ten residencies in various institutions over the past decade.

Prior to his leap as a serial resident artist, he spent over two decades working as an arts administrator for a transportation agency. Perhaps one his most notable qualities, however, is his earnest authenticity. When reflecting on his tenure as a bureaucrat, he laughed as he shared that:

> Even though I have a background working in government, I'm really not good at government speak. [...] I can't like, you know, code switch and become like The Professional. I've never been able to do that and you know, and so at this point it's never gonna happen.

His human-oriented approach rings through all aspects of who he is, including his artistic focus. Indeed, he says that "people" is a theme of his work. Coming out of his MFA, he shares that he "wasn't trying to make *that* kind of art. [He] was trying to make art for communities or for society." Owen's origins as an artist are rooted in a framework of activist art and working among other artists of color to challenge the current systems. He cites activist artist Judy Baca as one of his mentors, and spent two years as the only male committee member supporting the Women's Building, a feminist arts space. This grounding positions Owen well to provide a *relational* approach that *values intersectional identities, priorities, and expertise.*

Preparing him for *procedural* and *institutional* dimensions of justice, Owen described that his artist collective developed methods around working with communities as outsiders such that they "would have to kinda like figure out how to exist, and in the end, have enough trust built so that we can present them." He has taken this approach into his solo artist career as a civic artist. During his 10 institutional artist residencies over the last decade, he finds himself in unfamiliar territory. In his residencies, he tends to focus on portraying and honoring the staff at his host institutions, taking an internally-facing *relational* approach that starts to address *institutional* elements through departmental culture.

Irene, LADOT's second and final resident artist, is a White Jewish artist of Eastern-European descent in her mid-thirties. Originally from the Midwest, Irene shared how her practice was shaped by her childhood growing up in a racially diverse, predominantly immigrant community. Specifically, she says, her experience when her family went from being middle class to working-poor following the housing crisis attuned her to classism. However, her White, third-generation American family's experience, she shared, was markedly different from the White, Eastern-European immigrant families and the Latinx families in her neighborhood that soon got pushed out. Since then, she has been highly attuned to race and privilege.

Irene speaks quickly and passionately when she describes her practice's focus on race and racial injustice. She's "really fascinated with the ways we get around overt, like discrimination or oppression through infrastructure, and the policy also connected to that." Like the other civic artists, Irene has a fascination for systems; during her MFA, she emphasized Law, Culture and Society. Her previous project examined ordinances around payphone usage and how zoning restrictions and loitering policies ultimately lead to racially disparate arrest rates for breaking those laws. After describing additional projects, including one related to rural

broadband access, she stated, “I feel like almost everything in America goes back to being racist. Like racism is the reason for, like, everything.”

Irene’s practice can be described as *recognitional*. She aimed to bring attention to racial disparities in the built environment in systems that have not yet been widely acknowledged as racialized. As an emerging artist, she had not had much capacity to transform her recognitional work into something more tangible, such as a means for redistribution or procedural and institutional change. However, she was excited to bring her interest in infrastructure, race, and policy to her residency at LADOT following her graduation from her MFA program. She commented that by working with the government, in this case LADOT, her work had the potential to achieve change, empowering her to take on collaborative projects with residents that would have otherwise felt extractive without something tangible to offer participants. Irene recognized the increased potential for justice through collaborating with a government agency, and saw these collaborations as vehicles for heightened impact, particularly around a *relational* approach. Indeed, her projects at LADOT would offer new methods of community engagement that provided tools for *procedural* and *institutional* justice, as well as a fundraising project that sought to address *redistribution* during the pandemic.

As artists, Brian, Julia, Owen and Irene all speak to the social and systemic goals within their artwork. All four artists were interested in systems and institutions in their practice. Equally, they assumed a people-centric approach that could be described as *relational.* Though only Irene speaks specifically about racism or racial redress, Julia, Owen and Brian speak to ways the current system needs change. Additionally, Owen and Brian bring their experience as artists of color who have worked in communities of color. Collectively, their practices seek to explore the racially disparate impacts of policies, heal trauma, and contribute to the public good.

These ideas prepare them well to tackle themes of racial redress, equity, community engagement, and institutional norms at their agencies. In the next section, I detail my findings for each artist residency and how they relate to the reparative planning framework. Table 7 includes a summary chart of the projects.

Transportation Artist in Residence Impact on their Agencies

Table 7: Summary of Residence Projects by Reparative Dimension

	LADOT		MnDOT	
	Owen	**Irene**	**Brian**	**Julia**
Recogn-itional	• World Day of Remembrance • LA Dot Zine 1.0: Traffic Safety • Speed Kills (Film) • Commuter Portraits	• *Town Hall: Redlining & Highway Divisions* • *Town Hall: Policing* • *Skid Row Stories*	• Land Acknowledgement and Confluence Room	• What if You Could Poster Campaign
Distributive		• Hotline Fundraiser		
Relational	• Ghostbike Collaboration • Caffeine Tour • Mar Vista Great Streets • LA Dot Zine 2.0: Traffic Safety	• A Neon Stage Dedicated to the Little Ones of Los Angeles (MacArthur Crosswalk Performance) • *Skid Row Stories*	• Art Appendix • Land Acknowledgement Confluence Room	• How Do You Move Workshops
Procedural	• Street Haikus	• *Town Hall: Surveillance*	• Planning with Stories and Dreams Project	• How Do You Move Game • How Do You Move Website
Institutional	• The Moth Storytelling workshop • Staff Podcast Series	• Town Hall: The Census & You • Town Hall: How to Make a Public Comment	• Freedom of Movement Workshops • Creative Conversations • Land Acknowledgement Confluence Room	• Creative Practice for Sustainability at MnDOT
Environme ntal	• Street Perfumes	• *Town Hall: Environmental Impact*	• Turning Highways to Rivers	• *Residency focus: Sustainability and Reducing Vehicle Miles Traveled*

MnDOT Artist in Residence Origin

The origin of MnDOT's TAIR pilot came out of a relationship developed through a previous racial reconciliation project. A former commissioner at MnDOT had become familiar with Smart Growth America (SGA) through the Reconnect Rondo project to redress a community harmed by the I-94 interstate. Rebecca described that MnDOT was interested in further work with SGA to develop a new partnership around the residency program because of SGA's value proposition around integrating arts into planning. She shares that the:

> …primary tenets were getting better input in transportation projects, you know, healing divisions or working with communities harmed by transportation. You know, better partnerships, better solutions, better working with [environmental justice communities], all the things that they have—we were interested in from the very get-go.

She emphasized the agency's interest in participating once more, stating that, "engagement, art, new solutions, equity, from the very beginning were part of things that we wanted to be included with, and we saw something different about how this program could help us consider those questions." Brian's residency illustrates how one artist began to approach the hefty task.

