

City of Austin Equity Office Update



Vision & Mission



*The **vision** of the City of Austin is to make Austin the most livable city in the nation **for ALL**.*

*The **mission** of the City of Austin Equity Office is to provide leadership, guidance, and insight on equity to improve the quality of life for Austinites.*

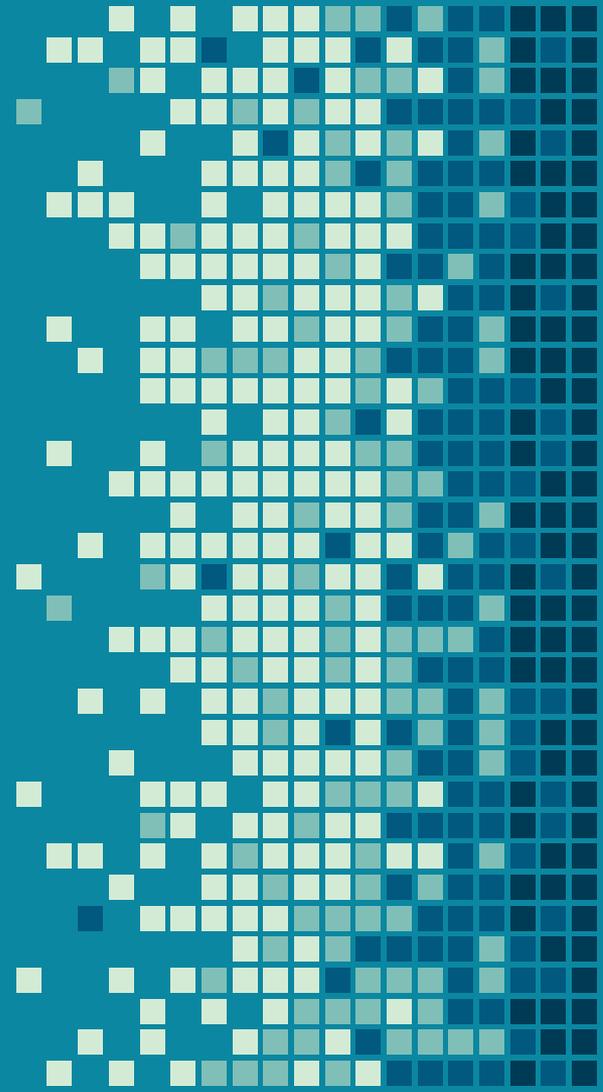
A Tale of Two Cities



Austin is the best place to live in the nation
according to *U.S. News and World Report*

&

One of the most economically segregated
cities in the U.S. according to the *Martin
Prosperity Institute*



Areas of Concentrated Poverty

Percent Poverty by Census Tract, Austin MSA, 2010-2014, ACS 5-Year Data

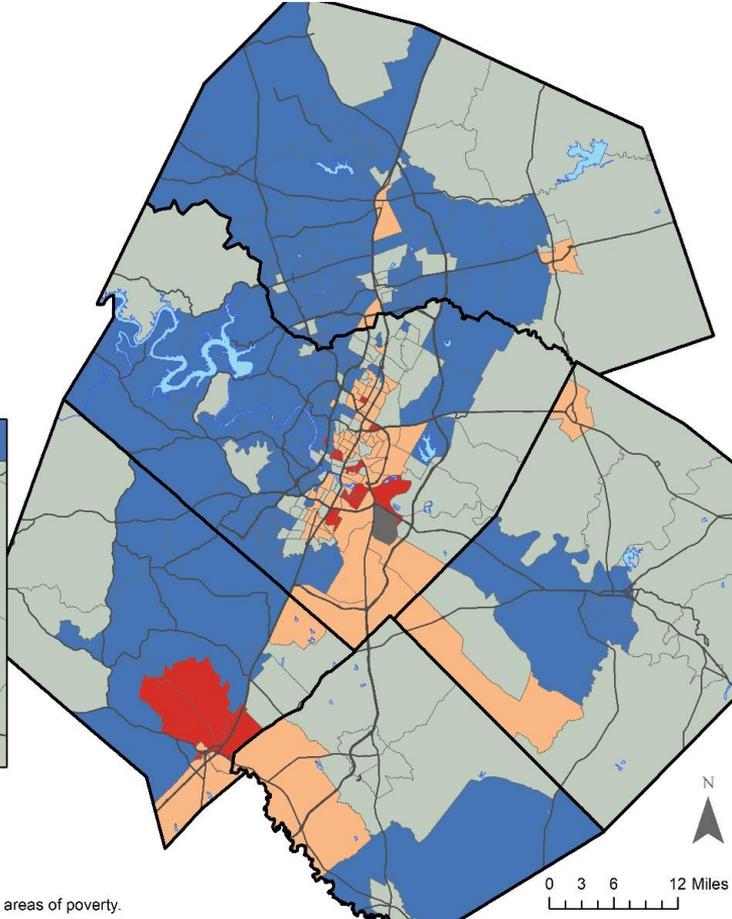
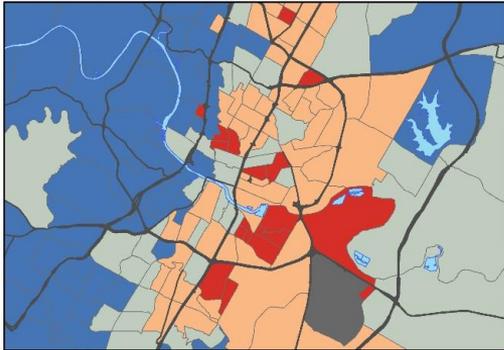
Legend

