

01-06-2021 Town Council Meeting Responses to Council Questions

ITEM #2: Government Alliance on Race and Equity & County-wide Framework Update

Council Question:

Can you say more about the data referenced on p. 27 of the packet, particularly on what kind of data would be indexed that would be disaggregated by race?

Staff Response:

The Racial Equity Tool requires an analysis of community indicators to identify and quantify desired results. Examples of community indicators are data sets on policy issues that can be disaggregated by race. Housing, employment, business ownership, and education are examples of community indicator data. Once desired results are identified, additional data will be collected to evaluate policy outcomes and set performance measures. Again, this data would need to be disaggregated by race. Examples of performance measures would include community engagement demographics and program recipient demographics.

Council Question:

Who is a part of the GARE team leadership from Orange Co, Chapel Hill, Carrboro and Hillsborough that is drafting a shared framework?

Council Question:

Who are on the Cross-Jurisdictional Committees?

Staff Response:

The cross-jurisdictional team includes:

- *Annette Moore, Human Rights and Relations Director – Orange County*
- *Anita Jones-McNair, Recreation and Parks Director – Town of Carrboro*
- *Sarah Vinas, Housing and Community Assistant Director – Town of Chapel Hill*
- *Rae Buckley, Organizational and Strategic Initiatives Director – Town of Chapel Hill*
- *Haley Bizzell, Interim Human Services Director – Town of Hillsborough*
- *Jen Della Valle, Assistant to the Town Manager – Town of Hillsborough*

Council Question:

Can we have access to an initial draft of this shared framework when it is ready?

Staff Response:

Yes, we plan to share the framework with Council once it is drafted.

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Council Question:

From my perspective, a racial equity toolkit would be applied not just to COVID recovery efforts or rethinking community safety, as referenced in the packet materials, but to all decisions made by staff and by the Council. Is there work being done to make a toolkit that would be used in any Council or staff decision?

Staff Response:

The GARE program instructed staff to apply the Racial Equity Tool to issues as they arose to the extent that was possible. Shifting to the use of the Racial Equity Tool in any Council and staff decision requires organizational resources and executive direction. If the Council is interested in setting this expectation the Manager can provide more information about how it could be done and the resources that would be needed for implementation.

Council Question:

How has the toolkit been applied to the Re-Imagining Community Safety Project?

Staff Response:

Staff proposed using the GARE toolkit for this project. We are working with the Task Force steering committee and will also work with any outside consultants who are hired to assist with this effort to consider ways that the GARE model could be applied to this effort.

Council Question:

What data points are planned to be collected on community engagement participation?

Staff Response:

We have collected basic demographic information using a short paper survey distributed at in-person engagement meetings or included questions in on-line opinion surveys. For a recent example, please see the Climate Action opinion survey [here](#).¹

Council Question:

What is the status of the piloting new approaches (adding racial equity questions to funding apps, NSC, and demographic data collection)? Are they already being implemented?

Council Question:

What are Neighborhood Support Circles?

Staff Response:

The pilot examples are all currently being implemented. Staff plan to include additional details

¹ <https://www.townofchapelhill.org/Home/ShowDocument?id=47696>

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about each of these efforts in the presentation. See below for additional information about our Neighborhood Support Circles (NSC).

Neighborhood Support Circles: *We are partnering with [Refugee Community Partnership](https://refugeecommunitypartnership.org/)² (RCP) to provide neighborhood based scholastic and childcare support to low-income families with children. The program provides families served by the program with vital support, created 10 new jobs for low-income residents from the community, and incorporates ongoing training and professional development opportunities for the NSC staff. We are supporting 12 NSCs in the community, serving families from Spanish, Burmese, Karen, Chin, Swahili/Kinyarwanda, and English speaking communities. All families participating in the program are Black, Indigenous, or People of Color (BIPOC). The feedback we have received continues to be overwhelmingly positive from both the children and parents. Some successes have included: parents facing unemployment finding jobs due to having childcare for the first time in many months, children connecting with their teachers for the first time this school year and catching up on assignments, and NSC staff facilitating connections between families, the school system, and community resources. The NSCs will continue to run this semester as CHCCS continues remote learning and we are exploring options to expand the program and securing additional resources.*

Council Question:

Has this work included thinking through how elected bodies would engage with this effort and use the toolkit in decision-making?

Staff Response:

The level of engagement will be determined by the elected bodies during the Racial Equity Planning process. Of the municipalities that are in the GARE network, many of the elected officials have gone through the same training as staff. And when the elected bodies decide to use the Racial Equity Tool it is used as a standard operating procedure for items that come before Council involving program decisions and resource allocation. The Racial Equity Tool is not a legal foundation for zoning decisions but can be used to consider Town investments and policies related to land use, such as affordable housing and transportation access.

² <https://refugeecommunitypartnership.org/>

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Council Question:

What is the plan to provide on-going training, mentoring, and support for managers and staff who are using the tool?

Staff Response:

GARE provided a Train-the-trainer program that will allow staff to provide each other training. GARE also provides an on-line portal with resources and monthly discussion forums.

Council Question:

How can we ensure staff have time to do the meaningful analysis required of an equity analysis?

Staff Response:

Racial equity analysis requires meaningful community engagement, data analysis and accountability. The Community Connections Strategy and Work Plan are focused on building deeper relationships with the African-American community and other marginalized populations. These efforts can be leveraged to support on-going engagement on Town issues. Data collection requires start-up costs and on-going maintenance. The County-wide GARE team is researching options to build a shared racial equity database (sometimes referred to as a Racial Equity Index) that will be shared with the draft framework. Accountability is set by the Council and implemented by the Town Manager. If the Council decides to require a racial equity analysis as a part of the research and information that is provided by staff to inform Council decisions, the Manager can provide more information about how it could be done and the resources that would be needed for implementation. Resources can involve an investment in new personnel and/or a re-prioritization of existing resources.