Recommended measure of diversity
Under the Equity and Access Category for Beyond Market Value
Draft for discussion 11-15

Diversity is core to what makes cities great. In the ideal, people of different backgrounds and perspectives live side by side, enriching each other's' lives and the fabric of the area. In the hard sciences, an area that has a greater abundance of species (richness) spread relatively evenly (evenness) is more diverse, more interesting and more sustainable than one that does not.

As Schuster and Ciurczac point out, in talking about racial and ethnic diversity, people often use the word "diverse" as synonymous with nonwhite. But that's not what it means. One person cannot be diverse. Diversity means having a **mix of people represented across multiple groups**. An area dominated by one or two groups is considered to be less diverse than one in which several different groups have a similar abundance.[1]

The **Diversity Index** recommended here factors in a populations' demographics across ALL subgroups and then calculates the probability that two people chosen randomly will be different from each other. This measure is used by NNIP partners in Boston, San Antonio and Houston[2] and addresses, both theoretically and methodologically, many of the criticisms aimed at other measures such as the dissimilarity index, the Blau Index, and various measures of isolation and segregation.[3]

The formula is:

Diversity = 1-((%white^2) + (%black^2) + (%asian^2) + (% Hispanic or Latino^2) + (%American Indian^2) + (% two or more & some other race^2))

It is a modification of Simpson's Index of Diversity which reflects the chance (probability) that two individuals randomly selected from the sample will belong to a different group. 0 represents no diversity and 1 represents diversity where there is both richness (a range of groups), and evenness (relative similarity in group size). The average diversity index for the 50 largest US cities is 61.45.

Of course, having diversity does not assure interaction or that people are treated without discrimination. To account for the long history of racial discrimination in Milwaukee—it would be useful to include a measure of **historical legacy**. We are currently exploring using the HOLC redlining maps and the potential of incorporating a value based on the original rating as a measure of this historical disadvantage as an additional measure of Equity and Access.

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[1] Luc Schuster and Peter Ciurczak, "Boston is More Diverse than You May Realize," Sept 2018
[2] Boston uses the Simpson's Diversity Index, San Antonio uses the same formula in the USA diversity index, and Houston uses the Entropy index. They all rely on this logic.
[3] For thorough and compelling critiques of other measures see, for example, Quinn, Rushton, or Maly.