

## 05-05-2021 Town Council Meeting Responses to Council Questions

### **ITEM #13: Receive the Draft Long-Term Recovery and Transformation Plan**

#### **Council Question:**

What would endorsement of the Long-Term Recovery and Transformation Plan entail in terms of the Town's commitments, financial or otherwise?

#### **Staff Response:**

*An endorsement by the Town Council would represent support for moving forward with the final version of the plan, relying largely on existing Town programs, projects, partnerships, and funding commitments. An endorsement would also represent a willingness to consider future action and funding proposals (e.g., [American Jobs Plan](#)<sup>4</sup>) that could help to address gaps or enhancements using existing Town activities that align with the goals, strategies, and initiatives within the recovery plan.*

#### **Council Question:**

Can you provide some data (demographics of people, locations/mediums of meetings, number of meetings, ideas/feedback raised at such meetings, etc) on the plan review surveys and meetings?

#### **Staff Response:**

*Starting on page 126 of the plan, Appendix B: Stakeholder Engagement Summary includes information about the purpose, method and key takeaways from major engagement activities that took place between August 2020 and February 2021. The [resources section](#)<sup>5</sup> of the project website includes information about different outreach and communication efforts related to the plan. Demographics and other data appear within several of the reports listed below:*

- [Impact Assessment: Key Findings](#)<sup>6</sup>
- [Impact Assessment](#)<sup>7</sup>
- [Community Values Survey](#)<sup>8</sup>

*We will share the question above with the Project Management Team (PMT) to see what other data are available related to public input and engagement.*

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<sup>4</sup> <https://www.whitehouse.gov/american-jobs-plan/>

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.orangencforward.org/resources/>

<sup>6</sup> [https://www.orangencforward.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/Impact-Assessment-Key-Findings\\_Final.pdf](https://www.orangencforward.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/Impact-Assessment-Key-Findings_Final.pdf)

<sup>7</sup> [https://www.orangencforward.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/Impact-Assessment\\_102620.pdf](https://www.orangencforward.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/Impact-Assessment_102620.pdf)

<sup>8</sup> [https://www.orangencforward.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/Community\\_Values\\_Survey\\_Summary\\_10.13.20.pdf](https://www.orangencforward.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/Community_Values_Survey_Summary_10.13.20.pdf)

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### **Council Question:**

Was there any discussion or thinking about how to support women-owned or minority owned businesses, which are referenced in the Plan?

### **Staff Response:**

*Pages 8-9 highlight a series of initiatives, including: "Promoting equitable capitalization of businesses owned by people of color to enable greater participation in the economy and to improve equitable access to financial resources."*

*Starting on page 13, under the Economic section, Strategy 1.1: Provide support for small businesses includes the following:*

- *Target metric: "Increase number of new small businesses owned by people of color"*
- *Initiative 1.1.3: Establish communication channels between economic development practitioners as well as to and from businesses in Orange County, includes among other tactics the following: "Work with EmPOWERment Inc., to identify business owners of color who are sharing information and best practices."*

*Unless the Council has other specific interests, staff will plan to share the question above with the Project Management Team (PMT) to see what other options there are for specifically addressing support for women-owned or minority owned businesses.*

### **Council Question:**

Why was there no public transit involvement in developing the plan and why does the recovery plan ignore public transit?

### **Staff Response:**

*On pages 76-77, under Human Services and Strategy 4.1: Promote job opportunities that provide thriving wages or increase quality of life, Initiative 4.2.3 calls for: "Support(ing) coordination between regional, county, and municipal transportation systems by securing additional funding."*

*Specific implementation steps include:*

*"Year 0-1*

- *Utilize findings from county and municipal transit plans to identify resource requirements for the expansion of transportation systems across the county.*

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- *Analyze current transportation system throughout the region, county, and municipalities to identify areas of duplication, and to identify geographic gaps in transportation services.*
- *Establish a committee or workgroup between coordinating organizations and partners to conduct a cost estimate, and begin identifying funding sources (federal, state, and local) that could be used to accomplish transportation goals.*
- *Evaluate areas of the plan that could be aligned with Climate Action Planning occurring in the county.*

#### *Years 1+*

- *Acquire and solidify funding sources to accomplish transportation expansion and to accomplish the centralization of transportation systems across the county.*
- *Conduct a thorough analysis of the impact of implemented changes to the socioeconomic atmosphere in Orange County and the budgetary savings incurred due to the streamlining of public transportation services.*
- *Market the initiative to the public to keep them informed of the plan's goals and progress.*
- *Continue to seek additional funding for ongoing improvements to transportation systems."*

*If there is more the Council would like to see regarding specific initiatives as they relate to public transit, staff can share these specific interests with the Project Management Team, as well.*

#### **Council Question:**

The consultant has a slide dedicated to racial equity. Where is the racial equity lens in the recommendations? There is no mention of minority businesses specifically or how they will be supported in the plan.

