




County of Fairfax, Virginia

MEMORANDUM

DATE: August 1, 2019

TO: Board of Supervisors

FROM: Bryan J. Hill 

SUBJECT: Strategic Plan/One Fairfax Policy Update

In a memo dated July 1, 2019, I updated you on the countywide strategic planning process and how the effort is providing the framework for the Board of Supervisors to focus on the priorities and strategies that will best address the needs of our growing and changing community. As a follow-up to that memo, and as we begin the next phase of community engagement, I wanted to share the attached strategic plan update, *Fairfax County Strategic Plan Tollgate #1 Summary*.

Please note that this is a summary of work in progress that is iterative by its nature and so by definition, not complete. The document broadly lays out for each of the nine strategic priority areas - the desired outcomes, indicators, challenge questions and summary. The basis for this work was the information collected from the community, stakeholder, and staff meetings, as well as information from existing planning documents and research of best practices. This work will serve as a foundation to define the factors that most influence the desired outcomes and ultimately to help us prioritize strategies and metrics. In mid-September, staff will engage with the community and stakeholders to help us target the best strategies and most meaningful metrics to best serve the community's needs. Please let me know if you have any questions. I look forward to sharing the draft strategies and metrics later this year.

As we look strategically at our future, we do so following the mandate of the One Fairfax Resolution and Policy, the consideration of equity in all planning and decision making. Across the entire organization we are building the capacity of our staff to consider equity through the process articulated in the One Fairfax Policy: training and capacity building, applying equity tools, equity impact action planning, an accountability framework, and community engagement.

With One Fairfax, we must also embrace an expanded view of inequity, one grounded in an understanding of the institutional and structural barriers to opportunity. We must acknowledge that while overtly discriminatory acts are now illegal, and we have the vehicles to address infractions through Fairfax County's Human Rights Ordinance and the county's compliance with federal and state mandates, we still see today the negative effects of government policies and practices (federal, state, and local) applied in previous generations, including those that regulated the features of communities, restricted who could live where, and limited opportunities for employment and other pathways to life success.

One Fairfax also calls for a shared commitment to build greater opportunities for all between the county and Fairfax County Public Schools. This has resulted in more open communication, focusing in on concepts that take Fairfax County governing to a higher level. Our organizations are identifying and addressing the disparities we have seen among our population and across our communities. While these trends are not unique to Fairfax County, the broad application of the policy, across all facets of the organization, and as a joint action with the School Board, has positioned the county as a regional and national leader in making a commitment to advance racial and social equity. Now, to become One Fairfax, it will take continued leadership and intentionality in examining our policies, practices, and resource decisions. The solutions that will be most impactful are those focused on *creating communities of opportunity for all*.

As a separate document we have outlined the process from June 2018 through today as we implement One Fairfax. The goal is to build an internal infrastructure to deepen the understanding of equity within our organization. We also recognize that the community is essential in articulating how the doors of opportunity have been opened or closed, in gaining a better understanding of the drivers and roots of inequity, and in co-creating solutions toward equity. A One Fairfax Community Roundtable, co-chaired by Leadership Fairfax and the Northern Virginia Health Foundation, has convened and engaged representatives of the civic, nonprofit, philanthropic, and corporate sectors. The Roundtable is creating space to foster cross-sector dialogue and alignment, expanding our community's understanding of the strategic importance of achieving equity to ALL residents, and facilitating the development of alliances to form the solutions that will shape the structure of opportunity in Fairfax County.

The efforts described demonstrate key elements in the full implementation of the One Fairfax Policy. As we look toward 2020 and beyond, the county will be at a critical juncture. With information from departmental equity plans and the countywide strategic planning process, members of the Board of Supervisors and School Board will be equipped with information for their continued prioritization of equity as a strategic consideration, and through briefings and trainings on key concepts, will have an opportunity to engage in assessing progress and formulating next steps in our journey to become One Fairfax.