- County
- Highways
- Water
- Airport

Percent Poverty by Census Tract

- Less than 10%
- 10% to 20%
- 20% to 40%
- Over 40%

Inset: Central Travis County



Brookings reports people living in concentrated poverty face

- higher crime rates
- poorer physical health
- low-performing schools
- higher drop out rates
- poor job-seeking networks

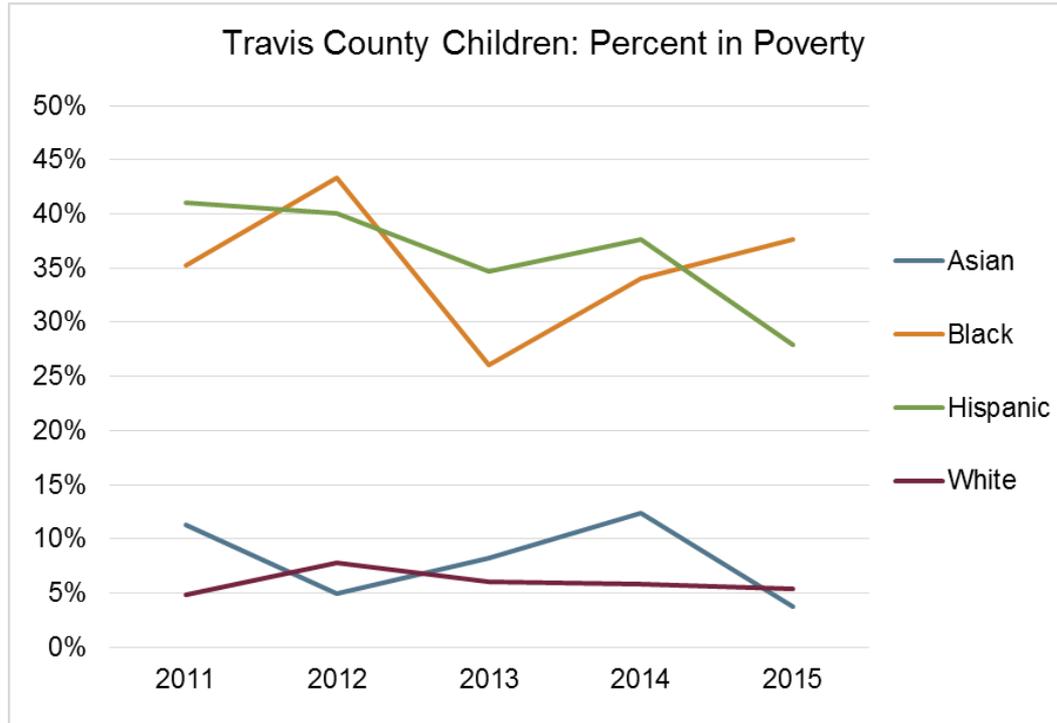
 Community Advancement Network

Map produced by CAN from U.S. Census Bureau, 5-Year, 2010-2014, American Community Survey data. (Table C17002: Ratio of Income to Poverty Level in Past 12 Months)
Census tracts with high student populations tend to correlate with high areas of poverty.

