

Citizens' Advisory Council on Equity

A Status Report to the Community



WE ARE IN THE THROES OF A REAL OPPORTUNITY TO CREATE LASTING CHANGE

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December 31, 2020

Racism

A system in which public policies, institutional practices, cultural representations, and other norms work in various, often reinforcing ways to perpetuate racial group inequity. It identifies dimensions of our history and culture that have allowed privileges associated with “whiteness” and disadvantages associated with “color” to endure and adapt over time. Structural racism is not something that a few people or institutions choose to practice. Instead it has been a feature of the social, economic and political systems in which we all exist¹.

Introduction

Structural racism and its various manifestations in our lives are both destructive and all too real. As an important step in confronting its persistent and debilitating nature, community groups, charitable organizations, business associations, hospitals, city and county governments, and hundreds of others have declared racism a public health crisis². Cuyahoga County Executive Armond Budish and Cuyahoga County Council made this important [declaration](#) in July 2020³. The past twelve months have proven to be a flashpoint on several fronts, but the face-to-face confrontations we have with issues of race, and more appropriately racism, elevated our collective consciousness to such a degree many believe we are in the throes of a real opportunity to create lasting change. Declarations by themselves, of course, will not solve the problem. Only through a concerned and committed citizenry will these issues be confronted, and actions be generated which move beyond symbolism.

The operating charter of Cuyahoga County affirms “the County shall have as a primary responsibility the promotion of economic well-being and prosperity of the County and all its residents⁴.” The first action to address the need for substantive change was the creation of the Cuyahoga County Citizens’ Advisory Council on Equity (CACE). The Council was legislatively established in 2012 via Ordinance No. O2012-0014 to support the equity work of the County. Meaningfully, the Council has the role of advising both the County Executive and the Cuyahoga County Council on policies, practices, and procedures to defeat racism and to establish equity, inclusion, and access both internally and externally within the County.

County Council confirmed seventeen (17) individuals nominated to serve as members of the inaugural Cuyahoga County Citizens’ Advisory Council on Equity. These terms began on July 15, 2020. These individuals bring diverse professional and life experiences to this work and serve only in a civic capacity. The names and professional backgrounds for every individual are listed on the County [website](#)⁵. The County Executive understands the urgency and importance of this work. As such, the work of the CACE is facilitated by the Cuyahoga County Clerk of Courts and other County senior staff.

The duties of the CACE include the following:

- 1) To act as a resource for information and advice for the County’s Equity Commission,

- 2) To encourage community outreach and public participation in the development of equity goals, strategies, and programs,
- 3) To provide recommendations and input to the County Executive and County Council regarding the development of equity goals, strategies, and programs,
- 4) To meet publicly on a quarterly basis to provide a forum for the public to offer ideas and recommendations regarding equity, and to hear and discuss updates on the progress of actions undertaken by the Cuyahoga County Equity Commission, and
- 5) To provide a semi-annual report of recommendations for policies and programs from the Advisory Council and collected from the public regarding equity. One of the semi-annual reports from the CACE will take the form of an Annual Equity Report. The Annual Equity Report will include a review of the County's equity initiatives, resources dedicated to such initiatives, an analysis of results, data collection criteria and benchmarking/results relative to the initiatives. These reports will be available to the public on the [website](#).

This document represents the first of such reports and should be viewed as a preliminary update on the progress and activity of the CACE since August 2020. The report further includes observations gleaned from community input and multiple discussions with County agencies and personnel (See Appendix 3). The Council engaged with organizations external to the County's reporting structure, and the leadership of these organizations expressed a deep commitment to assist the CACE and the County in this effort. The first Annual Equity Report produced by the Citizens' Advisory Council on Equity is anticipated to be completed mid-year 2021 and will also be available to the public. That report will include a summary of the 2020 and 2021 Common Ground conversations.

The Citizens' Advisory Council on Equity work is structured into four categories (sub-committees) to more effectively and more deeply address specific areas of disparity between Black and White people with respect to: health and healthcare, the criminal justice system, healthy food, safe and affordable housing, well-paying jobs, business ownership opportunities, quality transportation, educational opportunities, and safe places to be active. The sub-committee structure will address these disparities through the following four (4) areas:

1. Health and Healthcare
 - a. Care Continuum
 - b. Social Determinants of Health
 - c. Wellness and Lifestyle
 - d. Access and Inequities
2. Economic Opportunities
 - a. Well-paying jobs
 - b. Business Ownership

- c. Education
3. Equitable Quality of Life
 - a. Housing
 - b. Transportation
 - c. Safety and Lifestyle
 - d. Healthy Food Access
 4. Criminal Justice
 - a. Juvenile Justice
 - b. Adult Incarceration
 - c. Judicial and Prosecutorial Efforts
 - d. Bail Reform

The sections which follow provide summaries of early learnings from CACE sub-committee work and the accompanying themes which evolved from the hundreds of individual interactions through community dialogues and the dozens of discussions with county personnel. Additionally, members of the CACE have reviewed and discussed reports, writings, and documents relevant to each sub-committee topic.

The CACE determined the need to delineate the entire process in a format which not only identifies the core concerns, but which further demonstrates the intersectionality and overlap of those areas. Ultimately it is our hope that such a format will allow for identification of barriers and persistent patterns which foster and promote racial inequities. The early draft of a visual graphic listed in Appendix 2 highlights the cyclical nature of what has been an impervious problem. This will provide an opportunity for all members of our communities to unite at multiple levels and in deep and meaningful ways to eradicate persistent racism in our County.

The goal for all of us should be to possess the ability to confidently and convincingly one day say that the long-built institutional structures that engender racism have been removed and forever relegated to an unfortunate but bygone era. Today the work continues, and the supporters of equity remain committed to just outcomes.

CACE members are incredibly grateful to the many partners who have facilitated this work in 2020, as well as the citizens who believe this effort is worth championing!

Executive Summary

Approach – The Citizens’ Advisory Council on Equity is comprised of seventeen (17) members of the community who, in their daily lives, serve our area as religious leaders, nonprofit executives, union officials, business leaders and more. The current members are initially serving a one-, two- or three-year term, and are all eligible for another term of 3 years upon the conclusion of their initial term. The CACE is legislatively compelled to hold public meetings at least 4 times per year to discuss its efforts and garner feedback from the community. The CACE and County leadership took this effort even further by asking the public to provide input to the process through a series of dialogues facilitated by The Cleveland Foundation and the Common Ground process. Hundreds of individuals from the community weighed in particularly with first-hand stories around the impacts of racism on their lives or their work, and how we might as a community work to solve this seemingly intractable issue. Summary information on these community conversations will be captured on the website noted above by March 1, 2021. The CACE provided the County Executive and the Cuyahoga Council its preliminary findings and recommendations.

Findings and Recommendations – It came as no surprise that many institutions we all interact with are replete with example after example of structural racism which plays itself out in both subtle and obvious ways in our community. The better news is that there is a wide acceptance by County leadership and personnel to address the matter head-on. We discovered that almost all we spoke with (Black and White) acknowledged and could point to cases where equity and fairness were not consistently practiced or on full display for people of color. These individuals also convincingly professed they wanted to be a part of the solution.

As noted above, the CACE is subdivided into four subcommittees, each charged with addressing different areas where structural racism is present.

With respect to **Health and Healthcare**, it is firmly established that generational racism has led to poorer outcomes for Blacks in terms of their treatment by healthcare providers. As a result, their lifestyle choices and health have disproportionately suffered. Both better data collection, dealing with the social determinates of health, and committing resources are top priorities. **Economic Opportunity** for all means everyone should be provided a fair opportunity to realize their dreams. Years of neglect and unfairness however, should force a rigorous procurement focus, a public/private partnership that creates next-level opportunities for Black-owned businesses, and an alignment around the educational needs of Black children. Finally, for an **Equitable Quality of Life** the findings and recommendations provide great aspirations that can lead to great outcomes. We can improve our data collection on issues around equity to such a degree that Cuyahoga County becomes a national model for its ability to measure and deliver outcomes which produce fairness for all its citizens. Cuyahoga County can become a place where safety, mobility and stable housing are realities. In the **Criminal Justice** system, a process for diversion is underway. Training and de-escalation techniques are consistent themes across all areas of public interaction with law enforcement.

The Work Ahead – The goal is to get this initial report into the hands and thinking of as many residents who live within, do business with, work for, or receive services from Cuyahoga County as is practical. The CACE will utilize the services of the County’s communication team to circulate the contents of this report to the media, on social media, and other digital channels. Members of the CACE will present findings of this report thanks to the generosity of The City Club during a City Club Forum on January 14th, 2021.

Additional open community discussions will be conducted during the first quarter of 2021. The hope is to make the process generative, so as this work continues all voices can be heard in the discussions and represented in the findings and recommendations produced.

Taking a Systems Approach

Our work is grounded by a belief that systems lie at the core of the seemingly unrelenting and revolving forces that drive inequity. The content and the graphical depiction below represent one example of many interactions which express this view.

The structural racism approach can appear to be both simple and complex. One of the reasons that it appears complex is because we are often trying to translate it from one method of thinking and knowing the world around us into another. It is the translation that is complicated. If we shift to a systems approach, some of the apparent complexity goes away. Systems theory does not bring new information so much as it imparts a new way of knowing⁶.

Undoing structural racism entails understanding structural racism as a system involving both structural and distributional disparities. Distributional disparities describe the differences in allocation of incomes, assets, and diseases. Structural disparities describe the underlying system that produced these inequities in the first place. Being able to “see the system” is critical to being able to recognize when and how to implement solutions. Without this, claims of “we need to change the system” may be more aspirational than real.

There are many ways people can describe and see a system, from storytelling to images of a system to more formal causal maps. For the CACE, interviews were coded and mapped to describe structural racism as a system (See Appendix 2). Figure 1 illustrates an example of a causal map of one part of the underlying system focusing on inequities in the criminal justice system around bonds.

