



BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Wednesday, July 8, 2020
12:00 P.M. - 2:00 P.M.

WebEx Virtual Meeting (provided to members only by email)
Video livestream available to public on COG website

AGENDA

- 12:00 P.M.**
- 1. CALL TO ORDER**
Derrick L. Davis, COG Board Chair
 - 2. CHAIRMAN'S REPORT**
Derrick L. Davis, COG Board Chair
- 12:05 P.M.**
- 3. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT**
Chuck Bean, COG Executive Director
 - 4. AMENDMENTS TO THE AGENDA**
Derrick L. Davis, COG Board Chair
- 12:15 P.M.**
- 5. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES FROM JUNE 10, 2020**
Derrick L. Davis, COG Board Chair
Recommended Action: Approve minutes.
 - 6. ADOPTION OF CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS**
Derrick L. Davis, COG Board Chair
 - A.** Resolution R23-2020 – Resolution Authorizing COG to Receive and Expend Grant Funds from the Federal Transit Administration for its Innovative Coordinated Access and Mobility Pilot Program.
 - B.** Resolution R24-2020 - Resolution Authorizing COG to Procure and Enter into a Contract to Complete a Regional Analysis of the Impediments to Fair Housing Choice.**Recommended Action: Adopt Resolutions R23-2020 – R24-2020.**
- 12:20 P.M.**
- 7. ALLOCATION OF ADDITIONAL FEDERAL FUNDS TO SUPPORT HOUSING STABILITY**
Derrick L. Davis, COG Board Chair

The Board will be asked to consider Resolution R25-2020 supporting the allocation of additional federal funds to combat the effects of COVID-19 on housing stability.

Recommended Action: Receive briefing and Adopt Resolution R25-2020.

12:25 P.M.

8. COVID-19: EQUITY IMPLICATIONS

Tia Taylor Williams, American Public Health Association Centers for Public Health Policy and School, Health and Education, Director

Ms. Taylor-Williams will describe how structural racism has led to a disproportionate impact among African Americans during the COVID-19 pandemic and the need to confront these barriers through recovery and beyond.

Recommended Action: Receive briefing.

12:45 P.M.

9. RACIAL EQUITY EXCHANGE

Nancy Navarro, Montgomery County Council Member

Tiffany Ward, Montgomery County Chief Equity Officer

Justin Wilson, City of Alexandria Mayor

Jaqueline Tucker, City of Alexandria Race and Social Equity Officer

Speakers will provide insights from their journey to address racial equity from concept to resolutions to implementation, including the *Montgomery County Racial Equity and Social Justice Program*, and the *City of Alexandria Racial Equity Work Group*.

Recommended Action: Receive briefing.

1:20 P.M.

10. REGIONAL RACIAL EQUITY COHORT

Jaqueline Tucker, City of Alexandria Race and Social Equity Officer (formerly East Region Manager for the Government Alliance for Race and Equity)

Ms. Tucker will provide an overview of the first COG racial equity cohort serving over 100 participants from 11 jurisdictions. This will include the importance of this work along with the goals and outcomes of the 10-month program.

Recommended Action: Receive briefing.

1:40 P.M.

11. RACIAL EQUITY AS A FUNDAMENTAL VALUE

Executive Committee

The Executive Committee will recommend that the COG Board consider an affirmation that our work together as the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments will advance racial equity and that racial equity is a fundamental value.

Recommended Action: Consider Resolution R26-2020.

1:55 P.M.

12. OTHER BUSINESS

2:00 P.M.

13. ADJOURN

The next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, August 12, 2020. The focus will be on land-use aspects of regional transportation plans.

AGENDA ITEM #2

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

AGENDA ITEM #3

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT



MEMORANDUM

TO: COG Board of Directors
FROM: Chuck Bean, COG Executive Director
SUBJECT: Executive Director's Report – July 2020
DATE: July 1, 2020

COVID-19 COORDINATION

Since the beginning of June, COG has coordinated weekly calls with area health departments to explore ways to securely share contact tracing data, as appropriate. COG has also forged agreement among officials and begun testing a regional dashboard, which provides public health agencies and hospitals with information about the medical surge status of area hospitals. In addition, COG's website now features a page of publicly available health data dashboards by member governments as well as a page with links to local school reopening plans for Fall 2020.

[COG COVID-19 Resources Page](#)

POLICY BOARD & COMMITTEE UPDATES

National Capital Region Transportation Planning Board (TPB) – At its June meeting, the TPB held a robust discussion on equity and safety. Officials considered recommendations from a Regional Safety Study to address the most common factors that contribute to serious injuries or deaths on area roadways. They also received briefings on two work products that have come directly from the aspirational portion of Visualize 2045, the TPB's long-range transportation plan. The first is a list of Transit Access Focus Areas, or areas near high capacity transit that have the most potential to improve walk and bike access to transit. The other is the National Capital Trail Network, an expanded view of regional interconnected trails designed for pedestrians, bikes, and other non-motorized use.



COMMUTE WITH CONFIDENCE

As the region gradually reopens, COG's Commuter Connections program offers COVID-19 commuting tips and resources for employees transitioning back into the workplace.

[View the campaign and safety tips](#)

OUTREACH & PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

Racial Equity Cohort – The COG-GARE Advancing Racial Equity Cohort convened a virtual panel of thought leaders from the philanthropic community on June 25 to collaborate with local governments toward a shared vision of a more equitable region. Chuck Bean also discussed COG’s equity work as well as COVID-19 coordination on June 12 as the featured speaker in a Leadership Greater Washington webinar series.



VIRTUAL RACIAL EQUITY SUMMIT

COG and seven non-profit partners hosted more than 500 area leaders for the virtual **Race, Equity & the Future of Greater Washington Regional Summit** on June 25.

[View the news highlight and watch the summit video](#)

Transportation Grants – The U.S. Department of Transportation’s Federal Highway Administration awarded a \$2.9 million Advanced Transportation and Congestion Management Technologies Deployment grant to COG. The grant will help Commuter Connections build on its innovative incenTrip app, which offers people rewards for planning trips based on real-time traffic prediction data and user preferences. COG was also awarded a \$151,200 grant under the Federal Transit Administration’s Innovative Coordinated Access and Mobility pilot program for development of a technology platform which will integrate and synchronize transportation services to and from dialysis centers for underserved populations.

Chesapeake Bay Awareness Week – To celebrate Chesapeake Bay Awareness Week, June 6–14, COG’s Chesapeake Bay and Water Resources Policy Committee (CBPC) Chair and City of Fairfax Councilmember Jon Stehle, released a blog on the importance of partnerships and equity in the region’s work for the Bay. COG also highlighted CBPC founding member, Fairfax County Supervisor Penny Gross, in a video about the history of the committee and its impact on the progress of the Chesapeake Bay.

Transportation Webinars – The Transportation Planning Board recently hosted a webinar on curbside management challenges for transportation professionals. It also hosted a webinar on connected and autonomous vehicles and the impact these vehicles will have on the region. Both discussions fostered new ideas for enhancing transportation in the region and increased collaboration amongst jurisdictions.

Employer Recognition Awards –Commuter Connections recognized three local employers - Abt Associates, United Therapeutics Corporation, and ANA Enterprise – for their excellence in commute alternative programs. These programs offer measurable commuter benefits, promoting innovation and sustainability.

MEDIA HIGHLIGHTS

Annual homeless count shows slight drop, fewest unhoused since 2001– COG’s annual Point-in-Time count recorded a decrease in the amount of people experiencing homelessness in the region.

[The Washington Post story](#)

Safety improvements considered to help you arrive alive on DC-area roads– COG Systems Performance Analysis Manager Jon Schermann discusses the results of the TPB Regional Safety Study and what residents can do to stay safe on the roads.

[WTOP story](#)

Washington has yet to see unhealthful pollution levels this year. That’s a record. – The Capital Weather Gang cited a COG presentation and data that found that pollutants generally seemed lower in Spring 2020 after COVID-19 related restrictions were implemented in the region when compared with Spring 2019.

[The Washington Post story](#)

AGENDA ITEM #4

AMENDMENTS TO THE AGENDA

AGENDA ITEM #5

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

**METROPOLITAN WASHINGTON COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS
777 North Capitol Street, NE
Washington, D.C. 20002**

**MINUTES
COG Board of Directors Meeting
June 10, 2020**

BOARD MEMBERS AND ALTERNATES: See attached chart for attendance.

SPEAKERS:

Kim Ball, Montgomery County Department of Health and Human Services Homeless Services Administrator

Tony Turnage, Prince William County Homeless Services Division Chief

Dr. Travis Gayles, Montgomery County Department of Health and Human Services Health Officer and Chief of Public Health Services

Dr. Reuben Varghese, Arlington County Public Health Director

Dr. Steven Woolf, Virginia Commonwealth University Center on Society and Health Director Emeritus

Marc Elrich, County Executive, Montgomery County

Phyllis J. Randall, Chair-at-Large, Loudoun County Board of Supervisors

1. CALL TO ORDER AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

COG Board Chair Derrick Davis called the meeting to order at 12:00 P.M. and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

2. CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Chair Davis reported on the statement by COG's Executive Committee about the death of George Floyd and invited remarks from other board members.

Chair Davis noted that the annual COG board retreat would be canceled this year due the pandemic.

3. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

COG Executive Director Chuck Bean highlighted three land-use and transportation initiatives including the MARC/VRE Rail Run-Through, National Capital Trail Network, and Transit Access Focus Areas that will be presented to the COG Board in coming meetings. Bean also mentioned COG's Climate Energy and Environment Policy Committee's work to develop the 2030 goals for greenhouse gas emissions reductions in the region. Lastly, Bean mentioned the expected briefing by the Elections Officials Committee at the August 2020 board meeting to discuss lessons learned and to look ahead to the November elections.

4. AMENDMENTS TO AGENDA

There were no amendments to the agenda.

5. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The minutes from the May 13, 2020 board meeting were approved.

6. ADOPTION OF CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS

- A. Resolution R22-2020 – Resolution Authorizing COG to Procure and Enter a Contract with the Occoquan Watershed Monitoring Laboratory to Research Freshwater Salinization Syndrome (FSS) in the metropolitan Washington Region.

ACTION: Approved Resolution R22-2020.

7. 2020 REGIONAL HOMELESS ENUMERATION

Montgomery County Department of Health and Human Services Homeless Services Administrator

Kim Ball and Prince William County Homeless Services Division Chief Tony Turnage briefed the board on the results of the 2020 Point in Time count completed by COG's Homeless Services Committee. The enumeration revealed a total of 9,763 literally homeless individuals, the lowest number of persons counted experiencing homelessness since the region began coordinating in 2001 and the second year in a row that the literally homeless total has been below 10,000 persons.

ACTION: Received briefing.

8. HEALTH EQUITY: HOW OPPORTUNITIES FOR HEALTH ARE SHAPED BY RACE & ETHNICITY

Montgomery County Department of Health and Human Services Health Officer and Chief of Public Health Services Dr. Travis Gayles, Arlington County Public Health Director Dr. Reuben Varghese, and Virginia Commonwealth University Center on Society and Health Director Emeritus Dr. Steven Woolf briefed the board on a health equity brief produced by the VCU Center on Society and Health in partnership with COG's Health Officials Committee. The brief normalizes the conversation of why equity matters and addresses constrictions to good health and economic mobility opportunities.

ACTION: Received briefing.

9. REOPENING COORDINATION

Loudoun County Board of Supervisors Chair-at-Large Phyllis J. Randall and Montgomery County Executive Marc Elrich briefed the board on their respective jurisdictions' Phase 1 reopening experience and the importance of continued coordination across the region while entering Phase 2.

ACTION: Received briefing.

10. OTHER BUSINESS

There was no other business.

11. ADJOURN

Upon motion duly made and seconded, the meeting was adjourned at 1:47 P.M.

June 10, 2020 Attendance

Jurisdiction	Member	Y/N	Alternate	Y/N
District of Columbia				
Executive	Hon. Muriel Bowser		Ms. Beverly Perry Mr. Wayne Turnage Ms. Lucinda Babers	Y
	Mr. Rashad Young		Eugene Kinlow	
Council	Hon. Phil Mendelson	Y		
	Hon. Robert White	Y		
Maryland				
Bowie	Hon. Tim Adams			
Charles County	Hon. Reuben Collins	Y	Thomasina Coates Gilbert Bowling	
City of Frederick	Hon. Michael O'Connor	Y		
Frederick County	Hon. Jan Gardner		Ms. Joy Schaefer	Y
College Park	Hon. Monroe Dennis	Y	Hon. Patrick Wojahn	
Gaithersburg	Hon. Robert Wu		Hon. Neil Harris	
Greenbelt	Hon. Colin Byrd	Y	Hon. Emmett Jordan	(P)
Laurel	Hon. Craig Moe	Y	Hon. Michael Leszcz	
Montgomery County				
Executive	Hon. Marc Elrich	Y	Mr. Andrew Kleine	Y
Council	Hon. Tom Hucker	Y		
	Hon. Nancy Navarro	Y		
Prince George's County				
Executive	Hon. Angela Alsobrooks		Mr. Major F. Riddick	Y
Council	Hon. Derrick Leon Davis	Y		
	Hon. Sydney Harrison			
Rockville	Hon. Bridget Newton	Y		
Takoma Park	Hon. Kate Stewart	Y	Hon. Cindy Dyballa Hon. Peter Kovar	
Maryland General Assembly	Hon. Brian Feldman	Y		
Virginia				
Alexandria	Hon. Justin Wilson	Y	Hon. Redella Pepper	
Arlington County	Hon. Christian Dorsey	Y		
City of Fairfax	Hon. David Meyer		Michael DeMarco	
Fairfax County	Hon. Jeff McKay		Hon. James Walkinshaw	
	Hon. Penelope Gross	Y	Hon. Daniel Storck	
	Hon. Rodney Lusk	Y	Hon. Walter Alcorn	
Falls Church	Hon. David Snyder	Y	Hon. David Tarter	
Loudoun County	Hon. Juli Briskman		Rey Banks (Chief of Staff)	Y
Loudoun County	Hon. Phyllis Randall	Y		
Manassas	Hon. Mark Wolfe	Y		
Manassas Park	Hon. Hector Cendejas	Y	Hon. Miriam Machado	
Prince William County	Hon. Ann Wheeler	Y		
	Hon. Andrea Bailey	Y		
Virginia General Assembly	Hon. George Barker	Y		

Y = Present, voting

(P) = Present as Alternate in addition to Primary

AGENDA ITEM #6

ADOPTION OF CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS

ADOPTION OF CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS
July 2020

RESOLUTION R23-2020 – RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING COG TO RECEIVE AND EXPEND GRANT FUNDS FROM THE FEDERAL TRANSIT ADMINISTRATION FOR ITS INNOVATIVE COORDINATED ACCESS AND MOBILITY PILOT PROGRAM

The Board will be asked to adopt Resolution 23-2020 authorizing the Executive Director, or his designee, to receive and expend COG funds from the Federal Transit Administration’s Innovative Coordinated Access and Mobility Pilot Program (ICAM Pilot Program; Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) number: 20.513) in the amount of \$151,200 Federal funds. The pilot project, titled Rides to Wellness, will be contracted to IT Curves of Montgomery County, Maryland, who will provide matching funds. No COG matching funds are required for this grant.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Adopt Resolution R23-2020.

