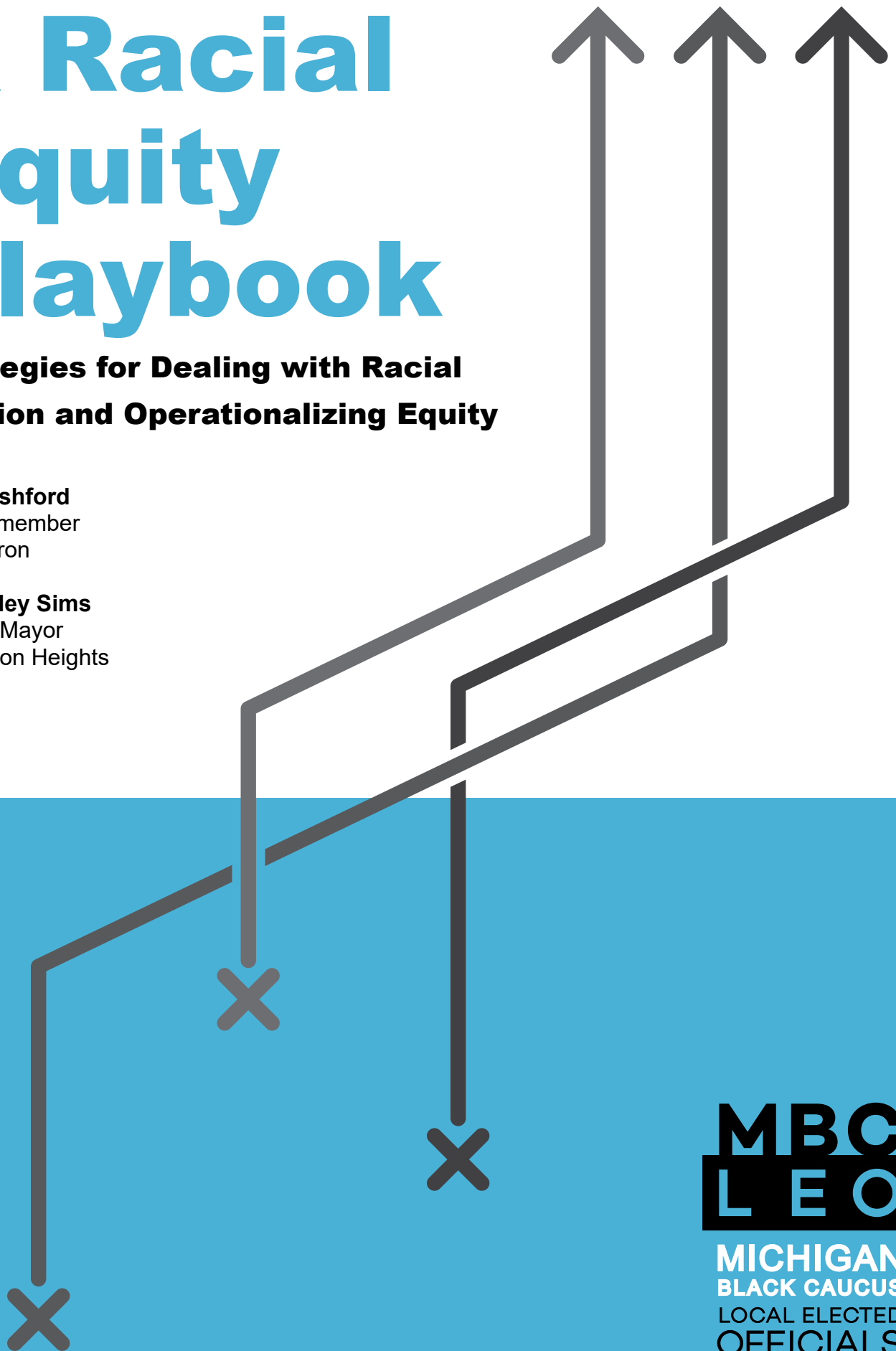


A Racial Equity Playbook

**Strategies for Dealing with Racial
Tension and Operationalizing Equity**

Anita Ashford
Councilmember
Port Huron

Kimberley Sims
Former Mayor
Muskegon Heights



**MICHIGAN
BLACK CAUCUS
LOCAL ELECTED
OFFICIALS**

**“The time is
always right to
do what is right.”**

—Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

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INTRODUCTION

The members of the Michigan Black Caucus of Local Elected Officials (MBC-LEO) have been called to action.