Attachments: Fairfax County Strategic Plan Tollgate #1 Summary
One Fairfax Policy Implementation Update

cc: Tisha Deeghan, Deputy County Executive
Rachel Flynn, Deputy County Executive
Joseph M. Mondoro, Chief Financial Officer
Dave Rohrer, Deputy County Executive
Karla Bruce, Chief Equity Officer
James Patteson, Manager, Countywide Strategic Plan
Dr. Scott Brabrand, Superintendent, Fairfax County Public Schools
Marty Smith, Chief Operating Officer, Fairfax County Public Schools



Policy Implementation Update

June 2018–July 2019

Background

- While Fairfax County is a great place to live, learn, work, and play, persistent disparities predictable by race, neighborhood of residence, and other social categories exist in outcomes related to life success such as education, employment, health, etc.
- Attempts to address these gaps in outcomes focused primarily on the delivery of programs and services to individuals and families but didn't produce improvements in outcomes at the scale desired.
- Individual-level programs and services may miss the root cause of these differences in outcomes. Further, there has been a growing understanding of the role of government in creating and maintaining inequity through its policy and practice.
- While overtly discriminatory acts are now illegal, the effects of policies applied in previous generations that regulated the features of communities, who could live where, how wealth could be built, etc., still linger. An expanded view of inequity has emerged, based in an understanding of the institutional and structural barriers to opportunity.
- In the last several years, reports from [PolicyLink](#), [Urban Institute](#), and the [Northern Virginia Health Foundation](#) have documented variances in opportunity and vulnerability within Fairfax County and across the region.
- The focus on policies and systems, as well as the desire to make Fairfax County a place where everyone can live to his or her fullest potential, led the Board of Supervisors and the School Board to adopt the One Fairfax Resolution in July 2016 and the One Fairfax Policy in November 2017. The policy commits the county and the FCPS to intentionally consider equity when making policies and delivering programs and services.
- Since the One Fairfax Policy was passed, a Chief Equity Officer was appointed in June 2018. Two Policy Advisors were added to the team in January 2019 and the recruitment of a project manager will begin in late summer. This team has been assembled through the repurposing of existing positions and at no additional cost to the county.

Approach

- In adopting the One Fairfax Resolution and Policy, the Board of Supervisors and School Board demonstrated *Visible Leadership*, acknowledging that the inequities existing in Fairfax County must be addressed to ensure the county's strong economic future and mandating the consideration of equity in all planning and decision making.
- To become One Fairfax will take continued leadership and intentionality in examining the county's policies, practices, and resource decisions, particularly in the areas identified as the drivers of equity: Cradle to Career Success, Community Health and Well-being, Just and Safe Communities, Equitable Community Development, and Inclusive Prosperity.



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- One Fairfax is grounded in the theory of Targeted Universalism, abandoning the one-size-fits-all policy formula in favor of an approach that is more inclusive and outcome-oriented. Through One Fairfax, the county is institutionalizing the practice of:
 - Establishing universal goals based upon broadly shared recognition of collective aspirations and societal problems;
 - Assessing general population performance relative to the universal goals;
 - Identifying groups and places that are performing differently with respect to the goals using disaggregated data;
 - Assessing and understanding the structures that support or impede each group or community from achieving the universal goals; and
 - Developing and implementing targeted strategies for each group or place to reach the universal goal.
- Fairfax County Government is building its organizational capacity to consider equity through training and capacity building, applying equity tools, equity impact action planning, an accountability framework, and community engagement. To do this work, a One Fairfax Executive Leadership Team has been convened, and equity leads from 40 county departments and a core group of staff working in cross-cutting areas has been recruited and trained.