MnDOT Artist 1: Brian

Brian completed four projects during his tenure at MnDOT, including the transformation of a conference room, an artist presentation workshop, a series of "Open Space Technology" workshops, and an interactive engagement concept project called "the Art Appendix: Turn the Highways to Rivers State-wide Multi-Modal Transportation Plan." To kick off his residency, he spoke with over 100 MnDOT staff members about their experience and perspectives on transportation planning. Brian shares that one agency staff member said "we offer technical solutions to deal with spiritual land," which he described as "a lovely articulation of the mismatch." This sentiment perfectly highlights the massive moment in transportation for racial

redress and the inadequacy of current tools and methods. By telling Brian this concern, the staff member perhaps hoped that an artist embedded in the agency might begin to address it. Brian embarked on this charge through his Land Acknowledgement Confluence Room.

Brian's Land Acknowledgement Confluence Room is the most explicit artist project in Table 7 on racial redress. The project, which reimagined and redesigned an underused conference room, aimed to contextualize current transportation planning with the State's history of transportation planning stemming from the colonization of the state, redlining, and the damage of highways on communities of color. Rebecca described Brian's project as:

> Creating this innovative experimental space [...] to kind of embody our values and to reckon with challenging histories, and to elevate the voices of our community members and our staff and those that we serve in new ways that really reflect where we want to go from an equity transportation equity standpoint…

Not only does Rebecca connect Brian's work with racial reckoning and transportation's legacy of harm, but she addresses the continuum of where this work is happening. In this instance, dealing with the legacy of harm is also an internal *institutional* process within the agency. Rebecca went on to detail the impact of the project internally on staff, sharing that while, "our Native American employees shared, you know, moments of appreciation for it," it also offered the whole staff:

> Different ways of embodying our values with our work. [...] I think it changed culturally people's respect for that. [...] There's a quote in the Land Acknowledgement Room from a crusty right-of-way guy, you know, who said that they "felt like things were cracking wide open." You know, they had this experience of just shifts in themselves and these perspectives in how they viewed the work.

Through a design intervention to reimagine a meeting room within the agency to be a land acknowledgement space, Brian hoped that the "physical change [...] relates to embodied change, psychological change." His project and his own accounts showcase a throughline between acknowledging history and humanizing transportation planning workers. Through a

recognitional project that faces inwards, towards the agency, rather than toward the communities harmed, Brian is providing an *institutional* tool, such that the staff and departments that make up the agency can begin to approach the past and present the role of the agency differently. In reflecting on the impact of the room, Tricia shared that changing the conference room was incredibly impactful and enduring because it allowed staff members to seek out the space when they want to have "a different type of conversation [... or] be in a different kind of space."

Rebecca also clarified the unique position that artist-led interventions have, as compared to more traditional methods, to more holistically address racial reckoning in MnDOT. She shared that it was "so different" to have Brian speak to the importance of land acknowledgements than to merely host trainings for staff members. She believes there is room for both, stating that, "we need different ways of modeling and getting into who we want to be and who we are." When further reflecting on Brian's Confluence Room project, she describes it as an both a *relational* and *institutional* change to their process:

> I would say culture change like that would be an example of [...] just how we relate to land and how we relate to people, and people that we might have harmed, through our reflection on the Rondo Community with I-94, with Interstate 94. Both of those are threads within his project within the [Confluence] Room…

She goes on to specify how the project ties histories of harm into daily practice, describing a third dimension of recognition achieved through the project in that:

> The Room kind of embodied people, you know? How do you reckon with those histories that happened in your agency, you know? How do you… how do you feel that every day? How do you take that into your work in a way that propels you forward, but doesn't stifle you, but you acknowledge it honestly and let it inform your work going forward?

Rebecca's description offers key insights into an important element of racial redress that often gets pushback: how to acknowledge heavy topics while still moving forward. Rebecca shares that Brian's approach was able to achieve *recognitional* justice that properly motivates

institutional practice because the project creates a certain "presence in a very sensitive way." She reflects that the project was "really good" because "that's not always easy to have those conversations, right?" Within her description of the project, Rebecca makes the argument that, here, an artistic approach, with its embodiment, sensitivity, and presence, was able to have unique impacts on conversations of racial redress that traditional planning methods may not have been able to achieve.

After its construction, the planners spoke very positively about the impact of the Room however, its implementation was no guarantee. One planner told Brian that when he first pitched the project, "he said to himself, no way in hell. [...] No one had ever asked for this kind of permission before." Brian's intervention allowed for an opening for *institutional* justice through *recognition* because he was willing to go there. Brian described the conference room as something "no one actually really likes, it wasn't well used, it wasn't up to code, it was dirty." His epistemic disobedience allowed him to ask for the room. His planning counterpart "thought his higher ups would say no." Brian commented that "This is how self-censorship happens, he didn't believe they would say yes." The presence of the artist, and his courage, fostered institutional courage for *recognitional* justice to occur.

Rebecca, Brian, and a staff member that Brian interviewed articulated the challenges of working on transportation planning in the present day when a legacy of racial harm lingers and traditional methods fall short. Charged with developing a solution as MnDOT's Transportation Equity Fellow, Brian attempts to merge past harms into present actions through his Land Acknowledgement Confluence Room.

Brian's second large project was "The Art Appendix: Turn the Highways to Rivers State-wide Multi-Modal Transportation Plan." Tara described the origins of the project as a "hair-

brained idea" between her and Rebecca to figure out an artistic approach to "tell the racist legacy" of the state's highway system as it reached its centennial. Harkening to Whitehead's (2020) terminology of "epistemic disobedience," Brian half-jokingly described the original framing as "go get some stories." True to his nature as a behavioral artist, he elaborated:

> The initial framing was "can you go out there to get some stories to bring back to us so we can include it in the plan, so that we can demonstrate that we are hearing the stories?" I was like, uhhh this is a misunderstanding of hearing,"

He shared that this disjuncture between listening and hearing is what "our whole world is suffering from, it's so deep in everywhere." Thus, he reframed the project, creating a:

> Fictional council, the Council of Old and New Wisdom. People's participation in this council was offering their stories, their advice to this council for this process. We convened it [with] different elders in the artistic communities, and I wanted the older people to invite younger people, maybe a mentee. Even though we had to do it online, it was sitting in a circle to talk, and offer whatever they wanted to offer to the Statewide Multimodal plan.

One of Brian's favorite quotes that emerged from the plan was from a "beloved elder in the community" who, when asked for his advice, said, "turn the highways to rivers." As an artist, Brian understood this not to be "100% literal," but ran wild with "the imagination that is engaged with those words." The process, which ultimately earned the name of The Art Appendix as an artistic addendum to the Statewide Multi-Modal Plan, became a process "to live closer to it." The project idea was that the council was overlapping, not external, to the planning process and that it crossed the boundaries of inside and outside between planners and community members.