0 3 6 12 Miles



Child poverty disparities, Travis County



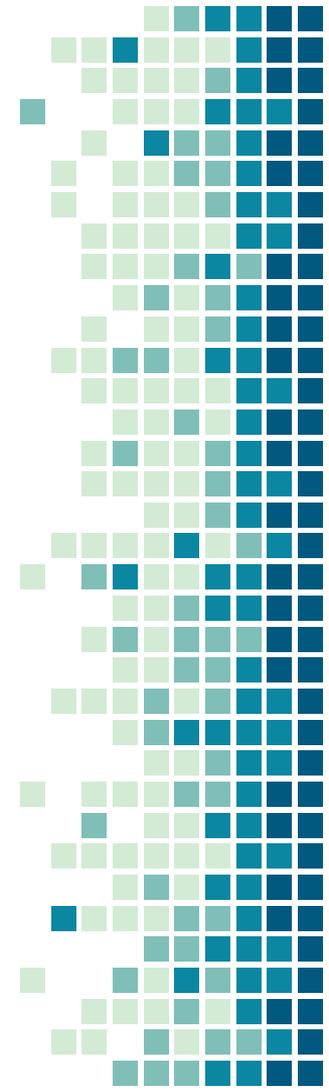
Hispanic and Black children are **5 to 7** times more likely to live in poverty than White or Asian children.

Source: American Community Survey, 1-Year data, 2015

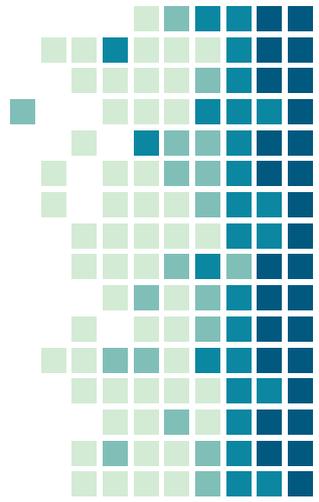


Challenge of Naming Equity Issues

- Public Health = Health Disparities
- Economic Development = Wealth Gap
- Criminal Justice = Disproportionality
- Education = Achievement Gap
- Technology = Digital Divide



What Does Equity Look Like to You?



COA Equity Statement

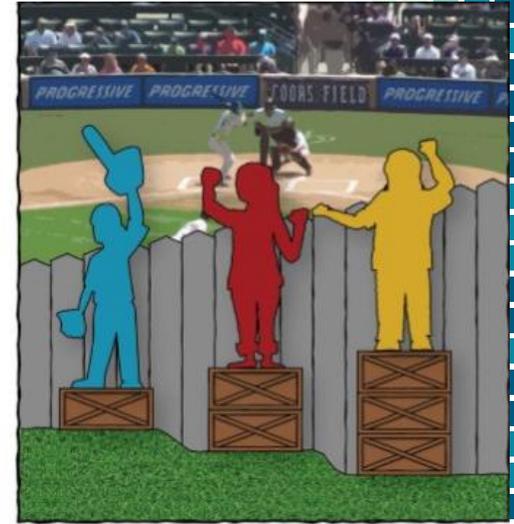
Racial equity is the condition when race no longer predicts a person's quality of life outcomes in our community.

The City recognizes that race is the primary determinant of social equity and therefore we begin the journey toward social equity with this definition.

The City of Austin recognizes historical and structural disparities and a need for alleviation of these wrongs by critically transforming its institutions and creating a culture of equity.



EQUALITY



EQUITY

Acknowledging How We Got Here

Inheriting inequality

“As greater Austin booms, the poisonous legacy of segregation continues to cut off the African-American population from economic opportunities and its own cultural anchors, threatening the whole region's potential. American-Statesman three-part series.”