Out of a sense of urgency and necessity, we have put together this Playbook on dealing with racial tension and ways to operationalize equity. We have been in the struggle for equity for years across our nation. The shooting of Jacob Blake on August 23, 2020, and the death of George Floyd on May 25, 2020, and countless others affirm that racial injustice today continues to wreak havoc on Black Americans and people of color. It is completely unacceptable and calls for real reform.

We'd like to offer you this Playbook of strategies to help you get started on your journey to having a more equitable community. In addition, the resources included will equip leaders who may experience racial incidents in their communities.

In this publication, you'll find a pledge from the Michigan Department of Civil Rights. We ask that you take the pledge, assess your community's

policies and procedures, and start to make institutional changes—not just in policing, but throughout your municipality. We have also included a racial tension checklist, courtesy of the National League of Cities, in case you find your community dealing with a racial incident. And, we have provided a toolkit from Seattle's Race and Social Justice Initiative.

In addition, we'd like to introduce you to L.O.V.E. Based Policing as a strategy for improving police-community relations. The film, *WALKING WHILE BLACK: L.O.V.E. Is The Answer* by A.J. Ali, is improving relations between police and Black and Brown people by transforming the narrative from conflict to L.O.V.E.

It is our sincere hope that the various resources we have selected and assembled in this Playbook will help you become more knowledgeable and prepared to make a difference.

— MBC-LEO Membership





Greetings,

As elected officials, we are leading through some very unprecedented times. Our communities are facing physical, social, and economic tensions on a daily basis. In many cases, these tensions are creating extreme stress for our constituents and communities. The current situation has revealed something about the world that many of us have known for a long time—existing systems are flawed.

As leaders in our communities, we are expected to have answers and solutions to myriad challenges that arise. This Playbook was developed to assist local officials by putting

researched, easy-to-use information in their hands. The goal of this document is to provide a step-by-step format you can follow when leading your community through a difficult situation—and while building a foundation for a more equitable and just community.

We hope you will use this playbook as you address the issues you are facing. We are here to help. If you need further assistance, please feel free to reach out to us. Our goal is to help all of us be the best leaders we can be. Together we can do this.

Better to Best,

Lois Allen-Richardson

Past President, Michigan Black Caucus of Local Elected Officials
Former Mayor, City of Ypsilanti

EQUALITY

Is Giving Everyone a Pair of Shoes

EQUITY

Is Giving Everyone a Pair of Shoes that Fit

ABOUT MBC-LEO

In March 2004, at the Michigan Municipal League Capital Conference in Lansing, the Michigan Black Caucus of Local Elected Officials (MBC-LEO) was organized and elected its first Board of Directors. At that time, there were 45 Black local elected officials in the state of Michigan. Today, that number has more than doubled. In September 2004, MBC-LEO officially became an affiliate organization of the Michigan Municipal League.

The purpose of MBC-LEO is to provide a forum for its members to collaborate, network, coach, mentor, share information, and provide support to one another in the state of Michigan. The caucus works in cooperation with the Michigan Municipal League (MML). Membership of MBC-LEO is comprised of local elected officials and municipal staff members and associates in the state of Michigan.

Some of the areas of focus for MBC-LEO include:

- Housing
- Criminal Justice/Policing
- Education
- Healthcare
- Economic Prosperity
- Race & Equity

During League annual events, MBC-LEO has hosted sessions highlighting these areas of focus. In addition, the organization has hosted fundraising dinners with guest speakers, hosted several Race and Law Enforcement forums, and granted several book scholarships to college students.

