

Sustainable and Equitable Solutions for the Housing Crisis

Pollination Workshop Report

05/04/2022

Executive Summary

31 participants registered for a half-day, in-person [Bold Challenges](#) Pollination workshop on the topic of “**Sustainable and Equitable Solutions for the Housing Crisis**” held at the Michigan Union on May 4, 2022. Participants included a group of 12 faculty from 5 departments, 5 external partners, 7 co-sponsor representatives, 1 staff member from Innovation Partnerships, and 6 faculty and staff from the Office of the Vice President for Research (OVPR). Jill Jividen from OVPR Research Development and Proposal Services facilitated the workshop.

All participants were sent an electronic survey after the workshop. Survey response highlights:

100% at least somewhat agree that the workshop:

- was a good experience overall
- was an experience that they would recommend to a colleague
- stimulated their thinking around interdisciplinary and engaged research projects
- helped them connect with new people interested in the workshop topic
- enabled them to hear different perspectives about the topic

Participants were able to:

- develop new useful contacts and meet potential collaborators
- share research interests, ideas, and speak to community partners
- hear the various ways that people could imagine connecting topics
- directly express how the University of Michigan could be able to impact housing affordability



Workshop Overview

U-M Sponsoring Partners

Remarks were given throughout the day by the following partners:

- **Anna Kirkland**, Director, [Institute for Research on Women & Gender](#)
- **Doreen Tinajero**, Senior Project Manager, [Center for Social Solutions](#)
- **Amanda Healy**, University-Community Partnerships Manager [Edward Ginsberg Center](#)
- **Gregory Keoleian**, Director, [Center for Sustainable Systems](#)
- **Luke Shaefer**, Director, [Poverty Solutions](#)

Other U-M units represented

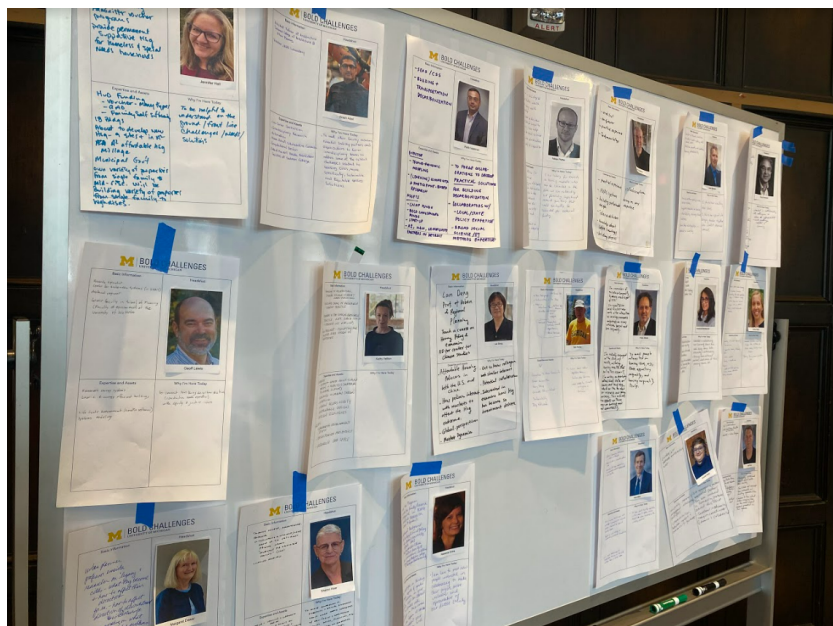
- Taubman College of Architecture and Urban Planning
- College of Literature, Science, and the Arts
- Institute for Social Research
- School for Environment and Sustainability
- School of Public Health

External Partners in attendance

- **Jennifer Hall**, [Ann Arbor Housing Commission](#)
- **Aubrey Patiño**, [Avalon Housing](#)
- **Conan Smith**, [Michigan Environmental Council](#)
- **Tom Porter**, [The Porter Family Foundation](#)
- **Evenlyn Zwiebach**, [Enterprise Community Partners](#)

Activity I: Getting to Know Each Other

Me Sheets: Participants created a “Me Sheet” to describe their expertise, assets, and why they attended, and then used this sheet to share a bit about themselves in a small group discussion. The sheets were posted to facilitate additional networking.



Activity II: Impromptu Networking

A series of short, paired conversations were held to continue getting to know one another and to begin surfacing focus areas (areas of shared interest). This included what ideas or interests participants brought with them and what has motivated their work related to the workshop theme in the past.