<http://projects.statesman.com/news/economic-mobility/>



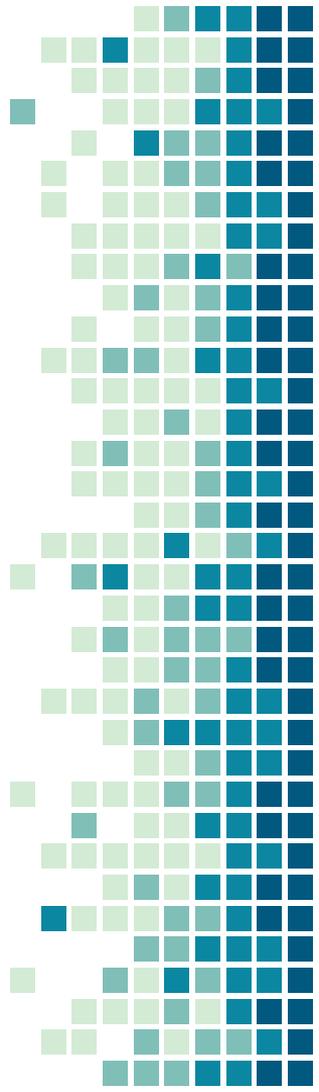
Bias

■ The evaluation of one group and its members relative to another.

- We all carry bias, or prejudice. Acting on biases can be discriminatory and can create negative outcomes for particular groups.



Source: Unconscious (Implicit) Bias and Health Disparities: Where Do We Go from Here?





An example of “Colorblindness”

Replicated Study done by Southampton University

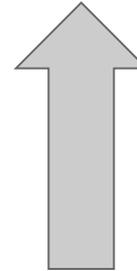
19,000 emails to public service departments including Libraries, Schools, Sheriffs, County Treasurers and Clerk’s Offices

Identical email requests apart from names.

Black sounding names were both:

- less likely to receive a response
- less likely to have a cordial, respectful response