Today, we are facing perilous times as a country and nation, and more specifically with how racial inequity is impacting the lives of Black Americans and people of color. We as members of MBC-LEO are committed to lead and equip ourselves, and others, with the tools needed to build inclusive and equitable communities.

ADDRESS

MBC-LEO, c/o Michigan Municipal League
1675 Green Road, Ann Arbor, MI 48105

PHONE

800-653-2483



RACE AND LAW ENFORCEMENT FORUMS

In 2015, after several high-profile cases of Black men and women being killed at the hands of police, MBC-LEO was compelled to act. A series of Race and Law Enforcement Forums was created to build trust and communication between law enforcement representatives, municipal officials, and citizens. The events were held in Saginaw, Southfield, and Holland, and hundreds attended from across the state.

Below are some of the lessons learned from the forums that could be included in your racial equity toolbox.

- Black Americans are 2.5 times as likely as white Americans to be shot and killed by police officers.*
- From pregnancy to life expectancy, race can determine your success in life.
- Plan ahead for a racial incident. If you wait until you are in the middle of a racial incident/crisis, it's too late.
- Lost relationships take years to build up, so communicate and focus on the relationships with your citizens now.
- People want to be heard and affirmed.
- There is more to reducing crime than policing.
- Policing is community involvement.
- Diversity, equity, and inclusion must be addressed in all municipal operations.
- Change must be made intentionally.
- Racial disparities are prevalent in education, criminal justice, health care, environment, employment, housing, arts/culture, and the media.

**Lowery, W. "Aren't More White People than Black People Killed by Police? Yes, but No." The Washington Post, July 11, 2016.*





PLEDGE FOR RACIAL EQUITY

The pledge aims to promote racial equity by encouraging collective action to build inclusive communities. This pledge acknowledges the need for cities, counties, school districts and organizational leaders to work on cultivating a trusting environment, where all ideas are welcome, and where residents and workspaces are empowered to openly talk about racial justice in efforts to dismantle institutional and structural racism.

The pledge serves a reminder of our commitment to achieving inclusive practices and procedures throughout our communities while supporting other jurisdictions to do the same. The persistent inequities across our country and state, remind us of the urgent need to address discriminatory practices in efforts to effectively promote equity within our communities, and reduce the gaps reflected in all indicators for success. As leaders of our communities, we recognize that we play a critical role in ensuring that equity is core to our cities, counties, schools and workplace culture. Moreover, we acknowledge that inclusive environments thrive in the innovation, creativity and broader perspectives that reside in diversity.

The pledge is embedded in the shared recognition that dismantling a system of advantage based on race is a multi-faceted task, and that we need to tackle it holistically to better engage and support all marginalized groups. We all have internalized racialized messages that shape biases at a personal/interpersonal level, and we all have a social responsibility to unlearn them. To do this, we believe that we need to address honestly and head-on the concerns and needs of all people. This means committing to three initial goals that we hope will catalyze further conversation and action around diversity, equity and inclusion within our communities.

1. **WHEREAS, the City/County/School District of _____ will continue to make our communities and workplaces trusting places by having complex, and sometimes difficult, conversations about racism, diversity, equity and inclusion:** we will create and maintain environments, platforms and forums where our residents feel comfortable reaching out to their colleagues to gain greater awareness of each other's experiences and perspectives. By encouraging ongoing dialogues and not tolerating any incongruence with these values of openness, we are building trust, encouraging compassion and open-mindedness, and reinforcing our commitment to a culture of inclusivity that acknowledges racism as real and pursues equity through racially conscious approaches.



2. **WHEREAS, the City/County/School District of _____ will implement and expand implicit bias education:** the field of implicit bias reminds us that we all have unconscious biases. Implicit (unconscious) bias education enables individuals and institutions to begin recognizing, acknowledging, and therefore engaging in debiasing strategies to implement change. We will commit to rolling out and/or expanding implicit bias education within our local municipalities and institutions. By helping our employees and residents recognize their blind spots, we aim to facilitate more open and honest conversations and socially conscious steps for inclusive practices.