Designed to take place in public space adjacent to the river, the project team sadly decided to make the project virtual due to COVID. Nonetheless, the project highlighted the tensions that reparative planning approaches and traditional planning face. Brian's process served as a tool for multiple dimensions of reparative planning. First, it served as a *recognitional* tool to prioritize marginalized social groups and as a *relational* tool that built strong relationships

and valued communities and their joy. At a *procedural* dimension, it served to reimagine how engagement could be non-extractive and value the community voice as essential data via co-created engagement processes. As an *institutional* tool, the project built cross-community power and advancing democracy in the planning process. Lastly, it served as an *environmental* justice tool that sought to think about land, water, and transportation as interlocking ideas connected to race and identity. Yet, the planners struggled to see how it could properly fit in their paradigm. Not only did Brian unsuccessfully advocated for the document to be an official Appendix in the Plan, the participating planners also struggled to translate the art process into the planning process. For example, Tara, who described herself as a "punk-rock planner" and deeply believed in transforming MnDOT to better reach racial justice, struggled to understand how to develop actionable takeaways. Yet, she described the conversations as "really beautiful" and later shared that in the process one of her colleagues had challenged her "burn it all down" mindset by saying, "I'd rather you, like, stay and fight longer than to, like, pick any individual battle or hill to die on." In this process, she examined what her "hard line" was for justice, reflecting that out of that dialogue she developed an understanding that, "even in death, you leave more fertile, fertile ground for things to grow. It's okay to let things die." This quote is one of her work mantras and reframed her thinking about how she advocates justice in bureaucracy.

While a smaller project, Brian also led a series of workshops on how MnDOT could be a more people-centered organization. He showed planners how "gatherings and convenings can be more co-created through open-space technology," which he defined as a process where participants can co-determine the agenda, rather than it being predetermined. This intervention was a very literal tool for planners to develop skills in *procedural* justice that allowed for co-created decision making processes.

MnDOT Artist 2: Julia

While Julia's projects focused less explicitly on racial redress, her project to reimagine community engagement touched on race and inequity within the current public participation paradigm, offering models for *procedural* justice. Her "Tell Us How You Move" project—which combined an online website, surveys, interactive workshops with her "Move Around Map Game", and a reflective gear costume making activity—highlights the challenges that current community engagement methodologies have when attempting to properly redress inequity and past harms. She summarized her project as:

> basically a community engagement project… [...] It was about listening and then producing things that would both work for the agency and speak to what people told me their needs were. I was trying to, like, combine those things, so that the message would speak to all the audiences both internal and external in the final project.

However, in Julia's approach to community engagement, she describes an iterative project with "each element [...] meant to feed into the next,." She outlines that she will "do a thing, and then that thing really will partially determine what happens next." This approach greatly contrasts with traditional community engagement, which she describes as more prescribed. Thus, through her projects, she was pushing for a *procedural* reimagining of community engagement that is often called for in conversations of equitable urban planning. In comparing her practice and the status quo, she shared that she felt that:

> MnDOT's way of doing these things might be more like, they think they know the answer to each of those things within their own process. They're like, yeah, we'll do public engagement and then we'll kind of do what we planned anyway, you know what I mean?

While planners did not specifically confirm Julia's perspective, several planners mentioned the agency's struggle to achieve good engagement, citing both time and authentic community relationships as challenges. For example, Tricia shared that the department lacked the resources

to partner with local community organizations from a variety of backgrounds. If they invested those resources, she thought that the agency would be able to build relationships with different cultural organizations, such that the agency could get to know each other, versus, their current approach, which she described as only reaching out "when we have a project and we're coming in and we need to communicate something," which echoes Julia's description of engagement with an agenda.

Julia's experience also showcased the logistical challenges that she worked to overcome. As a state-wide project, Julia aimed to engage residents in rural areas, including tribal nations. As she previously shared, the timeframe she had was inadequate to build relationships due to the fraught racial history between the agency and the Tribal Nations. She stated that she "would have needed another year [...] to build those relationships," attributing the specific need for more time to engage with native communities on issues of native "sovereignty plus a history of being fucked over."

Julia was committed to the engagement-based project, partnering with the agency's central Community Engagement office. Wanting to engage hard to reach populations during her project, she had to devise creative strategies to offer new procedural models of working. When describing her interest in working with rural Minnesotans, she stated that:

> I'd heard from the beginning [...] rural Minnesota tends to feel really not heard and not attended to and I was like, oh I'm interested in rural Minnesota. What's going on? You know, I wanna be able to talk to people from all over."

However, when she attempted to connect with the district engagement offices, "none of that went anywhere. [...] the public engagement folks in the districts never responded." She diagnosed the challenge by saying, "I think [the district planners] were like, this is too risky [...] I think they had no capacity to help co-produce a sort of outside the box workshop." Ultimately, Julia

devised a solution to engage both the state's tribal and rural residents by going outside of the agency's structure altogether. She partnered with rural transit conferences and local libraries. She describes that the local conferences were a key instrument for engaging rural areas of the state, as attendees were open to learning new things. In describing the library partnership, she explains:

> Local libraries are amazing. [...] They could conceptualize event hosting in an open exploratory way. And I was like, oh my God, thank fucking God for public libraries. Also librarians, just everyone, it was just like. Hallelujah, here's where it worked.

Here, Julia contrasts her experience working with the public library system from working with the transportation planners, echoing her earlier sentiments of the planners having less interest in exploration or openness when engaging. The ability to have exploration or openness becomes key when thinking about how agencies would truly embody recognitional and relational ways of working, as true responsiveness requires planning to move beyond prescriptive processes and to develop an ability to explore and be flexible. This flexibility also allowed Julia to better deliver on *relational* and *procedural* justice. While Julia faced challenges directly working with tribal nations due to the short nature of her residency, she made sure to select a particular library branch located in the neighborhood with the highest rate of tribal residence in order to encourage their participation. Ultimately, Julia describes her experience trying to deeply engage people across the state as one where she found most of her success by maneuvering outside of the agency's system.

The efforts to reach those historically left out in planning brought forth new insights as well. Julia shares that this particular library branch is "simultaneously one of the largest, like, homeless or unhouse people areas in Minneapolis." In working with the residents who came into the library, she shared a poignant story:

> There was one kind of group of three friends who spent a lot of time at the table with me and one guy came in. And I was like, do you want to make any [...] reflective accessories

> so you'll be more visible? And he's like, actually, if you have something that would make me invisible, that would be perfect. And I was like, whoa, point taken to your point about feeling exposed. He was like, if I could not be looked at all the time that would be awesome.

In reflecting on the project and the moment—a moment where a comment from a resident truly affected the perspective of a planner, albeit as an artist—Julia shared:

> Like there is like this sort of third position that artists operate in and I was thankful for it but I also felt like, oh my god, this feels like so much potential here, but I don't know what to do with it. And I don't know if MnDOT is capable of doing anything with it, but it felt like a thing that could continue.

