



PUBLIC WORKS AND ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES CALENDAR YEAR 2025 EQUITY IMPACT PLAN

Leadership Sponsor: Christopher Herrington, DPWES Director

Equity Lead(s): Courtney Willis-Banks, Equity Lead

Departmental Equity Guiding Statement:

As one department with racial and gender diversity at all levels reflective of the community we serve, DPWES creates and preserves a sustainable community by ensuring that neither race nor social vulnerability are predictors of the quality of services realized by our customers.

Context:

DPWES provides Fairfax County residents with a wide variety of essential services through the development of programs and projects for the management of the urban forest, stormwater, wastewater, solid waste, and capital facility construction for the County. Program examples include maintaining stormwater and wastewater infrastructure, treating wastewater, collecting and processing trash, planting trees, retrofitting streetlights to LED, restoring streams, building County buildings, and a wide range of community education and engagement. DPWES also provides essential emergency response functions like snow removal at County facilities, flood response, and storm debris removal. Most DPWES programs are driven by the need to comply with Commonwealth regulations, and many DPWES capital projects are initiated by other County departments. Historically, DPWES has not prioritized delivery of our programs and services to explicitly address areas of opportunity nor have we had racial or social equity as a primary consideration in our service delivery.

However, since the adoption of the One Fairfax Policy by the County Board of Supervisors, DPWES has worked to ensure equitable delivery of services to customers and diversifying the department at all levels. Upward trends include an increased number of equity-trained individuals inside DPWES and the continued expansion of vulnerability indices as a metric to target services in areas needing attention both internally with staff and externally in the community. Negative trends within DPWES continue to be a perceived lack of psychological safety for some employees and a lack of full appreciation by all DPWES employees of the value and importance of implementing the One Fairfax Policy in our service delivery. Marginalization based on socio-economic standing remains an issue within the department, although DPWES continues to expand training opportunities for employees and training requirements for supervisors. Women continue to be underrepresented in the department and in leadership positions, with women comprising only 33% of the executive level, 18% of the division director level, and 40% of the branch lead level positions.

DPWES continues to expand our diversity and equity initiatives through two chartered cross-functional teams within the department. The DPWES Diversity Team is working to enhance racial and gender diversity within the department to be more demographically representative of Fairfax County at all levels of the department by evaluating our training and recruitment practices. The DPWES Equity Team has developed frameworks for community engagement and equity assessments of DPWES services to evaluate the racial and social vulnerability outcomes of DPWES programs. These teams will continue guiding DPWES towards achieving our Equity Guiding Statement and identifying necessary improvements in the delivery of DPWES services to Fairfax County to advance the County's One Fairfax Policy.

System-Level Infrastructure:

The DPWES Internal Diversity Team, External Equity Team, and the departmental executive team seek the assistance of various stakeholders to develop the framework for business areas to utilize in addressing racial and social equity.

Internal Diversity Team:

- Department of Human Resources, County of Fairfax
- One Fairfax Central Team, Office of the County Executive
- Local Trade Schools and Apprenticeship Programs
- Professional Organizations such as National Society of Black Engineers (NSBE) and Society of Hispanic Engineers (SHPE)
- Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCU)
- DPWES Human Resources professionals
- DPWES organizational development and training professionals

External Equity Team:

- Department of Neighborhood & Community Services (NCS), County of Fairfax
 - NCS is needed to assist as subject matter experts as DPWES works to implement the Inclusive Community Engagement Framework, and to assist DPWES with identifying influential community leaders and organizations with whom DPWES can work as part of our ongoing outreach efforts.
- Department of Planning and Development (DPD), County of Fairfax
 - Coordination with DPD is necessary to ensure revisions to the County's Comprehensive Plan are consistent with DPWES infrastructure management objectives and strategies to advance One Fairfax in the delivery of DPWES' services.
- Land Development Services (LDS), County of Fairfax

- Coordination with LDS is necessary to ensure regulatory solutions to concerns like flooding are addressed in alignment with DPWES infrastructure and programmatic solutions.
- Department of Information Technology (DIT) GIS and Mapping Services, County of Fairfax
 - DPWES equity analytics rely heavily on spatial data maintained by DIT.
- Department of Transportation (DOT), County of Fairfax
 - DPWES constructs projects designed by DOT, so close coordination with DOT in the ideation and design of the project to comply with One Fairfax is essential to ensure that DPWES capital facility project management services are delivered equitably.
- Office of Public Affairs (OPA), County of Fairfax
 - To ensure DPWES messaging reaches all County residents and that engagement with residents is inclusive, ongoing coordination with OPA is necessary.
- Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD), County of Fairfax
 - Implementation of some DPWES programs such as recycling outreach and County code compliance requires the continued cooperation and collaboration with HCD.
- HOA/Community Organizations and Non-Governmental Partners
 - To assist as trusted sources of information and conduits for DPWES outreach efforts to Fairfax County communities.
- Northern Virginia Soil and Water Conservation District (NVSWCD)
 - Implementation of programmatic solutions that may assist individuals in taking individual action at home or work to address problems
- Fairfax County Public Schools (FCPS)
 - DPWES environmental outreach is heavily dependent upon finding willing partners within FCPS, and DPWES continues to seek partnership opportunities with FCPS to assist in recruiting new DPWES employees.

