RACIAL EQUITY TOOLKIT

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"TAKE PRIDE IN WHAT YOU ARE BEING CALLED TO DO AND ALL YOU HAVE DONE FOR OUR PEOPLE."

MAYOR LATOYA CANTRELL

Dear City of New Orleans Employees,

First, I want to express my appreciation and gratitude for your hard work and dedication to our city and our residents. Thank you for showing up and continuing to put in the work day after day to keep the City moving forward.

The city we are today has been shaped by our deep and complex 300-year history. From the first arrival of African Slaves to this region in 1718, our Black community has played an intrinsic role in forging the city structurally, economically, and culturally, and we remain the most Afro-centric city in the United States. New Orleanians are no strangers to tragedy, disruption, and sometimes deliberate actions to disadvantage Black residents and all residents of color.

Racial injustice and inequality are pressing issues in our city, especially as it relates to how our residents interact with City government. We have a moral and principled obligation to ensure equal opportunity, economic, and social mobility for our residents of color. The path to achieve this requires us to meet our residents where they are by providing equitable services throughout our daily work in each and every department.

We must address racial inequality with every tool at our disposal and challenge ourselves and our colleagues to create better outcomes for our residents of color. This toolkit is sponsored by funding that the City of New Orleans was awarded from the W.K. Kellogg Foundation, and is designed to center community perspective and guide departments through the design and implementation of strategic racial equity planning. Ultimately, we aim to embed equitable approaches into every level of City of New Orleans' programs and service delivery.

Equity is both an outcome and a process, and I am calling upon every single department to work harder and to work smarter, because what we do right now will influence and impact how our people live, work, and grow in this city. Take pride in what you are being called to do and all you have done for our people. We have an opportunity to improve our residents' quality of life and their daily interactions with our City government. While we recognize it has taken 300 years to get to where we are, **what we do now will set the tone for the next three hundred years of this city.**

Let's continue to work together and bring the mission, vision, and values that we hold to action!

Sincerely,

Mayor LaToya Cantrell

MESSAGE FROM THE OFFICE OF HUMAN RIGHTS AND EQUITY

Dear Colleagues,

Direct community engagement, dedication and resources from multiple Mayoral administrations, and local and national technical assistance partnerships over the last five years demonstrate a purposeful shift in New Orleans. **From planning to beginning implementation, the City has designed an infrastructure which embeds racial equity throughout our systems.**

The Office of Human Rights and Equity is situated to assist the analysis and action required to achieve an equitable process and improve quality of life for residents of color, to ensure all members of our New Orleans community can be thriving. In starting this work with individual projects and departments, we have designed a definition and guiding statement for equitable practices, which we believe departments will find applicable to their work:

An equitable government acts with purpose to achieve just and fair inclusion, leveraging power and resources to dismantle institutional racism and all forms of discrimination wherever they exist. Equity is achieved when identity, status, and ability no longer predict a person's quality of life in our City.

We aim for a process where community perspectives are included and evidence-based decisions can be measured for their impact. By understanding historical disinvestments or harms and focusing strategies to the needs of our most vulnerable residents, our environmental and social circumstances as a City will be improved.

Equity is both an outcome and a process. Including equity throughout our City practices, policies, and processes requires:

- Committing to operating with equity throughout decision-making,
- Advocating for improvements that advance outcomes for vulnerable community-members,
- Empowering and prioritizing public engagement, and;
- Investigating and employing quality data to inform strategies and decisions.

We hope this guide can be a tool and an evolving resource for every department as they embark on analysis and design of their systems with an equity lens. We see this as a living document - one that will be adjusted as we experience the successes and difficulties of utilization.

We know that taking these steps won't be easy, but it is absolutely necessary, and know that our office is here to support your progress at every turn.

Sincerely,

Eliza Kauffman
Director

Taylor Jackson
Deputy Director

AN EQUITY TIMELINE:

Over the course of our 300-year history, there have been events and moments that have greatly affected the outcomes of our people's lives in present day. In many moments throughout our city's history, there have been decisions made to the detriment and disadvantage of communities of color. As we embark on the work to create equitable processes and outcomes, it is important to have an understanding of where we have been to know where we are going.

NOTES: *Original inhabitants of New Orleans: the Chitimacha, with the Atakapa, Caddo, Choctaw, Houma, Natchez, and Tunica inhabiting other areas throughout what is now Louisiana.*

The Chitimacha is the only group to still live in a portion of what was their homeland. They subsisted on maize, potatoes, and wild game and were also divided into clans.

1706 - 1718: Conflict (war) between the Chitimacha subdivision (the Washa) and Bienville during which many Chitimacha were forced into slavery. A treaty ended this conflict.

1718 FOUNDING OF NEW ORLEANS

1724 Code Noir of Louisiana

1776 DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE
Noting: "We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness."

1803 LOUISIANA PURCHASE

1811 German Coast Slave Revolt

1830-1860s New Orleans becomes the 2nd largest immigration port in the U.S.
- 1837 - 1860 (peaked 1851): A peak of 52,011 immigrants arrived in New Orleans. Marking New Orleans as a primary immigration port only second to New York during the timeframe of 1837-1860 (https://richcampanella.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/02/article_Campanella_New-Orleans-Timeline-of-Economic-History_NOBA.pdf)
- 1853: Yellow Fever
  - 9000 people died, there was a myth that Black people could not contract the fever which led to lots of exposure and death. Our Health Department, the only Parish-level health department in the state, was formed to combat Yellow Fever.
- 1863: Emancipation Proclamation
- 1865: End of Civil War and Juneteenth