Through Julia's project, we see the outline of the kind of community engagement project that aims to deeply address racial equity: an iterative project that adapts based on feedback that is heard, a persistent effort to reach demographic groups often left out, and a sensitivity to the lived experiences of those who experience disenfranchisement. Yet, Julia's experience, and her sentiments, raise the question of how traditional transportation planning can truly meet these moments and build on them.. Her experience also highlights her ability as an artist in her residency position to move nimbly, partner with external organizations and agencies such as the libraries, and persist, taking the time to reflect on what she is learning in each stage of her engagement process. In her creative approach to collaboration for planning, Julia was able to engage some of the hardest to reach populations in the city and state. Her choice to develop the engagement as a game and have a costuming activity speak to the *relational* justice's tenet of valuing joy. Thus, her ability as an artist to facilitate those collaborations showcase additional ways that artists in residence navigate *relational* and *procedural* dimensions of racial redress.

Further, Julia's non-arts background in sustainability work also prepared her to serve in this *environmental* justice focused residency. In describing the opportunity, she shared that she

“hadn't really had the opportunity to bridge the two practices,” but that she was eager for the opportunity because her “art practice is also interventionist fundamentally.”

Similar to Brian’s residency, planners both saw the theoretical potential and experienced the personal “aha” of engaging with Julia’s projects; however, they too struggled with how to translate Julia’s approach into their current paradigm. When reflecting on the task of behavior change around driving, Tricia, saw the potential for working with an artist, sharing that “we get so stuck into the way that we're doing things” and that she “really wanted it to come more from the outsider perspective.” She highlights key communication and translation skills that Julia could bring to the project, sharing that “we say ‘mode shift.’ Well, that means nothing to the common person. So like, how would [Julia] describe it?” In reflecting on what change she was seeking, she realized that she was not imagining a change in process, but rather in language around how the agency talked about the technical topic of reducing vehicle miles of traveled (VMT). Yet, when Tricia participated in Julia’s project, she reflected that she shifted her thinking around her driving habits, sharing that, even as a professional focused on this work, she had not thought about how to shift her habits by combining trips or combining different mobility options. She shared that Julia’s “mapping exercise as a tool in a process was really valuable for those of us who participated in it.”

In reflecting on the potential for an artist intervention, Samantha described a similar analysis to Julia’s regarding the agency's approach to engagement, sharing that she sees herself and her colleagues in state government using engagement to “trying to validate our answers” and to “build up an argument for something that we know we want to do.” She realized that while the predetermined reasons may even be “rooted in equity and access and sustainability,” they are, nonetheless, attempts to control the process. In contrast, she described the process of working

with Julia as strategies that are a little less attached to the outcomes "so that you're able to really hear," which echoes the tenets of *procedural* justice that co-creates with community members.

Nonetheless, both Tricia and Samantha were challenged by this more artistic approach that ceded control of the outcome. Aligning with what organizational theory scholars have found, Tricia critiqued the ability of Julia's residency to create long term change. She suggested that future residencies should have a stronger focus on leaving "a permanent mark on the organization." In detailing the challenges of operationalizing Julia's processes after her residency had ended, Samantha noted that the lack of structure of the process made it challenging for Samantha to integrate Julia's tools into her ongoing community engagement work. Yet, the lack of predetermined structure was essential to Julia's iterative approach. Additionally, while Samantha thought it was cool to frame the activity as a game, she critiqued the process as too time intensive and engaged too few residents. While Julia saw her outcomes as the ability to have in depth conversations with extremely marginalized residents that uncovered big "aha" moments, such as the participants desire for invisibility, Samantha felt unable to justify the time investment given the meager quantitative results. The tensions between Julia's artistic approach and Samantha's as a planner speak directly to the very tensions between the goals of reparational planning and the priorities of traditional planning. For a new, and more just, planning paradigm, planners and their agencies will need to resolve these tensions.

LADOT Artist in Residence Origin

LADOT's Creative Catalyst residency was founded years before Secretary Foxx's statement on past racial harm, and was not explicitly intended to provide racial healing or racial redress. Yet, I argue that the residency program was created to fill a need for new tools to address racialized collective harm, and that the artists' approaches indeed delivered on reparative

methods to create repair. The residencies were embedded into the newly founded and interdisciplinary Vision Zero team, which aimed to eliminate traffic deaths and severe injury in Los Angeles. Within the U.S. generally, and Los Angeles specifically, people of color face the disproportionate rate of pedestrian and bicyclist fatalities experienced by people of color (Brozen and Yahata Ekman 2020; Cottrill and Thakuriah 2010). Using Ruth Wilson Gilmore's definition of racism, which she defines as a "group-differentiated vulnerability to premature death," (2007, 28), I argue that embedding an artist into Vision Zero indeed served as a tool for addressing these persistent racial harms. Returning to Williams and Steil's (2023) definition of reparative planning as "opportunity to focus on collective repair of collective harm" (586-587), we can look at both Owen's and Irene's projects to address the disproportionate traffic deaths and injuries in communities of color as offering the Vision Zero department tools for reparative planning.

LADOT Artist 1: Owen

Having produced about a dozen projects, Owen's portfolio perhaps best highlights the diversity of ways that a resident artist's approach aligns with that of reparative planning. Owen's work at LADOT can perhaps be best described as trying to capture "the real people" behind LA's Vision Zero campaign, both the people in the department and those most affected by the issue. Through his sensitive touch, Owen allowed the department to become more relational. From this relational approach, Owen was able to add *recognition, procedural,* and *institutional* justice dimensions to Vision Zero's work.

Owen's early projects started from a place of putting faces to the people of transportation. For his *Commuter Portraits* project*,* he drew a series of portraits of transit riders while commuting to his residency on the bus. He later hung those portraits in an informal gallery at the LADOT office, reminding bureaucrats of the real people behind their data. Similarly, Owen

developed a series of projects around the lived experience of the LADOT staff members. Seeing a need to ground the Vision Zero campaign work in real people, Owen coordinated a storytelling workshop for traffic engineers in collaboration with The Moth LA—an events-based organization dedicated to the art and craft of storytelling. In the workshop, staff members listened to stories told by people who experienced traffic violence, and worked to understand how resident stories could better shape the department's approach to traffic engineering at Vision Zero. As a trained oral historian, Owen also began documenting senior employees' stories about their time at LADOT.

Like Brian, Owen focused much of his residency internally aimed at influencing the dynamics of the department. Around this time, Owen shares that he was talking to one of the head transportation engineers in his office which had a desk with two monitors. The engineer then told him that the second monitor was, "hooked up to LAPD, and so when there's a traffic fatality, I get the police report." Owen goes on to share that the engineer, who had worked at LADOT for 40 or so years, told him that, "every time we get one of these reports, you know I take it personally, you know, I feel like I didn't do my job," and that "I'm wasting people's money you know taxpayers' money." Owen felt that the need to tell the story, sharing "I think the monolith of bureaucracy gets in the way of the message. You know, I think if we can humanize somehow, hopefully people will listen a little bit more." Owen described the workshops and oral histories as "ways to be heard [...] by somebody outside of the circle of field transportation." In describing the *Oral Histories* project, Eric said that they told "the heart and soul of the agency, which is the people right?" Owen developed a deep empathy for the Vision Zero staff, reflecting that engineering schools do not teach their students how to deal with the

emotionally heavy weight of civic responsibility and death. Through his following projects, he continued to address the heaviness employees felt.