Susan
Smith



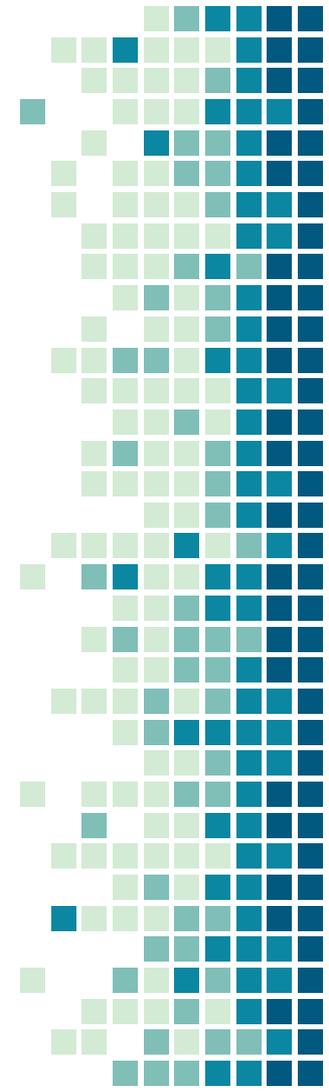
LaKesha
Washington

Austin's Opportunity to Drive Equity

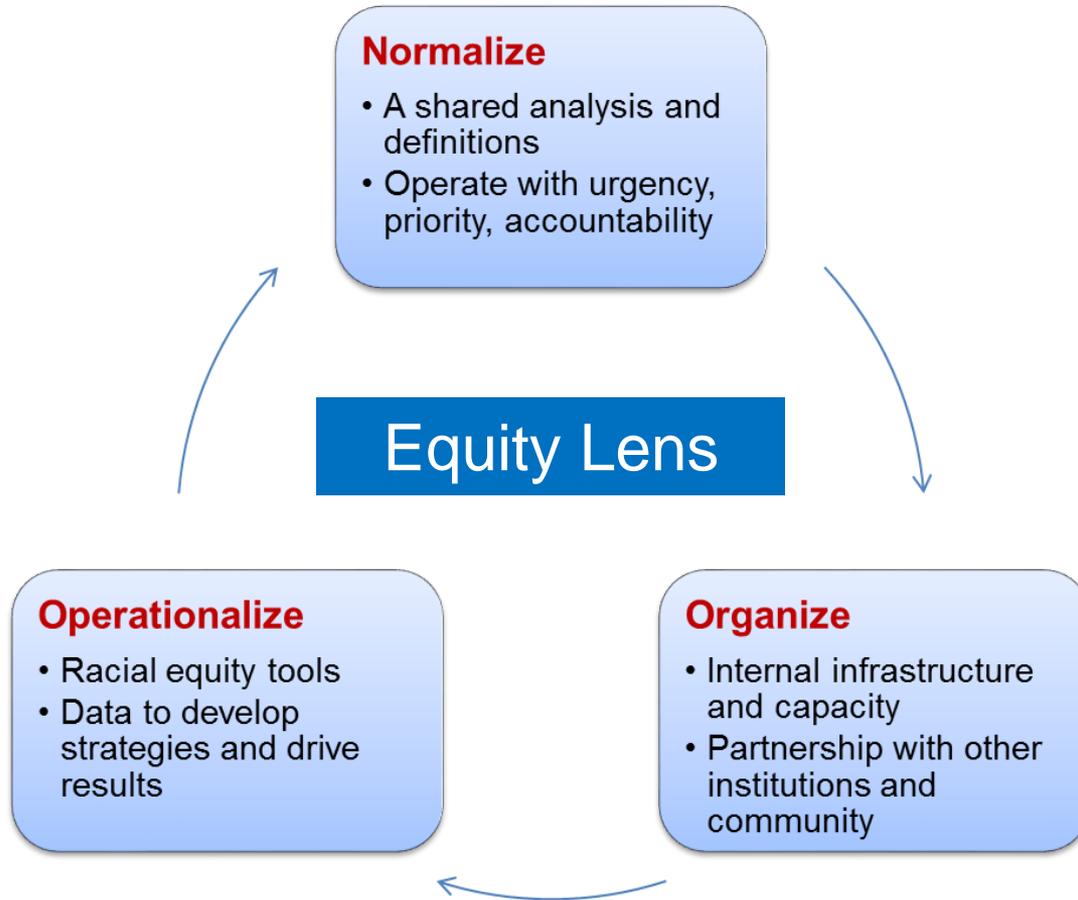
Key Areas of Departmental CHOICE

- **Planning:** What to change and prioritize in programs?
- **Budgeting:** what items do we add or cut and what initiatives get the funding?
- **Personnel:** who to hire, retain, promote, or develop as leaders
- **Policy Development:** what to propose or modify?
- **Practices:** routines/habits and or expectations to set

The cumulative impacts of small choices can lead to BIG influence on outcomes and equity



Building a Framework for Equity



How was the equity tool developed?

- Equity Action team members logging nearly 900 hours of volunteer time
- 6 Steps for Building Racial Equity- Government Alliance on Race and Equity (GARE)
- Council's Six Strategic Priority Outcomes

What does an equity tool cover?

1. Department Culture
2. Community Engagement
3. Budgeting
4. Alignment with Advancing Equity
5. Unintended Outcomes

Equity Assessment Core Elements

Lead with
Race/Ethnicity

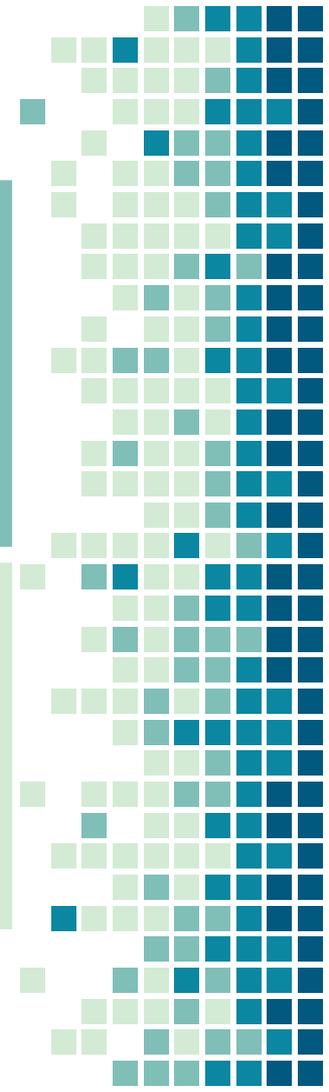
Focus on human
centered design and
institutional
empathy