1863-1877 RECONSTRUCTION ERA & BLACK CODES
- 1864; Lincoln begins Reconstruction in Union-occupied former Confederate state of Louisiana
- 1865:
  - January: Ratification of the 13th Amendment to abolish slavery
  - May: Presidential Reconstruction calls for general amnesty and restoration of property – except for slaves -- to all Southerners who swear loyalty to the Union
  - Late 1865: MS and SC enacted first black codes
    - MS: required Black people to have written evidence of employment for the coming year
    - SC: prohibited Black people from holding any occupation other than farmer or servant unless they paid annual tax of $10 to $100
- 1866: Civil Rights Bill grants citizenship and same rights enjoyed by white citizens to all male persons in the US without distinction of race or color or previous condition of slavery or involuntary
- 1867: Reconstruction Act of 1867 ratified the 14th Amendment which granted equal protection of the Constitution to former enslaved people and enact universal male suffrage before they could rejoin the Union.
- 1870: 15th Amendment guaranteed that a citizen's right to vote would not be denied "on account of race, color, or previous condition of servitude"

1896 Plessy v. Ferguson

1901 Robert Charles Massacre*

~1915 Great Migration

1918 Spanish Flu

1954 BROWN V. BOARD OF EDUCATION

1960 RUBY BRIDGES/NEW ORLEANS FOUR Desegregate New Orleans Public Schools

1965 Hurricane Betdy

1968 I-10 Through Claiborne

1978 First Black Mayor Elected, Ernest Morial

1992 Desgregation of Mardi Gras Krewes

2005 HURRICANE KATRINA

2018 Tri-Centennial/First Female Mayor Elected

2020 COVID-19

CLAIBORNE AVENUE SERVED AS THE CENTER OF NEW ORLEANS' BLACK ECONOMIC AND CULTURAL LIFE FOR OVER A CENTURY UNTIL THE LATE 1960S.

Named after the state's first elected governor, the area's population began growing in the 1820s, consisting of French-speaking Black creoles, enslaved Black Americans, Haitian refugees, and white Creoles[5]. Treme, one of the oldest black neighborhoods in the country, became known for its neutral ground along the avenue lined with hundreds of oak trees; home to some of the richest Creole architecture in New Orleans, comprised of Creole cottages built in the 1830s, townhouses erected in the 1840s, and shotguns dating back to the 1890s[6]. By the middle of the 20th century, Claiborne Avenue was a thriving commercial district central to New Orleans' black communities, serving as home to restaurants, grocers, music venues, residences, and shops[7].

When the Federal-Aid Highway Act of 1956 authorized billions of dollars for interstates across the country, New Orleans officials advanced a project proposed by Robert Moses to construct the I-10 Claiborne Expressway, a massive, elevated highway bisecting down and devastating the existing structure, character, and vitality of the surrounding neighborhoods[5]. Although Moses' proposal to erect the Vieux Carre Riverfront Expressway through the French Quarter was halted by dedicated preservationists, Claiborne Avenue residents did not have the resources, political power, or historic district protection to prevent the I-10 proposal, as oak trees were cut down and 500 homes cleared to prepare for the highway that opened in 1968[7]. Neighborhoods with the highest poverty rates now tend to be concentrated in the central part of the city and along the Claiborne corridor, which has grown to become characterized by blight and crime, further exacerbated by Hurricane Katrina.

An I-10 overpass around former Claiborne Avenue, Photo By Owen F. Murphy, Jr., The Historic New Orleans Collection

Before Katrina, New Orleanians already faced significant housing barriers, including a severe lack of affordable housing, low home ownership rates, and acute racial and economic segregation. This contributed to the disproportionate impact of the storm on low-income and minority communities, as hundreds of thousands of New Orleanians were displaced to other neighboring states and many households, particularly African Americans, never returned.

IN A NATIONAL POLL CONDUCTED A WEEK AFTER KATRINA MADE LANDFALL, TWO-THIRDS OF AFRICAN AMERICANS SAID THAT "THE GOVERNMENT'S RESPONSE TO THE SITUATION WOULD HAVE BEEN FASTER IF MOST OF THE VICTIMS HAD BEEN WHITE[8]."

Although Congress allocated over $11 billion in funding to The Road Home program intended to assist Louisiana homeowners affected by Katrina, rebuilding grants were calculated based on the lower of two figures: the pre-storm market value of the home, or the cost to repair the storm damage to the home. With homes in black neighborhoods generally appraised at lower values than those in white neighborhoods, black homeowners faced higher average shortfalls compared to white homeowners.

Similarly, the COVID-19 pandemic uncovered substantial challenges faced by impoverished New Orleans communities in adhering to mitigation measures. With low-income individuals more likely to be living in denser, multi-generational households, quarantining sick or exposed individuals became increasingly difficult. Additionally, low-income individuals are more likely to work in front-line service positions, rendering "stay-at-home" orders contradictory to one's livelihood. More than one-third of New Orleanians, mostly Black New Orleanians, do not have internet access at home, precisely when the pandemic requires online access for work, school, and family connections. During New Orleans' first year with COVID, Black New Orleanians outside of long-term care (LTC) died over three times the rate of White New Orleanians. With higher rates of infection, hospitalization, and deaths from COVID yet lower vaccination rates, the vaccine presents an opportunity to address covid-related health disparities. Distribution plans should overcome obstacles for those who have suffered the most: 80% of New Orleanians who rely on public transportation for work are Black and thus less likely to have dependable transportation to get to an appointment; over 10% of Black households do not have a computer and may struggle to schedule appointments online; and half of all Black families earn less than $25,000 in jobs with unpredictable work schedules.

NEW ORLEANS IS A DIVERSE CITY PRIMARILY COMPOSED OF COMMUNITIES OF COLOR.