RESOLUTION R24-2020 - RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING COG TO PROCURE AND ENTER INTO A CONTRACT TO COMPLETE A REGIONAL ANALYSIS OF THE IMPEDIMENTS TO FAIR HOUSING CHOICE.

The board will be asked to adopt Resolution 24-2020 authorizing the Executive Director, or his designee, to expend COG funds from the Department of Community Planning and Services in the amount of up to \$500,000. The resolution also authorizes the Executive Director, or his designee, to proceed with procurement for a contractor, or contractors, and enter into a contract to complete a Regional Analysis of the Impediments to Fair Housing Choice. No COG matching funds are required.

RECOMMENDED ACTION: Adopt Resolution R24-2020.

AGENDA ITEM #7

ALLOCATION OF ADDITIONAL FEDERAL FUNDS TO SUPPORT HOUSING STABILITY

**METROPOLITAN WASHINGTON COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS
777 NORTH CAPITOL STREET, NE
WASHINGTON, DC 20002**

**RESOLUTION SUPPORTING THE ALLOCATION OF ADDITIONAL FEDERAL FUNDS TO ENSURE
HOUSING STABILITY DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC**

WHEREAS, the COVID-19 pandemic has had a significant impact on the health and safety of our residents, and the recession caused by the pandemic has adversely affected the region's economy and workforce, threatening current and future housing stability for many of our residents; and

WHEREAS, new research projects this recession could cause a major increase in homelessness;

WHEREAS, even before the pandemic, people of color were significantly more likely to experience evictions and homelessness and will also likely experience greater housing burdens in the aftermath of this acute crisis;

WHEREAS, the creation of new housing was a top regional priority before the pandemic and investment in housing provides a wide range of benefits, including economic mobility and healthy living, and helps shape a more equitable future;

WHEREAS, on March 27, 2020 the federal government passed the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act allocating \$12 billion in housing and homelessness resources and other critical protections for low-income renters; and

WHEREAS, an additional \$100 billion in emergency rental assistance through the Emergency Rental Assistance and Rental Market Stabilization Act (S. 3685/H.R. 6820) would offer states and localities flexible resources to provide direct support to households in need with short-and medium-term rental assistance or to cover up to 6 months of back rent and late fees; and

WHEREAS, amending and extending the Eviction and Foreclosure Moratoria provisions in the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act (CARES Act) would afford people more time to recover from the economic shock and job losses caused by the pandemic; and

WHEREAS, including at least \$14 billion in the HOME Investment Partnership Program in the next comprehensive coronavirus package can ensure that existing housing for lower-income households remains viable;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE METROPOLITAN WASHINGTON COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS THAT:

The Board urges the federal government to take the following actions as part of its next COVID-19 response legislation to help ensure housing stability—especially for those who are facing an increased risk of evictions and homelessness due to the recession caused by the pandemic.

- 1) Support the Emergency Rental Assistance and Rental Market Stabilization Act (S. 3685/H.R. 6820) for \$100 billion in emergency rental assistance; and
- 2) Amend and extend the Eviction and Foreclosure Moratoria provisions in the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act (CARES Act); and
- 3) Include at least \$14 billion in the HOME Investment Partnership Program to allow a flexible and community-specific response to the current crisis.

The Board authorizes the Executive Director, or his designee, to send a letter on behalf of the COG Board of Directors to congressional leadership communicating this request.



July 8, 2020

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Majority Leader
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Speaker
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Charles Schumer
Minority Leader
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy
Minority Leader
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Leader McConnell, Speaker Pelosi, Leader Schumer, and Leader McCarthy:

As the association of local governments in the metropolitan Washington region, we write to ask that the next phase of COVID-19 legislation provide funding to ensure housing stability for those who are facing an increased risk of evictions and homelessness due to the recession caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Federal financial support is essential. The collective actions we have taken as local and state governments have had a major impact in slowing the spread of COVID-19 in our region, but they have also taken a heavy toll on our economy and significantly altered our fiscal outlook. To avert a surge in evictions and homelessness and to holistically address our most urgent housing needs, we respectfully request the following provisions be included by Congress in its next COVID-19 response:

- The **Emergency Rental Assistance and Rental Market Stabilization Act (S. 3685/H.R. 6820)** for \$100 billion in emergency rental assistance;
- **An amendment and extension of the Eviction and Foreclosure Moratoria** provisions in the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act (CARES Act); and
- **Inclusion of at least \$14 billion in the HOME Investment Partnership Program** to allow a flexible and community-specific response to the current crisis.

The CARES Act included \$12 billion in housing and homelessness resources and other critical protections for low-income renters. This was an important first step, but far more resources are required. Research from the National Low Income Housing Coalition estimates that at least \$100 billion in emergency rental assistance is needed.

This January, our region's annual count of persons experiencing homelessness resulted in the lowest number ever recorded since 2001, 9,763 people; however, this progress is threatened by the sudden economic recession. New research from Columbia University economics professor Dr. Brendan O'Flaherty projects an increase in homelessness by 40 to 45 percent this year over January 2019.

To avoid this catastrophic loss of housing stability, **the Emergency Rental Assistance and Rental Market Stabilization Act** would offer states, localities, territories, and tribes flexible resources to provide direct support to households in need with short-and medium-term rental assistance or to

The Honorable Mitch McConnell, The Honorable Nancy Pelosi, The Honorable Charles Schumer, The Honorable Kevin McCarthy
July 8, 2020

cover up to 6 months of back rent and late fees. These funds are designed to reach people in need quickly and directly.

In addition, we urge Congress to consider amending and extending the **Eviction and Foreclosure Moratoria** provisions in the CARES Act to avoid further disruption to the housing market and prevent increases in homelessness.

Extending the CARES Act eviction and foreclosure moratoria, extending the multifamily forbearance allowances for smaller 1-4 unit properties, and aligning the timeframe to one year, would afford people more time to recover from the economic shock and job losses caused by the pandemic without fear of also losing their homes.

It is critical to note that it is not just renters and homeowners who are at risk, but also the affordable housing providers who need to respond to our region's continued demand for safe, accessible, and stable places to live. The creation of new housing was a top regional priority before the pandemic, but now it will require significant investments just ensuring that existing housing for lower-income households remains viable. Housing providers, for example, face increased operating costs to keep properties clean and safe. New construction projects are facing higher costs due to COVID-19, and without additional support, numerous planned housing developments will be put at risk.

To prevent this outcome, we ask Congress to consider **including at least \$14 billion in the HOME Investment Partnership Program** in the next comprehensive coronavirus package. The HOME program is one of the most flexible housing programs that Congress has enacted and allows for the nimble response that the current crisis requires.

Housing forms the foundation for economic mobility, academic success, and healthy living. The pandemic has made it clear that housing is health care. We also know housing is fundamental in helping shape a more equitable future. Even before the pandemic, people of color were significantly more likely to experience evictions and homelessness, the result of centuries of institutional racism and economic inequity. People of color will also likely experience greater burdens in the aftermath of the acute crisis. There's no stronger investment that we can make than in protecting and expanding housing options for all of our residents.

Now more than ever, state and local governments need financial support from the federal government so that we can continue to provide our residents with essential services and prevent them from being displaced from their homes and their communities in the middle of a global pandemic.

Thank you for your attention to these proposals.

Sincerely,

AGENDA ITEM #8

COVID-19: EQUITY

The Washington Post

Democracy Dies in Darkness

Coronavirus Live updates U.S. map World map Reopening tracker Lives lost Your life at

4 reasons coronavirus is hitting black communities so hard

By **Eugene Scott**

April 10, 2020 at 3:10 p.m. EDT

PLEASE NOTE

The Washington Post is providing this important information about the coronavirus for free. For more, [sign up for our daily Coronavirus Updates newsletter](#) where all stories are free to read. To support this work, please [subscribe to the Post](#).

A [Washington Post analysis](#) of early data from jurisdictions across the country found that the novel coronavirus appears to be affecting — and killing — black Americans at a disproportionately high rate compared to white Americans.

Majority black counties have three times the rate of infections and nearly six times the rate of deaths as majority white counties, according to the analysis.

“Why is it three or four times more so for the black community as opposed to other people?” President Trump asked at Tuesday’s White House task force [briefing](#). “It doesn’t make sense, and I don’t like it, and we are going to have statistics over the next probably two to three days.”

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AD

But based on what we know about the inequities in many black communities, it does make sense. The Fix dug in to better understand why the coronavirus is apparently killing black Americans at a faster rate than other groups. Here are some of the main causes.

1. Higher rates of underlying health conditions, and less access to care

Data has long shown that black Americans have higher rates of hypertension, heart disease, diabetes and lung disease. Medical professionals have said that coronavirus exacerbates the challenges that come with these illnesses, and that's what Trump administration officials cited first when talking about the disparity in Tuesday's briefing.

AD

“Health disparities have always existed for the African American community, but here again with the crisis now — it’s shining a bright light on how unacceptable that is,” Anthony S. Fauci, director of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, said Wednesday.

Uché Blackstock, a physician who works at urgent care sites in Brooklyn, said existing health issues disproportionately affect black communities, making complications more likely.

“We carry a higher burden of chronic disease that predisposes us to the more serious complications of coronavirus,” Blackstock said.

A 2014 National Institutes of Health study found that hospitals in predominantly black neighborhoods are more likely to close down than those in predominantly white neighborhoods, often making it difficult for black Americans to access health care near where they live.

AD

“We don’t have access to care and if we do it’s likely that care is of worst quality because they are often termed minority-serving,” Blackstock said. “And they may

not have a specialist or the resources needed to care for covid-19 patients. And there's implicit bias on the part of the health-care providers, and studies have shown that there's bias toward white patients over patients of color.”

2. Black Americans hold a lot of ‘essential’ jobs

Black people are more likely to work in jobs that put workers in close contact with others who might be in poor health and that make engaging in social distancing more difficult.

According to data from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics compiled by the Center for American Progress, black people are overrepresented compared to the overall population in the food service industry, hotel industry and taxi drivers and chauffeurs.

AD

Preston Mitchum, policy director for URGE, a nonprofit that advocates for liberal policy issues, said the employment opportunities available for many black people often put them at greater risk of being disproportionately harmed by the coronavirus.

“Black communities are not socially distancing less than other communities and if they are, it is likely because many of us are essential workers or working gig jobs to sustain our living. These jobs require more in-person interaction.”

Jason Hargrove, a 50-year-old bus driver in Detroit, posted a video that went viral in which he said he thought he contracted the coronavirus after a passenger repeatedly coughed on his bus without covering her mouth. Hargrove died less than two weeks after he posted the video.

AD

“He knew he wasn’t feeling well,” his wife, Desha Johnson-Hargrove, wrote for Time magazine. “It took over him so very quickly that I’m still in disbelief. He was perfectly fine — a big, strong, 6’3 man — before that day. That day forever changed my life.”

3. Insufficient information

Keneshia Grant, a political science professor at Howard University, focuses on black

voters' relationships with state and local governments. She says poor information from government leaders has shaped black people's experience with the coronavirus.

“In short, I think the problem was not that black folks didn't get information from their governments. The problem was that we got bad and inconsistent information from our governments. We also got information that did not seem to represent people who looked like us,” she said.

AD

Grant said mixed messages from the Trump administration and some governors in states with large black populations caused confusion. Most black Americans — nearly 60 percent — live in the South. States like Florida, Alabama, Mississippi and Georgia are all headed by governors whose messaging on how to stay safe was often inconsistent with the guidelines of the federal government.

“I think that what black America, and the entire nation, needed was a clear message from the federal government,” she said. “I think this is especially true, because it took a long while for black people to see themselves represented in this crisis.”

“A strong, coherent federal message would have been helpful toward that end,” she added.

AD

U.S. Surgeon General Jerome M. Adams spoke at the White House task force’s briefing Friday about how black Americans are being disproportionately harmed by the illness.

“It’s alarming but it’s not surprising that people of color have a greater burden of chronic health conditions,” he said. “The chronic burden of medical ills is likely to make people of color especially less resilient to the ravages of covid-19 and it’s possible — in fact, likely — the burden of social ills is also contributing.”

Adams spoke about the need to better target messages about the importance of social distancing to communities of color, and he spoke about the needs of individuals in those communities to follow the guidelines.

AD

4. Housing disparities

Vedette Gavin, a principal investigator for the Conservation Law Foundation's Healthy Neighborhood Study, told The Fix that racial disparities in housing put black lives at much [greater risk](#) for contracting an illness. Her organization attempts to better understand and address the effects of neighborhood change on health in the Boston metropolitan area.

A 2017 Princeton University [study](#) found that black children are more likely to suffer from asthma because they live in older buildings that harbor fecal matter and rodent infestations, and which are in segregated neighborhoods that are near busy highways that put harmful matter into the air.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention [released](#) information stating that people with asthma may be at a greater risk of dying from coronavirus.

“People of color are more likely to live in densely packed areas and in multi-generational housing situations, which create higher risk for spread of highly contagious disease like covid-19,” Adams said Friday.

“There are huge issues with housing that are at play,” Gavin said. “The poorer housing stock and code violations for asbestos, mold and cockroaches increase the risk and prevalence of respiratory and pulmonary diseases, which heighten the severity of symptoms for those who contract covid. Black and Latino families in

urban centers tend to double and triple up when rent is unaffordable, making distancing in the home impossible.”

Coronavirus: What you need to read

The Washington Post is providing some coronavirus coverage free, including:

Updated June 30, 2020

The latest: Live updates in the U.S.