Inspired by what he was learning from his LADOT counterparts, Owen developed his first zine, *L.A. DOT Zine 1.0,* to highlight poems, photos and drawings about the Vision Zero work. Collaborating with the City's Print Department (a move that his planning counterpart Eric said was "a stroke of genius"), Owen printed 5,000, which he then brought with him on his "Caffeine Tour", where he donned an LADOT Safety Vest and sat in various cafes, spoke with residents and handed out the zine. Amanda, one of the Vision Zero planners shared:

> I remember seeing a pile of the zines that he produced and picking one up and [...] it made me feel seen. Like, it was the coolest thing and I was happy that these were being distributed out there in coffee shops because it gave visibility to our work in a different way and it validated the work we were doing and I was thrilled."

Owen's resourcefulness and openness allowed for another avenue of *relational* planning that was also having internal effects on morale. Amanda's comment highlights that as an artist resident, Owen was able to share about the work in a way that was needed, but this use of time was otherwise challenging. It was easy for Owen to simply make himself available by sitting in public space during his residency hours. The flexibility required to do this, however, would undoubtedly be harder for a planner to justify as they completed their timesheet. Here, we see a way that the structure of a resident allows for new forms of planning.

Owen and the planners frequently described the residency in the language of risk and permission. Owen and his LADOT counterparts described the generally challenging landscape for bureaucrats. Further, participants discussed the unique challenge of working on Vision Zero, a project that was literally about life and death. Illustrating the seriousness of the pedestrian fatalities, participants described the agency as an environment where engineers feared getting

subpoenaed in lawsuits due to street design changes. Further, they shared that working within such a large agency made innovation hard and often unrewarding.

Owen could take a nimbler approach than his agency counterparts. First, he was an artist, not an engineer. Thus, he had less legal liability if he tried something new. Second, he was a contracted artist, not an official employee of the agency, so he was able to operate outside of the usual rigid structures. Third, his presence in the agency was seen as a symbol of innovation, which had been approved by the highest level of agency leadership. Participants described Owen's presence as "granting permission" to those around him to try new things. Lastly, as the temporary artist in residence, not a long-time LADOT employee, he could navigate social spaces differently than LADOT employees. Staff members felt they represented "the Agency," which came with a certain sense of social stigma in historically harmed communities.

One key example of this dynamic was around Vision Zero's relationship to the organization Ghost Bikes LA—a community group that left clandestine memorials to bicyclists where they had been hit and killed. There was an obvious alignment between Vision Zero and Ghost Bikes LA. However, because Ghost Bike's memorials were unsanctioned, and often removed by the City of LA, LADOT planners perceived an unspoked boundary between them and the community group. Eric, wanting to connect with the Ghost Bikes LA, but afraid of being rejected by them, eventually asked Owen if he would reach out to the group. Owen, already a member of many biking-related organizations readily agreed, and eventually became an active member in the local chapter. When Owen's Vision Zero colleagues asked him to formally introduce the community group to the Vision Zero team, Owen described the agency as "walking on eggshells." Owen had no issues making the connection, and it was through his *relational* approach that the City was able to co-design another project, the *World Day of Remembrance*.

Owen, in his official capacity as LADOT's Creative Catalyst, spearheaded a collaboration among multiple organizations and 30 artists. Through his skills as a community collaborator and artist, Owen helped LADOT create an official event meant to honor those who had been killed due to traffic violence. Here, we see that strong *relational* projects led to more authentic *recognitional* justice of the issue and empowered the agency to formally acknowledge the harm that has resulted from designing dangerous streets.

In discussing his impact at LADOT, Owen shared a story about a specific leadership member at the agency. Early on, this person had told the artist, "I don't know why they hired an artist. I personally think it's a waste of taxpayers' money." However, toward the end of the residency, this leadership member was tasked with making a presentation on LA's Vision Zero program at a national conference. According to Owen, this individual got up on stage and said, "You know, I do have a PowerPoint that I'm supposed to present, but instead of doing that, I'd like to tell you a story." He proceeds to share his first experience visiting a traffic fatality site. He goes on to tell the story of meeting the victim's family and being invited to their home to have coffee. In front of the entire conference audience, this LADOT representative recognized the lived experience of the victim and his family as the means of describing the Vision Zero program and its goals. This approach was markedly different from the department's traditional data-focused approach. Owen recalls that the General Manager of LADOT at the time told him that she believed that the staff member would have never shared a story if it were not for his residency and workshop. She presented Owen's impact as an institutional shift taking place in the hearts and minds of agency planners and leadership.

Eric, Owen's supervisor, lamented that there were not more ways of capturing all that Owen had contributed to the team, such as an online repository of his oral history projects.

Further emphasizing the challenges that institutions face in operationalizing the richness that the residencies offer, Eric shared that:

> There was no, like, nice bow that we put on the end of the program, right? I think [Owen] sent a 50-page deliverable, right? And then, like, sort of disappeared. And that's, I think, yeah, that's just, it was such a special time and I feel forever connected to him and the agency because of it.

Eric expressed clear emotion around the power of Owen's presence in the agency. However, with many of the Vision Zero members having since moved on from LADOT, much of the transformative potential has gone to waste.

LADOT Artist 2: Irene

As an artist, Irene has a strong interest in systems, infrastructure and racial justice. These interests dovetailed in a series of projects working to enhance *procedural* and *institutional* justice for often excluded communities. Unlike Owen, Irene's projects largely focused externally on constituents. Driven by the challenging nature of attending town halls and giving feedback, she proposed the Mobile Town Hall Tour, a series of conversations with community and elected leaders that took place on the bus in various neighborhoods. She wanted to challenge the idea that people should have to travel to their political leaders, and rather, have leaders travel with commuters as they went about their day-to-day activities. Though she had to reimagine the Tour due to COVID, in its original iteration, she imagined six Town Halls, each on various important civic and social justice topics: the census, making public comment, redlining, policing, surveillance, and environmental racism through highway implementation. These projects not only recognized past and present racial harms, but also acknowledged the residents most negatively affected by each topic by locating these convenings on the bus in affected

neighborhoods. In describing the inspiration behind the project, Irene painted a current picture of participation, saying:

> Town hall meetings or city hall meetings [is] the best way to express comments and get change, but you know they [are] 11 am on a Tuesday and Thursday. Like what working person can go to that and like, call off work?