New Orleans is a diverse city primarily composed of communities of color, as African Americans, Hispanics, and Asians represent 60%, 6%, and 3% of New Orleanians, respectively[1]. However, New Orleans led the nation in poverty among the fifty largest metro areas in 2017[2], with over half of New Orleans' African Americans and nearly half of Latinos living below 200% of the federal poverty level, compared to over 25% of the White population[2].
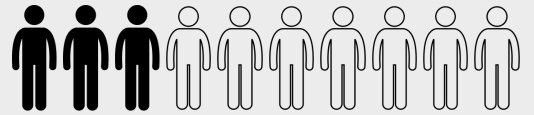
ETHNIC DIVERSITY OF NEW ORLEANS

Other
31%

Asians
3%

Hispanics
6%

African Americans
60%
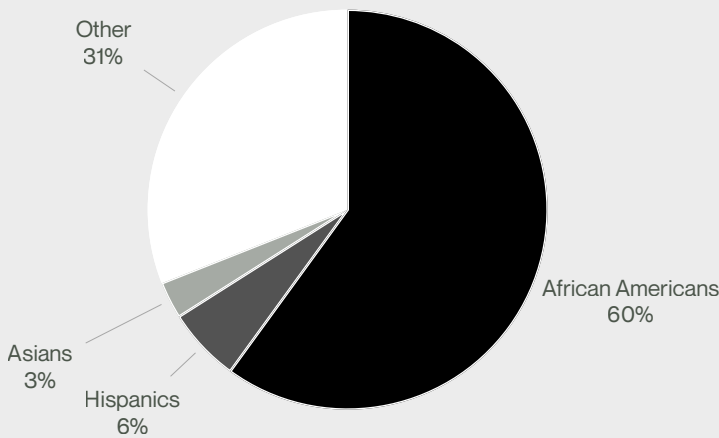
ABOUT 50% OF BLACK AND LATINO NEW ORLEANIANS LIVE BELOW 200% OF THE FEDERAL POVERTY LEVEL

COMPARED TO OVER 25% OF WHITE NEW ORLEANIANS

70% LACK CRITICAL SAVINGS

In addition, more than 70% of African American households lack the savings necessary to live above the poverty level for three months if they lose a job, face a medical crisis, or suffer another income disruption.

1/3 THE EARNINGS ON AVERAGE

African American households earn about one-third of what White households earn on average, with the racial wage gap persisting at higher education levels[3].

NOTABLY, DESPITE THE FACT THAT NEARLY HALF OF ALL BUSINESSES IN NEW ORLEANS ARE MINORITY-OWNED, THEY RECEIVE ONLY 4% OF ALL RECEIPTS.[3]

33% WHILE 33% PERCENT OF JOBS STATEWIDE REQUIRE AT LEAST AN ASSOCIATE'S DEGREE only 21% of African Americans and 25% of Latinos in New Orleans have that level of education[2].

11% Additionally, **11% OF 16 TO 24-YEAR-OLD AFRICAN AMERICANS ARE NOT IN SCHOOL** and do not have a high school diploma, over three times the percentage of Whites in the same situation[2].

HOMEOWNERSHIP REMAINS OUT OF REACH FOR MOST NEW ORLEANS HOUSEHOLDS OF COLOR.

RATIO OF HOMEOWNERSHIP BY RACE
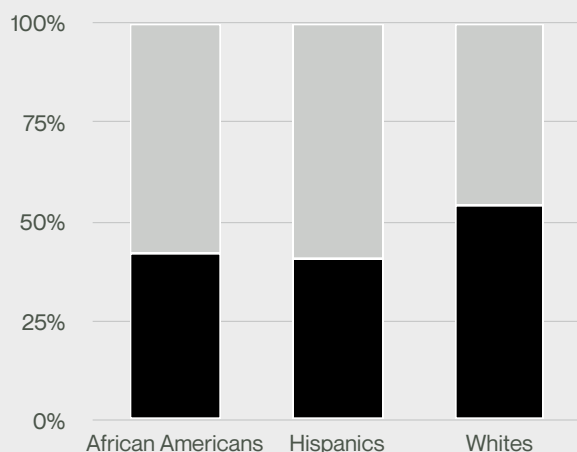
07% Approximately 7% of New Orleans students have **LIMITED ENGLISH PROFICIENCY,** as 41% of Asian adults and 34% of Hispanic adults in New Orleans speak English less than "very well".

26% African American New Orleanians and 17% of other/mixed race individuals live in households **WITHOUT ACCESS TO A CAR.**

91% whereas **91% OF WHITE HOUSEHOLDS** have at least one car[2].

12% Interestingly, the average New Orleanian who relies on buses to get around can only reach **12% OF JOBS IN THE AREA** within 30 minutes.

SECOND IN THE NATION

New Orleans is also second in the nation for highest energy cost burden on low-income households.

AFRICAN AMERICANS ARE MOST LIKELY TO RESIDE IN LIMITED SUPERMARKET ACCESS AREAS (LSAS), WHICH ALSO TEND TO COINCIDE WITH AREAS THAT HAVE HIGHER PROPORTIONS OF PEOPLE OF COLOR[2].

37%-14%

CHANGE IN UNINSURED AFRICAN AMERICANS

The percentage of African Americans ages 18 to 64 without health insurance coverage **FELL FROM 37% IN 2009 TO 14% IN 2016,** with the share of uninsured Whites **DECREASING FROM 21% TO 10% OVER THE SAME TIME PERIOD[3].**
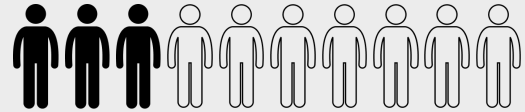
21%-10%
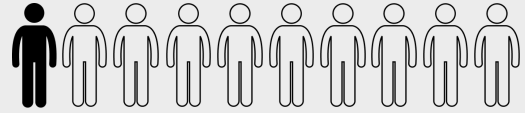
CHANGE IN UNINSURED WHITES

IN SPITE OF THIS,

SIGNIFICANT HEALTH DISPARITIES IN MORTALITY RATES BETWEEN RACES EXIST.

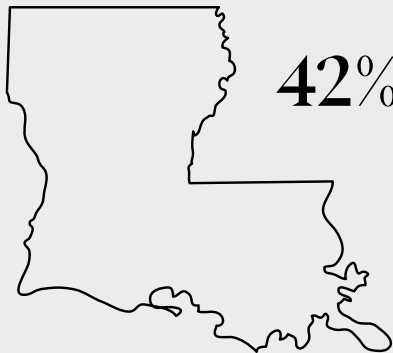**OVER 33% OF AFRICAN AMERICAN ADULTS ARE OBESE**

COMPARED TO OVER 16% OF WHITE ADULTS

with African American adults nearly **THREE TIMES MORE LIKELY** than their White counterparts to have diabetes[2].

