



Pittsfield Charter Township

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Office of the Supervisor

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Let's RISE Up to Promote Sustainable Equity

I started these weekly community letters, twelve weeks ago, when the Governor issued a StayHomeStaySafe Executive Order. With the rescission of this Order, I am sending you this final weekly letter, which hopefully encapsulates the messages of my previous letters.

As a planner, I have approached my role as your Supervisor by partnering with you to outline a vision of how we can promote sustainability and equity in Pittsfield Township. In my mind, both goals are intertwined such that we cannot achieve greater equity without greater sustainability and vice-versa. Most importantly, we can do neither if we aren't willing to challenge the status quo. My focus has been to dismantle the physical segregations that were implemented, post WWII, through such federal programs as the home ownership financing system and the construction of the highway network. Over the past 70 years, these physical segregations have cut off access to (quality) education, housing, and jobs for the economically disadvantaged, mostly people of color. The vicious cycle of poverty, exclusion, and racism is highly correlated to this lack of access to (quality) housing and education.

As such, my focus, over the past decade, has been to break down these physical barriers and inter-connect our physical spaces through multiple modes of transportation while co-locating apartments/multi-unit housing with single-family houses, all of which are proximate to retail and commercial centers. Not only does this approach reduce reliance on motorized vehicles (reducing carbon emissions) and control sprawl (preserving green spaces), it also allows folks of all ages and from different socio-economic and racial backgrounds to interact with each other to understand/appreciate that we need each other and we are all part of the same, vibrant community.

Such diversity of land uses and demographics is now a hallmark of Pittsfield Township wherein we have hard-coded a culture of respect and inclusivity such that you are currently served by the most racially diverse set of elected officials in Washtenaw County.

While some of our decisions have been questioned because they challenge the status quo, our commitment to promoting sustainable equity is only strengthened as our community and nation embark- especially after the cameras are turned off and the protestors empty the streets and the rhetoric on social media goes silent- on a deliberative and committed journey toward diligently working on rectifying the many social and racial injustices.

Please know that your Pittsfield Township team stands with you, as a partner and resource, to deliver on **R**espectful, **I**nclusive, and **S**ustainable **E**quity. Let's remember to continue being patient and kind with ourselves and each other as we RISE up, together, to provide for greater sustainable equity in Pittsfield Township.

While I'll miss the exchanges with you, sparked by these letters, we will continue engaging through our multiple communication channels and I look forward to continue working with and for you.

Mandy Grewal, Ph.D.