#### **Council Question:**

Although the introductory material talks about racial equity, I do not see it reflected in any of the strategies and initiatives. For example, on page 250 (economic strategies) there is nothing about assisting minority owned small businesses, which tend to be disproportionately impacted by something like COVID-19?

#### **Staff Response:**

*Under the Equitable Community Engagement section (pp. 8-9), the plan notes that "deliberate attention [was] paid to elevating the concerns and needs of communities of color that have been disproportionately harmed by the pandemic." This work included a series of meetings with*

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*community leaders in the Lantinx, African American/Black, Mandarin-Chinese speaking, Burmese speaking and Karen speaking communities to develop initiatives that could help address the challenges shared by these leaders and community members.*

*In terms of recommendations, Appendix E: Strategy Prioritization Results (p. 145) describes how initiatives and strategies were evaluated based on the following criteria:*

- *The number of community recovery needs the initiative addresses;*
- *The popularity of the initiative based on a survey of the community's preferences;*
- *The ability of the initiative to address needs of communities of color;*
- *The ability of the initiative to promote long-term resilience.*

*The detailed prioritization spreadsheet supporting Appendix E was weighted so that input from communities of color matched the disproportionate impacts found in the Impact Assessment. In other words, what was said to be important by the groups most affected by Covid is proportionately reflected in which strategies and initiatives have priority within the plan.*

*Additionally, under the Integration with the Government Alliance on Race and Equity section (also pp. 8-9), the plan specifically points to a list of initiatives that were raised by stakeholders and that most closely align with the "intent and focus of the GARE planning group"—as well as the county-wide racial equity plan that is scheduled for release later this year. These specific initiatives are listed below:*

- *Developing a systematic approach to countywide community engagement, focusing on creating meaningful opportunities for engagement with communities of color so that their needs are better represented by units of local government.*
- *Partnering with schools to establish mandatory bias and racial sensitivity training for educators to prevent further widening of the achievement gap by making schools welcoming to students of all races and ethnicities.*
- *Promoting equitable capitalization of businesses owned by people of color to enable greater participation in the economy and to improve equitable access to financial resources.*

*The consulting team informed us that, in some instances and at the consensus recommendation of certain working groups (e.g., Economic recovery), the wording of titles and headers within the plan are purposefully broad in order to be more inclusive of all groups. At the same time, stakeholders also agreed that it was important to include specific initiatives and actions (like those listed above) that reinforce the plan's emphasis on advancing racial equity in connection to other related county-wide activities (e.g. racial equity plan).*

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*If there is more the Council would like to see regarding specific initiatives or actions as they relate to racial equity, staff can share these interests with the Project Management Team, as well.*

### **Council Question:**

On page 252, why are there no programs to address vaccine hesitancy? Also, it would seem appropriate to evaluate the performance of the OC Health Dept. (as well as other OC departments) to see if there are lessons to be learned.

### **Staff Response:**

*In terms of project timing, the draft plan was released before vaccines were widely available to the general public and so vaccine hesitancy wasn't the issue it is today. This helps reinforce the point that the document is also intended to be dynamic as we move forward.*

*As a point of connection, on pages 48-50, under Health and Strategy 3.1: Continue monitoring, testing, and eradicating COVID-19, the plan outlines:*

- A key performance indicator (KPI) for the number of fully administered vaccinations and a target to increase the baseline count*
- Initiative 3.1.1: Continue to provide equitable and accessible testing and vaccines for COVID-19 for free or minimal cost, includes a variety of outreach and distribution tactics for vaccinations*

*Unless the Council has other specific interests, staff will plan to share the question and comment above with the Project Management Team (PMT) to see what other options there are for specifically addressing vaccine hesitancy and broadening performance evaluation.*

### **Council Question:**

On page 256 it would seem appropriate to address improving collaboration between jurisdictions in OC.

### **Staff Response:**

*The team structure and design of the implementation process are intended to reinforce the importance of collaboration between jurisdictions in Orange County. Specifically, in addition to key stakeholders from different local sectors and organizations, the seven recovery working groups will include public staff from each of the participating local governments.*

*Regarding the strategies and initiatives listed on page 256 of the Council packet, intergovernmental collaboration will be essential. For this reason, in many cases multiple local governments will be directly responsible for coordinating each of the initiatives (e.g., Initiative 7.1.1: Coordinating Organizations: Local Government Public Information Officers).*