3. **WHEREAS, the City/County/School District of _____ will share best—and unsuccessful—practices:** as many local jurisdictions are still developing their strategies and are at different stages in their journey of increasing racial consciousness and cultural awareness, we will commit to identifying our best successes or least successful initiatives strategies to share with others. We also pledge to create accountability systems within our communities and institutions to measure, monitor and evaluate our own progress, and to share regular updates with the **Equity Office of the Michigan Department of Civil Rights** in order to catalog effective programs and measurement practices. We believe that by sharing and learning with each other, we can strengthen our inclusive practices and commitment to better serve our communities.

We recognize that these three goals are not the complete answer, yet we believe they are important concrete steps toward building more equitable workplaces and communities. By working together toward achieving equity we can cultivate racially conscious change that anticipates unintended outcomes and does not rely on good intentions, but on the awareness that we all have work to do to dismantle systems of advantage, embedded in cultural mindsets and practices that sustain racial inequity.

I affirm that I value human diversity and inclusion in all its forms. I recognize that our communities have been impacted by racialized messages which contribute to the formation of unconscious biases. I am opposed to and will find ways to speak out against discrimination.

Signature/s of City/County/School District/Organizational Leader



Municipal Action Guide

Responding to Racial Tension in Your City

With support from:

**WELLS
FARGO**

RACIAL TENSION CHECKLISTS

Over the next few pages you'll find racial tension checklists from the National League of Cities Municipal Action Guide. These will help you when you are responding to and communicating during a crisis. We've also included a list of potential stakeholders that you may want to be communicating with during this time. Please review the NLC document in its entirety for additional information.



Crisis Response Checklist

Convene all cabinet/executive level staff to ensure city leadership is briefed from outset.

Consult with municipal legal counsel to ascertain any issues of municipal liability.

Identify options for independent investigation in consultation with legal counsel.

Establish a clear and direct line of communication with police chief.

Identify elected leadership/staff and clearly state roles for internal response team; (i.e., spokesperson, family/victim liaison, media liaison, etc.). Set the tone.

Articulate a balanced message to law enforcement leadership and personnel.

Prioritize outreach to family/victim(s).

Engage community stakeholders.

Develop an asset map of community stakeholders. Establish direct lines of communication to family/victim(s), community stakeholders, and the public.

Establish/review crowd management response policies with police chief and response team.

Continue to communicate updates to and any need for support from county, state, and federal officials.



Communications Checklist

Designate a primary spokesperson and a backup spokesperson.

Understand your audience and who you are communicating with. (Note: your key audience is always your constituents, even if you are on the national news.)

Gather information and be thoroughly briefed by relevant agency and community stakeholders before you make any written or verbal statements.

Based on your audience, identify the appropriate communication methods and channels for disseminating information to this audience.

Ensure that all audiences' language needs and access needs are considered and addressed (i.e. non-English speakers; hearing impaired; digital divide; elderly; etc.).

Establish a regular schedule of updates to manage expectations around information sharing; communicate the schedule transparently.

Stick to the facts and acknowledge context.

Do not simply say "no comment." Provide factual responses about why you may not have an answer in the moment and be transparent to the extent legally appropriate.

Track and respond to media and community requests.

Maintain a crisis communications inventory, a running document of statements, speakers, and coverage.

Stay calm and composed even when asked tough questions.

Stakeholder Checklist

Local Government

Law Enforcement

County, state, and federal government

Nonprofit, community-based organizations

Neighborhood groups

Religious community

Health services/mental health services/hospitals

Education community

Business community

National organizations

Philanthropic organizations

Seattle Race and Social Justice Initiative

Racial Equity Toolkit

to Assess Policies, Initiatives, Programs, and Budget Issues

The vision of the Seattle Race and Social Justice Initiative is to eliminate racial inequity in the community. To do this requires ending [individual racism](#), [institutional racism](#) and [structural racism](#). The Racial Equity Toolkit lays out a process and a set of questions to guide the development, implementation and evaluation of policies, initiatives, programs, and budget issues to address the impacts on racial equity.