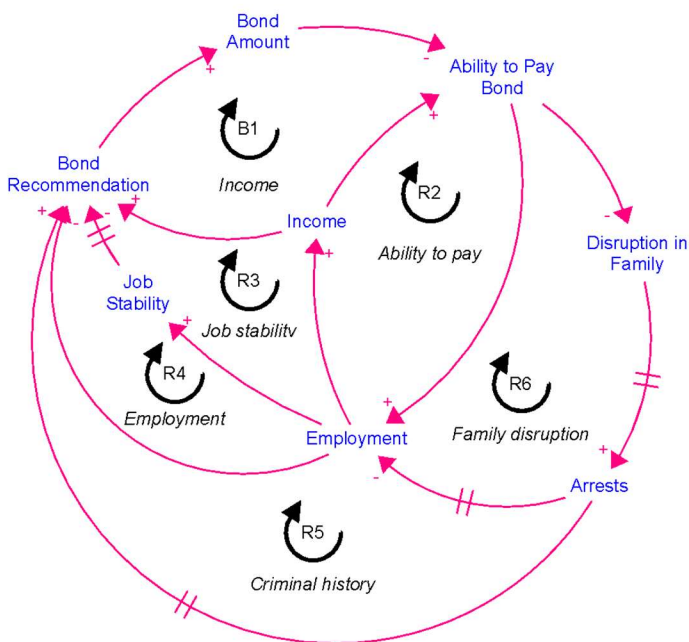


Figure 1 Example of a system map.

In Figure 1, arcs with a + sign indicate a causal relationship in the same direction. For example, increasing the bond recommendation increases the bond amount. Links with a – sign indicate a causal relationship in the opposite direction. For example, increasing the bond amount decreases the ability to pay bond. Causal feedback loops are pathways where the causes “feedback” on the effects.

For example, increasing the bond recommendation leads to a higher bond amount, which decreases the ability to pay the bond, and this decreases employment (e.g., missed shifts), which impacts income and ultimately, “feeds back” to lower income and *decrease* the bond recommendation. This represents a balancing feedback loop (B prefix) because the loop counteracts or balances the initial direction of change. Similarly, an increase in the ability to pay leads to better employment (fewer lost shifts, more reliable), which increases income, and higher income increases the ability to pay a bond forming a reinforcing loop (R prefix).

There are multiple loops shown in Figure 1 that are all interacting simultaneously. People experience these simultaneously and within a much larger and more complex system. Understanding and unpacking structural racism as a system is a critical step to finding and acting on the high leverage points for system transformation.

The CACE will continue to apply these methods to understand the system and to consider places where solutions are identified. This work is ongoing, but important to consider how individual areas of this work fit together in a larger whole.

Subcommittee Reports

Health and Healthcare

Subcommittee Roster

Chair - Heidi Gullett

LeVine Ross

Eddie Taylor

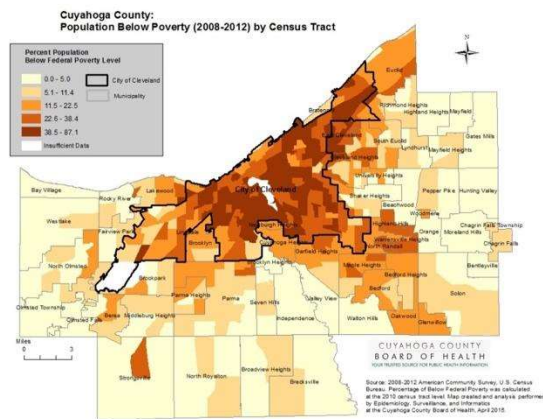
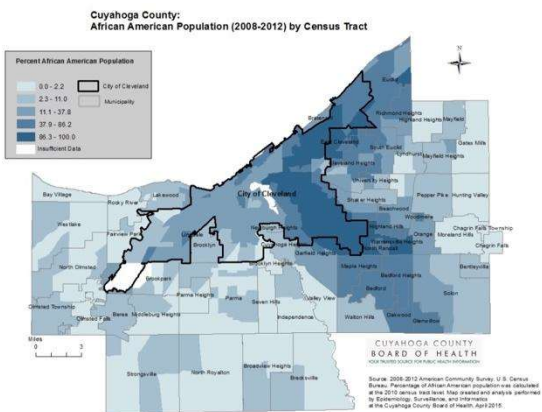
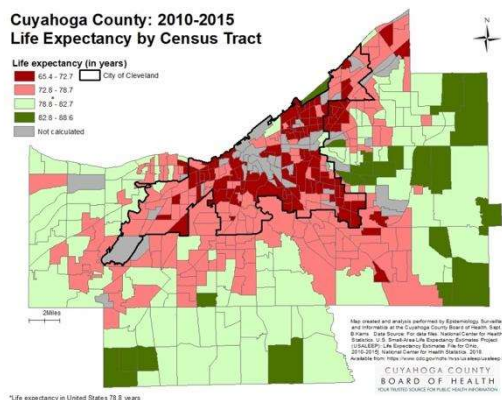
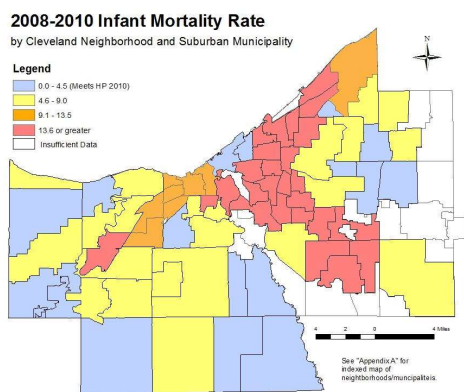
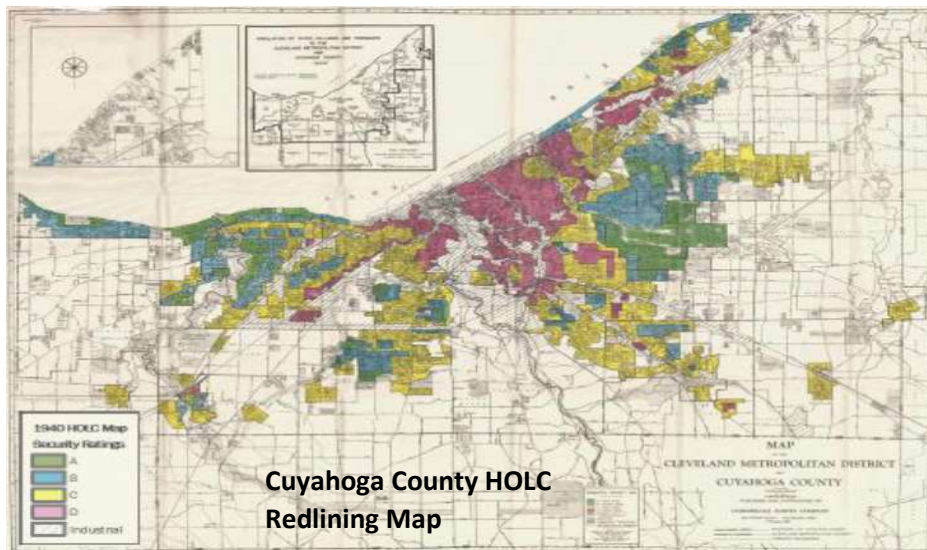
Sheila Wright

Subcommittee Charge

Health is a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being, and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity⁹. The World Health Organization's Constitution also states that "the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of health is one of the fundamental rights of every human being without distinction of race, religion, political belief, economic or social condition¹⁰." While this is an ideal which many believe, health outcomes for both individuals and populations are the result of powerful structural determinants of health. Differences in health outcomes for people of color across the United States, including in Cuyahoga County, are the direct result of racism in many forms across a continuum from structural racism to interpersonal bias.

In Cuyahoga County, each community health assessment since inception in 2013 has highlighted stark inequities in health outcomes for Black community members as compared with their White counterparts¹¹⁻¹³. These inequities are the direct result of historical and systemic oppression in the form of structural racism¹⁴.

In the 2015 History Matters report, the impact of one type of structural racism, redlining, a racially-biased systemic banking practice affecting 239 communities across the United States in the 1930s, overtly limited opportunities for people of color to obtain home loans¹⁵. The contemporary impact of these racist practices has led to segregation and stark differences in health outcomes for Black residents of Cuyahoga County as demonstrated by multiple health outcomes, including life expectancy and infant mortality¹¹⁻¹³.



In the most recent 2019 Cuyahoga County Community Health Assessment, data were collected from surveys, interviews, and public health information to understand the current impact of racism on the health of Cuyahoga County citizens. A stark difference in measures of health across the life course such as life expectancy and infant mortality persists for people of color across Cuyahoga County¹³. There are also persistent differences in health outcomes such as incidence and

prevalence of various cancers, youth lead poisoning, death by suicide and homicide, and complications and death from chronic diseases such as diabetes, asthma and high blood pressure.

In 2020, the emergence of COVID-19 has underscored the immense impact of racism on communities of color across the United States and within Cuyahoga County. The Black-White inequity index for COVID-19 in suburban Cuyahoga County has ranged from 2.7-3.8 throughout the pandemic, meaning Black residents have a nearly 3-4 times higher risk of contracting COVID-19 than their White counterparts and greater than a 3.5 times higher risk of being hospitalized with the disease. These striking differences are the direct result of systematic racism. Furthermore, deeply entrenched racism within medical care institutions and medical research serves as the context for a great deal of concern regarding the forthcoming COVID-19 vaccines among communities of color.

The Cuyahoga County resolution declaring racism a public health crisis boldly outlines unconscionable impacts of racism on residents of color in the United States and in Cuyahoga County¹⁶. The resolution clearly indicates the interconnectedness of health and healthcare with multiple other impacts of racism, including access to healthy food and safe places to be active, well-paying jobs and business ownership opportunities, quality transportation, educational opportunities, and the criminal justice system.

The resolution underscores the important long-term work necessary to realize the vision of Cuyahoga County as a place where everyone has an opportunity to thrive. It calls for collective and immediate action to catalyze fundamental change in systems, structures and policies. The resolution also commits Cuyahoga County resources to address racism in the areas outlined above. The work of the Citizens' Advisory Council on Equity (CACE) over recent months has been to collect and analyze numerous sources of data (See Appendix 3). Careful analysis of these data has generated a robust environmental scan internal and external to Cuyahoga County government that has yielded insights on the degree to which individuals and organizations recognize the impact of racism and are working to address its impact.

It is also important to note the state and local context in which this resolution exists. A national reckoning with racial equity emerged in 2020 following the deaths of multiple unarmed people of color by police. In the state of Ohio, work on building a case for health equity has been emerging over the past few years. The state health improvement plans beginning in 2017 included equity as a cross-cutting principle to guide community health improvement work at the local level^{17,18}. Furthermore, a state equity advisory group crafted the following health equity consensus definition to be used in application to state work across multiple sectors. Health equity means “everyone is able to achieve their full health potential. This requires addressing historical and contemporary injustices and removing obstacles to health such as poverty, discrimination, and their consequences, including powerlessness and lack of access to good jobs with fair pay, quality education and housing safe environments and healthcare¹⁸.”