Coronavirus maps: Cases and deaths in the U.S. | Cases and deaths worldwide | Which states are reopening

What you need to know: Summertime activities & coronavirus | Your life at home | Personal finance guide | Make your own fabric mask | Follow all of our coronavirus coverage and sign up for our free newsletter.

How to help: Your community | Seniors | Restaurants | Keep at-risk people in mind

Have you been **hospitalized for covid-19**? Tell us whether you've gotten a bill.

Eugene Scott

Eugene Scott writes about identity politics for The Fix. He was previously a breaking news reporter at CNN Politics. Follow 

THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC IN NORTHERN VIRGINIA: A PLAN FOR MARGINALIZED COMMUNITIES

The Washington, D.C. metropolitan area has joined other cities as an epicenter of the COVID-19 pandemic, affecting the people and economy of Northern Virginia, the District of Columbia itself and surrounding Maryland suburbs.

"Every major crisis or catastrophe hits the most vulnerable communities the hardest."

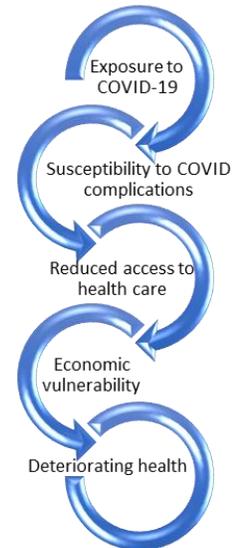
*Marc Morial, president and CEO,
National Urban League, National
Public Radio, April 18, 2020*

Populations at greatest risk

As has occurred throughout the United States, vulnerable populations in Northern Virginia face the greatest risks from COVID-19. Although everyone is potentially susceptible to the virus, people of color and low-income families are especially vulnerable and have higher death rates from COVID-19, for reasons that include greater exposure to the virus, susceptibility to complications, barriers to health care, economic vulnerability, and deteriorating health caused by deepening economic adversity (see Appendix).

For example, African Americans are overly represented among COVID-19 patients requiring hospitalization, intubation, and intensive care and account for a disproportionate number of people who die from the disease. Although African Americans account for 13% of the US population, they represent 33%¹ of patients requiring hospitalization for COVID-19 and 34% of COVID deaths.² In many areas of the country, ranging from Louisiana to Chicago, blacks have accounted for up to 70% of deaths.³

Hispanic Americans and other minority groups also face higher risks, as do immigrants, many of whom have additional reasons to avoid or delay seeking care. A survey by the Pew Research Center found that 31% and 43% of African Americans and Hispanic Americans, respectively, were "very concerned" that they would become infected by COVID-19 and require hospitalization, whereas only 18% of whites shared this level of concern.⁴



It is neither skin color nor ethnicity that puts people at risk but rather their socioeconomic status and living conditions. Economic marginalization and discrimination, which have endured across generations,

¹ Garg S, Kim L, Whitaker M, et al. Hospitalization rates and characteristics of patients hospitalized with laboratory-confirmed coronavirus disease 2019. *MMWR Morb Mortal Wkly Rep* 2020;69:458–464.

² Racial Data Transparency. Johns Hopkins University Coronavirus Resource Center. <https://coronavirus.jhu.edu/data/us-state-data-availability>

³ CBS News. "African Americans comprise more than 70% of COVID-19 deaths in Chicago, officials say." April 6, 2020.

⁴ Pew Research Center, "Health Concerns from COVID-19 Much Higher Among Hispanics and Blacks than Whites." April 2020.

have left many of today's black, Hispanic, and immigrant families with fewer savings, lower net worth, inadequate health care, segregated neighborhoods, and scarce resources for good health.

Impact in Northern Virginia

The impact of COVID-19 in Northern Virginia varies by population groups and neighborhoods—as it does for many other health measures. The existence of geographic health disparities has been documented in a series of studies commissioned by the Northern Virginia Health Foundation and performed by researchers at Virginia Commonwealth University's Center on Society and Health. In one such study, researchers found that life expectancy varied by 17 years across Alexandria, Arlington County, Fairfax County, Loudoun County, and Prince William County.⁵ The researchers also showed that place matters to health, that data on the living conditions in census tracts could predict life expectancy. In fact, in a study for the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments, the same researchers found that 60% of the variation in life expectancy across the region could be predicted by the educational level and economic wellbeing of census tracts, and 26% could be predicted by housing and transportation.⁶ It's no surprise that vulnerability to COVID 19 also varies by census tract.

The census tracts in Northern Virginia that are most vulnerable to COVID-19 are no mystery. The VCU researchers have mapped out “islands of disadvantage” in Northern Virginia, neighborhoods with low levels of education, economic distress, inadequate housing and transportation, and large numbers of residents without health insurance. These conditions were found within clusters of census tracts in Alexandria West and Old Town in Alexandria; Columbia Pike, Douglas Park, Buckingham, Fort Myer, and Arlandria in Arlington County; Herndon, Reston, Centreville, Chantilly, Fair Oaks, Springfield, Annandale, Landmark, Seven Corners, Bailey's Crossroads, Huntington, the Route 1 corridor, and Fort Belvoir in Fairfax County; Leesburg and Sterling Park in Loudoun County; and Bull Run, Manassas, Dale City, Woodbridge, and Dumfries in Prince William County. In all, the VCU researchers identified 15 islands of disadvantage across the region (Figure 1).

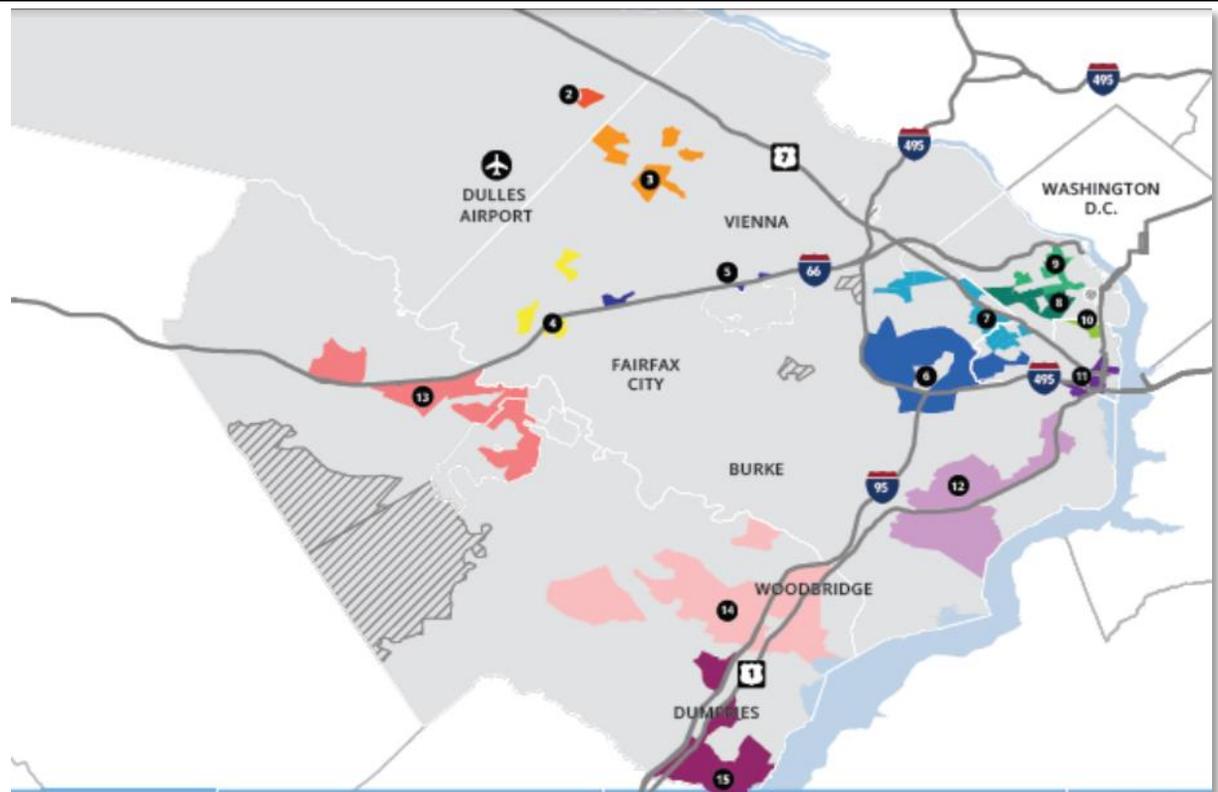
Policy implications

Officials in Northern Virginia, along with private-sector and nonprofit stakeholders, should expect COVID-19 to have a disproportionate impact in marginalized communities, where people of color and immigrants are often overrepresented. Residents of these communities are likely to have greater exposure to the virus, have more comorbidities that exacerbate complications from COVID-19 infection, and face greater barriers in accessing health care. They are less likely to be reached by population testing and contact tracing programs. A large number of patients who require admission to Northern Virginia hospitals, occupy ICU beds, and die from this disease are likely to be people of color and to come from these “islands of disadvantage.” Economically marginalized communities will face devastating wage losses, unemployment, and food scarcity during the economic shutdown. Low-income families will undoubtedly struggle for months with housing and utility bills and many may lose their homes, especially after the state and Federal bans on evictions lift.

⁵ Woolf SH, Chapman DA, Hill L, Snellings LK. *Getting Ahead: The Uneven Opportunity Landscape in Northern Virginia*. Richmond: Center on Society and Health, Virginia Commonwealth University, 2017.

⁶ Woolf S, Chapman D, Hill L, Schoomaker H, Wheeler D, Snellings L, Lee JH. *Uneven Opportunities: How Conditions for Wellness Vary Across the Metropolitan Washington Region*. Richmond: Center on Society and Health, Virginia Commonwealth University, 2018.

Figure 1. Clusters of disadvantaged census tracts in Northern Virginia



Source: Woolf SH, Chapman DA, Hill L, Snellings LK. *Getting Ahead: The Uneven Opportunity Landscape in Northern Virginia*. Richmond: Center on Society and Health, Virginia Commonwealth University, 2017.

The living conditions faced by minority groups and the adverse conditions that exist in marginalized neighborhoods are products of history, including policies of exclusion that were enacted decades ago and many that persist today. Those policymakers familiar with this history recognize the need to apply an “equity lens” to current decisions, and the COVID-19 crisis is no exception. Even before the region faced this pandemic, the Northern Virginia Health Foundation recognized the need for a more equity-focused policy agenda to reduce health inequities and promote opportunity. Our 2017 report, *Getting Ahead: The Uneven Opportunity Landscape in Northern Virginia*, outlined three policy priorities:

- **Expanding access to basic needs**, including healthy and affordable foods; quality, affordable housing; and health insurance.
- **Breaking the cycle of poverty** in disadvantaged communities by broadening access to preschool education, improving school quality, increasing the affordability of a two- and four-year college education, attracting new businesses that pay decent wages, offering job training, and providing unemployment assistance for workers without jobs who are struggling to support families.
- **Investing in community infrastructure**, including a built environment that promotes outdoor physical activity, clean air and water supplies, affordable public transportation that serves disadvantaged areas, and greater efforts to reduce violence.

The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on marginalized families and neighborhoods in Northern Virginia makes it vital to redouble efforts to address these priorities and to be intentional in placing marginalized populations at the forefront of the region’s pandemic response and recovery plans. A genuine policy

commitment to an equity agenda requires policymakers, in particular, to be proactive in taking these steps *early in the process* rather than rushing out a plan that overlooks marginalized communities or deals with them as an afterthought—or when an outbreak occurs. Policies that neglect underserved communities always exacerbate inequities, but in a pandemic they expose the entire population to greater risk. Allowing the virus to go unchecked in any population sets the stage for a resurgence of infections across the region.

Table 2. Local strategies to help marginalized populations amid the COVID-19 pandemic
<p>Combat the virus</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prioritize COVID-19 antigen testing in low-income communities by establishing testing sites or using mobile vans to bring testing to the community. • Work with the local public health department to establish contact tracing programs to isolate viral transmission. • Expand access to emergency services and health care at local hospitals and clinics and offer financial support for indigent care programs. • Promote telemedicine and virtual consultations with primary care practice and emergency departments. • Given the large number of immigrants and other residents with limited proficiency in English, design customized communications that explain how to identify symptoms, maintain social distancing, and follow hygiene and sanitation directives that are sensitive to language, culture, and customs. • Build outreach through trusted local-community initiatives and faith leaders. <p>Curb the social and economic impact</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expand paid leave and other employment protections for workers.^a • Provide direct financial support for those with special needs.^a • Freeze evictions, eviction filings, and utility shut-offs and provide rental assistance.^b • Ensure safe and healthy housing, given the added need for people to shelter in place.^c • Protect and provide temporary shelters for people who are experiencing homelessness. • Increase nutritional supports in low-income communities, including expanded WIC and SNAP benefits. • Given the added risk of domestic violence resulting from close quarters and economic distress, waive ordinances that prohibit repeat calls to 911. • Plan ahead to alleviate the impact of a prolonged economic shutdown on low-income and marginalized communities. • Add public health protections for workers providing essential services.
<p>^aIncludes prohibitions against retaliation for taking leave and the provision of reasonable accommodations for those who must self-isolate, care for a sick relative or friend, or lack access to childcare during school closures</p> <p>^bIncludes financial resources and rental debt forgiveness, as well as efforts by utility companies to forgive consumer debt incurred during the COVID-19 pandemic.</p> <p>^cIncludes an intentional effort during the COVID-19 pandemic to deploy inspectors to low-income communities to identify and remediate hazards (e.g., leaks, mold, infestations).</p>

At-risk populations and neighborhoods of Northern Virginia should therefore be the first to receive population testing for COVID-19 infection and contact tracing. By law, such testing should be provided at no cost. Steps should be taken to address apprehensions that accompany contact tracing, such as concerns about security, privacy, and fears of repercussions that deter immigrants from getting tested. Low-income individuals who have limited transportation or mobility (e.g., the elderly or the infirm) may

have difficulty reaching testing labs or physicians' offices. Testing centers should be situated near low-income communities and mobile testing vans should be used to bring testing to populations at risk.