She addresses ethnic and racial disparities in access as well adding that "you have [to give] them your comment in English. I think there are translators but like, […] more or less you have to speak English." Connecting this to transportation, she points out that the meetings are only downtown and particularly challenging for transit riders to attend due to the time it takes to get there. From this examination of the challenges of civic participation, particularly for non-English speaking public transit riders, she envisioned a version of a town hall meeting that "would be on a bus in motion around the neighborhood where people could ask questions." Rather poetically, she describes an artistic intervention through which the town hall would "bus to them rather than asking them to come to town hall." Irene flips the expectations around whose responsibility it is to ensure participation among residents with higher barriers to participation. In her project, City officials are expected to do the commuting, rather than the residents.

Within the project, Irene became a "problem finder" a la Whitehead (2020), and linked accessible civic participation, race, class, and language access all within one larger frame of transportation justice. She centered the conversation of transportation access around one's ability to be an active participant in civic life. She initially proposed six topics for her town halls, including surveillance, policing, redlining, and highways that divided communities. Though Irene was only able to complete two Town Hall Tour events due to the pandemic, the ultimate artistic concept behind her piece was a *procedural* reimagining of civic engagement that allowed for community input to be more *relational,* all through the lens what transportation should afford

residents. Additionally, the two topics Irene did manage to host were on the census and making a public comment, two elements central to *procedural* justice. She saw the census as a key tool for marginalizing communities to gain political power and resources through more accurate population counts. Similarly, she saw civic education around public comment-making as key to having more reflective public participation in transportation planning and governance more generally. In its series format, Irene also provokes an *institutional* reimagination of what government-resident relationships could be. Additionally, her other proposed topics—redlining, surveillance, environmental injustice of highways—pushed towards a *recognitional* project for the government to acknowledge past harms.

Similarly to Owen's impact on community-agency relationships in his residency, Irene helped the agency forge new connections outside of a traditional community engagement paradigm through her work. Her performance piece, *A Neon Stage Dedicated to the Little Ones of Los Angeles,* on traffic safety and its effect on children, served as a vehicle to collaborate with Heart of Los Angeles, an afterschool program that primarily serves Latinx youth in the MacArthur/Westlake—one of the most lethal neighborhoods for children in Los Angeles due to traffic violence(Vision Zero LA 2016). David shared that collaborating on the public performance opened his eyes to new ways of working with community. While a typical community engagement is always "tied to an ask from the City," he said her project let the department connect more freely with community members. This, he shared:

> Really freed up my mind in terms of like, okay, what's possible here? [...]] I think it definitely opened the door for me to kind of approach community engagement in a way that wasn't so transactional. [...] I had always believed in, like, really leading with relationships. [...] Seeing what the City could do if it was intentional about doing something like that, I think was really cool.

Through Irene's project, LADOT was able to take on a more relational approach to engagement that, per David, could ultimately shift the procedural way that the agency operates by redefining how the agency connects with its constituents. Despite his excitement, David reported that he was unaware if the Department built on the relationship with HOLA.

Irene's third proposed project, which she was unable to complete due to COVID, was a video series with residents of Skid Row. She aimed to connect the topic of traffic safety to those living on the streets. Unhoused residents, she shared, are the most likely demographic group to be hit and killed by cars, yet they are often not acknowledged in transportation conversations around street safety. She imagined her role as an artist to reframe who we see as those harmed by traffic to include those often left out due to societal classism, racism, and prejudice. Had she been able to complete this project, she would have perhaps been offering the department new ways of understanding the issue through the perspectives of residents living in Skid Row.

When sharing his perspectives on Irene's project, David—the last of three LADOT staff members to be assigned as her liaison—shared that working with Irene affected his perspectives on his work. He shared that at first the experience "was a little weird," because her project engaged with residents without a specific "ask." He specifically contrasted this from his background as a planner, and as a former employee in the City Council's office. In reflecting on how the experience affected him, he said:

> It really freed up my mind in terms of like, okay, what's possible here? [...] I think it definitely opened the door for me to kind of approach community engagement in a way that wasn't so transactional. [...] I had always believed in, like, really leading with relationships, [...] seeing what the City could do if it was intentional about doing something like that, I think was really cool and I was like we should be doing stuff like this more often.

David's remarks highlight that his experiences working with community, both as an urban planner for LADOT and during his time working for the City Council, were shaped by a more

"transactional approach". He described community engagement as a means to get something from community groups, such as a letter of support. Thinking back to David's goal "to elevate the voices of our community members" by becoming a planner, his comment highlights a disconnect between how he had hoped to work with community, and how he was able to work with community within the institutions in which he has worked. This example highlights that David wished to be able to work more relationally, however the structure of his role and job made him feel unable to do that. Collaborating on artist-led projects showcased a different way of engagement, one that did not necessarily have a specific goal and allowed him to "really lea[d] with relationships" like he had wanted to, offering a new mode of relational planning.

However, the idea of having a clear goal within urban planning—which Julia might frame as a predetermined outcome from her time at MnDOT—is complex. As David clarified:

> It was hard for me to understand the point of it all, or to maybe even measure success. Right? Like once we get a letter of support or you know, we do engagement on something, it's like, sort of a step to a final end goal of, like, being able to install the project or stop the project or whatever. This didn't really have those parameters in place.

This sentiment goes back to Metzger's (2011) theory on planners' roles of accountability and transparency. Similarly, it echoed Irene's own reflections regarding the legitimacy that partnering with an agency can provide her as an artist, as it can indicate that the work has a larger purpose. Thus a tension arises, when and where should community engagement focus less on outcome, and where are guaranteed outcomes essential? To tie this back to the reparative framework, the question arises, how can relational planning lead to *procedural* and *institutional* transformation?

The Challenge of Transformation

While Brian's, Julia's, Irene's and Owen's projects clearly outline new approaches to transportation planning topics around racial reckoning, community engagement, organizational culture, and equity, the question still remains how the agencies can integrate the *recognitional*, *relational*, *procedural*, and *institutional* elements of these project outcomes into their larger operations. Much like Antal and Strauss (2016) found in their meta-analysis, participants at both MnDOT and LADOT questioned the ability of the projects to have lasting effects or the agency to capture the temporary changes that the artists provided. Rebecca shared that though she and others "…would say that the program was successful and the projects were successful and we learned a lot," yet, she felt like the solutions were "a little bit of a bridge to nowhere." Ade pointed to LADOT's structural challenges to capture impact, including the format of having the artists as a contract worker. He also pointed out that multiple of Irene's assigned collaborators were promoted during her residency; thus, she was reassigned to new personnel. Eric shared that if he "had a magic wand [he] would make [the Moth workshops] a yearly thing for the department, because it was so cool to have engineers thinking about how their projects are stories that they need to tell." Ted, the program administrator from the Department of Cultural Affairs, diagnoses the challenge Eric describes astutely. He suggests that the program could have had more transformative potential if the artists were not positioned as disruptors, but:

> Position themselves as a risk investor. "I'm here to help you take some risks. To see if we can solve this problem in a different way. We're gonna put money into these things. We're gonna do three or four. Two of them may suck [...] but two of them might be good and one of them might be brilliant and become a new program.

