WSP USA’s Equity Center of Excellence Commits to Inclusive Infrastructure

On Transit Equity Day, WSP USA reflects on how its clients are creating places, infrastructure and experiences that are improving underserved, marginalized and disinvested communities.

NEW YORK, February 4, 2022 — Equity is the defining measure of progress for the transportation industry, and the Equity Center of Excellence (ECE) at WSP USA, a leading engineering and professional services consultancy, is committed to ensuring every project achieves this high standard of accessibility.

Today is Transit Equity Day, a national day of action to commemorate Rosa Parks and other civil rights icons, and to advocate for accessible, reliable and affordable transit powered by renewable energy.

In recognition of the immense need for equity-focused expertise, WSP established the ECE to provide the firm’s clients and staff with guidance and innovation to integrate and tailor equity to organizational, programmatic and project needs. Through the ECE, WSP provides equity services to its clients and partners across all its regions and business lines to create places, infrastructure and experiences that improve the quality of life for historically underserved, marginalized and disinvested communities.

“WSP’s projects create opportunities to impact lives in ways that extend far beyond structural benefits,” said Denise Roth, Advisory national business line executive and ECE director. “In the
pursuit of equity and racial justice, our Equity Center of Excellence will foster a world where everyone can achieve their potential, participate fully and access all opportunities our work generates. Evaluating equity and fairness in everything we do creates a more positive environment where our expertise, resources and skillsets sharpen our business practices while improving our communities. Benefits once perceived as exclusive can now be more inclusive.”

The four key objectives of the ECE are to:

- operationalize equity in WSP’s business development and project delivery practices,
- advance equity through projects to ensure WSP’s work is socially responsible,
- enhance internal understanding of equity with a uniform approach and best practices, and
- attract and retain diverse talent so that project teams reflect the communities we serve.

Equity is inextricably linked to WSP’s clients’ priorities, including public trust, effective investments, distribution of benefits and sustainable outcomes. The ECE explores the history of decision-making and community impact, the diversity of experiences among members of the same group, and the implications of common static indicators like race, income and pollution.

WSP is committed to leveling the playing field by taking steps to pilot policies and projects that benefit impoverished communities and communities of color – whether rural or urban – by improving transit and mobility to create opportunities to obtain better jobs, secure educational opportunities and access quality healthcare.

This vision led to the completion of the Equitable Development Around Transit Study for the City of Raleigh, North Carolina by WSP in 2020. The study identified growth and affordability goals along future bus rapid transit (BRT) corridors in the city and provided a transit-oriented development (TOD) framework to fully and equitably realize the benefits of BRT in the city. This resulted in the creation of the city’s Equitable TOD Guidebook, which serves as a toolkit of equitable transit strategies for Raleigh.

Through the ECE, WSP is poised to continue its collaboration with clients to develop comprehensive frameworks, policies, processes and resources to put equity into action. WSP is
striving to demonstrate cultural competency through its work, its commitment to continually learning and adapting to a changing landscape, and in accepting accountability for each project’s equitable solutions for the natural, built and social environments. The ECE supports WSP clients in achieving anti-displacement, affordable, ability-agile, connected mobility and resiliency preparedness that results in equitable outcomes.

Joining Roth in the WSP ECE leadership are Gabi Brazzil, senior equity consultant, public engagement; Heather Martin, senior lead equity consultant, transportation planning; Muhammed Patel, equity program consultant, grants; and Sean Scott, senior equity consultant, urban design.

To learn more about how WSP’s equity services, visit the website, Building a More Equitable Future.

About WSP USA
WSP USA is the U.S. operating company of WSP, one of the world's leading engineering and professional services firms. Dedicated to serving local communities, we are engineers, planners, technical experts, strategic advisors and construction management professionals. WSP USA designs lasting solutions in the buildings, transportation, energy, water and environment markets. With more than 12,000 employees in 200 offices across the U.S., we partner with our clients to help communities prosper. wsp.com

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