The economic shutdown created by stay-at-home orders is necessary for public health reasons but is wreaking havoc on low-income communities in Northern Virginia, making it vital to address social and economic needs, both to cushion the blow on local families and small businesses and to curb the health complications that arise from financial insecurity itself. Income is the most important predictor of health. The sweeping health effects of economic deprivation—both physical and mental—will almost certainly reach well beyond COVID-19. Addressing socioeconomic needs is therefore vital to prevent an even greater public health catastrophe in Northern Virginia. In March 2020, health justice experts Emily Benfer and Lindsay Wiley outlined three priorities for helping low-income and marginalized communities weather the stresses of COVID-19:

1. Legal and policy responses should address the social determinants that can exacerbate the health, financial, and social impacts of a public health emergency on low-income communities, communities of color, and other socially subordinated groups.
2. Policies that mandate healthy behaviors—such as social distancing—must be accompanied by immediate legal, social, and financial protections and supports to facilitate those behaviors.
3. Because emergencies typically exacerbate long-standing and interconnected crises in socioeconomically disadvantaged communities, legal and policy responses must address deep-seated, longstanding problems in addition to immediate needs.⁷

A variety of strategies could help achieve these goals (Table 2). Resources for carrying forward many of these efforts are authorized and funded under the recently enacted CARES Act and local emergency declarations and authorities.

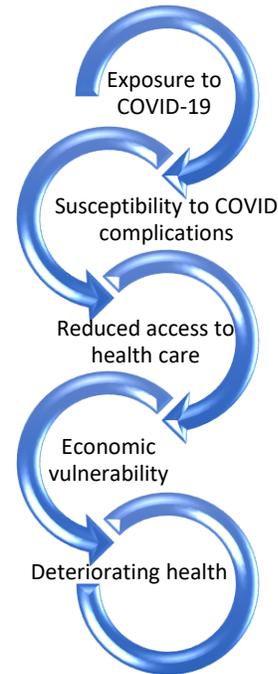
The Northern Virginia Health Foundation urges policymakers in Northern Virginia—including the private and non-profit sectors, regional planners, and city and county officials—to build their pandemic response plans around the needs of minority and low-income communities. The “islands of disadvantage” in our region have struggled with poor health for many years and, as occurs too commonly for those with few resources, will pay the highest price for COVID-19.

⁷ <https://www.healthaffairs.org/doi/10.1377/hblog20200319.757883/full/>

Appendix

Why people of color and low-income families are more vulnerable to COVID-19 infection and death

- Greater exposure to virus:
 - More likely to live in neighborhoods where social distancing is difficult.
 - More dependent on jobs (e.g., in service industries) that do not allow them to stay home.
 - More likely to lack a vehicle and depend on public transit, heightening exposure to commuters.
 - More likely to be incarcerated or in detention facilities.
 - Overrepresented in the armed services, where they are more likely to be housed in close proximity on military bases and naval vessels.
- Greater susceptibility to complications from infection:
 - More likely to have chronic diseases that make COVID-19 lethal, such as diabetes, chronic lung disease, and heart disease.
- Reduced access to care:
 - Less likely to have adequate health insurance coverage and to be able to afford out-of-pocket expenses.
 - Diminished access to COVID-19 testing.
 - More compelled to delay care, for reasons ranging from concerns about costs and work responsibilities to fears among immigrants of potential repercussions.
 - Less access to behavioral health services to cope with stresses on mental health.
- Greater economic vulnerability:
 - More likely to have faced economic challenges before the pandemic and to have limited savings or disposable income to sustain expenses during the shutdown.
 - Greater risk of food insecurity and unstable housing.
 - Less likely to have been given furloughs and more likely to have lost their jobs and work benefits, and are therefore more likely to be seeking employment and require unemployment assistance after economic activity resumes.
 - More likely to experience delayed recovery from the economic shutdown and prolonged financial insecurity.
- Health complications from economic deprivation

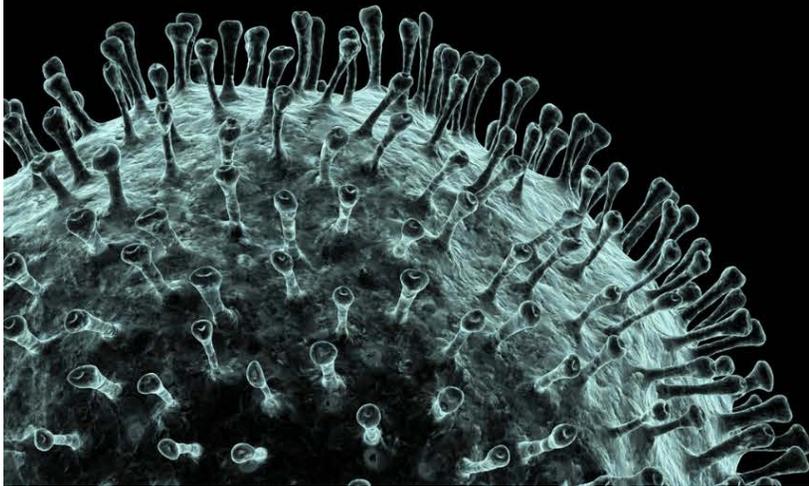


COVID-19 Conversations



Sandra Quinn, PhD

Senior Associate Director,
Maryland Center for Health Equity



COVID19Conversations.org

[#COVID19Conversations](https://twitter.com/COVID19Conversations)





FIXGOV

Why are Blacks dying at higher rates from COVID-19?

Rashawn Ray · Thursday, April 9, 2020

Local

An immigrant community faces a ‘catastrophic’ pandemic without help

NEWS CORONAVIRUS GOVERNMENT RESPONSE

Indian Country faces higher risks, lack of resources in COVID-19 fight

Experts worry about the pandemic's impact on Native American communities.

By **Stephanie Ebbs** and **Cheyenne Haslett**

April 3, 2020, 2:06 PM · 12 min read



Hospitals in minority communities have long struggled - and then came Covid-19



By **Jasmine Wright**, CNN

Updated 7:09 AM ET, Fri April 17, 2020



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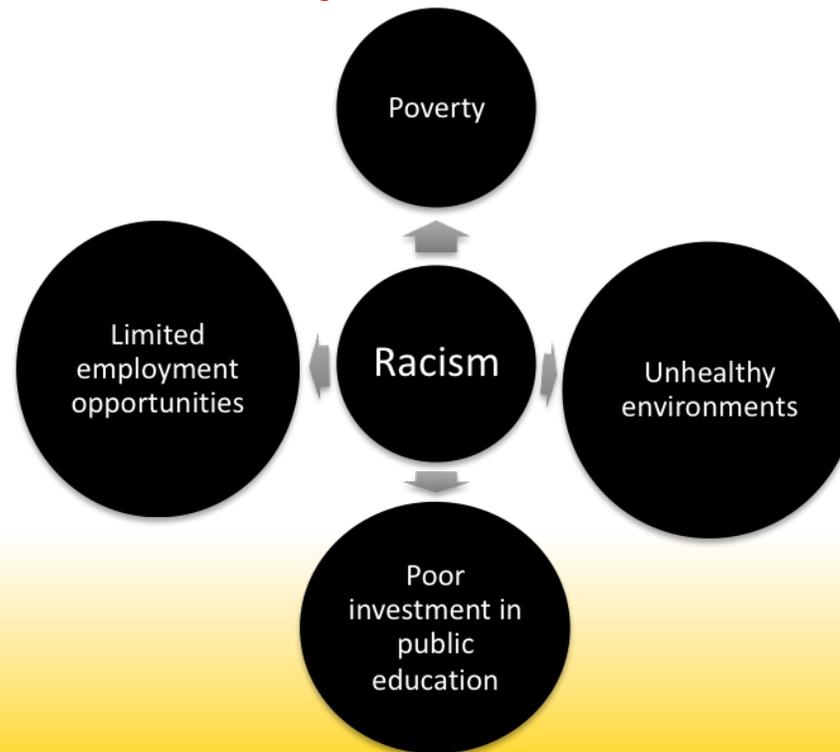
Social Determinants of Health Disparities in the COVID-19 Pandemic: A Call to Action

APHA/NAM COVID-19 Conversations

April 29, 2020



The risks of COVID-19 exposure are not evenly distributed



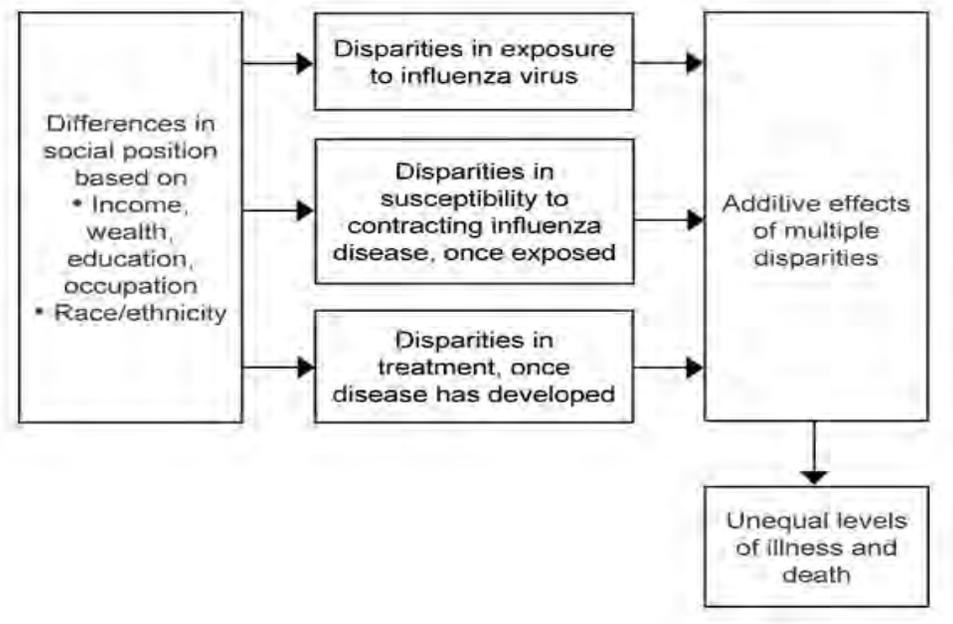


Other contributing factors

- Rising number of uninsured
- Inadequate investment in public health infrastructure
- Closing hospitals in rural areas
- Racial bias and discrimination in health care



A Conceptual Model: Health Disparities during Influenza Pandemic



Blumenshine, P., et al., *Pandemic influenza planning in the United States from a health disparities perspective*. Emerging Infectious Diseases, 2008. 14(5): p. 709-15.



Key Results ¹⁴	
<i>Measure</i>	<i>At higher risk of disease</i>
Geographic and living situation	All minorities
Larger household size	Spanish-speaking Hispanics
Work-related inability to social distance	Spanish-speaking Hispanics
Difficulty accessing individual daycare	African Americans, Spanish-speaking Hispanics
Difficulty avoiding public transportation	All minorities
Prevalence of chronic conditions (susceptibility to complications)	African Americans marginally higher
Difficulty accessing health care	Spanish-speaking Hispanics
Discrimination when accessing health care	All minorities
Key Results from a Second Wave of Data Collection ¹⁵	
▪ Higher incidence of influenzalike illness (ILI) was associated with greater inability to social distance at work and greater number of children in the home.	
▪ Latinos had significantly higher ILI incidence associated with these determinants.	
▪ Absence of workplace policies (sick leave) contributed to population attributable risk of 5M additional ILI cases in general population and 1.2M among Latinos.	





What are the lessons we should have learned from H1N1?

1. Pass a national sick leave policy
2. Recognize and address entire groups in our workforce at risk in a pandemic
3. Expand access to health care
4. Address racial bias and discrimination in health care
5. Strengthen partnerships between communities, health departments and health care systems
6. Develop a pandemic plan informed by a health equity lens and health in all policies approach



Bring a health equity and health in all policies lens to the COVID-19 response and recovery

- Institutionalize reporting of racial and ethnic data for testing, cases, hospitalizations and deaths
- Review the use of scarce medical resources
- Examine all safety net and other programs to ensure they adequately protect vulnerable communities during the pandemic (e.g. prohibiting evictions)
- Integrate leaders from affected communities in task forces preparing for re-opening and recovery
- Integrate health equity data to foster planning for re-opening and recovery



Community Engagement

- Engage communities on locations of testing, educating community members about testing, and prepare all new contact tracers to work effectively
- Engage affected communities to identify barriers to seeking COVID-19 testing and care and implement feasible changes now
- Establish listening posts/community forums to hear their concerns and needs
- Mobilize community assets (i.e. faith communities, sororities and fraternities)



Increase Vaccine Uptake

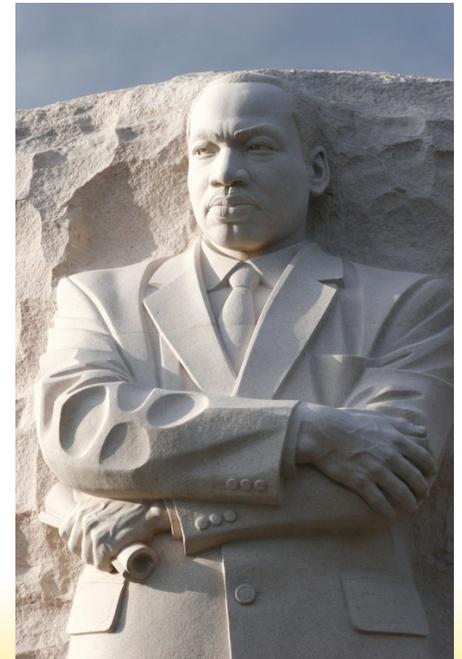
- Mobilize community health workers/leaders on education and outreach about the flu vaccine in the fall
- Ensure adequate supplies in trusted community settings
- Begin dialogues about clinical trials for a COVID-19 vaccine
- Initiate education about the COVID-19 vaccine ahead of its release



Quinn, 2014



“We are now faced with the fact that tomorrow is today. We are confronted with the fierce urgency of now. In this unfolding conundrum of life and history, there "is" such a thing as being too late. This is no time for apathy or complacency. This is a time for vigorous and positive action.”





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AGENDA ITEM #9

RACIAL EQUITY EXCHANGE

Racial Equity and Social Justice

Community Engagement **TOOLKIT**



Contents

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¹ Source documents include: Office of Legislative Oversight Report 2018-8: Racial Equity in Government Decision-Making; “Better Together Community Conversation Toolkit” and “Community Conversation Participant Guide”, Decatur, GA; Hayward Community Task Force Community Conversation Toolkit, Hayward, CA; National Civic League, All-American Conversations Toolkit; and Health Equity Alliance of Rock County Community Engagement Toolkit.