Subcommittee Activities

The health/healthcare subcommittee has reviewed and analyzed the following data sources in order to produce our initial recommendations and strategic plans for the 2021 cycle of work.

- 2013 Cuyahoga County Community Health Status Assessment
- 2015 Cuyahoga County Community Health Improvement Plan
- 2015 Cuyahoga County History Matters report
- 2017-2019 State of Ohio Health Improvement Plan
- 2018 Cuyahoga County Community Health Assessment
- 2019 Cuyahoga County Community Health Assessment and supplemental data report available at hipcuyahoga.org
 - Data review included 2019 data from Cuyahoga County hospitals and public health departments (Cuyahoga County Board of Health and the City of Cleveland Department of Public Health), as well as summaries of quality-of-life surveys with residents conducted by mail and in-person, a series of community meetings, focus groups with community health workers, and a series of semi-structured interviews with leaders of 16 community organizations.
- 2020-2022 State of Ohio Health Improvement Plan
- Review of regular health data updates at healthyneo.org and ccbh.net
- Review of health policy briefs at healthpolicyohio.org

CACE Subcommittee Interviews

- David Merriman - Cuyahoga County Director of Health and Human Services
 - Cuyahoga County Health and Human Services has 8 divisions, with nearly 2700 staff and substantial responsibility for resources and programs that total \$2 billion in economic impact for Cuyahoga County.
- Terry Allan - Health Commissioner, Cuyahoga County Board of Health (CCBH)
 - CCBH is a quasi-independent governmental agency that receives statutory authority from the state health director and Ohio law. CCBH is responsible for ensuring a range of public health services for approximately 880,000 people in Cuyahoga County outside the city of Cleveland which has its own health department. Some services extend countywide including newborn home visiting and some infectious disease services. CCBH also has responsibility for regional public health roles in emergency preparedness, serving multiple Northeast Ohio counties.
- Scott Osiecki - CEO Alcohol, Drug Addiction and Mental Health Services (ADAMHS) Board of Cuyahoga County

- Beth Zietlow-DeJesus, Director of External Affairs, Alcohol, Drug Addiction and Mental Health Services (ADAMHS) Board of Cuyahoga County
 - ADAMHS board is a quasi-independent form of government that oversees all mental health and treatment recovery services in Cuyahoga County. The board receives funding from Cuyahoga County Health and Human Services levies, along with state and federal government and private foundation funding.
- Matt Carroll - Chief of Economic Growth and Opportunity Officer

The Health/Healthcare Subcommittee conducted meetings on 10/28/20 and 12/11/20 and participated in multiple CACE interviews outlined in other subcommittee reports and data reviews as detailed above.

Additional Stakeholder Context: [HIP-Cuyahoga](#)

Three Cuyahoga County community health assessments have occurred (2013, 2018, 2019) and two community health improvement plans have been released (2015, 2020)¹¹⁻¹⁴. A considerable amount of work has been done to collect and analyze both qualitative and quantitative data over the last 7 years to understand the root causes of differences in health outcomes in Cuyahoga County. Racism has repeatedly been identified as the root cause of differences in health outcomes for Black residents within Cuyahoga County. To address racism and other structural causes of health inequities, the Health Improvement Partnership-Cuyahoga (HIP-Cuyahoga) was formally created in 2014 by the Cuyahoga County Board of Health in collaboration with many other organizations. This cross-sector, equity-grounded collective impact community health improvement consortium now includes over 300 organizations and 1000 individuals collectively committed to a vision of racial equity in Cuyahoga County.

HIP-Cuyahoga first declared a commitment to eliminate structural racism as a social determinant of health in 2015 in the Cuyahoga County community health improvement plan¹⁴. Over the past 5 years, the work of eliminating structural racism has been led by Greg Brown of [PolicyBridge](#), who led the consortium through many stages of work, including creating a framework for action with [perspective transformation](#) as the first key approach. This includes creating a shared vocabulary and opportunities for racial equity to be a foundational shared value at the individual and organizational levels. This work then led to the 2019 Cuyahoga County community health assessment where Cuyahoga County hospital systems, the Cleveland Department of Public Health, the Cuyahoga County Board of Health, multiple community-based organizations and neighborhood representatives came together to identify collective areas of focus for the next 3 years.

Priority Areas for the 2020-2023 Cuyahoga County Community Health Improvement Plan:



Summary of Key Findings

Themes

- Among health/healthcare leaders and organizations in Cuyahoga County, racism is generally recognized as a major determinant of health and an issue that must be addressed urgently.
- Leaders and their organizations are at different points along personal, professional, and organizational journeys in understanding racism and its impact on colleagues/employees and those served by the organization.
- Most health/healthcare organizations have not made formal declarations of racism as a public health crisis or explicitly devoted resources to addressing racism.
- There is an expressed desire by many leaders to partner outside of traditionally siloed and sometimes competing organizations, departments, and programs to collectively address racism and its many manifestations.
- Many organizations do not have dedicated senior level leaders focused solely on equity, diversity, and inclusion initiatives across all elements of the organization.
- There is no consistent approach to data collection and public dissemination of data regarding equity, diversity and inclusion in the workforce, which includes data on different types of diversity within the organization, but also the experience of employees at work.
- There is no consistent approach to data collection and public dissemination of data with regard to equity, diversity and inclusion for people served by various organizations or their programs, but also the experience of interacting with the organization.
- There is limited to no coordination between agencies/organizations on their efforts to address racism as a public health crisis.

- There is limited to no data sharing between agencies/organizations to provide a comprehensive understanding of population health in Cuyahoga County (i.e., public health, hospital, ambulatory clinical, social service, educational data, even deidentified and in aggregate, remain siloed, fragmenting a comprehensive understanding of outcomes).
- Despite community members and multiple organizations participating in a Cuyahoga County community health assessment and improvement planning process, resources to work collectively to address structural racism and build trust with communities of color remain limited and dependent on short-term grant cycles.
- Solutions that address racism and foster equity exist at multiple levels and include interventions at the individual, organizational and policy levels.
- Policy is a powerful lever for action, but many issues identified at the local level will require intervention at the state and federal level to change policies that are inherently biased.

This work will require both short and long-term approaches, along with action at the individual, organizational, policy, systems, and structural change levels. Short-term approaches should focus on areas where there is political will and feasibility for change that will result in equity, while systems, structure and policy level change will occur over a longer time and may be more incremental.

Actionable Recommendations

The following actionable recommendations in the realm of health/healthcare are focused on pragmatic changes that can be identified in the short-term among County agencies, as well as the CCBH and ADAMHS Board. Future reports will more comprehensively identify incremental recommendations for longer-term changes, particularly needed on the structural, systems and policy levels. These recommendations will also likely be cross-cutting for the work of the entire CACE.

Individual Level

- Require Cuyahoga County, CCBH, and ADAMHS Board employees at all levels, including senior staff and elected officials, to participate in formal equity, diversity, and inclusion training at regular intervals.

Organizational Level

- CCBH should finalize their pending resolution declaring racism a public health crisis.
- County agencies, CCBH and ADAMHS Board should conduct regular and transparent collection of data on staff diversity and workplace experience.
- County agencies, CCBH and ADAMHS Board should regularly collect and transparently disseminate data on the diversity of people served across programs and their experiences in interacting with the agency. This is also important to understand current service provision and any best practices or bias that may exist, but it is also critical to identify gaps

in the provision of services and unmet needs. The committee understands and respects the importance of privacy; however, the intent of this recommendation is for community awareness through release of deidentified and aggregate data on the provision of services and experience with agency engagement.

Systems Level

- Cuyahoga County HHS Senior Leadership should be on the HIP-Cuyahoga community health improvement plan steering committee that meets monthly. (Of note, there is a standing position on the HIP-Cuyahoga overall steering committee for a representative from Cuyahoga County government, but this recommendation is specific to the county health assessment and improvement plan which is completed every 3 years).
- The HIP-Cuyahoga County health improvement plan steering committee data workgroup should work with Cuyahoga County HHS senior leaders to identify sources of data to inform future community health assessments and improvement plans.
- ADAMHS Board and CCBH should create a plan for collaboration around addressing racism as both agencies are working in parallel on the same issue with a focus on health.
- County agencies, ADAMHS Board and CCBH should include collaboration with external agencies, partners and local governments who have also declared racism a public health crisis, in their strategic plan to operationalize their own organizational declarations. This should be an important part of entering into working relationships with any partner organization in order to ensure efficiency and avoid duplication of efforts.

Aspirational Recommendations

The bold, cross-cutting work of addressing and ultimately eliminating racism as a determinant of health requires commitment to a long-term time horizon aimed at systems and structural changes at the organizational, local, state, and federal governmental levels, but it also requires simultaneous attention to immediate needs as a result of racism impacting individuals and families within Cuyahoga County. The work must also account for the need for individual perspective transformation. This is foundational individual work that is necessary for leaders and community members to have a shared understanding of racism, power and privilege, as well as a shared vocabulary that enables respectful dialogue to enable movement forward in comprehensively addressing racism at multiple levels – individual, organizational, community, governmental.

This work will require boundary spanning to create opportunities to work across political, philosophical, and geographical divides. Our work must transcend our differences in these areas and build on the beauty and wisdom in our diversity of lived experience, understanding, professional training and personal skillsets to create an opportunity for everyone in Cuyahoga County to reach their full potential.

Organizational and elected officials who have already led in their spheres of influence to declare racism a public health crisis and put resources into efforts to authentically address this issue, must also challenge other leaders who have not yet declared this to be an issue. It is imperative that

every healthcare system, community-based organization, institution of higher learning and local government within Cuyahoga County declare racism a public health crisis and thoughtfully consider how such a declaration is the first step toward operationalizing how their organization can be part of the solution to our shared vision of creating an equitable Cuyahoga County.

Following a declaration of racism as a public health crisis within multiple sectors, leaders within Cuyahoga County must establish a standard whereby both public and private organizations embrace equity, diversity and inclusion at the individual and organizational levels. This includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- A commitment to a funded, senior level position with the dedicated focus of ensuring a cross-cutting organizational commitment to equity, diversity, and inclusion
- A commitment to formal and regular training for every employee at all job classifications, including senior leadership, on equity, diversity, and inclusion
- A commitment to regular data collection on equity, diversity and inclusion within the organization's workforce and pertaining to those served by the organization
- A commitment to regularly collect information on the experience of employees and those served by the organization in order to continually address bias at the interpersonal and systems levels
- A commitment to transparent data sharing on population level metrics among organizations (public and private) for the purposes of addressing racism within Cuyahoga County

Future Directions

In 2021, the health/healthcare subcommittee will commence the year with the following plans with the expectation that additional interviews and data gathering will emerge as CACE work unfolds.