56% African Americans are **56% MORE LIKELY** to die from cancer or heart disease

49% and **49% MORE LIKELY** to die of stroke than Whites[3].

42% **OF HOMICIDES OF TRANSGENDER INDIVIDUALS OCCURRED IN LOUISIANA IN 2019**

NEW ORLEANS IS ALSO HOME TO THE FOURTH LARGEST LGBTQ+ POPULATION AMONG THE TOP FIFTY METROPOLITAN AREAS IN THE COUNTRY, ESTIMATED AT JUST OVER 5%[4].

Within the LGBTQ+ community, people of color experience significant disparities, barriers and violence, particularly among those who are transgender and gender non-conforming.

In 2019, there was a national uptick of Black transgender women murdered, and in 2017 Louisiana was the location of 42% of the recorded homicides of transgender individuals that year.

A child's ability to read by the end of third grade is an important predictor of future success. Children who read on grade level by the end of third grade are more likely to graduate high school and have higher earnings as adults. In New Orleans public schools, only 34% of third-graders read on grade-level by the end of the third grade. This means the vast majority of our city's children miss this critical milestone.

34%

only 34% of third-graders read on grade-level by the end of the third grade.

OUTLINE
OF PROCESS:

1. SET PRIORITIES

Leadership and institution communicates emphasis on public engagement and commitment to equity.

2. INVOLVE STAKEHOLDERS & ANALYZE DATA.

Identify existing data revealing the starting point of an issue, create methods for measuring impact at starting point and into the future, and gather information and perspective from community and staff about the issue of focus.

3. IDENTIFY BENEFITS & BURDENS.

Analyze policy, practice, or issue for impacts on equitable outcomes and stakeholders. Understand how it aligns with the goals of achieving racial equity.

4. ADVANCE OPPORTUNITY OR MINIMIZE HARM.

Develop strategies to increase racial equity or minimize harm.

5. EVALUATE.

Raise racial awareness and be accountable: Track impacts on communities of color overtime through data analysis and continued engagement with stakeholders. Document unresolved issues, unexpected outcomes, and successes.

6. REPORT BACK & REPORT OUT.

Share information and analysis transparently with community, equity leads, and City leadership.

WHY WE ARE HERE

Thinking about our work as City government from an equity lens is hard. It is supposed to be a distinct shift in how we make decisions, what we consider our priorities, and how we get from point A to point B. Core to an equitable process is understanding the hundreds of years it took to get to where we are, which means each moment we take on this effort we come up against hundreds of years of decisions made without equity as a priority; sometimes, coming up against decisions made to specifically disadvantage people based on their race, gender, or other aspects of their identity.

Using this guide and being open to trying a new way of providing services to our community is an important first step in a process that will require trial and error and some difficult conversations. This guide is meant to be a living document for years to come and to offer concrete support for taking on equity planning in your department.

If there is only one area of this work that we can leave you with or emphasize as an underpinning for every principle and activity that follows, it is the importance of genuine, empathetic, community engagement. As local government, the City has a responsibility and obligation to proactively address disparities and work toward racial equity.

We have a responsibility to make every attempt to hear our people. Hear their priorities. Hear their needs. This responsibility is a moral imperative and the principled case that race should not be a determinant of one's quality of life. Ultimately, this mission is the foundation of our work as a City and what we are each responsible for protecting: each person's ability to thrive in a life that is not predetermined by any factor of their identity.
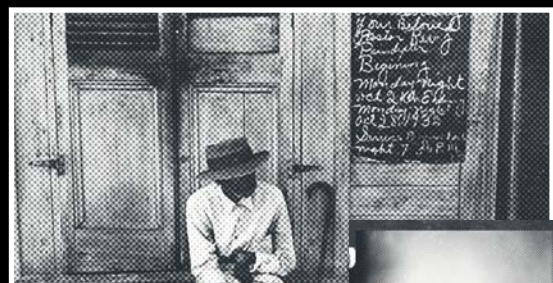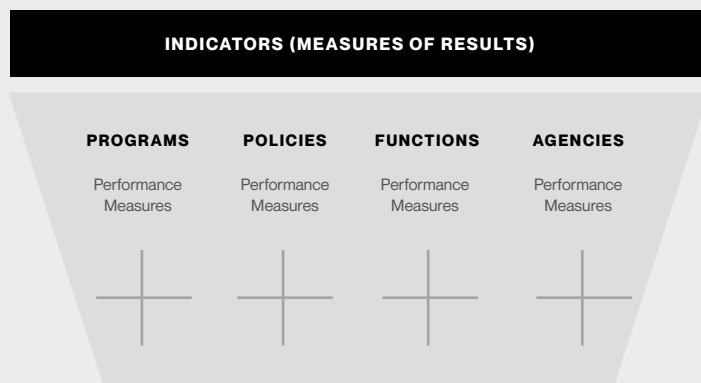
EXERCISES

RESULTS-BASED ACCOUNTABILITY

All too often when considering a project, initiative, or plan, we start designing based on the limitations already in existence. We confine ourselves to the narrow scope of what is in progress, without stepping back to think about what we hope the ultimate result is or how we might transform what exists to better serve us all. The following is a tool that starts with the desired results and works backwards towards the means, to ensure that your plans work toward community results with stakeholder-driven implementation at the core.