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DEPARTMENT GOALS

Goal 1: Implement departmental training, policies, and programs that further our diversity and equity goals in employee recruitment, retention, and professional development

One Fairfax Area(s) of Focus:

- 3. Workforce development pathways that provide all residents with opportunity to develop knowledge and skills to participate in a diverse economy and earn sufficient income to support themselves and their families.
- 16. Intentional, focused recruitment efforts that bolster a diverse applicant pool; hiring and evaluation practices, and processes for employee feedback, to achieve and preserve a culture of equity and fairness for all employees.
- 17. Policies that prohibit all forms of discrimination under Federal and State law in county and school system activities, and ensure that all practices provide fair treatment for all employees, contractors, clients, community partners, residents, and other sectors who interact with Fairfax County including higher education, business, nonprofit, faith, philanthropy, and civic.

Countywide Strategic Plan Community Outcome Area(s): Efficient and Effective Government (EEG)

Countywide Strategic Plan Strategies/Metric(s):

- EEG 8. Improve the county’s competitiveness as an employer to recruit, hire and retain a diverse, highly qualified workforce utilizing data to determine barriers and target strategies for marginalized groups.
- EEG 9. Make the onboarding process for all new employees streamlined, consistent and compelling, so that staff have the information, tools and technology they need to begin their county careers effectively.
- EEG 10. Enhance countywide succession planning and ensure continuity of operations by focusing on key positions and critical functions where effective knowledge transfer and smooth workforce transitions are required.
- EEG 11. Expand employee learning opportunities to increase staff competencies and experience in the areas of leadership, equity, cultural proficiency, use of technology and innovation to meet the needs of a changing environment.
- EEG 13. Implement a workplace culture change effort to actively promote equity and inclusion, collaboration, excellence, innovation, customer service, transparency, accountability and trustworthiness.

Actions	Stakeholders	Resources/Supports	Responsible	Timeline	Performance Measures
1a. Through focused recruitment outreach, revised hiring practices, enhanced onboarding, and increased professional development opportunities, increase opportunities for more female employees at all levels of DPWES, for Black employees at S32+, and for Hispanic employees at	DPWES Diversity Team, DPWES Executive Team, DPWES Leadership Team, DHR	DPWES Diversity Team, DPWES HR staff, DHR, FCPS, HOAs/NGOs	DPWES Director, DPWES HR Manager	Ongoing	% of DPWES employees identify as female (Target: 50%) % of DPWES S32+ identify as Black (Target: 10%)

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S23+. Specific actions include continued training for supervisors, coordination with the Department of Human Resources on a study of DPWES Human Resource staff work, and continued enhancement of onboarding procedures for new hires in addition to ongoing leadership development programs.					% of DPWES employees S23+ identify as Hispanic (Target: 16%)
1b. Continue employee development efforts on fostering a work culture of belonging and eliminating harassment and discrimination, including executive team engagements with staff and additional training for supervisors on corrective actions	DPWES Diversity Team, DPWES Executive Team, DPWES OD&T Team	DPWES Diversity Team, DPWES HR staff, DHR, One Fairfax	DPWES Director, DPWES HR Manager	01/2025 – 12/2025	# of engagement events # of additional training requirements for supervisors
1c. Continue English-language proficiency courses for DPWES employees	Solid Waste Deputy Director, Solid Waste HR, DPWES Executive Team	Course vendor, Solid Waste HR staff, Solid Waste Newington Complex Manager	Deputy Director-Solid Waste	01/2025 – 12/2025	Initiate third round of the course # participants
1d. Support employee affinity groups, including the Women of Works (WOW)	Women of Works, DPWES Executive Team	Women leaders in the County to provide mentorship and speak at WOW meetings	Deputy Director-Stormwater/Wastewater, Assistant Director	01/2025 – 12/2025	Support any request for new affinity group creation or supporting existing groups # participants

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Goal 2: Evaluate the delivery of DPWES programs and projects to determine if our services are provided equitably to Fairfax County

One Fairfax Area(s) of Focus:
 6. Community and public safety that includes services such as fire, emergency medical services, police, health, emergency management and code enforcement that are responsive to all residents so that everyone feels safe to live, work, learn, and play in any neighborhood of Fairfax County.
 11. A quality built and natural environment that accommodates anticipated growth and change in an economically, socially, and environmentally sustainable and equitable manner that includes mixes of land use that protects existing stable neighborhoods and green spaces, supports sustainability, supports a high quality of life, and promotes employment opportunities, housing, amenities and services for all people.
 12. A healthy and quality environment to live and work in that acknowledges the need to breathe clean air, to drink clean water now and for future generations.