As stated above, there is a considerable amount of cross-cutting work involved in addressing racism as a public health crisis. The committee members will continue to work closely with all other CACE committees on overarching strategies that impact the charge of each committee and address the expectations set forth in the resolution.

Interview plans in early 2021

Cuyahoga County Hospital Leaders (in alphabetical order by organization)

Tom Mihaljevic, MD – CEO Cleveland Clinic
Brian Lane, CEO Center for Health Affairs
Akram Boutros, MD – CEO MetroHealth
Tom Strauss, CEO Sisters of Charity Health System
William Young, CEO, Southwest General
Cliff Megerian, MD – CEO University Hospitals
Other hospital leaders to be identified

Cuyahoga County Community Health Leaders with explicit focus on addressing racism

Better Health Partnership Pathways Hub

Rita Horwitz, CEO Better Health Partnership

Birthing Beautiful Communities

Christin Farmer, CEO Birthing Beautiful Communities

Cuyahoga County Medical Examiner's Officer

Tom Gilson, MD – Cuyahoga County Medical Examiner

First Year Cleveland

Bernie Kerrigan – Director

Health Improvement Partnership-Cuyahoga

Greg Brown, PolicyBridge

Martha Halko, Cuyahoga County Board of Health

Delores Collins, A Vision of Change

Other steering committee members to be identified during interviews listed

Institute for HOPE (Health, Neighborhoods, Economy, Future)

Susan Fuehrer – MetroHealth

James Misak, MD – MetroHealth

LGBTQ Center of Greater Cleveland

Phyllis Harris – Executive Director

Ohio Equity Institute

Angela Newman-White, Cuyahoga County Board of Health

United Way Accountable Health Communities

Augie Napoli, CEO United Way of Greater Cleveland

Other leaders to be identified

Cuyahoga County Health Education Leaders

Wendy Batch-Wilson, DNP – Dean Tri-C School of Nursing

Timothy Gaspar – Dean Cleveland State University School of Nursing

Stan Gerson, MD – Dean CWRU School of Medicine

Carol Musil, PhD – Dean CWRU School of Nursing

Marquita Rockamore – Director of Health Industry Solutions, Tri-C

Elisabeth Young, MD – Dean NEOMED (partnership with Cleveland State University urban health track medical school)

Additional activities in 2021 to facilitate ongoing data collection and identification of strategic directions

- Participation in ongoing HIP-Cuyahoga community health assessment and improvement planning process with monthly meetings (coordinated by CWRU and Center for Health Affairs under auspices of HIP-Cuyahoga; includes participation by all 5 hospital systems, CDPH, CCBH, multiple community-based organizations)
 - Formal data collection and improvement planning process occurs every 3 years (next community data collection to occur in 2022)
- Explore the role of Cuyahoga County federally qualified community health centers

- Identify other community programs, partnerships, or initiatives with relevance to this work and investigate role for convening, collaboration, and recommendations.
- Continued work with Dr. Peter Hovmand to further elucidate systems mapping and identification of cross-cutting leverage points and solutions given the complex determinants of health related to racism. This will include further defining policy leverage points at the state and federal levels that have direct and profound impacts on programs and people at the local level.
- Identification and discussions about the intersection of work for other governmental and Cuyahoga County agencies who have declared racism a public health crisis, such as the Cities of Cleveland and South Euclid (See Appendix 3).

Conclusion

The CACE Health/Healthcare Subcommittee members respectfully submit this summary of our work and recommendations to date. We are eager to move into the next phase of CACE work in 2021 to identify actionable change toward our shared goal of racial equity in Cuyahoga County.

Economic Opportunities

Subcommittee Roster

Chair – Stephen Caviness

Jenice Contreras

Habeebah Grimes

Marsha Mockabee

Yanela Sims

Danielle Sydnor

Subcommittee Charge

The Economic Opportunities Subcommittee is guided by the general spirit of the Cuyahoga County Council Resolution declaring racism as a public health crisis which acknowledges the deep disparities that exist between Black and White people because of structural/systemic racism. Our charge is to address three (3) core areas where structural/systemic racism disproportionately impacts Black residents of Cuyahoga County: **Educational Opportunities, Well-paying Jobs, and Business Ownership.**

Structural/systemic racism has been the root cause of the disparities we see now in workforce participation, occupations, income, wealth generation educational attainment, and overall accessibility to critical resources required to achieve sustained economic prosperity. Today, our Black residents are disproportionately represented in low wage occupations compared to their White counterparts; the median income for White residents is 2.1 times greater than Black residents; wealth disparities remain virtually unchanged since before the passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 as White households have more than 6 times the average wealth of Black Households; and Black residents in Cleveland are 1.7 times more likely to live in poverty compared to White residents¹⁶. Educational attainment disparities persist as suspension rates for Black students in the Cleveland Metropolitan School District are 1.7 times greater than their fellow White students; Black residents are up to 4 times more likely to not have quality home internet access; and more than a third (38.9%) of White residents in Cuyahoga County have a bachelor's degree or higher compared to 14.7% of Black residents¹⁶.

The Economic Opportunities Subcommittee believes that addressing these three core areas of focus collectively impacts the overall well-being of Black families and can contribute to breaking the cycle of generational poverty. Our community is faced with greater challenges now as the pandemic has shown deeper disparities and a breadth of vulnerability more acute for Black residents compared to their White counterparts and arguably given more credence to the urgency of addressing structural/systemic racism across these core areas.

Subcommittee Activities

To date, members of the Economic Opportunities Subcommittee have participated in the Common Ground community conversations which occurred in October 2020, interviews with county leadership, and discussions with special interest groups. These engagements have generated both

quantitative and qualitative data that have been valuable throughout this discovery process and was considered when developing next steps and further action items to begin addressing the disparities that exist within the Educational Opportunities, Well-paying Jobs, and Business Ownership areas of focus.

The Economic Opportunities Subcommittee prioritized interviews with County officials as the first phase of the discovery process to better understand the County structure, its systems, and programs. While we participated in several interviews with County leaders, the subcommittee felt strongly that the following department heads and the information gathered from these conversations aligned the most with our stated charge.

- Matt Carroll, Chief of Economic Growth and Opportunity Officer
- Ted Carter, Chief Economic Development Officer
- Jesse Drucker, Chief Human Resources Officer
- Lenora Lockett, Director, Office of Procurement and Diversity
- Rebecca Kopcienski, Director, Personnel Review Commission
- Andrea Turi, Supervisor, Workforce Development Program

Summary of Key Findings

These interviews were conducted with Cuyahoga County leadership as part of the Economic Opportunities Subcommittee's exploration of how racial disparities are understood and addressed within Cuyahoga County government. It can be concluded from these conversations that while institutional and structural racism are acknowledged as root causes of systemic barriers to economic opportunity as experienced by Cuyahoga County's Black employees and residents, the Economic Opportunities Subcommittee found there was variability across departments when it came to individuals' readiness to lead with equity and address racism in proactive, impactful ways.

Based on these interviews with County leadership, it is the belief of the Economic Opportunities Subcommittee the County has not yet developed a cohesive, institutional anti-racist strategy to enable systemic change across all its departments; this goes beyond the list of departments interviewed that directly relate to this subcommittee's charge. Nonetheless, in all cases, leaders came across as genuine when expressing interest in taking action to address racism within their departments and programs. Although, the degree in which potential actions implemented to advance an equity agenda seemed highly dependent upon the individual capacity of each leader and/or their staff to envision or effect necessary changes.

While the capacity of individual leaders to plan or institute change in this area is highly variable, there are opportunities that may be more easily actionable because of the alignment of thinking that emerged from several leaders in key areas of need and span across the County system. These areas are:

- Systematic training on racial equity, to include training on implicit bias,
- Increasing the diversity of leadership, including individuals in senior leadership positions,
- Integration of efforts in the area of racial equity and inclusion across the organization, and
- Innovation that builds on current successes in the region and taps into successful initiatives being implemented in other communities.

There were also commonalities gleaned among interviewees regarding barriers that exist within County government that either prevent or slow the implementation of impactful, system-wide race conscious policy and programs geared toward upending racial disparities. Barriers include:

- Organizational culture factors within County government, such as complacency and fear
- Inadequate departmental resources (human and fiscal) to leverage opportunities and/or address specific areas of concern
- Need for community input and better representation of persons served; need for a customer service orientation
- Need for strategic relationships and political alignment with entities outside of County government, including City government and local school districts
- Need for data on key metrics related to economic opportunity in the region
- Need for better integration across departments within the County
- Regional fragmentation
- Federal and state policy environment that perpetuates inequities
- Inequities embedded within County policy and procedure with procurement being a very public example
- Biases of staff within the organization as well as those of community members

Several local initiatives, either led or supported by County government, were referenced during conversations because of their effectiveness in disrupting or preventing the harm caused by racism. These programs are successes that can likely be built upon because of their documented outcomes or emerging data that suggest strong potential for similarly structured programs to further reduce racial disparities in economic opportunities. These initiatives include:

- First Year Cleveland
- Say Yes Cleveland
- Opportunity Zones

- Workforce Connect
- Job Hubs
- Skill Up
- COVID Stabilization Effort and Pandemic Relief Program
- Lead Safe Cleveland

The Economic Opportunities Subcommittee believes this initial discovery process has yielded an abundance of valuable information and insights. Going into the initial phase of this process, it was our belief as a subcommittee that like many other systems, Cuyahoga County government is complex. Our initial findings reaffirm the complexity of the County system. Our subcommittee has gained greater appreciation of the breadth of programmatic management/oversight as well as constraints; and respects the subject matter expertise that resides within the County structure.

Actionable Recommendations

While the system engages with community on many fronts within the Economic Opportunities Subcommittee core areas, it is the recommendation of this subcommittee for the County to achieve more focus in three areas: Procurement, Public-Private industry-informed or -led collaboration, and education systems alignment. These three areas are recommended based on our findings to-date; however, should further discovery suggest otherwise, the recommendation(s) will be amended accordingly. These recommendations also require further investigating to ultimately provide policy recommendations.