March 8, 2019

Dear Friends,

MONTGOMERY COUNTY HAS A LONG HISTORY of working with residents to identify and achieve shared goals aimed at improving opportunities for our community. Building off this work, today we launch the County's Racial Equity and Social Justice Initiative aimed at advancing fair and equitable outcomes for individuals and communities of color in government decision-making across all County-funded agencies:

- **Montgomery County Government,**
- **Montgomery County Public Schools,**
- **Montgomery College, and**
- **the Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission.**

Many of you joined the County Council as partners in the ***Ready for Tomorrow Education and Workforce Summit***, which made the compelling case that narrowing employment and academic achievement gaps by race, ethnicity, and language were moral and economic imperatives for Montgomery County. Today, we ask you and your community partners to help us continue this conversation by sharing your perspectives and helping us identify opportunities to advance racial equity and social justice in government decision-making.

Last April, the County Council adopted Resolution No. 18-1095 articulating a vision for racial equity in the County and a commitment to developing a Racial Equity and Social Justice Policy for the County. Executing this resolution requires the meaningful engagement of all communities in the County, with communities of color at the forefront, to ensure that the policy reflects the needs and priorities of those most impacted by disparities and inequities.

We have built a coalition of government and community leaders to join us in this effort because advancing racial equity is a top priority for the County. A County Racial Equity Office will be created to oversee the implementation of the Racial Equity and Social Justice Policy. While the County will have technical assistance to implement this policy, we need the community's assistance to set priorities and address potential challenges.

Our March 13 community conversation on equity at the Silver Spring Civic Building will bring together a diverse set of participants to brainstorm opportunities for improving racial equity and social justice in Montgomery County. With this community engagement toolkit, we also are asking



Marc Elrich
County Executive



Nancy Navarro
Council President

CONTINUED...

members of the community to host community conversations that capture residents' perspectives, ideas, and recommendations for action to reduce inequities.

The Council will use the feedback we receive from our March 13 kick-off meeting, community conversations, and responses to our Equity Matters Community Survey (launching on April 1, 2019) to inform the development of our County's Racial Equity and Social Justice Policy. More specifically, feedback through these three community engagement opportunities will shape next steps for how government entities in our County apply equity lenses to their policies, practices, and decision-making.

Please join us at our community conversation kick-off, facilitate a community conversation, or complete the Equity Community Survey available online through July 15, 2019. Each of you has something important to contribute, and we look forward to hearing what you have to say.

Sincerely,



Marc Elrich
County Executive



Nancy Navarro
Council President



Advancing Racial Equity and Social Justice in Government Decision-Making²

RACIAL AND ETHNIC DISPARITY, RATHER THAN EQUITY, characterizes many systems of well-being nationally and locally. As noted by the Racial Equity Institute, people of color (African Americans, Native Americans, Latinos, and some subgroups of Asian Americans) are often over-represented in the child welfare and criminal justice systems, and experience higher levels of disadvantage on measures of health, education, and economic development. Local data in Montgomery County tells a similar story.

Data on Disparities by Race and Ethnicity in Montgomery County, 2011-2015

System	Outcomes	White	Asian	Black	Latin
Education	High school completion	98%	92%	92%	69%
	Some college education	88%	81%	72%	45%
Employment	Employment rate	78%	74%	73%	77%
	Unemployment rate	4%	5%	20%	8%
Housing and Income	Households owned their own home	75%	74%	44%	50%
	Average household income	\$160,000	\$131,000	\$88,000	\$88,000
	Residents living in poverty	4%	6%	11%	12%
	Children living in poverty	2%	6%	16%	14%

Source: 2011-15 Census Data compiled by L. Hendey and L. Posey, Racial Inequities in Montgomery County, 2011-15 (The Urban Institute, 2017)

Despite high rates of high school completion (69–98%) and employment (73–78%) among adults from each racial and ethnic group, Black and Latino residents in Montgomery County were more than twice as likely as Whites to be unemployed and have household incomes below the federal poverty level. Blacks and Latinos were also 32–41% less likely to own their homes and their children were 2–7 times more likely to live in poverty than Whites and Asians in the County.

Research suggests that increasing equitable outcomes among communities of color stimulates economic growth that benefits communities overall. For example, PolicyLink’s Equitable Growth Profile for Fairfax County, Virginia, estimates that eliminating disparities in incomes by race and ethnicity would have increased their County’s gross domestic product by \$26.2 billion in 2012.³

The Government Alliance for Race and Equity (GARE) finds that racial disparities evident across measures are often “explained by blaming individual people—promoting ‘hard work’ as the way to get ahead.” They note that while hard work can help, the underlying systems driving racial inequities must be addressed to eliminate disparities by race and ethnicity. Based on their work in more than 100 local jurisdictions, GARE offers three sets of best practices for local jurisdictions to advance racial equity:

- **Normalize** conversations about race and equity, including the distinctions between individual and institutional racism and between explicit and implicit bias.
- **Organize** for racial equity by building organizational capacity within government to advance equity and engaging communities to advance racial equity, particularly communities of color.
- **Operationalize** for racial equity by using racial equity tools and data to evaluate progress.

² Summarized from OLO Report 2018-8, Racial Equity in Government Decision-Making.

³ See page 56 of Equitable Growth Profile of Fairfax County, PolicyLink and USC Program for Environmental and Regional Equity.

Racial Equity and Social Justice Initiative Timeline

- **April 24, 2018**, Resolution 18-1095 adopted affirming the Council's commitment to creating a Racial Equity and Social Justice Policy for Montgomery County
- **September 25, 2018**, release of Office of Legislative Oversight Report 2018-8, Racial Equity in Government Decision-Making: Lessons from the Field
- **January 10-11, 2019**, Racial Equity Training for County Leadership
- **February 12, 2019**, Racial Equity Training Debrief for County Leadership
- **March 13, 2019**, Kick off Racial Equity and Social Justice Community Engagement Campaign with press conference and community conversation at the Silver Spring Civic Building
- **April 1, 2019**, Launch of Community Equity Matters Survey and Community Conversations
- **April 8, 2019**, Youth Forum on Racial Equity and Social Justice
- **June 11, 2019**, Council meeting on Racial Equity and Social Justice
- **Spring/Summer 2019**
 - Community Conversations through July 15, 2019
 - Release of baseline report describing disparities by race and ethnicity in education, employment, housing, health, criminal justice, and other measures of opportunity
 - County Council starts work on developing Racial Equity and Social Justice Policy legislation
- **Fall 2019**
 - Public hearing on proposed Racial Equity and Social Justice Policy
 - Pass legislation enacting Racial Equity and Social Justice Policy



Preparing for Community Conversations

EFFECTIVE COMMUNITY CONVERSATIONS CAPTURE COMMUNITY INPUT. They engage community members to discuss what helps and hinders community priorities from advancing. Community conversations can bring together similar individuals from existing community-based organizations as well as strangers on topical issues. Moreover, “community conversations can help mobilize ideas, improve skills, and build on the passion of the community.”⁴

To enable community conversations to generate knowledge that can inform decision-making, participants should feel comfortable sharing different perspectives and differences of opinion so long as they do so in a way that enhances the conversation. To help ensure a productive session, please review the guidelines and key assumptions for community conversations described below.⁵

Guidelines for Community Conversations

Speak from your experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be honest and willing to share. • Speak only for yourself and avoid speaking for others or for an entire group. Use “I” statements. • Avoid critiquing others’ experiences; focus on your own experiences.
Respect the group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What you share during community conversations is honored and respected. • Be mindful of the time. • If you tend to share a lot, challenge yourself to listen more. • If you tend to remain quiet in group discussions, challenge yourself to speak a little more.
Listen to learn	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Listen with curiosity and the willingness to learn from others and to change your mind. • Lean into discomfort. Allow yourself to stretch beyond your comfort zone.
Be aware of your impact	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Resist the temptation to interrupt. • Suspend judgment. Be open to the wisdom in each person’s story. • Use the skills that you have to help the whole group have a good conversation. • Be courageous.

Assumptions for Community Conversations

- Diversity is a valuable community asset.
- Diversity of input and strategy is essential to yield results that will serve a diverse population.
- Taking time for people to genuinely connect, learn together and develop relationships can grow trust and generate more effective collaborative action.
- If people are passionate about something and involved in the creation of the plan, they are more likely to be invested in the implementation of actions.
- Local government is responsible for representing the interests of residents from all backgrounds and all walks of life.
- Trust and cooperation are necessary for positive and productive relationships between residents and local government.

Source: *The Better Together Initiative Conversation Guide*, Decatur, GA

⁴ Health Equity Alliance of Rock County Community Engagement Toolkit

⁵ The Better Together Initiative Conversation Guide, Decatur, GA

The Community Conversation Toolkit

WE OFFER THIS DOCUMENT TO HELP ORGANIZATIONS AND COMMUNITIES across the County continue the community-wide conversation on racial equity and social justice launched at our kick-off meeting on March 13, 2019. We invite members of the community to take this conversation to homes, houses of worship, neighborhood associations, book clubs, PTAs, and other places and organizations that bring people together in Montgomery County. The County Council will rely on input received from these community conversations by July 15, 2019, to help shape legislation for a County Racial Equity and Social Justice Policy by the end of 2019.

To assist community-based organizations and individuals in hosting community conversations on racial equity and social justice, this toolkit offers information on the following:

- **Roles and Responsibilities**
- **Community Conversations Check List**
- **Racial Equity and Social Justice Discussion Guide**
- **Final Reminders**

1. Roles and Responsibilities

The experiences of other jurisdictions that have used community conversations to broaden their community engagement suggests the need for five specific roles:

- **Hosts** to convene community conversations;
- **Moderators** to facilitate community conversations;
- **Scribes** to record specific reflections and suggestions shared by participants;
- **Timekeepers** to ensure the flow of community conversations; and
- **Participants** with a strong interest in the topic of discussion.

Brief descriptions of the key responsibilities for each of these roles follows. ***We also recommend that each person assisting or attending a community conversation review this toolkit beforehand.***

- **Hosts** are responsible for setting a date, time, and location for the conversation and inviting participants. Five to 10 people make a good-sized group; groups with more than 10 people can divide into two or more sub-groups. A sample invitation follows:

On [date], I will be hosting a community conversation on racial equity and social justice in Montgomery County. The County Council is intending to develop a Racial Equity and Social Justice Policy for County Government aimed at advancing racial equity and social justice in government decision-making. Their proposal for legislation will be based in part on input from people like us who are invested in the future of the County. I am excited about this opportunity and hope you will join me. Here are all of the details: [insert date, time, place, what to bring, and RSVP] If you have any questions, please let me know. You might also want to visit www.montgomerycountymd.gov/COUNCIL/EquityMatters.html for more information about the Council's ongoing equity work. Thanks, and I look forward to hearing from you.

The Host also recruits several people to help with the conversation (Moderators, Scribes, and Timekeepers) and obtains all necessary supplies (see details in the Community Conversation Checklist). On the day of the conversation, the Host should plan on welcoming and, afterward, thanking participants for their engagement.

- **Moderators** are responsible for keeping the conversation moving and staying on topic. They make sure everyone has a chance to speak and keep an eye on the Scribe. They are also responsible for slowing the conversation down whenever the Scribe needs a moment to catch up on note taking. In turn, Moderators should contribute very little as participants.
- **Scribes** take notes using a notebook, notecards, or a laptop computer—whatever works best. They are not responsible for capturing every detail—just the highlights. Scribes should not hesitate to ask participants to repeat or clarify something they have said. The Scribe will also be responsible for completing the Community Conversation Report within two days of the group’s discussion at www.montgomerycountymd.gov/COUNCIL/EquityMatters.html. If a Scribe needs a paper response form, please contact Dr. Elaine Bonner-Tompkins at elaine.bonner-tompkins@montgomerycountymd.gov.
- **Timekeepers** assist Moderators in keeping the conversations moving. Timekeepers are encouraged to use their cell phones to keep track of time without literally watching their clocks. Timekeepers are also encouraged to give “two-minute warnings” to help participants wrap up their thoughts and move to the next discussion question. Unlike Moderators, Timekeepers are encouraged to actively participate in the conversation.
- **Participants** are responsible for keeping their remarks on topic, listening to others, and if they disagree with someone, doing so respectfully. In particular, participants should try to understand the positions of others, not monopolize conversations, and make the extra effort to contribute opinions, questions, and ideas if they tend to be quiet in groups. Anyone with a strong interest in Montgomery County can participate. Most participants will be Montgomery County residents, but people who work in the County and frequent visitors can also be invited to participate.



2. Community Conversations Check List⁶

- **A Group of People**—Five to 10 people is a good-sized group. If your group is larger, consider breaking into smaller sub-groups.
- **A Location**—Groups can meet in private homes, houses of worship, community centers, or even one of Montgomery County’s excellent eating and drinking establishments. Anywhere participants can sit comfortably and hear each other will do.
- **Racial Equity and Social Justice Community Engagement Toolkit**—Copies are needed for the Host, Moderator, Scribe, Timekeeper, and Participants. The Toolkit is available for download at www.montgomerycountymd.gov/COUNCIL/EquityMatters.html and a limited number of print copies are available from the Montgomery County Council.
- **Pens and Pencils**—Make sure there are enough for everyone.
- **Food and Drink**—You can provide drinks and snacks or ask everyone to bring something to share.
- **A Moderator**—This person facilitates the conversation, making sure the group stays on topic and everyone has a chance to speak. This could be the Host or someone else in the group. Make sure the Moderator is identified before the group meets.
- **A Scribe**—This person takes notes during the conversation and submits the group’s Community Conversation Report online to the County Council via www.montgomerycountymd.gov/COUNCIL/EquityMatters.html. This job can be shared by two people.
- **A Timekeeper**—This person assists the Moderator, so the group finishes on time.

3. Racial Equity and Social Justice Discussion Guide⁷

This section describes the recommended flow and agenda for community conversations, including the discussion questions to review as a group. It is presented in three parts.

A. Capture Information about the Convening Group

The Moderator should consult with the Host and/or Scribe to answer the following questions before the conversations begin. Responses should be recorded on a separate sheet of paper so that they can be entered into the Community Conversation Report online following the meeting. After participants have introduced themselves, review this information with the full group and ask for any additional input they might have.

- Group Name
- Description of your group. You might include gender and racial mix, age range, neighborhood, how long participants have lived in Montgomery County, etc.
- Where did you meet? (e.g., private home, house of worship, community building, library, recreation center, restaurant, park, etc.)
- Is this an existing group (e.g., book club, Sunday school class, neighborhood association, etc.) or did you gather specifically for this discussion? If it is an existing group, please tell us what kind.
- Is there anything else you want to tell us about your group?