When Do I Use This Toolkit?

Early. Apply the toolkit early for alignment with departmental racial equity goals and desired outcomes.

How Do I Use This Toolkit?

With Inclusion. The analysis should be completed by people with different racial perspectives.

Step by step. The Racial Equity Analysis is made up of six steps from beginning to completion:



Racial Equity Toolkit Assessment Worksheet

Title of policy, initiative, program, budget issue: _____

Description: _____

Department: _____ Contact: _____

Policy Initiative Program Budget Issue

Step 1. Set Outcomes.

1a. What does your department define as the most important racially equitable **community outcomes** related to the issue? *(Response should be completed by department leadership in consultation with RSJI Executive Sponsor, Change Team Leads and Change Team. Resources on p.4)*

1b. Which racial equity **opportunity area(s)** will the issue primarily impact?

Education
 Community Development
 Health
 Environment

Criminal Justice
 Jobs
 Housing

1c. Are there impacts on:

Contracting Equity
 Workforce Equity

Immigrant and Refugee Access to Services
 Inclusive Outreach and Public Engagement

Please describe:

Step 2. Involve stakeholders. Analyze data.

2a. Are there impacts on geographic areas? Yes No

Check all neighborhoods that apply *(see map on p.5)*:

All Seattle neighborhoods
 Ballard
 North
 NE
 Central

Lake Union
 Southwest
 Southeast
 Delridge
 Greater Duwamish

East District
 King County (outside Seattle)
 Outside King County

Please describe:

2b. What are the racial demographics of those living in the area or impacted by the issue?

(See Stakeholder and Data Resources p. 5 and 6)

2c. How have you involved community members and **stakeholders**? *(See p.5 for questions to ask community/staff at this point in the process to ensure their concerns and expertise are part of analysis.)*

2d. What does data and your conversations with stakeholders tell you about existing racial inequities that influence people’s lives and should be taken into consideration? (See *Data Resources* on p.6. *King County Opportunity Maps* are good resource for information based on geography, race, and income.)

2e. What are the root causes or factors creating these racial inequities?
Examples: Bias in process; Lack of access or barriers; Lack of racially inclusive engagement

Step 3. Determine Benefit and/or Burden.

Given what you have learned from data and from stakeholder involvement...

3. How will the policy, initiative, program, or budget issue increase or decrease racial equity? What are potential unintended consequences? What benefits may result? Are the impacts aligned with your department’s community outcomes that were defined in Step 1.?

Step 4. Advance Opportunity or Minimize Harm.

4. How will you address the impacts (including unintended consequences) on racial equity? What strategies address immediate impacts? What strategies address root causes of inequity listed in Q.6? How will you partner with stakeholders for long-term positive change? If impacts are not aligned with desired community outcomes, how will you re-align your work?

Program Strategies? _____

Policy Strategies? _____

Partnership Strategies? _____

Step 5. Evaluate. Raise Racial Awareness. Be Accountable.

5a. How will you evaluate and be accountable? How will you evaluate and report impacts on racial equity over time? What is your goal and timeline for eliminating racial inequity? How will you retain stakeholder participation and ensure internal and public accountability? How will you raise awareness about racial inequity related to this issue?

5b. What is unresolved? What resources/partnerships do you still need to make changes?

Step 6. Report Back.

Share analysis and report responses from Q.5a. and Q.5b. with Department Leadership and Change Team Leads and members involved in Step 1.

Creating Effective Community Outcomes

Outcome = the result that you seek to achieve through your actions.

Racially equitable community outcomes = the specific result you are seeking to achieve that advances racial equity in the community.

When creating outcomes think about:

- What are the greatest opportunities for creating change in the next year?
- What strengths does the department have that it can build on?
- What challenges, if met, will help move the department closer to racial equity goals?