Recommendation 1: Procurement

Of the three recommended areas, procurement seems to be the most mature in understanding with the most data supporting the existing disparity and line of sight to potential policy changes that can address structural/systemic racism. This recommendation is grounded in the recent disparity study completed this year that found statistically significant disparities exist¹⁹. While there is still much to digest from the study, the following two tables stood out, which in the most simplistic terms defines the available market qualified to do business with the County (**Table 2**) compared to the firms that actually receive awards (**Table 3**).

Table 2: Summary of Availability Estimates by Work Category

In the respective Relevant Markets
(Based upon the Master Vendor File)
Cuyahoga County Disparity Study

Ethnicity	Construction	Professional Services	Other Services	A&E	Goods & Supplies
African American	14.87%	8.43%	7.36%	7.52%	4.29%
Asian American	2.84%	1.83%	1.72%	7.52%	0.69%
Hispanic American	3.41%	0.95%	1.06%	1.31%	0.51%
Native American	0.11%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.06%
Total MBE	21.23%	11.22%	10.14%	16.34%	5.54%
White Female	17.14%	6.67%	5.96%	10.46%	4.94%
Unidentified MWBE	2.84%	1.17%	1.06%	1.31%	0.23%
Total MWBE	41.20%	19.06%	17.16%	28.10%	10.71%
Non-MWBE	58.80%	80.94%	82.84%	71.90%	89.29%
Total	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%

Griffin & Strong, P.C. 2020

Table 3: Summary of Prime Utilization for FY2014-FY2018

By Dollars in the Relevant Markets

Cuyahoga County Disparity Study

	Construction		Professional Services		Other Services		A&E		Goods & Supplies	
	Dollar	Percent	Dollar	Percent	Dollar	Percent	Dollar	Percent	Dollar	Percent
African American	\$830,462	0.38%	\$145,372	0.02%	\$944,336	0.52%	\$600,000	2.91%	\$193,003	0.28%
Asian American	\$1,698,430	0.78%	\$165,000	0.03%	\$766,620	0.42%	\$646,997	3.14%	\$250,000	0.36%
Hispanic American	\$0	0.00%	\$0	0.00%	\$247,251	0.14%	\$0	0.00%	\$49,155	0.07%
Native American	\$0	0.00%	\$0	0.00%	\$0	0.00%	\$0	0.00%	\$0	0.00%
Total MBE	\$2,528,892	1.16%	\$310,372	0.05%	\$1,958,208	1.07%	\$1,246,997	6.05%	\$492,157	0.71%
White Female	\$13,500,576	6.18%	\$720,146	0.12%	\$28,917,902	15.80%	\$0	0.00%	\$1,844,557	2.67%
Unidentified MWBE	\$0	0.00%	\$0	0.00%	\$0	0.00%	\$0	0.00%	\$0	0.00%
Total MWBE	\$16,029,468	7.34%	\$1,030,518	0.17%	\$30,876,109	16.87%	\$1,246,997	6.05%	\$2,336,715	3.38%
Non-MWBE	\$202,388,293	92.66%	\$622,723,882	99.83%	\$152,173,436	83.13%	\$19,372,424	93.95%	\$66,787,446	96.62%
Total	\$218,417,761	100.00%	\$623,754,400	100.00%	\$183,049,546	100.00%	\$20,619,421	100.00%	\$69,124,160	100.00%

Griffin & Strong, P.C. 2020

Additionally, Griffin & Strong, P.C. has provided the following 8 recommendations as potential tools to support closing the disparities in the County procurement process²⁰.

- **RECOMMENDATION 1:** MWBE SUBCONTRACTOR GOALS WITH DEFINITIVE GOOD FAITH EFFORTS REQUIREMENTS
- **RECOMMENDATION 2:** ENHANCED CONTRACT COMPLIANCE
- **RECOMMENDATION 3:** INCREASED STAFFING AND RESOURCES
- **RECOMMENDATION 4:** STAFF TRAINING
- **RECOMMENDATION 5:** INCREASED UTILIZATION OF SMALL BUSINESS SET ASIDE PROGRAM
- **RECOMMENDATION 6:** CONTRACT FORECASTING
- **RECOMMENDATION 7:** COORDINATED VENDOR OUTREACH
- **RECOMMENDATION 8:** REFORM DATA INFRASTRUCTURE

While the Economic Opportunities Subcommittee fundamentally agrees with the recommendations provided by Griffin & Strong, P.C., there is further information gathering needed to understand the feasibility, implications, and impacts of these recommendations against the to be developed ideal future state of what equity looks like for those affected. For the community there are areas where the County can take immediate actions. Based on initial conversations, we are in agreement with the County Executive’s forthcoming Executive Orders implementing many of the recommendations found in the report.

Recommendation 2: Public-Private Industry-Informed or -led Collaboration

Over the past 5 years, the County has been a critical partner in developing, financially supporting, and continued leadership for the Sector Partnership Initiative: Workforce Connect, which has a “goal of connecting more workers to well-paying career paths in manufacturing, healthcare, and information technology (IT) and helping employers find the skilled talent they need, ultimately supporting a more inclusive and competitive economy in Cuyahoga County. By connecting businesses and workforce development training and service provider partners together in innovative ways through business-led sector intermediaries, the workforce development ecosystem will become more efficient, effective and equitable.”

County leaders should continue to actively participate, provide financial backing, and when appropriate be the convener/facilitator of initiatives such as Workforce Connect. This type of activity is essential for achieving the charge of connecting Black residents to well-paying jobs. Leveraging this as a best practice could lead to deeper industry engagement in sectors such as construction, etc.

Recommendation 3: Education systems alignment

While the County has no direct jurisdiction over city led educational systems, the Economic Opportunities Subcommittee is recommending that the County explore potential policies and practices that improve districts’ abilities to improve student performance. For example, to be a better partner in addressing the broadband disparity, can the County use its power of bulk purchasing of hotspots to assist in the elimination of disparity, so that more youth can participate in distance learning?

Future Directions

As we move into 2021, there will be several factors considered in the work of the Economic Opportunities Subcommittee. Connection to living wage jobs and increased educational attainment will be impacted by the speed of economic recovery that evolves from post pandemic guidelines, the timing of financial stimulus assistance coming from the Federal Government will impact upon how state and local resources are redirected from severe food insecurity support and housing insecurity. The plans to move forward in the core focus areas of this subcommittee would be challenging enough pre-pandemic and pre-economic recession. The committee will have to stay abreast of new policies and strategies developing in these areas to determine the impact at the County and even city levels.

Looking out to 2021 and beyond, the process used to develop strategies for transformation will be critical. Continued interface with Cuyahoga County departmental work will assist in determining where change/innovation may be occurring. There will be a need to establish firm baseline data for the areas of Educational Opportunities, Well-paying Jobs and Business Ownership to be addressed. The next step will require a process to establish a desired state of participation that eradicates the disparity. However, we want to be careful to examine overall poverty rate for the County to ensure that we create a scenario in this work where “a rising tide can lift all boats”.

Equitable Quality of Life

Subcommittee Roster

Chair - Randell McShepard

Phyllis Harris

Victor Ruiz

Subcommittee Charge

The Equitable Quality of Life Subcommittee (EQOL) is focused on four categories outlined in the resolution, which include:

Access to Healthy Foods

- According to Feeding America, Black people are two times more likely to face hunger on a daily basis as compared to White people.
- Food security is tied to how close a person lives to a grocery store, and a large percentage of Blacks live in food desert communities without grocery stores. In Cuyahoga County, 23.5% of White people live in a food desert compared to more than half (56%) of Black people.

Safe and Affordable Housing

- Historical policies and practices, such as discriminatory lending practices known as “redlining” have shaped the differences in opportunities for safe and affordable housing for Black people.
- The neighborhoods in Cuyahoga County that consist of majority Black populations have the highest rates of lead poisoning.
- More than two-thirds (70.9%) of White people in Cuyahoga County believe their neighborhoods are quiet and/or extremely safe from crime versus only 42.7% of Black people.

Quality Transportation

- Four times the amount of Black people than White people in Cuyahoga County rely on public transportation to get to their jobs, go grocery shopping, attend school and medical appointments and participate in other activities.
- A fifth (20%) of all Cuyahoga County households located in a food desert do not have a vehicle.

Safe Places To Be Active

- The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention stated that Black people experience obesity at a rate of 44.1% compared to White people at 32.6%.
- Numerous studies and medical professionals have linked access to green space and parks to the physical behavior of people, and access to parks and green space is much lower in neighborhoods largely occupied by Blacks.
- Evidence shows that people will not exercise if they don't feel safe in their neighborhood.

Based on these statistics which bring to bear the stark contrasts between the lived experience of Black and White people, the Equitable Quality of Life Subcommittee seeks to better understand each of the aforementioned four categories in-depth and to establish a firm grasp on what is working and what is missing in Cuyahoga County Government and beyond. In addition, the interconnectedness of these four categories needs to be analyzed and highlighted for the Citizens' Advisory Council on Equity and Cuyahoga County government in general.

Subcommittee Activities

The subcommittee has been quite active to-date, attending the monthly CACE meetings since inception and actively participating in the work generated by the Communications subcommittee, which is chaired by Phyllis Harris. Each of the participants of the EQOL Subcommittee participated in the Common Ground community meetings, which connected hundreds from the community with CACE members and other County officials to discuss equity, inclusion and diversity issues and needs throughout Cuyahoga County.

In addition, the EQOL Subcommittee hosted or participated in interviews with the following persons/groups: **(Interviews ranged in length from 45 minutes to 75 minutes)**

*Michael Dever, Director of Public Works

*David Merriman, Director of Health and Human Services

*Mike Foley, Director of Sustainability

*Catherine Tkachyk, Chief Innovation Officer

*Dr. Leon Harris, Interim Assistant Director of the Department of Health and Human Services

*Sabrina Roberts, Administrator of Health Policy and Programs for the Department of Health and Human Services

*Ted Carter, Chief Economic Development Officer

*Bob Coury, Chief of Public Safety

Outside Entities Also Interviewed

*Dr. Flounsay Caver, Chief Operating Officer (RTA)

*Colleen Cotter, Executive Director, Legal Aid Society of Cleveland

*Molly Martin, Executive Director, Northeast Ohio Coalition of the Homeless (NEOCH)

*Cleveland Fair Housing Working Group (A consortium of housing organizations)

Each of the County leaders interviewed are working in areas or departments perceived to be aligned with the focus of the work of the EQOL Subcommittee. By example, David Merriman, Dr. Leon Harris, Sabrina Roberts and Ted Carter all touch quality of life through health and human services, housing and economic development priorities such as the digital divide. Mike Foley and Michael Dever were interviewed with more of a focus on safe places to be active and neighborhood quality of life, while Catherine Tkachyk shared the County's overall perspective on innovation and the use of data to track and improve service outcomes, which is also of interest to the EQOL Subcommittee.