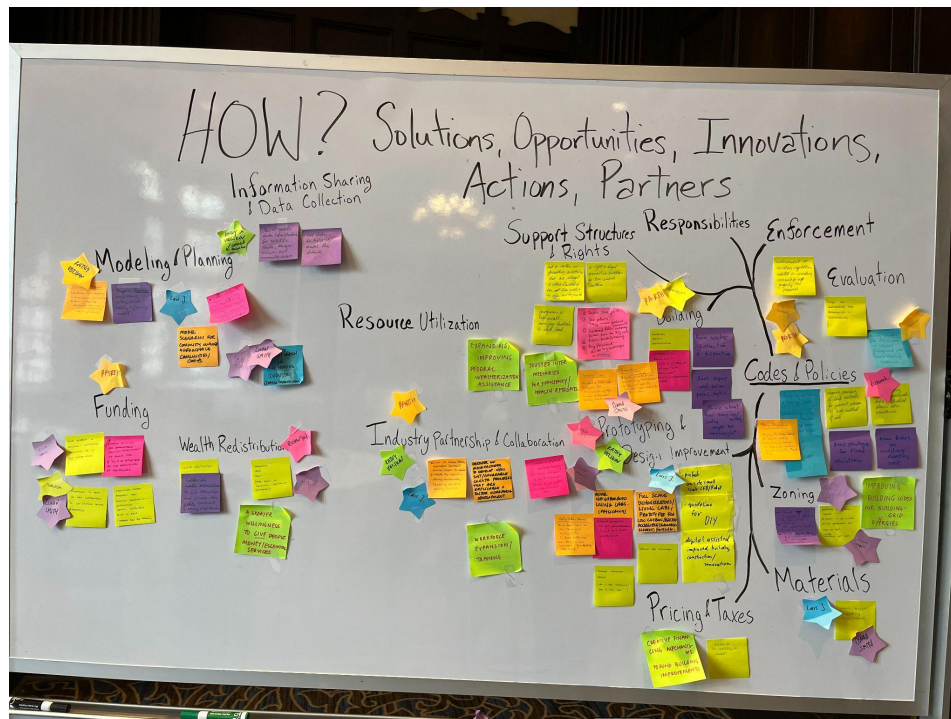
Activity III: Identifying Research Problems and Needs

Participants reviewed the ideas that they jotted down in paired conversations and prepared these ideas to share with the group. Participants shared these ideas first with their table and then individually reported out to the larger group. Sticky notes with these ideas were posted on the whiteboard and clustered into themes.



Activity IV: Sparking Exciting Solutions and Clustering Ideas

Themes were identified from the spark sticky notes and then participants were asked to come up with creative solutions to these research ideas. Participants shared their solutions with their table and reported out to the group. Sticky notes were placed in clustered themes on a separate white board. Participants placed star sticky notes to vote on the areas that most interested them.



The top themes identified from the star voting exercise were:

Research question/idea	Participants interested in exploring further
Modeling and Planning <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Propose ambitious alternative housing and financing models - Model scenarios for affordable communities and co-ops - Land use optimization is necessary for planning housing, where housing can be placed sustainably and how to get density 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kathy Velikov • Lars Junghans • Conan Smith • Pablo Mitnik
Funding <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Fund research in building and construction technology at a much higher level - Change funding for affordable housing development to allow money to hire architects at the beginning of the process - Subsidized or low cost programs for housing remodeling and renovation for healthy, sustainable, aging in place - Financing to open up construction to low/middle income homeowners 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ellie Abrons • Sharon Haar • Conan Smith • Parth Vaishnav
Wealth Redistribution <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Lobby for wealth redistribution to fund reparations and finance new public investment - Community land trusts and other forms of collective, community ownership - Greater willingness to give people money and essential services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pablo Mitnik • Roshanak Mehdipana
Industry Partnership and Collaboration <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Partner with industry partners, organizations, government entities, and unions to advance and transfer the research on advanced manufacturing processes to real world building practices - Partner with manufacturers to develop new sustainable and affordable construction processes that are replicable and foster workforce development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parth Vaishnav • Kathy Velikov • Lars Junghans
Prototyping and Design Improvement <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Model neighborhood in living labs - Full scale demonstrators and prototypes for low carbon, healthy and accessible housing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lars Junghans • Kathy Velikov • Conan Smith • Ellie Abrons • Arash Adel
Materials <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Promote and financially support carbon-sequestering building materials 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conan Smith • Lars Junghans
Building <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Policies for Mandatory building electrification - Funding for Roof repair and solar panel install 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parth Vaishnav • Sharon Haar

Codes and Policies <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Improving building codes for building grid synergies - Engage state to sponsor strategic brainstorming sessions as part of Healthy Climate Plan - New strategy for flood resistance - Policy changes and enforcement to address disinvestment and unsafe housing conditions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Roshanak Mehdipana • Evelyn Zweibach • Parth Vaishnav
Zoning <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Eliminate single family zoning on all residential lots, adding ADUs, and lower minimum lot sizes - Adopt progressive policies such as all-electric heating mandate for new buildings or a carbon tax to fund infrastructure for low- income communities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pablo Mitnik • Ellie Abrons

Detailed Housing Data available by Request

The Stone Center for Inequality Dynamics has access to microdata on housing for the entire United States (containing, for instance, detailed information on parcel and housing characteristics, transactions, assessments, and much more), which can potentially be used to study a range of applied questions around housing stocks, housing affordability and other housing topics. To explore collaborations around these topics where they contribute their social-science expertise, data access, and quantitative-analysis capabilities, please contact Pablo Mitnik (pmitnik@umich.edu) and Fabian Pfeffer (fpfeffer@umich.edu).