Keep in mind that the City is committed to creating racial equity in seven key opportunity areas: **Education, Community Development, Health, Criminal Justice, Jobs, Housing, and the Environment.**

Examples of community outcomes that increase racial equity:

OUTCOME	OPPORTUNITY AREA
Increase transit and pedestrian mobility options in communities of color.	Community Development
Decrease racial disparity in the unemployment rate.	Jobs
Ensure greater access to technology by communities of color.	Community Development, Education, Jobs
Improve access to community center programs for immigrants, refugees and communities of color.	Health, Community Development
Communities of color are represented in the City's outreach activities.	Education, Community Development, Health, Jobs, Housing, Criminal Justice, Environment
The racial diversity of the Seattle community is reflected in the City's workforce across positions.	Jobs
Access to City contracts for Minority Business Enterprises is increased.	Jobs
Decrease racial disparity in high school graduation rates	Education

Additional Resources:

- **RSJI Departmental Work Plan:** <http://inweb/rsji/departments.htm>
- **Department Performance Expectations:** <http://web1.seattle.gov/DPETS/DPETSWEbHome.aspx>
- **Mayoral Initiatives:** <http://www.seattle.gov/mayor/issues/>

Identifying Stakeholders + Listening to Communities of Color

Identify Stakeholders

Find out who are the **stakeholders** most affected by, concerned with, or have experience relating to the policy, program or initiative? Identify racial demographics of neighborhood or those impacted by issue. (See *District Profiles* in the [Inclusive Outreach and Public Engagement Guide](#) or refer to U.S. Census information on p.7)

Once you have identified your stakeholders

Involve them in the issue.

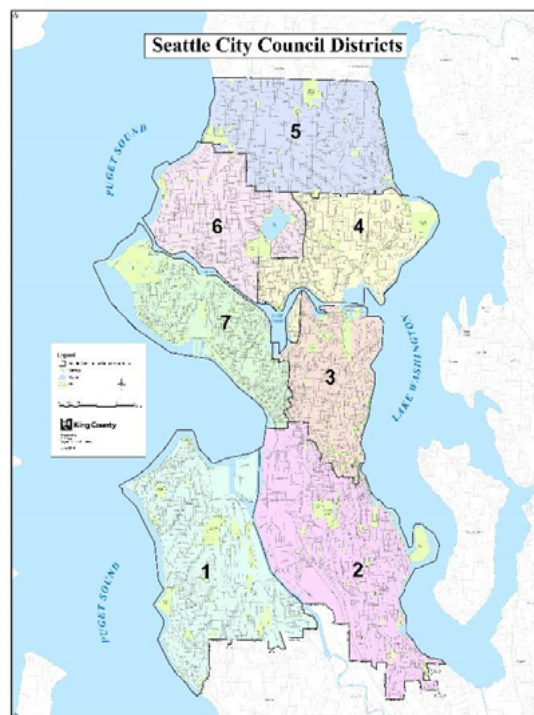
Describe how historically underrepresented community stakeholders can take a leadership role in this policy, program, initiative or budget issue.

Listen to the community. Ask:

1. What do we need to know about this issue? How will the policy, program, initiative or budget issue burden or benefit the community? (*concerns, facts, potential impacts*)
2. What factors produce or perpetuate racial inequity related to this issue?
3. What are ways to minimize any negative impacts (harm to communities of color, increased racial disparities, etc) that may result? What opportunities exist for increasing racial equity?

Tip: Gather Community Input Through...

- Community meetings
- Focus groups
- Consulting with City commissions and advisory boards
- Consulting with Change Team



Examples of what this step looks like in practice:

- A reduction of hours at a community center includes conversations with those who use the community center as well as staff who work there.
- Before implementing a new penalty fee, people from the demographic most represented in those fined are surveyed to learn the best ways to minimize negative impacts.

For resources on how to engage stakeholders in your work see the **Inclusive Outreach and Public Engagement Guide**: <http://inweb1/neighborhoods/outreachguide/>



L.O.V.E.-BASED POLICING

WALKING WHILE BLACK: L.O.V.E.