RESULTS (A CONDITION OF WELL-BEING FOR PEOPLE)

INDICATORS (MEASURES OF RESULTS)

PROGRAMS	POLICIES	FUNCTIONS	AGENCIES
Performance Measures	Performance Measures	Performance Measures	Performance Measures

I. WHAT CONDITION OF WELL-BEING DO WE WANT FOR OUR COMMUNITY (RESULTS)?

First, you need to be clear about what desired racial equity conditions you and your group want to see in your whole community. This requires the recognition that the whole community cannot experience well-being when communities of color experience it at disproportionately lower rates. Results focus on a city, county, or state and are articulated as positive conditions of well-being—such as people in New Orleans having access to healthy living conditions, including clean air to breathe and safe water to drink. This requires you to think about the larger context—toward the transformation of systems to get equitable results for communities of color. Because changing results is a bigger responsibility than any one agency can shoulder, you need institutional, agency, and community partners to accomplish your goals. For example, Portland, Oregon's statement "Develop planning and sustainability solutions that eliminate racial disparities thereby creating prosperous, resilient, healthy, and affordable communities for all Portlanders" includes four results toward which the Bureau of Planning and Sustainability's planning and sustainability solutions aspire: prosperity, resilience, health, and affordability. In order to get to those results, the Bureau will have to partner with other groups. The first step, then, is for your group to determine results.

Fill in the following statement: "We want families/communities that are…"

These statements should be framed in the positive or affirmative state (i.e. "healthy" versus "not sick"). They should also be about the condition itself, not a choice or possibility of a condition, (i.e. "educated" versus "the opportunity or to be educated")—allowing the choice to be built in to the condition. Saying "the opportunity" reinforces notions that community members experience disparate outcomes because of choices they make rather than as a result of institutional and/or structural racism.

II. WHAT WOULD THESE CONDITIONS LOOK LIKE IF WE ACHIEVED THEM?

- The next step is to answer the following question: What would this result/condition of well-being look like if you experienced it in the community? What would it physically look like? What would it feel like?
- This question should be answered in a culturally relevant, contextualized manner that is connected to the vision you have for racial equity.
- The question is not about any community, but about this community. You should ask yourself, whose vision does this picture reflect? Does it reinforce a deficit orientation about behaviors or does it authentically reflect what a result means to that city/county/state/community?

III. WHAT MEASURES CAN WE USE TO QUANTIFY THESE CONDITIONS (INDICATORS)?

The next step is to identify community indicators of the population-level result(s). Indicators may not be quick to move because they should be community-level measures that reflect generations of policy and systems failures that have produced racial inequity. Nevertheless, they are powerful measures that focus and hold your efforts accountable to population-level systems change over time.

Keep ambitions practical and identify a small number of indicators on which to concentrate; it is easy to get distracted or avoid work when taking on too much at once. You can use some of the following guiding questions to help identify the most relevant indicators:

- What does our organization define as the most important racially equitable indicators? (e.g. literacy level, cultural appropriateness, language availability when assessing communications)
- What are some known racial inequities in our organization's field?

IV. HOW ARE WE DOING ON THE INDICATORS QUANTITATIVELY (DATA TREND) AND QUALITATIVELY (ROOT CAUSE)?

Look at the data trend for each indicator, disaggregated by race/ethnicity and whatever relevant demographic breakdowns matter to your work, while asking "what would happen if we did nothing different?" Longitudinal indicator trends can help you see the racially disproportionate results for communities of color over time, and therefore past data is critical at this point in the process.

Uncover the root causes behind the data trend, asking yourselves "why does the trend look like this?" and for each answer, you should ask "why" three to five more times to move past superficial understandings of racial inequity and get to the underlying causes. During this part of the process, you need to maintain discipline to dig into the root causes represented by indicator data trends. The review of data trends and analysis of root causes of racial disparity are critical to setting the stage for the rest of your work with your group.

V. WHO ARE THE PARTNERS WITH A ROLE TO PLAY?

After you've completed your root-cause analysis, your group should consider which partners you should work with in order to reach your goals. The group should consider:

- other government agencies;
- local government leadership;
- nonprofits;
- philanthropy;
- community-based advocacy and community organizing groups;
- those directly involved or impacted by the current condition and therefore any changes;
- the private sector; and any other partners that would be required.

For each of the identified partners, you should also determine their role ("Why are they important? What are they needed for?"), and when it would be effective to bring that partner into the effort so as to phase the work strategically. Identify partners from other institutions whose participation will ensure that you have impact in your priority communities. Representatives from community-based organizations and grassroots community groups bring a more holistic understanding of inequities, as well as innovative solutions.

Challenge yourself to identify "unlikely suspects" or partners that have not been brought to the table in the past—these might well be the exact partners you need in order to produce the results you seek. In addition, consider current partners and how they might expand or change what they are doing, allowing all options to be on the table. To reach impact, it is critical to set a culture of transparency about past performance by current partners.

VI. WHAT WORKS TO CHANGE THE DATA TREND TOWARDS RACIAL EQUITY?

When determining what might work to transform results in your community, begin by having brainstorming sessions.
No one program or policy will change an entire result, but any can be a good starting point.

Results-Based Accountability starts with these categories of ideas:
- Low-cost, no-cost ideas: free or nearly free ideas that members of the group identify. Because these solutions are not resource dependent, they may help the group get started more quickly than other activities that require money.
- Community knowledge: ideas and solutions that are culled from the wisdom and experience of residents and community members who have already informally tried out actions and have found them to be effective.
- Promising practices: solutions that are not considered "evidence-based" because they haven't been rigorously studied, but that people in or outside of the community have tried that show promise.
- Evidence-based practices: actions that research has shown to be effective.
- Out-of-the-box/"Imagine if" ideas: ideas that may seem unorthodox or nontraditional but that just might work. With a diverse partnership comes a diversity of ideas, and RBA believes that the more initial ideas the better. Creative, out-of-the-box ideas that relate to the root cause analysis can be particularly impactful.

Ask the group to think about the city/county/state's current policies and service systems, and how they maintain or reinforce structural racism. During this part of the process, the group considers all actions—from policy changes or implementation to new, client-level programs with the end of decreasing racial disparities. Remember that the root causes they have already identified will inform their brainstorming.