The non-County external partners who were interviewed work in areas with a more linear focus, including RTA's obvious focus on public transit, Legal Aid's work with supportive legal services for needy families, and NEOCH and the Cleveland Fair Housing Group respectively providing information and specific recommendations in reference to low-income housing, homelessness and income source discrimination.

Summary of Key Findings

Cuyahoga County government is a large, complex and multi-faceted governmental entity addressing many critical needs and issues that affect the quality of life for all of its citizens. While there was a vast number of items discussed that opened up additional opportunities for dialogue and continued questioning, there were a few key themes that are worth noting for the sake of this report and the charge given to the EQOL Subcommittee and the CACE and a whole. These findings are outlined below:

Inconsistent Levels of Diversity and Inclusion Training

If Cuyahoga County wants to delve into strategies to address systemic racism and truly believes that racism is a public health crisis, one of the first required steps will be to ensure that leaders from all County departments fully understand the depth and breadth of the problem and firmly commit to taking action. It became very clear as a result of the interviews that while all County leaders agreed that diversity and inclusion training is helpful and important, there is a wide disparity among the various departments with respect to if and how this training is being

coordinated and/or delivered. One department (HHS) has a very extensive training program aimed at DEI, which is well defined and broad. Several other department leaders mentioned brief DEI training encounters such as the half-day REI training program, while others either used other training modules altogether or admitted to not yet participating in such training. The County needs a plan that would consistently offer DEI training from the same source so that employees at all levels share a common understanding of what success looks like across the County and where and how their work fits into the larger scheme. This training should also come with metrics that are tracked and revised on an annual basis as needed.

More Diversity Needed in Senior Positions

Most of the County leaders that were interviewed were White males. When asked about diversity within their respective leadership ranks, most leaders commented that they “had work to do” or that “things could be better.” If the goal is to address systemic racism, one good place to start would be to place people of color in positions of leadership and influence so that they can bring new perspectives and address the blind spots that are obvious when minority voices or perspectives are absent. Diversity hires will not occur by happenstance. Rather, the County needs to devise a plan to identify, develop, promote and support leaders of color and to do so with a pipeline in mind that continues to position minorities for opportunities in the future. This is especially important when the percentage of people of color served by the County is taken into account. Clients and customers served by the County need to see leaders that look like them.

Lack of Communication and Collaboration Amongst Departments

As was mentioned previously, the County is a large and complex entity with many roles and responsibilities that it fulfills on a daily basis. However, one of the early discoveries of the CACE team was that the nine areas of focus (health disparities, affordable housing, entrepreneurship and jobs, criminal justice, etc.) are all interrelated or interconnected in many ways. People receiving public assistance need employment or entrepreneurial opportunities. Access to housing and food is a great determinant of health outcomes, as those who don’t have either are more likely to suffer from health challenges or homelessness. Criminal justice system outcomes too often result in lost opportunities for returning citizens, relegating them to menial jobs if not unemployment. If the County plans to take the necessary sweeping challenges associated with identifying racism as a public health crisis, it would behoove leaders of various departments to know how their respective department’s work connects to other departments, and to understand how efficiencies can be realized when departments work together to serve the needs of Black and Brown people. Silos can no longer prevail in this new age of equity and inclusion.

More Resources Needed for Equitable Quality of Life Opportunities Versus Service Delivery

A very large portion of the County’s annual expenditures falls under the Health and Human Services category with good reason, as large numbers of needy individuals and families approach that department of the County for support. However, there are a myriad of resources and services that can help families before they reach dire consequences or face pressing basic needs that seem to fall lower on the County priority list. These areas loom large on the priority list for the EQOL Subcommittee, and include housing assistance, safe places to be active, healthy food access and

transportation. Although the County is directing funds to these categories, an argument can be made that not enough funding is being directed to these types of initiatives, which all can assist residents who are not necessarily in need of public assistance in the form of food stamps or other welfare programs. Helping County residents to enjoy a decent and equitable quality of life will require some imagination and a new perspective on the varied needs of Black and Brown people and how investments are made and prioritized.

Lobbying and Advocacy Efforts at the State and Federal Levels

As a governmental entity, the County has finite resources. And limited resources “limit” the extent to which the County can implement or expand programs and services. This was a common theme that was shared by several of the County leaders who were interviewed, and it was implied by several individuals that more support from the State or the Federal Government should be explored in earnest. It is not clear that the County has a comprehensive plan for lobbying and advocacy and it could be assumed that departments pursue State and Federal funds independently as opportunities become available. However, a more deliberate and comprehensive strategy for leveraging state and federal resources is needed, especially in light of the fact that Cleveland is number one in poverty and several other categories. As a community, we should ask: What other city or County is more deserving of State and Federal support than Cleveland and Cuyahoga County?

Actionable Recommendations

- 1) Institute a Comprehensive DEI Training and Analysis Initiative, led by the Department of Health and Human Services. Build on the success of the work of Dr. Leon Harris and require every County department to follow the same training curriculum that is being used by HHS. Develop metrics and analyze what is working and track progress in critical areas of diversity, ranging from employees of color in leadership positions to improved procurement activities.
- 2) Strategically invest in underrepresented neighborhoods. Bring together Housing (Dept. of Economic Development), the Department of Public Works, the Department of Sustainability and the Sheriff’s Office (Illegal Dumping Task Force) to prioritize and target neighborhoods for investment. Incorporate community residents in a participatory budgeting process to listen to what residents need.
- 3) Charge the Office of Innovation with establishing a new ***Data Analyst*** position that tracks trends and critical data points (in County government and in the general community) that impact Black people and further validates racism as a public health crisis. Some data points that were learned during the EQOL Subcommittee interviews that could serve as examples of what this newly created data analyst position could track includes:
 - a) 65% of child welfare recipients are Black
 - b) 70%-80% of those on public assistance are Black
 - c) 90% of summer job participants are Black

- d) 90% of housing voucher recipients are Black
- e) 1 in 9 Black households use housing vouchers
- f) 85% of the 1,500 people that are homeless in the County are Black
- g) 80% of evictions in Cuyahoga County are Black women

This type of data should be tracked annually and used to evaluate the County's understanding of and response to the pressing issues of racism and its impact as a public health crisis. Programs and services should be shaped, revised, and expanded based on the data collected by this data analyst position. Program delivery of various County programs should also be analyzed with an eye towards improved outcomes and new opportunities for innovation. As the adage goes, what gets measured gets done.

- 4) Work with the CACE and its subcommittees to provide recommendations to change/update the 2012 Equity Plan and share those recommendations with the Equity Council.
- 5) Revise the strategic plan with a focus on Leadership, Operations and Service, Community Partnerships (representing diverse collaborations) and Organizational Culture and Workforce.

Aspirational Recommendations

- Appoint a cabinet position focused on Equitable Quality of Life Priorities
- Incorporate DEI metrics and outcomes as a standard component of performance reviews for all County leadership positions
- Promote Cuyahoga County as a National Model for Equity and Inclusion Practices in Government

Future Directions

- Identify and begin interviews with non-County leaders and organizations
- Look into potential policy recommendations for areas such as income source discrimination, homeless bill of rights and participatory budgeting
- Assist with the formation of the revised Cuyahoga County strategic plan
- Track similar work in other parts of the country

Criminal Justice

Chair – India Pierce Lee
Rabbi Joshua Caruso
Rev. Kenneth Chalker
Cordell Stokes

Subcommittee Charge

The CACE Criminal Justice subcommittee is charged to address four primary areas of review within Cuyahoga County purview through research and interview of law enforcement, judicial, and criminal justice stakeholders toward equity achievement in:

1. Juvenile Justice
2. Adult Incarceration
3. Judicial and Prosecutorial Efforts
4. Bail Reform

Many issues in the current criminal justice system have been present since the founding of our nation and are largely tied to the nation's history of enslaving Blacks. Although the 13th Amendment eliminated slavery, it made an exception for those convicted of crimes. Additionally, while Ohio's first constitution (1802) abolished slavery, the (1804) *Ohio Black Code* allowed a sheriff to arrest a free Black individual and receive pay to deliver said person to anyone claiming ownership of that human being. Similarly, based on the nation's history of slavery, violence against Blacks is deeply engrained in the criminal justice system. For example, in Virginia's 1705 *An Act Concerning Servants and Slaves XXXIV*, slave owners were given the right to kill resisting enslaved persons with no repercussions. These laws have laid the groundwork for the present-day issues we are seeking to address.

The following critical, unanswered questions and highlighted areas provide some insight into the complex dynamics impacting the criminal justice system in Cuyahoga County and have guided the subcommittee's work to date.

A) Adult & Juvenile Justice/Incarceration

Since many suburban cities no longer house or detain arrestees, more is demanded of the County that impacts population, classifications, and separation of detainees.

1. What is the policy for suburban intake of new inmates?
2. How are inmates classified when incarcerated?

3. What are the policies/practices for separating potentially adversarial ethnic groups, gangs, and inmates charged or convicted of high-level violent felonies and misdemeanors versus lower-level non-violent felonies and misdemeanors?
4. What resources are needed to adequately address the intake of inmates?

B) County Jail

1. What are the policies and/or actions the County has regarding recruiting and maintaining diverse staff with appropriate background to manage majority, minority inmate populations?
2. Provide examples of ongoing modifications to training to address ever changing inmate populations.
3. Explain the current administrative/staff culture and its direct impact/effectiveness in the management of diverse inmate populations.
4. Explain/provide disciplinary policies and procedures with respect to jail staff.

C) Judicial and Prosecutorial Efforts (areas were combined as many actions overlap):

1. What are the County's practices for targeting and recruitment of diverse legal teams that will impact prosecuting majority, minority populations?
2. Explain the current legal culture of the prosecuting team and their vision about how to effectively and equitably prosecute majority, minority populations.
3. Explain legal approach to sentencing recommendations of minorities when being prosecuted for drugs, robbery, white collar crimes etc. Include approaches/policies in type(s) of workforce/rehabilitation allowance.
4. Explain and share data regarding warrant policies that supports warrant procedures, types (no knock or other), impact/type warrants issued between majority vs minority populations.