He further imagines a system where artists' planner counterparts have systems to "own" one of the tools, much like Eric describing his desire to continue the storytelling workshop.

Beyond ownership of the creative solutions, the agencies must commit to changing institutional structures to achieve true reparative planning. Echoing Raviola and Schnugg (2016) findings, Samantha shares that the agency's culture around time scarcity was in conflict with Julia's slower approach, thus making the change at MnDOT challenging. For these artists in residence to have lasting effects, bureaucracies will have to be willing to find the time, resources, and personnel to champion true institutional change. Similarly, to do true reparative planning, agencies will have to commit time, resources, and consistent personnel to tackle these issues.

Discussion

This study finds that past racial harm and racial redress were a prominent theme at both agencies. While MnDOT participants discussed these themes from a top-down lens, mentioning Federal, State, and agency influences, LADOT participants discussed this legacy in more personal terms. Further, the planners in this study see the profession at a point of inflection between the history of the field and where they would like it to go. Within two progressive DOTs, planners verbalized the need and desire for new ways of working, particularly to achieve *procedural* and *institutional* justice. Planners also identified data as a means to take a more *distributive* approach to focus energy and resources on overlooked communities, but did not have explicit compensation and restitution programs for racial redress. Planners did not, however, articulate externally-facing initiatives for *recognitional* justice to own said harm publicly. Additionally, planners did not discuss mechanisms for *relational* justice. While *environmental* justice was an implicit theme, it did not surface as an explicit topic, such that this study could comment on planners' conceptualization of their environmental sustainability work through the lens of *environmental* justice.

The second part of this study found that artists can play a key role in providing new approaches for planners to incorporate reparative dimensions to their work, namely, through civic artists' *relational* approach that puts people and relationships first, their desire to affect civic systems, and predisposition to be "problem finders". In their residencies, the artists created a variety of projects that linked closely with the reparative planning framework, especially in categories of *recognitional, relational, procedural,* and *institutional* justice. While I find elements of their approaches could be *distributive* and *environmental,* this study lacked data to assess those parameters.

Most notably, the embedded artists each brought a strong *relational* approach to their work, conducting projects that upended the normal order of operations for the planning agencies. Interestingly, the artists' starting place of *relational* practice tended to unlock more just approaches to the other parameters of the framework. For example, Owen's *relational* approach of wanting to capture the full stories of the employees and the community groups affected by traffic violence birthed a *procedural* intervention to hold community voices as essential data. Further, the "story-first" framing began to affect larger *institutional* practices that led the institution to more publicly own the harm caused through the state of traffic violence. The largest *institutional* impact seemed to be due to the structure of inviting an artist in, which implicitly and tangibly invited a higher tolerance for risk that allowed planners to adopt new approaches, an essential element of changing the dominant/traditional paradigm of planning practice.

This risk-tolerance also allowed for new forms of public *recognitional* justice, in that artists could address past racial harms on behalf of the agency more freely as agency affiliates, but not technical employees. This finding was seen in Owen's *World Remembrance Day* project and Irene's planned (but COVID-canceled) *Mobile Town Halls* on redlining, surveillance, policing, and environmental racism. Meanwhile, Brian was able to take a large risk internally by refashioning a conference room into a sight of remembrance of past racial harm. In its physical manifestation, the Room provided an explicit acknowledgement of *recognitional* justice that also got publicized through residency documentation and publications.

While artists took great interest in affecting *procedural* and *institutional* justice, and produced projects that incorporated reparative tenets to these processes, the findings show that the learning transfer and institutional adaptation of these approaches proved difficult. The difficulty is evidenced in the planners' curious, yet frustrated responses to the outcomes from

Julia's *Tell Us How You Move* project, Owen's storytelling workshops, Brian's *Turning Highways to Rivers/Art Appendix,* and Irene's *A Neon Stage Dedicated to the Little Ones of Los Angeles.* These findings echo Antal and Strauss (2016) and Raviola and Schnugg (2016) who highlight the inherent tension between current agency structures and practices and that of the desired reparative process.

The findings do show, however, that in an institutional setting, the presence of the embedded artists offered planners a sense of permission to try new things and take risks. Planners mentioned how the artists' projects allowed them to see things differently, try out cool ideas they would not have otherwise tried, or generally surprise them in what the agency was willing to do. How this finding aligns with the *institutional* dimension definition is harder to discern. Certainly risk and courage are key dimensions of transforming systems into places of racial redress. Yet, current literature, as well as my proposed framework, do not include increasing risk tolerance or developing healthier work cultures. In fact, William and Steil (2023), Song & Mizrahi (2023), Untokening (2017), and Giamarino et al. (2022) offer few insights on the capacities that an institution should develop to be successful leaders in reparative planning. These findings suggest that current understandings of the *institutional* dimensions of the framework are undertheorized and should be further developed.

Lastly, and perhaps most critically, *distributional* justice is largely absent from the findings. How can one argue for a method of reparative planning if it fails to deliver on redistribution? The results hint at the potential role of the embedded artists in contributing to *distributional* justice, namely that the artists redistributed agency attention toward often excluded residents. Owen's work with the Ghost Bikes LA collective, Brian's work with elders of color, Julia's engagement of unhoused and Native residents, and Irene's focus on disconnected and

non-English speaking transit riders all serve as examples. Further, I find that the artists saw their residencies as a unique tool to affect change for these residents. Still, I did not name many of these approaches or outcomes as *distributive* because key to this parameter is *material redistribution, compensation, and restitution*. However, the artists did see their role as one of distributing power. This finding ultimately points to the strength of cross-sector collaborations; for true reparative planning approaches, agencies should seek to combine the skill sets of artists and planners with the material resources of the agencies to back up this work. These results show that artists can and should be key collaborators in that *distributive* process, but that the material commitment must come from the agency that has perpetuated the harm.

An outstanding critique of these transportation artist-in-residence programs as a model for racial redress and equity is the glaring Whiteness of their creation and implementation. At both LADOT and MnDOT, the administrative partners and departmental leadership that put the programs together were all White. Half of the artists in residence were White as well, and no artists were Black, Native American, or Latinx—all communities directly harmed by transportation in Los Angeles and Minnesota. While, as mentioned in the literature review, this case is not necessarily a reality for all civic artist residencies in the US, the lack of diversity in program participants is a key critique of transportation artist-in-residence programs specifically. In alignment with the reparative planning framework, agencies looking to implement TAIR programs as a tool for racial justice should ensure that people of color are leaders in their development and implementation. Still, it is also significant that these two TAIR models offered ways to provide reparative approaches that did not place the burden for repair on planners of color, nor claim that only those who have been harmed must do the work to rectify it. I, as a White woman, deeply believe that White people need to see themselves as the accountable and

responsible actors for reparative planning and dedicate time, resources, and energy toward making this an active part of our practice. I believe that cross-sector collaborations with the right structure and values can offer a way for this to happen.