⁶ Adapted from The Better Together Community Conversation Toolkit, Decatur, GA

⁷ Adopted from Health Equity Alliance of Rock County Community Education Toolkit and the Better Together Conversation Guide, Decatur, GA

B. Introductions and Getting Started

The Moderator should ask each participant to introduce and share information about themselves. After everyone is introduced, remind them of the Community Conversation Guidelines and Assumptions previously mentioned. This part of the conversation should last no longer than 20 minutes; the Scribe does not need to record information shared during introductions.

- Name, neighborhood, or other affiliation
- Why did you choose to participate in today's community conversation on equity?

C. Discussion Questions

The Moderator should spend a predetermined amount of time (10–12 minutes) on each of the discussion questions. Out of respect for the time commitment of the group, we recommend sticking to this agenda. Scribes should record responses to questions **3 – 6** on separate sheets of paper to enter online later. If the Scribe experiences difficulties recording responses, slow the conversation down. If the conversation goes over time, allow participants to leave at the scheduled end.

1. *Why does racial and ethnic equity matter to you?*
2. *As a resident, how are you impacted by inequities by race and ethnicity in your daily life? How are members of your family and/or community impacted?*
3. *What do you see as the top three challenges to achieving racial equity and social justice in Montgomery County? Why?⁸*
4. *What are some of the changes that could be made to reduce inequities in Montgomery County?*
5. *What are some of the barriers to advancing racial equity and social justice in the County? What suggestions can you offer for addressing these roadblocks/concerns?*
6. *Is your organization/group addressing racial and ethnic equity? If so how? If not, what activities, if any, are envisioned? How could the County be of assistance to your group toward this end?*
7. *What would Montgomery County look like if we eliminated inequities by race and ethnicity?*

In closing, the Moderator and/or Host should thank participants for taking time out of their schedules to participate in the Community Conversations and share appreciation for their suggestions. The Scribe will be responsible for completing the Community Conversation Report at www.montgomerycountymd.gov/COUNCIL/EquityMatters.html. We ask that reports are completed within two days of the community conversation if possible and submitted no later than July 16, 2019. If a paper response form is needed, please contact Dr. Elaine Bonner-Tompkins at elaine.bonner-tompkins@montgomerycountymd.gov.

4. Final Reminders

- Community conversations on racial equity and social justice should take place between **April 1 and July 15, 2019**.
- Participants should **take a few minutes to read this Community Engagement Toolkit** before their group meets. It is available for download at www.montgomerycountymd.gov/COUNCIL/EquityMatters.html.
- To ensure that your group's input helps inform the development of Council legislation to develop the County's Racial Equity and Social Justice Policy, **Community Conversation Reports must be submitted online by July 16, 2019** at www.montgomerycountymd.gov/COUNCIL/EquityMatters.html.
- Groups submitting **paper responses** may send them to Dr. Elaine Bonner-Tompkins, Office of Legislative Oversight at 100 Maryland Avenue, Rockville, MD 20850.

⁸ An alternate question to get at the same point is "What policy areas (e.g. education, housing, criminal justice, economic development) should the County prioritize in its efforts to advance equity?"

Resolution No.: 18-1095
Introduced: April 17, 2018
Adopted: April 24, 2018

**COUNTY COUNCIL
FOR MONTGOMERY COUNTY, MARYLAND**

Lead Sponsors: Council Vice President Navarro and Councilmember Elrich
Cosponsors: Councilmembers Floreen, Leventhal, Katz, Berliner, Council President Riemer,
Hucker, and Rice

SUBJECT: Resolution to Develop an Equity Policy Framework in County Government

Background

1. Montgomery County is a community with a strong economy and public services that embraces its residents and the future. Our strong public services include awarding-winning public schools, community college, and park systems, vibrant performing and fine arts, and essential safety net programs in housing, public health, and other social services.
2. Montgomery County is a diverse and welcoming community. No one race or origin is a majority of Montgomery County's population. Almost one-third of the population is foreign-born. Our diversity is our strength and is key to our continued success as a community.
3. While we embrace our diversity, disparities exist by ethnicity, income, disability, gender, sexual identity, and other factors that can impede our future prosperity. These disparities in education, employment, health, and housing result from institutional and individual biases that undermine opportunities for vital members of our community.
4. Furthermore, the aforementioned disparities can be exacerbated by **racial** and **linguistic diversity** that intersect with and compound the effects of additional disparities and inequities based on racial background and limited English language proficiency.
5. Eliminating disparities by promoting equity - the fair treatment of individuals and diverse groups - is an economic imperative. The Urban Institute's *Racial Inequities in Montgomery County, 2011-15* report shows that a more equitable Montgomery County would increase the number of immigrants, Latinos, African Americans, and Asians with some college education, and would also increase employment and homeownership rates among people of color. A more equitable Montgomery County would enhance opportunities for all residents, thereby improving the economy.

6. The Montgomery County Government is responsible for all of its residents, and is in a position to address both unconscious and overt bias, to advance equity, and to address disparities based on race, ethnicity, national origin, English language proficiency, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, religion, age, differing abilities, and income.
7. As part of the Government Alliance on Race and Equity (GARE), a growing number of jurisdictions are undertaking the work needed to operationalize equity, and integrate it into the decision-making process. These include the use of an “equity lens” to determine who benefits from public policies, regulations and practices and the development of equity tools and plans to inform local decision-making.
8. It is time for Montgomery County to move beyond disjointed efforts to reduce disparities, and commit to advancing the actions necessary to intentionally develop strong equity policies and create a strategic plan.

Action

The County Council for Montgomery County, Maryland, approves the following action:

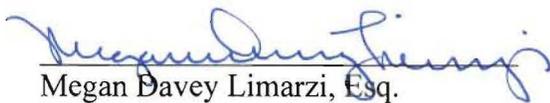
The Council is committed to examining the data needed to develop an equity policy framework that would require the County to question how budget and policy decisions impact equity.

This effort must be a partnership between the County Council, County Executive, County Government, county agencies, institutions, and our community. The County Government must challenge itself to bring new and different partners to the table. Partnering with other jurisdictions as members of the Government Alliance on Race and Equity (GARE) will also enhance the County’s effort and commitment to fostering equity.

Equity analyses should be part of capital and operating budget reviews, appropriation requests, and legislation. Program and process oversight should be undertaken viewing programs and processes through an equity lens. Equity targets and measures of progress must be put in place.

The Council will provide additional FY19 Operating Budget resources for the Office of Legislative Oversight to develop a baseline report describing current disparities in education, employment, housing, health, employment, land use, and other measures of opportunity by May 31, 2019. Following the transmittal of the baseline report, the Council will introduce legislation for the County to develop an equity policy framework to inform the delivery of all County services.

This is a correct copy of Council action.


Megan Davey Limarzi, Esq.
Clerk of the Council



City of Alexandria Racial Equity Work Group Update

September 24, 2019



Background

Interdepartmental Workgroup formed 2 years ago

- Established a charter and created four broad equity goals
- Received support from the City Manager to move forward
- City senior leadership attended Implicit Bias workshops in the summer and fall of 2018
- Presented to Council November 2018

Work Group Racial and Social Equity Goals





National Movement

- Racial Equity movement started in King County, WA
- Government Alliance on Race and Equity (GARE)
 - Joint project of Race Forward & Haas Institute for a Fair and Inclusive Society at UC Berkeley
 - National network of jurisdictions working to achieve racial equity & advance opportunities for all
 - Supports and builds local and regional collaborations
 - City of Alexandria government has now become a member of GARE



National Movement

National League of Cities

Race, Equity and Leadership (REAL)
initiative goals:

- Eliminate racial disparities
- Heal racial divisions
- Build more equitable communities
- Municipal Action Guide



Case Study Department Updates

- Department of Community and Human Services
- Alexandria Police Department
- Office of Human Rights
- Court Services Unit



DCHS Early Activities

- Initiated training, lunch and learns, dialogues and panels
- Developed language access policy and plan
- Incorporated racial equity goals within DCCHS Work Plan
- Worked with DCCHS HR to review hiring practices
- Added employment interview questions re: cultural competence and diversity
- Cultural and Linguistic Competence Committee (now IDEA—Inclusion, Diversity Action Committee)



DCHS Current Efforts

- Establishment of Racial Equity Core Team (20 members from across Dept.)
- Upcoming required training for Leadership Team, Managers and Core Team:
 - Advancing Racial Equity: The Role of Government
 - Using a Racial Equity Tool
 - Understanding White Supremacy
 - Allyship
 - Building Equity
 - Bias and Microaggressions



Data and Policy Review Areas

- Adult Protective Services findings
- Involuntary hospitalizations
- Child Welfare referrals and dispositions
- Child and Family Behavioral Health points of entry and interventions
- Access/dispositions with shelter and
■ Diversion
- Denial, sanctions, discontinuance, training, employment, and wage data in TANF/VIEW program
- Workforce retention
- Disciplinary Actions

Police Department Activities

- 21st Century Policing Plan
 - Published departmental policies
 - Traffic stop data analysis
 - Data transparency plan
 - Implicit bias training for all staff
- Creation of community advisory group CAT21
- Beat evaluation & deployment assessment





Police Department Future Work

APD Equity Plan using 21st Century Policing Recommendations





Court Service Unit

- Virginia Department of Juvenile Justice Equity Work Group – DJJ Transformation related to Racial & Ethnic Disparity
- Staff training & dialogue, lunch and learns, coffee talks
- Added employment interview questions re: cultural competence and diversity



Court Service Unit & Partners Form Racial & Ethnic Disparities in Juvenile Justice team

- March 2019: Alexandria team led by the Juvenile Court attended **Georgetown Center for Juvenile Justice Reform and the Center for Children's Law & Policy Racial & Ethnic Disparities Program**
- August 2019 – team admitted to CJJR Fellows Network following submission of capstone project



Office of Human Rights

- Engagement of Diverse Communities
 - Targeted Outreach to Underserved w/AHRC
 - Implicit Bias Training
 - Youth Engagement
 - Collaboration w/Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) & Local FEPAs
 - Contract Funding
 - Trauma-Informed Intake Training
 - Shared Resources
- Enforcement & Compliance
 - Titles VI & VII, ADA(AA), Alexandria Code
 - Language Access (Interpretation & Translation)
 - Accommodations & Physical Access w/ACPD
 - City Departments, Boards & Commissions
 - Workforce Utilization & Applicant Tracking Data
 - Non-discrimination Data Sheets



Local Collaboration Efforts

- The City of Alexandria
- Alexandria City Public Schools (ACPS)
- ACT for Alexandria
- Parent Leader Training Institute (PLTI) and other non-profits
- Local Planning Efforts – Community Health, Children & Youth Master Plan, ACPS 2025



Regional Collaboration

- Council of Governments/GARE
 - City has helped initiate and lead this effort
 - Regional Learning Cohort
 - More than 18 jurisdictions
 - City of Alexandria team of 14, including ACPS
 - Launches September 26, 2019 to June 2020



Next Steps

- Hiring of Race and Social Equity Officer
- Creation of Communities of Practice/Racial Equity Affinity Groups
- Train the Trainer of DCHS Core Team to provide training to all DCHS staff
- Expand Racial and Social Equity initiative to other City departments

AGENDA ITEM #10

REGIONAL RACIAL EQUITY

District of Columbia

FOCUS ON EQUITY

- Create a Central point of contact** – a lot of great work is already taking place in the District and they need a central point of contact who will lead the work and bring it all together. This should be a cabinet level position since this person will work with directors from the different agencies and offices to identify and address structural and institutional biases
- Create a Coordinating Council to deepen the racial equity work**

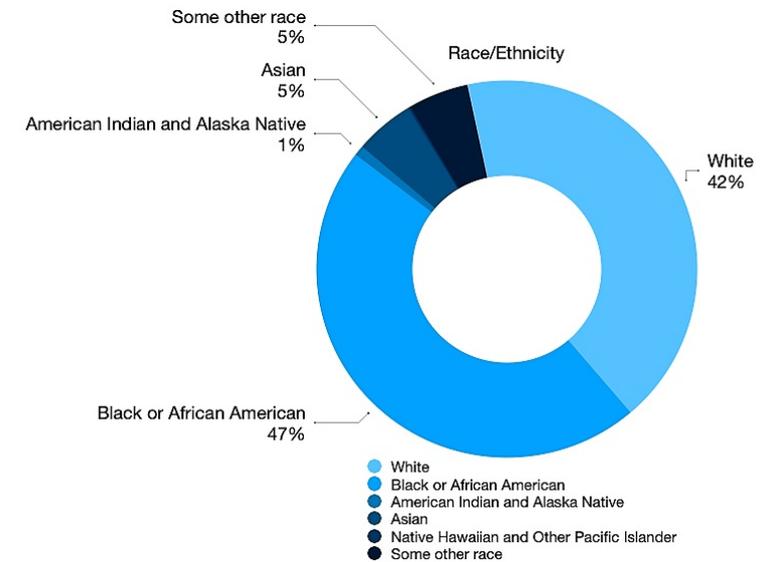
DATA



685,000
Residents



312,000
Housing units



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2018 American Community Survey 5-year estimates

COHORT MEMBERS

Ana Van Balen	Department of Housing and Community Development
Christopher Brown	Department of Energy and Environment
Elisabeth Morse	Office of the State Superintendent of Education
Evelyn Kasongo	Office of Planning
Helen McClure	Office of the Deputy Mayor for Public Safety and Justice
Joseph Breems	Office of the City Administrator
Meagan Reed	Office of Budget & Performance Management
Thomas Bowen	Office of Religious Affairs

EQUITY IN ACTION

[x] The Cohort has gotten meaningful feedback from existing agencies and they are updating leadership on their racial equity work. There is also greater buy-in from leadership which has committed funds for a second cohort.

[] They are also seeking to develop recruitment strategies for the next cohort to equip them so that they can sustain the work rather than starting all over.

[] The Racial Equity Achieves Results Amendment Act of 2019 was introduced in January 2019 and would require OHR and HR to develop and provide racial equity training for District employees.