D) Bail Reform:

Bail reform should be viewed as a judicial function that derives from judges establishing mandates.

1. What is the current policy?
2. Are there changes in policies and procedures needed to improve the current system?
3. Provide data that shows balance or equitability of use between majority and minority populations.

Note: It is extremely important the judicial and prosecutorial leadership impacting these aforementioned areas work collaboratively and cooperatively with the below named groups. Our understanding is there is no embedded relationship between the County and the below mentioned groups allowing for consistent communication and facilitating immediate and long-term impact with many of the aforementioned issues regarding diversified populations. We should want to know from each entity any, if at all, communication between their respective departments and:

1. National Organization of Black Law Enforcement Executives (NOBLE), Sheila Mason, Chief Woodmere Village.
2. Black Shield Police Association (BSPA), Vince Montague, Sgt. Cleveland Police.

Subcommittee Activities

As members of the Criminal Justice Subcommittee of the CACE, our first step was endeavoring on interviews of the heads of the many law enforcement agencies of Cuyahoga County. Our key findings reveal disparities as it pertains to inclusion and equity.

Interviews

- Cleveland Municipal Administrative Judge Michelle Earley
- Anthony Body (The Bail Project)
- Chief of Public Safety and Justice Services Bob Coury
- Cuyahoga County Public Defender Mark Stanton
- Common Pleas Administrative Judge Brendan Sheehan
- Juvenile Administrative Judge Thomas O'Malley
- Cuyahoga County Prosecutor Michael O'Malley
- Sheriff David Shilling and Deputy Chief Sheriff Bryan Smith

Key Findings

First, the words “*key findings*” are critical to what the Criminal Justice Subcommittee presents. Our list of key findings are substantiated findings of fact. They are not anecdotal allegations. They are not the loud musings of discontented persons seeking to grind an axe or draw attention to themselves and their issues. Rather, the following are our key findings based on careful interviews with committed criminal justice stakeholders who are invested and involved in administering justice in Cuyahoga County.

Further, while these are key findings, we also note that these same individuals in leadership are involved in various efforts to address these stated inequities. So, we set forth these findings, *not as indictments*, but with the full knowledge that as a community we seek to do better and go further in the cause of justice for all.

Second, these key findings are not stating the obvious. Indeed, one of the great tragedies of systemic racism is that too many people will deny that such racial inequity even exists. By detailing these findings, we acknowledge the public health crisis caused by systemic inequity and racism in our County. We do this as an additional and important County-wide step to address and eradicate systemic racism in our community.

1. There is racial disparity in regard to setting bail on defendants in Cuyahoga County.
2. There are people of color, in disproportionate number to our County-wide population, who are serving time in jail, who have not been proven guilty of a crime, who are often serving time while awaiting trial, and who may have been inappropriately charged with a crime.
3. There is racial disparity in regard to the sentencing of defendants found guilty for same/similar offenses in Cuyahoga County.
4. Assessed fines, penalties and/or fees on defendants in Cuyahoga County frequently exacerbate poverty, employment and opportunities for remediation inequities experienced by persons of color.
5. Cuyahoga County judges have much discretion. There is seemingly no central accountability structure among judges for sentences they impose.
6. There is great disparity in efforts made to recruit, train, encourage, promote and achieve racial equity throughout the County criminal justice system.
7. The training on inclusion, racial equity, and efforts to recognize and overcome bias varies greatly from one part of the criminal justice system to another. For instance, the efforts being promoted and put in place through the Clerk of Courts are significant in their intentionality and growing in effectiveness. The process administered, required and initiated in the Sheriff's Department and jail, however, lacks intention other than a sincere but casual admission that, "we need to do better."
8. The criminal justice system in Cuyahoga County is all too often adjudicating and warehousing people who are suffering from mental illness. The disparities in access to and treatment of mental illness in our County results in mental illness being addressed and treated as criminal.

Actionable Recommendations

The Criminal Justice Subcommittee broadly identified several areas for which actionable recommendations can be implemented:

1. Information Gathering

In the realm of addressing racial equity, County agencies largely exercise independent oversight over issues of recruitment, hiring and training. While every agency creates its own process in these areas, interagency coordination is uneven.

We recommend that staff of a centralized County department or departments based on jurisdiction be tasked with gathering statistics and setting benchmarks for each agency to reach equity goals.

2. Training

In all our interviews, department heads and officials believe that implicit bias training is critical to growing a more just criminal justice system. Many of these officials shared details about these programs, their length, and goals. However, it became clear to us that each department operates on its own, and there do not seem to be shared goals for training. Moreover, it is unclear if an evaluation process to measure the effectiveness of these trainings exists.

We recommend all segments of the criminal justice system develop one common training program around racial equity, including implicit bias, and is tailored for all staff.

3. Bail Reform

The issue of bail reform has generated much discussion and scrutiny nationally, as well as in our region. It is clear law enforcement professionals have become more sensitized to the inherent bias within the system of charging and processing, all with the goal of reducing the number of people jailed simply because they cannot afford to pay bail. Still, people of color continue to face financial hurdles in a system where each offender is not treated equally. Moreover, those charged face a labyrinth of challenges in negotiating “the system”.

We recommend that a Jail Coordinator (ombudsperson) with the proper training around bias and racial equity be assigned to those who are awaiting judgement on bail and related interactions.

4. County Diversion Center

We applaud County Executive Budish in implementing the bold plan to establish a diversion center for those suffering from addiction and mental health issues. The potential to reduce the number of incarcerations for low-level, non-violent offenders is heartening. There is no better time than the present to examine how our criminal justice system might work in these centers.

We recommend that law enforcement and diversion center staff be trained to interact with people of color fairly, acknowledging the diversion center as a place for rehabilitation and recovery rather than detention.

5. County Jail

While our County should certainly strive to broadly reduce incarcerations, dangerous and repeatedly unlawful offenders should be jailed and imprisoned for the sake of the safety of the community and themselves. Might there be ways for the County to take steps to afford the incarcerated more time with counselors, lawyers and advocates? Might there be ways for County

jail staff to see their role not only as enforcers, but as advocates for the human rights of every individual under their charge?

We recommend an examination and evaluation of the rights afforded to, incarcerated individuals, and the enforcement of these rights.

Aspirational Recommendations

The Criminal Justice subcommittee has formulated aspirational recommendations, but our “aspiration” will hopefully be the aspiration of the citizens of Cuyahoga County, particularly, our racially diverse citizens who have received the brunt of proven and agreed upon institutional racism and unconscious bias.

1. Implement a fixed working relationship to assess, review, negotiate, establish standing policy to effectively address our unequal findings by engaging:
 - National Organization of Black Law Enforcement Executives (NOBLE) - Woodmere Chief of Police, Sheila Mason;
 - Black Shield Police Association (BSPA) – Cleveland Police Sgt. Vincent Montague;
 - Legal Aid Society (very focused on aforementioned institutional issues); and other identifiable Black/Hispanic complimentary association leadership to assist in attacking issues historically adverse to diverse population within current County operating systems.
2. Establish a continuing, certified County Director/Supervisor training program that teaches and mandates yearly/bi-yearly recertification for how all areas of the criminal justice system manage a diverse workforce.
 - Managing is very different from being a staff member charged to carry out missions of departments. Prior to promotion to leadership positions such as a director/supervisor (interim included), staff should be required to immediately enroll in some type of modified complimentary program designed for circumstances when the overarching training is not presently available.
3. Knowing defendants who have finances available for private representation and/or the ability to post bail etc. have better outcomes regarding charges/incarceration when compared to indigent defendants who most often are people of color, Judicial and Prosecutorial leadership should conduct a comprehensive assessment/review of the systems impacting how people are charged and represented.
4. Establish a Jail Coordinator (ombudsman) position to oversee the process of bail, the impact of charging indigent defendants for GPS tracking, and to ensure jailed defendants are afforded a greater window of time to meet with their lawyer and explore how to enhance their ability to assist the public defender to prepare their case. This was identified as an overarching issue by one of the interviewees⁷.

5. County leadership should "aspire" to quickly address any abuse by law enforcement officers against diverse County citizenry so any violator may be held accountable.
6. The County leadership must establish policy through union negotiations that allows for proper discipline of County employees for abuses not complimentary of their duties.
7. Specifically, around "peer review" and its perceived ineffectiveness in appropriately determining officer discipline, an adjustment seems to be in order. Consistent with the work of others in this area, we suggest an impartial process providing greater visibility to the public and those impacted ⁸.
8. Establish an Adult & Juvenile Diversion Program:
 - The County leadership has aspired to recently establish an adult based diversion program to deal with issues around mental illness and other like issues that affect those charged with crimes or incarcerated above and beyond crime(s) charged with.
 - County Judicial and Prosecutorial leadership need to review policies and procedures associated to **youth** charged with crimes and or incarcerated. They must examine the impact of mental illness, drug abuse, binding over to adult system, and other like issues to try to stop their evolution into a life of crime, etc. Chief Public Defender Mark Stanton shared the bind over issue as an area needing to be addressed and further investigated.
 - In Ohio, we currently do not have an abundance of data around the bind over issue. County Judicial and Prosecutorial leadership must immediately establish some type of ad hoc committee, commission, or the like to examine this matter and seek to address legislatively and/or through a County wide policy.
 - Reference "Falling through the cracks: A new look at Ohio youth in the adult criminal justice system" by the Children's Law Center, Inc. Through research the report shows... "that placing children in the adult criminal justice system or in adult facilities, such as jails or prisons, has negative consequences that are both long-lasting and harmful to youth and to the communities to which they return."
 - Reference "Summit County based "Crossroads Program" Juvenile Court Judge Linda Tucci Teodosio "Turning lives around one child at a time" which is a program specifically designed to address the aforementioned issues that impact youth similarly to adults.

Additional Research

In recent decades, the reach of the criminal justice system has grown substantially as shown in **Figure 1**. Despite this significant growth, research has shown that incarceration has lost its potency and increased incarceration has had a very limited effect on the reduction of crime over the past two and half decades. As seen in **Figure 2**, in Ohio this crossover happened in 1989.