VII. WHAT DO WE PROPOSE TO DO?

Use the following RBA criteria to determine which actions to begin with:
- Values: Is it strengths-based, people-centered, and culturally relevant/ anti-racist? Does it advance a racial equity agenda?
- Leverage: How likely is it to change the trendline? What additional resources for change does it activate?
- Reach: Is it feasible? Will it actually benefit communities of color experiencing racial inequities?
- Specificity: Does it have a timeline with deliverables that answer the questions who, what, when, where, and how
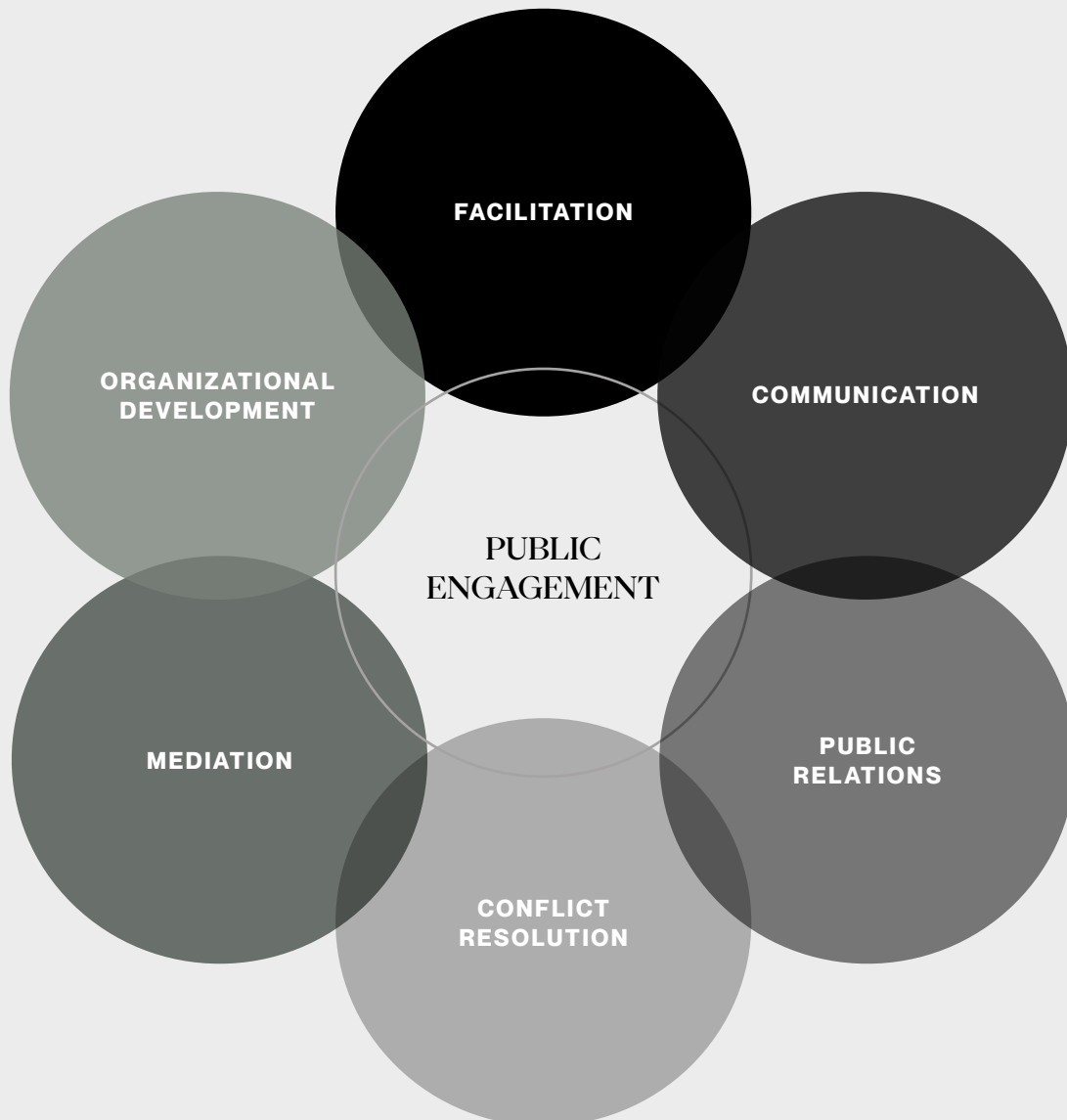
PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

Public engagement refers to a broad range of methods that aim to inform members of the public and provide opportunities to shape public decisions. Involving the public in problem solving or decision-making allows us to make sustainable and enduring decisions. Public engagement includes all aspects of identifying problems and opportunities, developing alternatives and making decisions.

The basis of engagement requires the same skills that are foundational to success for many other aspects projects: organizational development, communication, and conflict resolution. We have the tools already. It is time to apply our focus and resources towards involving our community in the decisions that directly relate to everyday life.

Two effective ways to identify the public are:

-   Consider the extent to which the individual, group or other entity perceives it will be affected by the problem/opportunity to be addressed.
-   List the people and groups that care about the decision and identify their interests and concerns.

This graphic serves as a reminder of the elements that make up public engagement.

-   Are there components your team is already prepared to address? I.e. organizational development – do you have strategic plans or expected project details that can be shared?
-   Are there some areas your team needs support in? I.e. Can you identify potential areas of conflict and methods to find resolution?
-   Are there resources you need to ensure you are well-prepared to engage with community members?

INCLUSIVE ENGAGEMENT

(adapted from The City of Seattle Inclusive Outreach and Public Engagement Guide)

THREE GUIDING PRINCIPLES:

- Build relationships: "Creating trusting relationships, increasing accessibility to facilities and services, and providing diverse opportunities to become involved, are key actions that reflect on organizational attitudes and values about developing equitable and sustainable engagement."

- Build knowledge: "Strengthening connections with communities through knowledge gathering allows those constituents to play a key role in determining relevance and appropriateness of organizational programming. In essence, exchanging information, rather than collecting it, provides an incentive for engaging in conversations and collaborations, as well as a greater sense of ownership in the outcome."

