

## Next Steps

Dispute Resolution Institute

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Dispute Resolution Institute, "Next Steps" (July 15, 2016). *DRI Symposia*. Paper 4.  
[http://open.mitchellhamline.edu/dri\\_symposia/2015/post\\_symposium\\_information/4](http://open.mitchellhamline.edu/dri_symposia/2015/post_symposium_information/4)

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AN INTENTIONAL CONVERSATION ABOUT  
Public Engagement and Decision-Making:  
Moving from Dysfunction and Polarization to Dialogue and  
Understanding

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Next Steps ...

“Make a commitment to engage and check back in 6 months”

In Process

- Digest this experience
- Create our own community – share contact information
- Public engagement/input is embedded in MN laws
  - How is it defined?
  - Create catalogue
  - How might we want to revise?

To be done

Personal Suggestions:

- Present to staff and colleagues on learnings from symposium
- Be an ambassador for dialogue and engagement
- Be a role model
- Honor people’s “well intentions”
- Be an ally (figure out what it means to be an ally)
- Ask questions and encourage others to ask questions
- Use mediation and conflict resolution skills to “call the question”
- Allow discomfort
- Choose “your” issue as opposed to hooking up with others
- Public conversations project in Minnesota
- Address the gaps identified
- Cultivate and model curiosity
- Influence the tone of comments by being an early “post-er”
- Take public engagement home (infuse in our individual spheres)
- Continue to agitate for good process
- Jump into conversations
- Model it

- Talk to someone (or a number of people) who is going to vote for someone different than you in the next election (or has different political views) *without* the intention of changing his/her mind
- Personal responsibility to normalize this idea
- Share the “good” news – talk about models that are working
- Have difficult conversations we fear
- Develop the capacity not to judge so quickly
- Learn more from peers
- Engage the “middle”
- Use facebook and other social media groups to stay connected – share resources with each other
- Be flexible and adapt
- Make peace with the land first

#### Collective Suggestions:

- Do some mapping and create data base of things that are happening in collaborative governance, public conversations, and search for common ground...
- Explore strategies that allow public engagement to be healthier and more impactful – research?
- Hold follow-up event which includes ideologues (we are not all one dimension)
- Host another event with more elected officials.. and identify who else is missing?
- Hold more forums and conversations
- Bring people together on issues such as disparity, gun use, immigration, Afghanistan
- Develop something around preparation that will be a real adjunct to this work
- Create “best practices” with stakeholders and public officials (city and state different)
- Develop community/mobile response clinic at Mitchell Hamline School of Law
- Engage law students in helping people tell their story/gather stories
- Propose legislation
  - Statutory drafting
  - 1<sup>st</sup> year clinic
- Encourage more engagement at county board meetings
- Make government and community leaders aware of options
- Assist local government with engagement efforts (LMC)
- Improve “2 minute” comment process
- Train public administrators
- Give elected officials positive re-enforcement when they ask hard questions

- Promote development of state-wide district councils
- Identify community trying to engage, educate, serve
- Bring successful people to light as creative solution makers
- Dispute resolution has a bigger role to play in conflict management
  - Public square – private sphere develop capacity
  - Dispute system design work
  - Start with the family – if we can't learn and do at home, how can we expect government to embrace it
- What from the past is worth trying to recover
- Create an opportunity for people to work with each other “across the aisle”
- Create a Public Engagement Day on the hill with talking points

#### Dispute/Conflict Resolution:

- Police sitting with minority communities in circle process
- Start where we can
- Local control – finding the key that resonates with people – common interest
- Focus on “people” rather than government – government cannot do this on its own
- Practitioners instigate engagement processes (don't wait for government)
- Use community mediators for dialogue and engagement – rethink their role
- Identify and build on what practitioners are already doing
- Use participatory design for process
- Engage faith communities and cultural organizations
- Transition from prison to civic engagement

#### Schools:

- Diversity work in school – be a bridge builder
- Develop course
  - Education about how to access leaders
  - Role of leadership in engagement
- Talk to kids
- What does it mean to be a citizen
- Dialogue and engagement training for youth (especially of color) with state dollars
- Leadership training for high school and law students
- Empower young people – students and young professionals
  - Connect with Street Law; Marshall Brennan Project