POLICIES

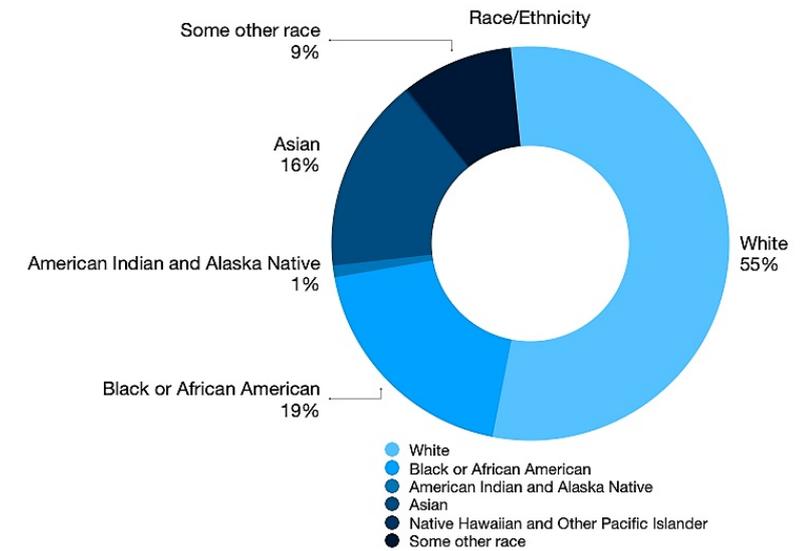
1. Racial Equity Achieves Results Amendment Act of 2019

Montgomery County

FOCUS ON EQUITY

- Create a more vibrant base of businesses in the county** – the Chief Procurement Officer is taking a deeper look at systems, policies, and procedures in supporting minority-owned businesses in order to ensure that everyone has a fair and equitable opportunity to get contracts with county government.
- Develop a Racially Equitable Hiring Tool for HR** – the cohort is facilitating a root cause analysis and is focused on identifying ways to achieve this work with outside leadership which oversees job descriptions in the HR department.

DATA



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2018 American Community Survey 5-year estimates

COHORT MEMBERS

Andrew Kleine	Office of the County Executive
Angela Talley	Department of Correction and Rehabilitation
Aseem Nigam	Department of Housing & Community Affairs
Ash Shetty	Office of Procurement
Barry Hudson	Public Information Office
Berke Attila	Office of Human Resources
Betty Lam	Community Affairs
Chris Conklin	Department of Transportation
Elaine Bonner-Tompkins	Office of Legislative Oversight
Gwen Wright	Department of Planning
Jennifer Bryant	Office of Management and Budget
Michael Baskin	Office of the County Executive
Tiffany Ward	Office of the County Executive
Travis Gayles	Public Health Services

EQUITY IN ACTION

[x] Tiffany Ward has been confirmed by Council as the new Chief Equity Officer and is leading the Racial Equity and Social Justice Department which was created by the County Executive.

[] Tiffany is looking to discuss with HHS ways to expand the county's racial equity work in vulnerable communities in the context and aftermath of the pandemic.

POLICIES

1. Racial Equity Bill 27-19
2. Declaration of Racism as a Public Health Crisis

Charles County

FOCUS ON EQUITY

- **Improve public transit system and services** - since residents don't have a metro or subway system, the cohort is focusing on improving its public transit system. The county currently has VanGO which has 16 routes that covers the entire county. 78% of ridership are people of color and the county is becoming majority people of color.

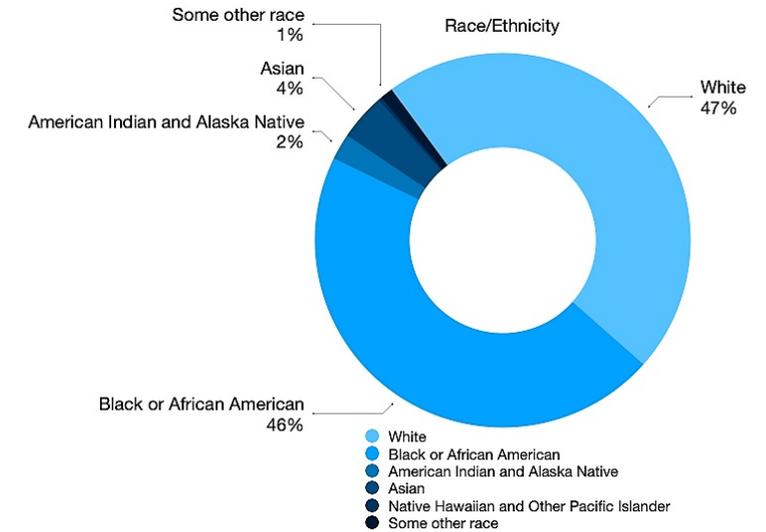
DATA



158,000
Residents



60,000
Housing units



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2018 American Community Survey 5-year estimates

COHORT MEMBERS

Alexis Blackwell	Human Resources
Catherine Reisinger	Department of Planning and Growth Management
Deb Hall	County Administration
Dina Barclay	Department of Community Services
John Filer	Emergency Medical Services

EQUITY IN ACTION

[x] The existing county-wide transportation plan allowed cohort members to extract a lot of data which was disaggregated by race. Cohort members were able to identify meaningful feedback and data from community stakeholder surveys, which they plan to continue.

[x] The Board of County Commissioners is aware of the cohort's proposed recommendations and has included this in the proposed budget for Planning Growth Management.

POLICIES

City of Alexandria

FOCUS ON EQUITY

- ❑ **Increase housing production and affordability** – although the city’s housing and job balance are in equilibrium, the cohort is seeking to raise housing production and affordability by 310 units for a total of 1,150 units each year over the next 10 years. The city produces about 840 units per year and aims to add 310 units as an active participant of the Regional Housing Initiative. Of those 310 units, the city is committed to ensuring that 75% of those units will be affordable for very low to moderate income households.
- ❑ **Implement regulatory changes** – cohort and staff have generated a list of proposed regulatory changes that they are seeking to design over the next ten years. Through an equity plan that will be part of the housing initiative, they are seeking to design new regulations that will address the extensive bias in terms of housing, overall living conditions and quality of life for minority communities.

EQUITY IN ACTION

[x] The cohort has identified 11 historic African American communities throughout the city dating back to the 1700s, as well as several regulatory and social practices that controlled those communities and hindered their ability to prosper.

[x] The cohort feels supported because they have obtained adequate resources and continue to work with the private sector and nonprofits. They feel further supported because they have several “natural allies” in the community who support their work in racial equity such as the strong team they have built and Jacqueline Tucker who has recently transitioned as the city’s Chief Equity Officer.

POLICIES

1. Resolution 2950

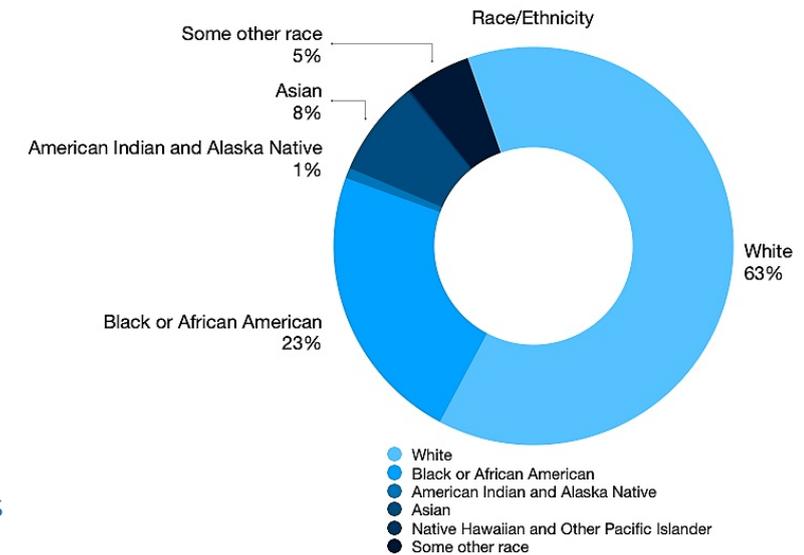
DATA



157,000
Residents



76,000
Housing units



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2018 American Community Survey 5-year estimates

COHORT MEMBERS

Allyson B. Coleman	Department of Community and Human Services
Cheryl Robinson	Alexandria City Public Schools
Debra Collins	Office of the City Manager
Diane Ruggiero	Department of Recreation, Parks & Cultural Activities
Eric Keeler	Office of Housing
Geralyn Taylor	Mobility Services
Julie Crawford	Alexandria City Public Schools
Kennetra Wood	Alexandria City Public Schools
Nancy Williams	Department of Planning & Zoning
Natalie Talis	Department of Health
Nayna Rizk	Department of Community and Human Services
Ray Evans	Office of Emergency Management
Shannon Soriano	Community Relations Division

Fairfax County

FOCUS ON EQUITY

- Work across Fairfax County, within departments, and with COG cohort participants to make Fairfax County a place where all...
 - Residents, businesses and visitors are aware of and able to participate in quality arts, sports, recreation and culturally enriching activities,
 - People, businesses and places are thriving economically,
 - People trust that their government responsibly manages resources, provides exceptional services and equitably represents them,
 - Residents facing vulnerability are empowered and supported to live independent lives to their fullest potential,
 - People can attain their highest level of health and well-being within a healthy sustainable environment,
 - People live in communities that foster safe, enjoyable and affordable living experiences,
 - Residents at every stage of life are taking advantage of inclusive, responsive and accessible learning opportunities that enable them to grow, prosper and thrive,
 - Residents, businesses, visitors and goods can move efficiently, affordably and safely throughout the county and beyond via our well-designed and maintained network of roads, sidewalks, trails and transit options, and
 - People feel safe at home, school, work and in the community.

EQUITY IN ACTION

[x] The county passed a racial and social equity resolution in July 2016 followed by the One Fairfax policy in November 2017, and hired a Chief Equity Officer in July 2018.

[x] The COG Cohort joined the infrastructure of staff that have been trained in key equity principles and have been tasked with developing equity impact plans specific to their departments.

POLICIES

1. One Fairfax Policy

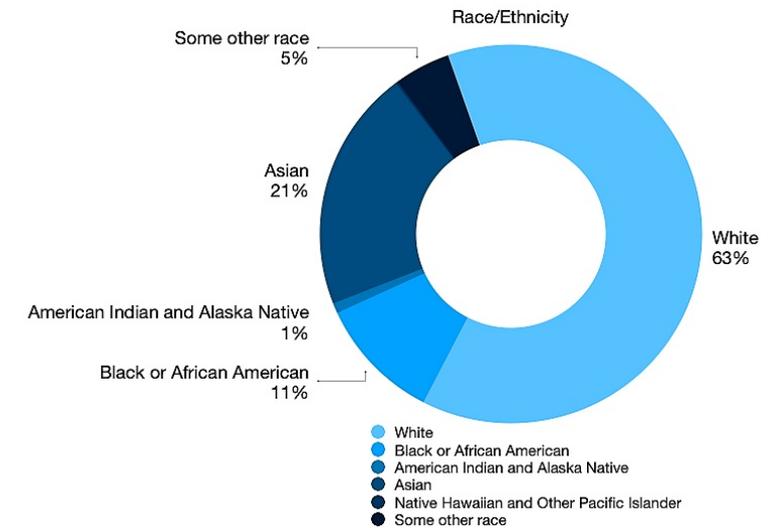
DATA



1,143,529
Residents



413,000
Housing units



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2018 American Community Survey 5-year estimates

COHORT MEMBERS

Ajashu Thomas	Office of Human Rights and Equity Programs
Cathy Muse	Department of Procurement and Material Management
Chris McGough	Small Business Commission
Chris Revere	Department of Health
Courtney Willis-Banks	Department of Public Works
Dana Thompson	Department of Family Services
Davida Parson	Department of Human Resources
Diana Pina	Office to Prevent and End Homelessness
George Robbins	Fire and Rescue Department
Lorraine Fells-Danzer	Department of Public Safety Communications
Marlon Murphy	Fire and Rescue Department
Mena Nakhla	Department of Family Services
Michelle Stahlhut	Department of Planning and Development
Nancy Ryan	Public Library
Rachad Davis	Department of Transportation
Robin Wilson	Office of the County Executive
Tarla Richards	Department of Health
Vostina Dinovo	Fairfax-Falls Church Community Services Board

Arlington County

FOCUS ON EQUITY

- **Increase diversity of county government staff through recruitment and workforce development** – the cohort is addressing equity issues with recruitment, hiring, promotion, training and development, and retention of county staff

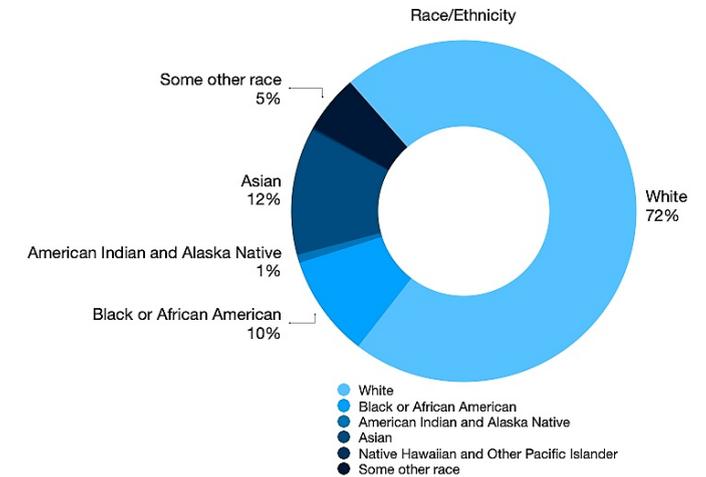
DATA



232,000
Residents



113,084
Housing units



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2018 American Community Survey 5-year estimates

COHORT MEMBERS

Anne Gable	Libraries
Arlova Vonhm	Community Planning, Housing & Development
Carolyn Jackson	Arlington Public Schools
Corey Dotson	Arlington Public Schools
David Herlihy	Digital Experience and Technology Services
Farzin Farzad	Human Resources
Gurjit Chima	Office of Human Rights, EEO & ADA
Jennifer Fioretti	Parks & Recreation
Julia Burgos	Arlington Public Schools
Mike Collins	Environmental Services
Paula Brockenborough	Police
Reuben Varghoes	Human Services
Richard Stephenson	Management & Finance
Tiffanye Wesley	Fire

EQUITY IN ACTION

[x] Through the cohort's root cause analysis of county government staff, they have identified the lack of diversity in the county's executive-level team.

[x] The cohort continues to meet regularly with senior leadership team and has felt supported through GARE's engagement with county leadership. Members state that they have given a budget of \$100k by county government.