- Build change: "Organizations (and individuals that represent those organizations) must be open to organizational changes that are responsive to community insight and allow for shared power between communities and the organizations that serve them. The process and results of increased community engagement must go beyond activities to involve more community members, but rather become a prominent organizational value that drives everyday decision-making processes."

SIX ESSENTIAL STRATEGIES:

I. BUILD PERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS WITH TARGET POPULATION

- Who are key individuals or constituents you already have or should be building a relationship with?

- What venues can you attend or explore to find out who are natural community leaders?

II. CREATE A WELCOMING ATMOSPHERE

- How does your process reflect, honor, and welcome the community?

- How do the venues you choose invite participation and engagement?

III. INCREASE ACCESSIBILITY

- What issues/barriers (language, location, time, transportation, childcare, food, incentives, appeal, power dynamics, etc.) should be considered throughout the whole process?

- How can you increase the level of input a community has in a process?

IV. DEVELOP ALTERNATIVE METHODS FOR ENGAGEMENT

- What non-traditional methods of outreach can you implement to get people involved?

- What are the different ways people can contribute input and feedback?

V. MAINTAIN A PRESENCE WITHIN THE COMMUNITY

- What community-driven events can you participate in that people will already be gathering for?

VI. PARTNER WITH DIVERSE ORGANIZATIONS AND AGENCIES

- What organizations currently have relationships with your target populations that you can connect with?

- What agencies or organizations have successfully implemented similar programs or initiatives that you can solicit advice from?

STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

(https://www.fcgov.com/excellence/files/publicengagementguide.pdf:
Page 8, 9 & 10 definition of stakeholder and how to engage)

Stakeholders: anyone who has a stake, or interest, in an outcome, including people who will benefit from the project, people who could be negatively impacted, and those who are simply interested in.

- External stakeholders: governmental agencies, non-profit community groups, special interest groups, businesses, and individual residents

- Internal stakeholders: other City departments or committees that could be impacted or included
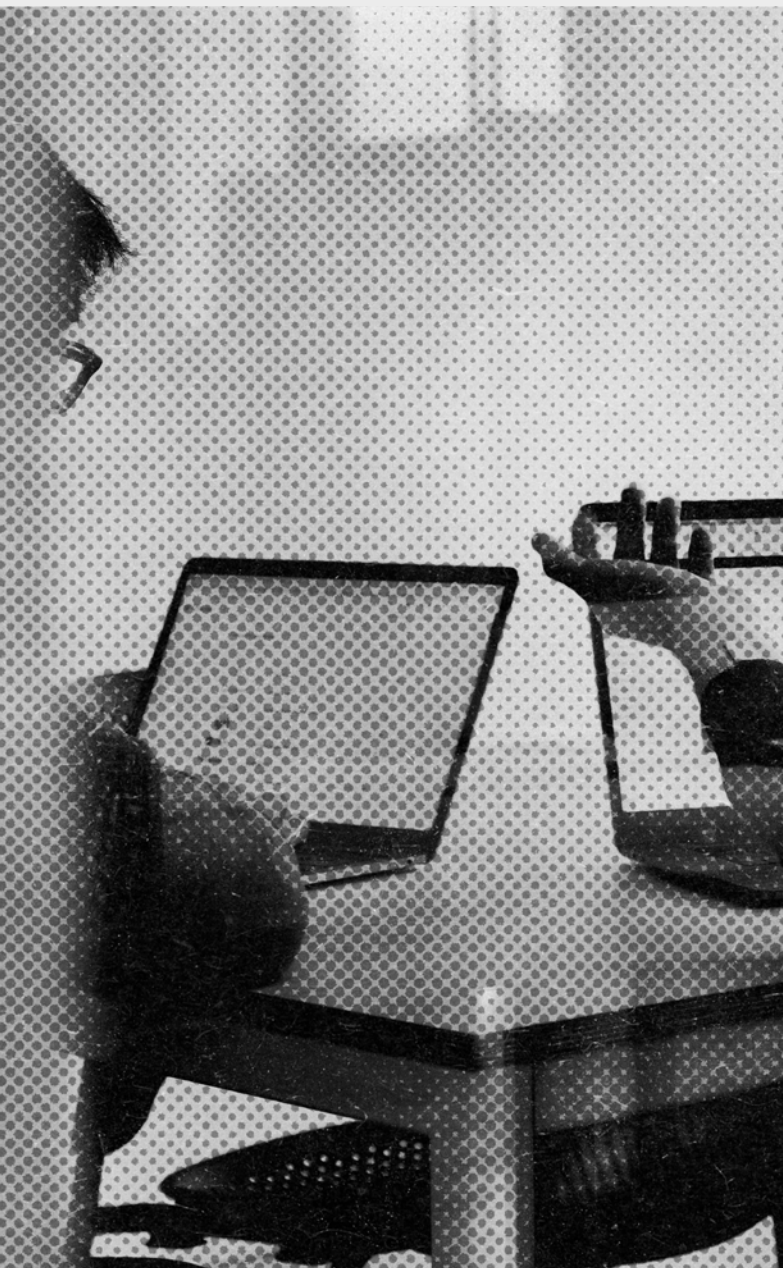
HOW TO CREATE A LIST OF STAKEHOLDERS? ASK THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS:

WHO WILL BE IMPACTED POSITIVELY OR NEGATIVELY?
Consider geography – who lives, works, or plays nearby?

WHO NEEDS TO KNOW ABOUT THIS?
- Is there a legal requirement?
- Is there a group with an imperative interest (i.e., Claiborne Avenue residents being included in the Claiborne Overpass development)

WHO CAN OR WILL CONTRIBUTE TO THIS CONVERSATION?
- Who are the experts?
- Where are the outside sources that discuss this same topic?