- In the past 25 years, Ohio’s prison population has more than doubled. Experts found that increases in the average length of an individual’s time spent incarcerated, in addition to increased prison admissions primarily drove this expansion.
- In 2011, Ohio passed a bipartisan law to reduce its prison population. Among other changes, the law reduced the maximum sentences for many crimes, including most burglaries and some drug offenses. It also allowed prisoners to earn time off their sentences by completing education and mental health programs. The state also bolstered statewide community-based alternatives to prison.
- **Figure 2** depicts the declining effectiveness of increased incarceration in Ohio from 1980, when the prison population was 13,489. By 1997, when the number of prisoners soared to 48,016, incarceration’s effectiveness had declined to a level that was essentially zero. It remained essentially zero throughout the 2000s, as the growth in imprisonment slowed. By 2013, with 51,729 prisoners in the state, increased incarceration had negligible effects on crime.

Key Statistics

- **2.3 million** Americans currently incarcerated
- **2.7 million** minors have an incarcerated parent
- **25% of the world's prisoners** are in the US despite only making up 5% of the population
- **1 in 3** Black men can expect to spend time in prison
- **Over 400%** increase in US imprisonment rate since 1970
- **\$80 billion** spent annually on law enforcement
- **\$55-60 billion** in GDP lost annually due to incarceration

Figure 1.

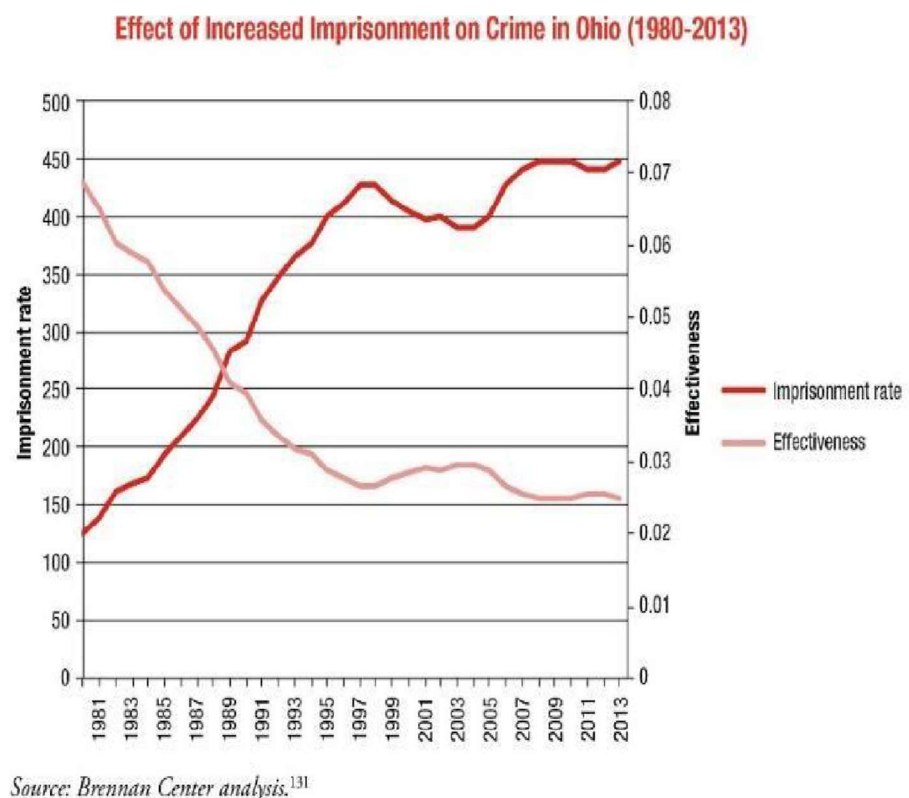


Figure 2.

Report referenced is attached at this link: https://www.brennancenter.org/sites/default/files/2019-08/Report_What_Caused_The_Crime_Decline.pdf

Future Directions

Over the next six months, the Criminal Justice Subcommittee will work with the leadership of the CACE and County Executive, County Judges, County Prosecutor, and County Public

Defender to continue interviewing and delving deeper into the issues identified in this report. Over that period of time, we hope to begin taking some of the recommendations and prioritize actions along with the other subcommittees that may lead to changes as well as further examination of the current systems.

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ADDENDUM

List of Appendices

- 1. Appendix 1: List of CACE Members and Affiliations**
- 2. Appendix 2: Systems Approach Description**
- 3. Appendix 3: List of Data Sources**
 - a. Interviews**
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**Appendix 1
CACE Members**

Name	Organization
Rabbi Joshua Caruso	Rabbi, Anshe Chesed Fairmount Temple
Stephen Caviness	Director of Project Management, Team NEO
Rev. Kenneth Chalker	Retired Senior Pastor, University Circle United Methodist Church
Jenice Contreras	Executive Director, Northeast Ohio Hispanic Center for Economic Development
Habeebah Grimes	CEO, Positive Education Program
Dr. Heidi Gullett	Medical Director, Cuyahoga County Board of Health
Phyllis Harris	Executive Director, LGBTQ Community Center of Greater Cleveland
India Pierce Lee	Senior VP, The Cleveland Foundation
Randy McShepard	VP of Public Affairs and Chief Talent Officer, RPM International
Marsha Mockabee	President and CEO, Urban League of Greater Cleveland
Levine Ross	Policy Advisor, Cuyahoga County Council and Social Work Instructor, Cleveland State University
Victor Ruiz	Executive Director, Esperanza, Inc.
Yanela Sims	Ohio State Director, Service Employees International Union Local 1
Cordell Stokes	Chairman and CEO, CLC Stokes Consulting Group
Danielle Sydnor	President, Cleveland Branch NAACP
Eddie Taylor	President, Taylor Oswald, LLC
Sheila Wright	President, The Good Community Foundation

Appendix 2 System Dynamics of Cross-Sector Innovation

Health Improvement Partnership (HIP) Cuyahoga has been applying system dynamics to understanding structural racism as a public health crisis through the Cross Sector Innovation Initiative (CSII) funded through the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. System dynamics is a way to understand systems and how they change from an endogenous or feedback (Richardson 2011). The approach taken in the CSII project uses participatory group model building to engagement and empower communities and organizations to understand the system and identify high leverage points for system change (Hovmand 2014; Király and Miskolczi 2019).

Figure 1 below illustrates an early example of a causal map created using group model building with the HIP Cuyahoga CSII project’s core modeling team in fall 2019. The causal map has 5 major sectors or subsystems: criminal justice, equitable quality of life, healthcare, economic opportunity, and perspective transformation. Each sector consists of a set of variables with causal links that form a set of balancing and reinforcing feedback loops.

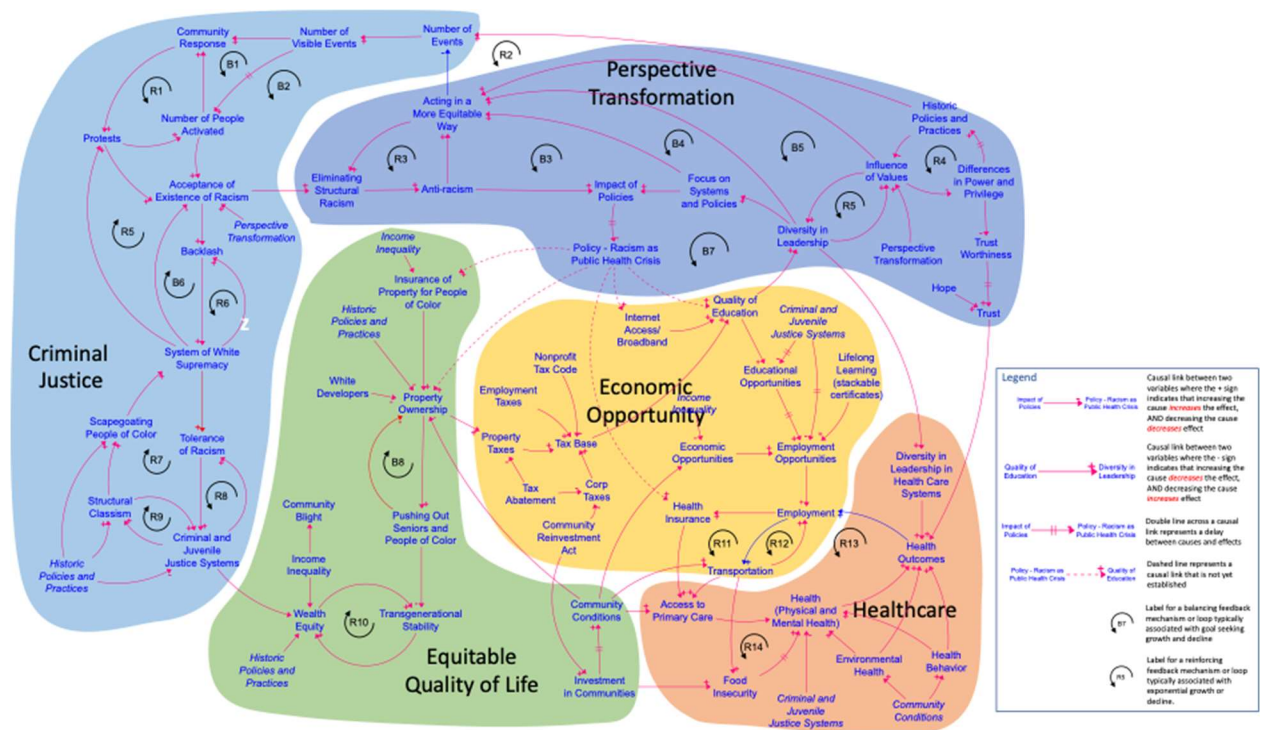


Figure 1 Causal map of structural racism as a public health crisis

The HIP-Cuyahoga causal map of structural racism highlights a system of feedback mechanisms that underlie structural racism, i.e., making the structure of structural racism and racialized outcomes visible as a system (powell 2008). Such maps can be used to help people see a system as a whole (versus isolated components or silos), identify gaps in our knowledge of a system where we need to do more research, and most importantly, map and identify solutions as leverage points [1] for systems change. When combined with data and more formal computer modeling, system

dynamics can be used to support the evaluation of existing and planned changes in policies, programs, and practices; guide and build support for investment decisions; and develop transformative cross-sector solutions for advancing racial equity and social justice.

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[1] A leverage point is a place in a system where small changes can have big effects (Meadows 1999)

Appendix 3
List of Data Sources

- a. Interviews**
- b. Formal reports**
- c. Common Ground community conversations October 2020**
 - i. Full analysis to be released in 2021
- d. Public comments**