Countywide Strategic Plan Community Outcome Area(s): Effective and Efficient Government (EEG); Environment and Energy (EE)

Countywide Strategic Plan Strategies/Metric(s):
 EEG 1. Implement a human-centered, highly responsive design approach across county and school programs and services to improve the customer experience.
 EEG 13. Implement a workplace culture change effort to actively promote equity and inclusion, collaboration, excellence, innovation, customer service, transparency, accountability and trustworthiness.
 EEG 17. Ensure local leaders, public and private, have the knowledge and capacity to understand the drivers of racial inequity and their contribution to structural racism, and use their power to build more equitable communities.
 EEG 21. Strengthen the use of data-informed decision making through regular data collection, evaluation and distribution.
 EEG 25. Develop, pilot, and institute Fairfax County equity-based decision-making tools for planning, projects, decision making and resource allocation.
 EEG 31. Equitably assess and perform ongoing maintenance, upgrades and replacement of county facilities, infrastructure and equipment so that they can meet future demands and provide a safe and healthy environment for residents and staff.
 EE 4. Improve the health of county waterways through maintaining effective stormwater controls and regulating development to protect environmentally sensitive areas to lessen adverse community impacts.

Actions	Stakeholders	Resources/Supports	Responsible	Timeline	Performance Measures
2a. Branch Chiefs and Complex Managers complete their identified actions by the end of calendar year 2025	DPWES Executive Team, DPWES Leadership Team, DPWES branch chiefs and complex managers	DPWES Director, DPWES Asst Director DPWES Leadership Team, DPWES branch chiefs and complex managers, LDS,	DPWES Director, DPWES Leadership Team	Jul 2024 – Dec 2025	All identified actions completed

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		DPD, HCD, HOAs/NGOs, NVSWCD			
2b. In the implementation of countywide trash collection services, ensure service costs and fees are levied equitably on county residents and businesses	DPWES Director, DPWES Deputy Director for Solid Waste, DPWES Zero Waste planning team	DTA, DMB, NCS, Board of Supervisors, HOAs, business associations, private trash collection companies	DPWES Director, DPWES Deputy Director for Solid Waste	Jan 2024 – Dec 2030	Discount factor applied to Zero Waste fee and Pay as You Throw programs
2c. In developing a countywide flood risk reduction policy, ensure equity is a consideration in the prioritization of flood risk reduction projects	DPWES Director, DPWES Deputy Director for Water Resources and Infrastructure, DPWES Stormwater Planning Division	OPA, NCS, HOAs, business associations, Magisterial District Offices	DPWES Director, DPWES Deputy Director for Water Resources and Infrastructure	Jan 2025 – Dec 2025	Equity considerations are an explicit factor in project prioritization in the new Countywide flood risk reduction policy

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Goal 3: Implement community engagement and public participation processes that are inclusive and equitable for all Fairfax County residents

One Fairfax Area(s) of Focus:
 11. A quality built and natural environment that accommodates anticipated growth and change in an economically, socially, and environmentally sustainable and equitable manner that includes mixes of land use that protects existing stable neighborhoods and green spaces, supports sustainability, supports a high quality of life, and promotes employment opportunities, housing, amenities and services for all people.
 12. A healthy and quality environment to live and work in that acknowledges the need to breathe clean air, to drink clean water now and for future generations.

Countywide Strategic Plan Community Outcome Area(s): Effective and Efficient Government (EEG)

Countywide Strategic Plan Strategies/Metric(s):
 EEG 2. Implement a comprehensive approach to consistently solicit customer feedback on their service experience and share results regarding the quality of the county’s programs and services.
 EEG 4. Improve public participation and engagement opportunities to ensure all facets of the community are represented and have the physical, technological, and language access necessary to engage and participate in community discussions and decisions.
 EEG 6. Expand capacity to meaningfully engage the community in places that are accessible and in ways that consider needs, traditions, and values of diverse ethnic, racial, and cultural groups.

Actions	Stakeholders	Resources/Supports	Responsible	Timeline	Performance Measures
3a. Complete training of all DPWES project managers on using an inclusive community engagement framework	DPWES Executive Team, DPWES Leadership Team, DPWES project managers	NCS	DPWES Director, DPWES Asst Director	Jan 2025 – Dec 2025	# and % of project managers completing new training (Target: 100%)
3b. Continue collaboration with Culmore Partners to identify more effective means of partnering with local community groups to achieve larger collective impact	DPWES Director, DPWES Asst Director, DPWES outreach staff	Culmore Partners group, NCS	DPWES Director, DPWES Asst Director	Jan 2025 – Dec 2025	DPWES representative attends all Culmore Partners meetings # partnerships
3c. Ensure DPWES representation in Gum Springs and Hybla Valley opportunity development programs facilitated by One Fairfax	DPWES Director	One Fairfax	DPWES Director	Jan 2025 – Dec 2025	DPWES attends all program meetings, contributes all requested assessments, and fully participates in solution implementation

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					consistent with the DPWES mission
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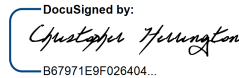
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