WHO OR WHAT IS MISSING?
Each stakeholder list could include:
- Experts
- Clubs
- Personal interest groups

WHO COULD STOP THIS PROJECT?
- Is there anyone who will dislike this idea or be impacted to an extreme extent?

WHO COULD MAKE IT BETTER?
- How could this be more entertaining to the public?
- Who would have a unique perspective?

WHAT QUESTIONS WOULD I ASK AS A RESIDENT?
- If you were on the outside of this issue, what would you want to know?

WHOSE LIFE OR SCHEDULE STANDS TO BE ALTERED BY AN ASPECT OF THIS PROJECT?

BUDGET ANALYSIS

(Adapted from The Guide to Budget Equity Assessment Tool from the City of Portland and The Racial Equity Budget Tool from Milwaukee County)

A budget analysis is a set of questions to guide City departments in providing a holistic assessment of how budget allocations benefit and/or burden residents, especially communities of color. This analysis is imperative to implement changes, both in the short- and long-term, to help foster racial equity throughout City government.

GOALS:

- Use an asset management approach to achieve more equitable service levels across communities and geographies.
- Track and report on service levels and investments by community and geography, including expanding the budget mapping process
- Assess the equity and social impacts of budget requests to ensure programs, projects and other investments to help reduce disparities and promote service level equity, improve participation and support leadership development.
- Identify whether budget requests advance equity, represent a strategic change to improve efficiency and service levels and/or are needed to provide for basic public welfare, health and/or meet all applicable national and state regulatory standards.

QUESTIONS:

1. How does the Budget advance the achievement of the City's racial equity goals?

   - In what ways does the Budget benefit residents of color?

   - In what ways does the Budget negatively impact residents of color?

2. What will the department do to mitigate unintended consequences resulting from your proposed budget changes?

3. Describe how has the department engaged with communities in the budget request to identify the priorities, particularly communities of color. How are these priorities reflected in this Proposed Budget?

4. What are the insufficiencies in the base budget that inhibit the department's achievement or goals of racial equity?

5. If the department has dedicated equity staff, such as an Equity lead, how were they involved in developing and monitoring the departments Requested Budget?

6. If the department has capital assets, how does the Requested Budget take into consideration intergenerational equity (ensuring that those who are currently benefiting from the service are paying for its upkeep versus placing the financial burden on future generations)?

7. How does the department use quantitative and qualitative data disaggregated by demographics, to track program access and service outcomes for different populations?

8. How can the department's Requested Budget support employee equity in hiring, retention, and inclusion?

9. If applicable, how does the department's budget create contracting opportunities for disadvantaged, minority, women, and emerging small businesses?

IDENTIFYING IMPACTS WORKSHEET

Please use the following chart as a template to name the potential burdens and benefits.

Populations Impacted	Potential Positive Impacts	Potential Negative Impacts

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES:

DATA:

The Data Center, a fully independent and neutral nonprofit, is the most trusted resource for data about Southeast Louisiana

- The Data Center (datacenterresearch.org)

Kellogg Foundation Equity Profile of New Orleans:

- https://nationalequityatlas.org/sites/default/files/EP-New-Orleans-june21017-updated.pdf

The Alice Report: A Financial Hardship Study of Louisiana

- The ALICE Report | United Way of Southeast Louisiana (unitedwaysela.org)

U.S. Census Bureau

- U.S. Census Bureau QuickFacts: New Orleans city, Louisiana

GUIDANCE

Hiring/promotions

- Advancing Racial Justice in the Professional Workplace c/o AFL-CIO

OTHER CITIES

City of Boston

- Diversity | Boston.gov
- Equity and Inclusion Cabinet | Boston.gov
- Resilience and Racial Equity | Boston.gov

City of Seattle

- Seattle Office for Civil Rights - CivilRights | seattle.gov
- Seattle's Participatory Budgeting Process - CivilRights | seattle.gov

City of Austin

- Equity | AustinTexas.gov
- Equity Action Team Dashboard: Equity Action Team Dashboard - Smartsheet.com
- GTW.F.3 - Percentage of City departments implementing the equity assessment tool | Open Data | City of Austin Texas

NATIONAL AND LOCAL ORGANIZATIONS:

National League of Cities (NLC)

- National League of Cities - Cities Strong Together (nlc.org)
- The National League of Cities is an organization comprised of city, town and village leaders that are focused on improving the quality of life for their current and future constituents.

Government Alliance on Racial Equity (GARE)

- Government Alliance on Race and Equity (racialequityalliance.org)
- GARE is a national network of government working to achieve racial equity and advance opportunities for all.

PolicyLink

- PolicyLink - PolicyLink is a national research and action institute advancing racial and economic equity by Lifting Up What Works.
- National Equity Atlas - The National Equity Atlas is America's most detailed report card on racial and economic equity. We equip movement leaders and policymakers with actionable data and strategies to advance racial equity and shared prosperity.

New Orleans Workers' Center for Racial Justice (NOWCRJ)

- https://www.nowcrj.org
- NOWCRJ is "dedicated to building power at the intersection of race and the economy."

Urban League of Louisiana

- Urban League of Louisiana | Empowering Communities. Changing Lives. (urbanleaguela.org)
- Their work is focused on assisting underserved communities in securing economic self-reliance, parity, power, and civil rights, with programs to ensure quality education and access to information, employment, entrepreneurial and economic inclusion opportunities, and shared dignity under the law.

VAYLA

- http://www.vayla-no.org
- VAYLA is an intersectional AAPI (Asian American Pacific Islander) nonprofit organization focused on advocacy through providing climate and reproductive justice education, community organizing education, and comprehensive civic engagement.

Made In New Orleans Foundation

- MiNO Foundation
- Made in New Orleans Foundation works to address, ameliorate, and eliminate disparities facing hospitality professionals of color.

Familias Unidas en Acción

- Families United in Action – Resisting and Transforming (familiasunidasla.org)
- An organization dedicated to educating and empowering parents and community with a critical, analytical and supportive sense in the search for equality, equity, social and educational justice.

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