Is The Answer, (www.walkingwhileblack.com) the award-winning film by Director and Producer A.J. Ali, offers a powerful message of reconciliation. The film, released in 2017 and updated in late 2019, is improving relations between police and Black and Brown people by transforming the narrative from conflict to L.O.V.E.

The L.O.V.E. Is The Answer movement (<http://loveistheanswermovement.com>) includes the film, companion book, training programs, and proven action steps that have peace officers and other community members learning, working, and healing together.

What is L.O.V.E.?

The L.O.V.E. acronym is best described through this pledge peace officers and others are taking nationwide: *I pledge to **LEARN** about the people in my community, to unconditionally **OPEN** my heart to their needs as if they were all immediate family members, to **VOLUNTEER** to be part of the solution in their life during both good and challenging times, and to **EMPOWER** everyone I meet to do the same as if our lives depended on each other.*

Does L.O.V.E. really work?

Yes! Here are just a few of dozens of amazing success stories:

1. Andrew and Jameel, from Benton Harbor, MI, are featured prominently in the film. Andrew was a police officer who framed Jameel, sending him to prison. When Andrew's indiscretions came to light, he was sent to prison and Jameel was set free. Years later, after Andrew completed his sentence, they met again in Benton Harbor, where Jameel forgave Andrew. They became unlikely best friends and have been helping people with reconciliation all over the U.S. See sample clips from the film, including Andrew and Jameel, at: <https://walkingwhileblackthemovie.com/sample-movie-clips/>.
2. During a screening of the film at Wayne County Community College District in 2018, a woman left early and told A.J. Ali that she had to pick up her husband, and that he would have loved the film. She said that he had recently been released from prison and no one would give him a break. She returned with her husband and A.J. did what he has been doing with people all over the country—formed a mentoring circle around the husband and wife. A retired peace officer, a businessperson, and an educator all agreed to wrap their arms around the family and help the husband get back on his feet. This is what the *L.O.V.E. Is The Answer* movement is all about—opening minds, transforming hearts, healing families, and improving public safety for everyone in the community.
3. In Bucks County, PA, a nonprofit organization called The Peace Center brought the film to the attention of District Attorney Matt Weintraub after they learned about it during the inaugural National Day of Reconciliation event. The DA agreed to obtain a Lifetime Universal License of the film for use throughout the county. In January 2020, The Peace Center partnered with him on a Martin Luther King, Jr. weekend screening to kick things off in Bucks County. Within just nine

months, the DA secured commitments from 38 out of 40 police chiefs in his county to use the film to train their officers; interest from a Bucks County high school to make viewing the film a graduation requirement; a commitment from the county commissioner to use the film to train all 2,400 county employees by the end of 2020; and commitments from several other DA's in Pennsylvania to use the film in efforts to improve police-community relations in their counties. *L.O.V.E.-Based Policing* and *L.O.V.E. Is The Answer* principled living is spreading like wildfire in Bucks County. Here's an interview that County, PA District Attorney Matt Weintraub did with A.J. Ali in the summer of 2020: <https://youtu.be/qXvVPFVoRP4>.

How can we put L.O.V.E. into action in our community?

1. **Watch the film, read the book, and do the work.** Put L.O.V.E. into action in your community by licensing the film and showing it virtually through Zoom, getting people to read the *L.O.V.E. Is The Answer* book, and getting peace officers and other community members to put L.O.V.E. into action by doing one or more of the 25 action steps described in the book. The action steps include creating and managing a L.O.V.E. garden together, refurbishing a community center together, creating art and music projects together, and more. The key is to have peace officers and other members of the community watch the film, discuss it, and do the action steps—together! Putting in the hard work, having the hard discussions, and doing life together makes all the difference, especially in today's fast-paced cancel culture. *L.O.V.E. Is The Answer* brings humanity to the table where truth and reconciliation happens. For organizations like city and county governments, companies, nonprofit organizations like the NAACP, ministries, and other groups, here is a template immersive experience:

- A. All team members receive the book and film. Everyone watches the film on their own, in small groups, or as one large group. With every signed Director's Edition of the book, each person will receive the film to download and own.
 - B. A key figure from the film participates in a virtual Q&A with some team members watching and participating in the Q&A. Team members who can't attend can watch a recording later.
 - C. Hold weekly discussions over a two-month period. Small groups discuss the film virtually, followed by reading the book and discussing it in those same virtual small groups.
 - D. Work on action steps over another one- to two-month period. Each group decides on doing one of the 25 things we recommend in the book (create a LOVE Garden, refurbish a community center, create a mural or other art project, etc.). The groups plan out their project, inviting members of the community to join them. The *L.O.V.E. Is The Answer* team assists the groups with planning their projects. Groups that have obtained a Universal Screening License go into schools to show the film and have meaningful discussions with students.
 - E. Implement the projects. Students and others are invited to participate, making it a true community affair. The projects are completed and communities brought together in amazing ways.
 - F. Some of the members of this "class" assist in teaching the next wave of people to participate. Repeat until the entire community is operating from *L.O.V.E. Is The Answer* principles.
- 2. Support efforts to make L.O.V.E.-Based Policing the national community policing standard through legislation and practice.** L.O.V.E.-Based Policing will save lives, improve public safety, and increase wellness and quality of life for peace officers and members of the communities they serve. Join us in this movement to bring more peace and love into our communities by getting people to take the pledge and live out its principles.

Visit loveistheanswermovement.com to learn more and get involved!

Visit loveistheanswermovement.com to learn more and get involved!



IF NOT NOW, THEN WHEN?

In the words of Fannie Lou Hamer, “We are sick and tired of being sick and tired.”

The way things are playing out in our society for Black Americans and people of color, these actions ultimately affect the entire human race!

We have heard the outcry from our leaders asking the questions, What do we do? How do we communicate with the people and how do we lead during all this adversity?

MBC-LEO cares, and we are humbly and respectfully taking this opportunity to place in your hands this playbook that will help you be better equipped to address any racial tension and make equitable changes in your systems.

This Playbook was created under the leadership of the 2020 MBC-LEO Board and staff listed here. It continues to be a valuable resource that is endorsed by the current MBC-LEO leadership.

Michigan Black Caucus of Local Elected Officials 2020 Board & Staff

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Second Vice President

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DISCLAIMER

Please be advised that portions of this MBC-LEO Playbook are from various sources that have been researched and selected for inclusion. The documents selected for use are the Pledge for Racial Equity, created by the Michigan Department of Civil Rights; Responding to Racial Tension in Your City: A Municipal Action Guide, authored by the National League of Cities: R.E.A.L. (Race, Equity and Leadership); and the Racial Equity Toolkit, from the Seattle Race and Social Justice Initiative.



Acknowledgements

MBC-LEO would like to thank the Michigan Municipal League for providing resources and dedicated staff members to work with our organization.

The MBC-LEO membership is grateful to the Michigan Department of Civil Rights (MDCR), National League of Cities (NLC), and the Seattle Race and Social Justice Initiative for their outstanding resources addressing race and equity.

MDCR is promoting the racial equity pledge as a step for participating in the process of dismantling racial equity. You can find additional information here: www.michigan.gov/mdcr.

The decision to use the NLC's Municipal Action Guide, Responding to Racial Tension was an easy one, given the present-day climate in America. We are experiencing social unrest across the country. This publication hit the target in terms of having a foundational plan to counter and address the tensions in our cities.

Rita Ossolinski is the REAL (Race, Equity, and Leadership) program director, Ariel Guerrero was a manager of REAL tactical support and outreach, and Leon T. Andrews, Jr. is the REAL director, they are the authors of the NLC Guide.

We also decided to use the Seattle Race and Social Justice Initiative Toolkit because it is a city-wide effort to end institutionalized racism and race-based disparities in city government. It can be used to further assist leaders in their respective challenges in dealing with the issue of race and equity.

Please note that numerous other publications were reviewed in our quest to decide what would satisfy our Playbook theme and design. Our thanks for all those who have put forth efforts in this fight to make a difference.



**MICHIGAN
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