As with all comparative case studies, there is limited generalizability of these findings. Yet, I believe the findings offer key insights into future approaches. In both cases, participants identified their agencies as progressive and outlined key ways their agency had taken on the charge of racial justice and equity within planning work. Thus, these results serve as an aspirational case: when agencies and planners are looking for methods to address their stated goals for racial equity and repairing past harm, TAIR programs offer a model to collaborate with professionals skilled in *relational* and *recognitional* approaches, such that transportation agencies can develop new modes for *distributive, procedural* and *institutional* justice.

Conclusion

Institutions have sought artists as collaborators for new creative modes of thinking and more human-centric and authentic means of engagement (Antal and Strauss 2016; Asleson, Cunningham, and Ingram 2015; Darso 2016; Metzger 2011). Meanwhile, reparative planning scholars have argued for a new planning paradigm, but offer few, if any, methods to operationalize this emerging theory (Giamarino et al. 2022; Sandercock 2004; The Untokening 2017; R. A. Williams 2020; R. Williams and Steil 2023). With this evolving conversation around racial harm and redress in transportation planning, the US DOT has begun investing in repair-based initiatives, namely the Reconnecting Communities Pilot Program (USDOT 2023). This study offers the US DOT, policymakers, and the local agencies key insights into the key role that civic artists can play in reparative justice work. As *relational* professionals, these artists can unlock new approaches to better meet the pillars of reparative justice. Ultimately, this thesis suggests that reparative justice is a cross-sector effort and invites agencies at the highest level to continue exploring collaborating with artists in the pursuit of authentic racial redress and equity.

Appendix A

Interview Guide (Planner)

Personnel Background:

- Tell me a little bit about your role.
    - What does a typical day look like for you?
    - Who/which departments do you typically interact with/collaborate with for your job?
    - What sorts of constituents/stakeholders do you typically engage with for your work?
    - How long have you been with the agency?
- How do you approach your work as a planner?
    - What motivated you to become a planner?
    - What led you to work at a transportation agency?
    - What values and/or goals guide your work?

Agency Background:

- Can you describe the Agency for me?
    - How many people?
    - How many departments?
    - Structure?
    - Sorts of Projects?
    - Relationship to local/regional/state/federal agencies/funding sources?
- How would you describe the culture of your agency?
    - Are there explicit or implicit guiding values/principles?
- What do you perceive to be the big agency goals/projects at the moment? Can you walk me through how the agency is working on it?
- Can you describe how the agency make strategic decisions
    - How does your department make decisions?
        - What does staff participation/input look like in these processes?
- Who do you perceive the agencies' main stakeholders to be?
    - How does the agency engage with them?
- Can you describe how public input or engagement affects project outcomes?

TAIR Program Description:

- Can you walk me through how the TAIR Program came to be at your agency?
    - When did it get started?
    - What key conversations were happening?
    - Was there a specific person/department that championed its adoption?
- What did you perceive the goals to be of the TAIR program when it was getting started?
    - Who communicated these goals: leadership, staff, funders?
- Can you describe how the TAIR Program works at your agency?
    - Which departments are involved?
    - Who works closest with the artist in residence?
    - Who selects the artist' scope of work/project?
- Can you tell me a little about the artist-in-residence?

    - What has your relationship been like?
    - What sort of work do they make?
    - How do they work within the agency?
    - How have they approached their projects?
    - What do you perceive their goal to be through their TAIR role?
- Can you walk me through your most recent TAIR project and how it came to be?
- What are all the projects that the TAIR Program has undertaken?
- How is the TAIR program funded? Is there a timeline for that funding to expire?

TAIR Program Impact:

- What have been the results of the TAIR projects?
    - New programs, policies, procedures, collaborations, relationships?
- What do you see as the biggest benefits to having a TAIR Program?
- What have been the biggest challenges or limitations of the TAIR Program?
- What do you think the impact of the TAIR program has been overall?
    - Changes in approaches? Perspectives? Value shifts?
- Do you think the TAIR program will have any lasting effects if funding stops and the program cannot continue?
    - Any permanent changes around process, policy, budget, procedures?

TAIR Program Personal:

- How did you become involved in your agencies' TAIR Program?
- What were your expectations going into the TAIR Program?
    - Specific ideas about what the program would achieve?
    - Goals for the program?
    - Hesitations about the program, about the practice?
- What has your experience been working with the TAIR Program?
    - What is it like to work with an artist?
    - Has there been anything that has surprised you about working with an artist, or on the TAIR Program?
- Has your involvement in the TAIR program impacted your working style at all? If so, how?
- Is there anything you would want to share with your planning colleagues about your experience with TAIRs?

Appendix B

Interview Guide (Artist)

Background:

- Tell me a little bit about your arts practice.
    - What does a typical day look like for you?
    - How has your art practice shifted/changed over the last five years?
    - What sorts of audiences do you typically engage with in your work?
    - How long have you been a practicing artist?
- How do you approach your work as a civic artist?
    - What motivated you to shift your practice towards civic art??
    - What led you to work at a transportation agency?
    - What values and/or goals guide your work?

Agency Experience:

- How did you first come to hear about the agency and this opportunity?
    - What was the application process like?
    - What did you initially think of the opportunity?
- How would you describe the culture of your agency?
    - Are there explicit or implicit guiding values/principles?
- What do you perceive to be the big agency goals/projects at the moment? Can you walk me through how you perceive the agency is working on it?
- Have you observed how the agency seems to make strategic decisions? If so, what is it?
    - How have you observed staff participation/input in these processes?
- Who do you perceive the agencies' main stakeholders to be?
    - How does the agency engage with them?
- Can you describe how public input or engagement affects project outcomes?

TAIR Program Description:

- Can you walk me through your involvement in the TAIR program as an artist-in-residence?
    - Walk me through a typical day as the TAIR
- Can you describe how the TAIR Program works at your agency?
    - Which departments are involved?
    - Who do you work closest with?
- How have you selected your project? Did any staff members have influence over what you worked on?
- What did you perceive the goals to be of the TAIR program when you first started?
- How has your understanding of the TAIR program shifted as you've participated?
- Has program funding affected your time as a TAIR at all? If so, how?

Project Description:

- Can you walk me through your most recent TAIR project and how it came to be?
    - What was your goal with the project?
    - How has the project morphed since you started?
    - What did funding look like for your project?

    - For materials?
    - For labor?
    - For collaborators?
- Who were key instigators of the project?
- Who were key collaborators?
- How did the results of the project match up with your expectations?
- Do you think the project had any longer-term impacts? If so, can you describe them to me?

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