Engage residents,
especially those
adversely affected,
in decision making

Bring conscious
attention to racial
inequities and
disparities *before*
decisions are made

Avoid or minimize
adverse impacts and
unintended
consequences

Affirm our
commitment to
equity, inclusion, and
diversity



Equity Assessment Pilot

- Austin Water
- Economic Development
- Human Resources
- Parks and Recreation
- Public Health
- Library
- Public Works
- Transportation

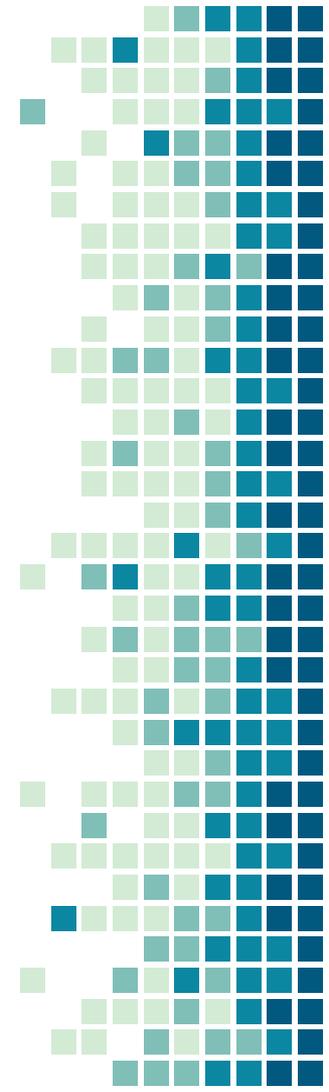


COURAGE...

...is contagious

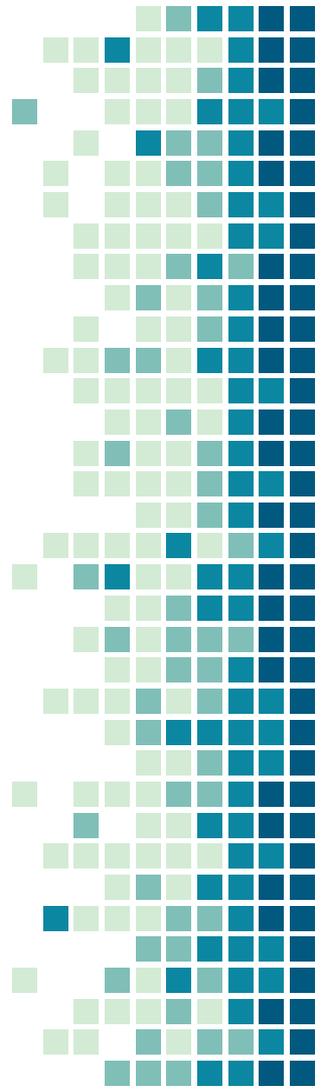
Outcome Evaluation

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Hiring and Training<ul style="list-style-type: none">◦ Use of community orgs, boards and commissions, and chambers of commerce to ID candidates• Information Sharing<ul style="list-style-type: none">◦ Standards for document translation and evaluation of cultural appropriateness	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Data Collection and Measurement<ul style="list-style-type: none">◦ Lack of disaggregated client, contractor and consultant data• Community Engagement<ul style="list-style-type: none">◦ Lack of definitive processes or use of passive processes in gathering input
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Programming<ul style="list-style-type: none">◦ Programs across city are natural touchpoints for engagement and input• Cross-Department Collaboration<ul style="list-style-type: none">◦ Individual department strengths can address city-wide issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Funding<ul style="list-style-type: none">◦ Lack of tracking or ability to connect budget line items directly to equity initiatives and goals.• Disproportional Effects<ul style="list-style-type: none">◦ Well-intentioned policies disadvantaging marginalized groups



Next Steps

- Recognized internationally by the Open Governments Partnership as a **STAR** level intervention
- Working with 1st cohort of departments to implement Equity Action Plans for FY 19
- Launched the third cohort of departments
- Adopting a vision of having 100% of departments participating by 2020 currently at 75% to goal
- Working to build an Equity Academy to expand training opportunities
- Introducing a cycle of continuous improvement around equity





■ Questions and Discussion

THANKS!

Any
questions?