[x] The county has hired a company to do a barrier analysis which will improve interviews and focus groups, and the cohort will be able to draw from this data.

POLICIES

1. Equity Resolution
2. Destination 2027

City of Takoma Park

FOCUS ON EQUITY

- **Increase diversity recruitment for council-appointed committee members** - the cohort is seeking to meaningfully impact the racial disparity they identified with regard to the city's 16 various council-appointed committees; specifically, committee surveys indicated that 80% of appointees were white.

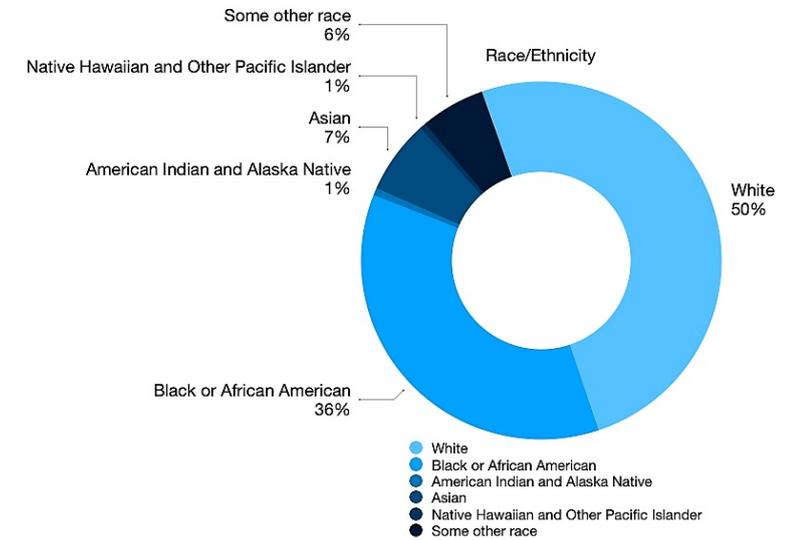
DATA



18,000
Residents



7,000
Housing units



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2018 American Community Survey 5-year estimates

COHORT MEMBERS

Kurt Gilbert	Police
Rosalind Grigsby	Housing & Community Development
Samira Cook Gaines	Housing & Community Development
Tracy Smith	Human Resources

EQUITY IN ACTION

[x] City Manager attended a meeting with cohort members, and they shared their racial equity vision statement. Cohort members feel that the City Manager is responsive to their work and agreed with their vision statement. Cohort members were able to discuss with City Manager lessons learned and further identified their "better off" indicators.

[x] Cohort members presented at the council retreat and the council is aware of the cohort's work in racial equity – they are aware of and receptive to the work.

POLICIES

1. Racial Equity Considerations
2. Racial Equity Bill 27-19

City of Gaithersburg

FOCUS ON EQUITY

- Initiated race/ethnicity questions on applications for employment.
- Initiated race ethnicity question on registrations for Parks and Recreation department programs.
- Developing an organizational structure for implementation of projects, organizing awareness workshops, and initiating the use of the racial equity tool throughout all departments.

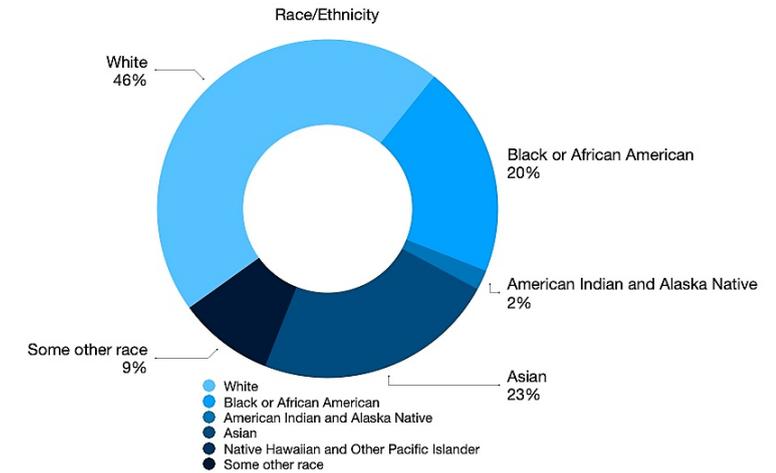
DATA



68,000
Residents



26,000
Housing units



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2018 American Community Survey 5-year estimates

COHORT MEMBERS

Chris Vance	Police Department
Kevin Etters	Public Works
Nathan Bassett	Finance and Administration
Patrice Payne	Community and Public Relations
Tammy Castillo	Parks, Recreation and Culture

EQUITY IN ACTION

[x] Created a racial equity vision and timeline. Presented progress to the Mayor and City Council in February 2020. In the progress of reviewing race/ethnicity data for the current workforce.

POLICIES

1. Racial Equity Bill 27-19

Loudoun County

FOCUS ON EQUITY

- Conduct a comprehensive review of HR policies and procedures with a racial equity lens** – using the toolkit and resources provided to them, cohort members are seeking to address five instrumental policies under review; these include 1) interview, selection & hiring, 2) employee development and awards, 3) policies and procedures related to EEO, 4) diversity & inclusion, and 5) performance management, discipline, & reasonable suspicion.
- The cohort aims to build its presence in the workforce through the creation of a County intranet page with information and resources on race and equity.
- The cohort will partner with the Department of Human Resources to offer learning opportunities for the workforce on race and equity.

EQUITY IN ACTION

[x] The County passed its FY 2020-2021 budget in April 2020; which included the creation of an Office of Equity and Inclusion, as well as an Equity Officer position.

[x] The County has been proactively partnering with more than 70 community organizations to reach Loudoun County's Spanish-speaking residents with important information related to the COVID-19 pandemic.

[x] The County has developed an online Spanish-language toolkit with COVID-19 related resources to support community partners in making sure that all of our residents have essential information about COVID-19 and the resources they may need at this critical time.

[x] Representatives from Loudoun County Administration, Health Department, emergency management, public affairs and communication, and the Town of Leesburg met with officials from the Commonwealth of VA's Health Equity Working Group to kick-off a program that provides services to underserved communities in Loudoun.

POLICIES

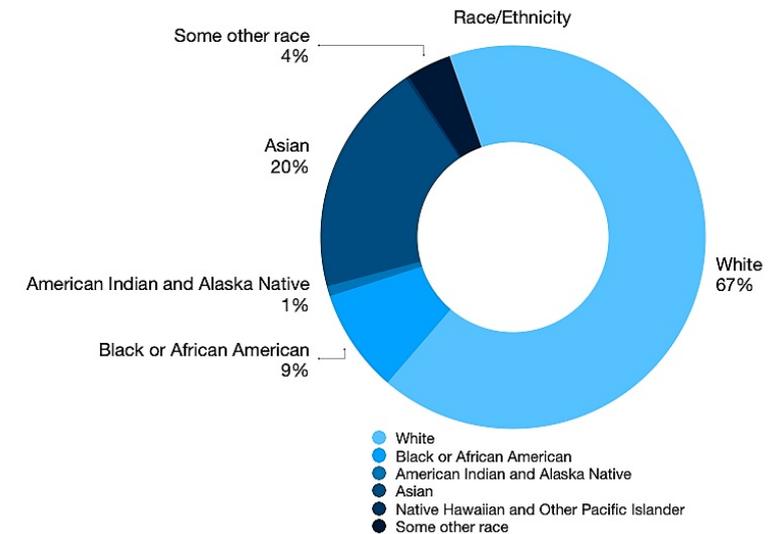
DATA



385,143
Residents



130,000
Housing units



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2018 American Community Survey 5-year estimates

COHORT MEMBERS

Anne Lewis	County Administration
Catherine Motivans	County Administration
Chitra Gosain	Loudoun County Parks Recreation and Community Services
George Khan	Health Department
Glenda Blake	Family Services
Joseph Razzano	Mental Health, Substance Abuse, and Developmental Services
Judy Kwitnieski	Human Resources
Julius Reynolds	Juvenile Courts
Orlando Rosa	Community Corrections
Valmarie Turner	County Administration

City of College Park

FOCUS ON EQUITY

- Utilize data to inform decision-making with racial equity lens** - the city has a racial equity contract with its police force so the cohort is seeking to collect and analyze the demographic and socioeconomic data of its workforce in order to inform effective decision-making with a lens towards racial equity. The cohort is also seeking to meaningfully engage its police force on their work in racial equity.
- Increase diversity on boards and commissions** - the cohort has identified racial disparities in membership and is seeking to increase the diversity of appointees on the city's boards and commissions.

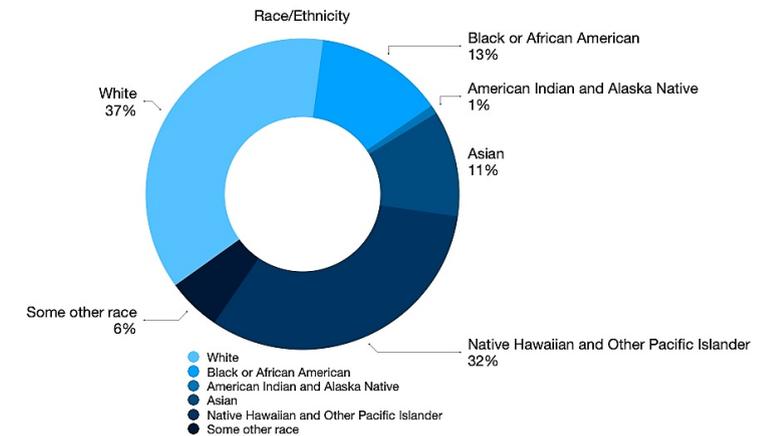
DATA



32,000
Residents



8,000
Housing units



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2018 American Community Survey 5-year estimates

COHORT MEMBERS

Bill Gardiner	Office of the City Manager
Frank Pacifico	Department of Public Works
Kiaisha Barber	Office of the City Manager
Teresa Way-Pezzuti	Department of Human Resources
Tracey Clayton	Department of Finance

EQUITY IN ACTION

[x] The cohort has formalized its racial equity timeline and drafted the framework for its racial equity policy which will be presented to city council.

[] They are conducting a review of committee membership which is time sensitive as the council will reappoint all committees on July 1.

[] They are still working through the process of root cause analysis and is analyzing demographic and socioeconomic data for the city's police force in order to inform potential issues, either with the police force or disparate treatment.

POLICIES

1. Racial Equity in Policing Proposal

Prince George's County

FOCUS ON EQUITY

- **Improve language access and utilization for county services and communications** - while the majority of COVID-19 educational materials have been translated into Spanish, the county does not have a strong presence of language access which has been challenging for cohort members. The cohort is seeking to meet the needs of diverse communities by strengthening language access and utilization.

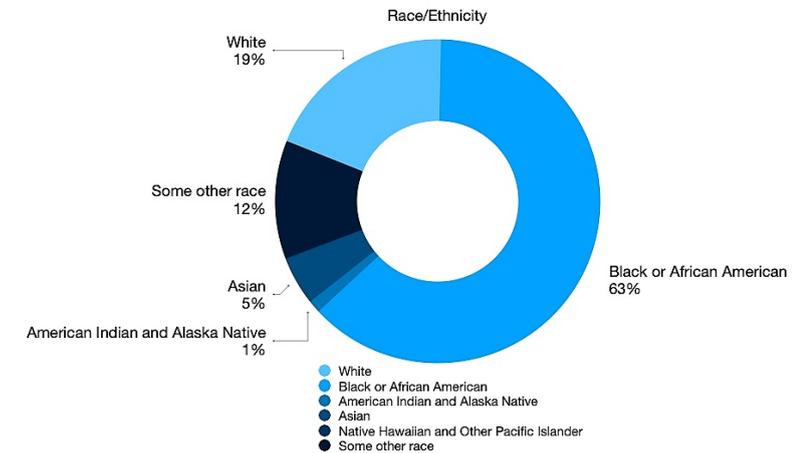
DATA



906,202
Residents



331,272
Housing units



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2018 American Community Survey 5-year estimates

COHORT MEMBERS

Brian Frankel	Emergency Services Command
Jonathan Butler	Office of Central Services
Katina Rojas Joy	Office of the County Executive
Robert Harvin Jr.	Bureau of Administration & Homeland Security
Shawn Stokes	Office of Human Resources Management

EQUITY IN ACTION

[] The cohort is recommending that the county commit to 3 full-time translators to be shared across agencies outside of police and the school system because they are unable to meet this need.

POLICIES

AGENDA ITEM #11

RACIAL EQUITY AS A FUNDAMENTAL VALUE

**METROPOLITAN WASHINGTON COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS
777 NORTH CAPITOL STREET, NE
WASHINGTON, DC 20002**

RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE METROPOLITAN WASHINGTON COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS REGARDING RACIAL EQUITY AS A FUNDAMENTAL VALUE

WHEREAS, the work of the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments has been guided by the overarching goals of Prosperity, Accessibility, Livability, and Sustainability as espoused in COG's *Region Forward Vision* for the region; and

WHEREAS, local governments are increasingly committing to intentionally consider equity when making policies or delivering programs and services; and

WHEREAS, "Equity" is a fundamental value defined as the commitment to promote fairness and justice in the formation of priorities, policy, and programs; and

WHEREAS, equity is achieved when all people are fully able to participate in the region's economic viability, contribute to the region's readiness for the future, and connect to the region's assets and resources; and

WHEREAS, COG has acted in support of equity analysis and decision-making, including the Transportation Planning Board's Equity Emphasis Areas; and, COG has initiatives that focus on racial equity such as the Regional Racial Equity Cohort, the work of the Health Officers Committee on health equity, and the regional initiative to develop a Fair Housing plan, but recognizes that a more intentional focus on equity is needed; and

WHEREAS, the Board of Directors condemns racial discrimination and commits to being non-racist, and significantly, also commits COG to actively oppose racism and be anti-racist;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE METROPOLITAN WASHINGTON COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS THAT:

- 1) The Board affirms that our work together as the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments will be anti-racist and will advance equity; and
- 2) The Board affirms that Equity will be woven into COG's *Region Forward Vision* to ensure a more prosperous, accessible, livable, sustainable, and equitable future for all area residents and throughout COG's analyses, operations, procurement, programs, and priorities.

The Board instructs the Executive Director to ensure the practical application of these values.

AGENDA ITEM #12

OTHER BUSINESS

AGENDA ITEM #13

ADJOURN