Structure

- The One Fairfax Executive Leadership Team* meets monthly, alternately as County-only and with Schools' leadership. This group provides direction and support and pursues opportunities for work requiring joint Board involvement or action. The current topic being discussed is digital access and literacy, and future topics identified include shared space and the link between housing patterns and school boundaries.
- Each department director designated an equity lead in his/her department to advance this work. Equity leads are being provided with learning opportunities to build their foundational understanding of key concepts and are being guided through an equity impact planning process. Through this process, equity leads are gaining a more equity-informed understanding of the context of their work, considering opportunities for impact, determining intended results in the community and outcomes to be achieved through the direct efforts of their organizations, and identifying metrics.
- A core group of about 20 county staff brings technical assistance and support to the work of departments in the areas of training, budget, procurement, and data; and brings an equity focus into key countywide initiatives.

*County Membership: Chief Financial Officer, Deputy County Executives, Cathy Spage (Human Resources), Tony Castrilli (Office of Public Affairs), Ken Saunders (Office of Human Rights and Equity Programs)



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Training & Capacity Building

- Equity leads and the core group are engaged in training and capacity building to understand the role of government in equity, the use of equity tools, and action planning.
- In 2019, equity leads and the core group (about 60 people total) have so far attended four gatherings on the role of government in equity, the use of racial equity tools, communicating about race, and building accountability mechanisms for racial equity. Additional training and support are being provided in action planning.

Applying Equity Tools

- Equity leads and core group members have been trained in using a racial equity tool – thinking through who benefits and who is burdened by decisions, as well as data collection and community engagement in planning and decision making.

Equity Impact Action Planning

- Equity leads are also taking part in equity impact action planning, looking at areas such as organizational commitment to equity, data, workforce (for example, recruitment, retention, promotion, and training) within their department. This will lead to the development of action plans that set goals and actions for specific practices, policies, and initiatives within their department. This planning process has been adapted from the Government Alliance on Race and Equity, a national organization that is providing training and technical assistance to Fairfax County.

Accountability Framework

- The departmental plans will identify actions and performance measures that can be analyzed, quantified, and disaggregated to evaluate efforts and will align with the strategic plan and other countywide efforts addressing the broader conditions of well-being for residents or communities.
- The timing of the departmental plans intentionally aligns with the strategy and metric development phases of the countywide strategic planning process and the end of the term of the Board that adopted the One Fairfax Policy. The plans demonstrate a key element in the full implementation of the One Fairfax Policy, the consideration of equity in all planning and decision making.

Community Engagement

- Community partners and stakeholders are essential in articulating how the doors of opportunity have been opened or closed, gaining a better understanding of the drivers and roots of inequity, and co-creating solutions that advance progress toward equity.
- Community engagement efforts have involved strategic messaging, outreach, inclusive public participation processes, BAC composition, and language access.



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Integration with County Initiatives

- Equity is one of five cross-cutting themes in the countywide strategic planning process. An equity lens is being applied to better understand the key inequities that need to be addressed to ensure the county's ongoing success. The nine strategy teams are being engaged to consider equity as they frame challenges, identify factors that contribute to those challenges, and develop strategies and metrics.
- Equity has been a key consideration in recent efforts such as the Affordable Housing Strategic Plan, the Equitable School Readiness Strategic Plan, zMod, and the redevelopment of the Original Mount Vernon High School property.

Additional Points


- One Fairfax is not a program or initiative – it is integrated into the work of governing and managing Fairfax County. It requires intentionality, collective action, and shared accountability – a shift from random and disjointed actions and siloed organizational and system efforts to recognizing that we are in this together with the goal of unlocking the potential of every resident.
- With One Fairfax, an expanded view of inequity has emerged, based in an understanding of the institutional and structural barriers to opportunity. The legal aspects of equity are addressed by the Office of Human Rights and Equity Programs, which enforces the county's Human Rights Ordinance and ensures compliance with federal and state mandates granting equal access to housing and employment opportunities and other programs and services. One Fairfax, on the other hand, is a proactive, strategic move to (1) institutionalize the consideration of equity, and to (2) facilitate collective action toward reducing inequity and increasing opportunity.
- Equity work addresses policies and practices that were created over decades and centuries. There are no quick fixes to systems and structures, but we can identify where change needs to happen and take incremental steps to show progress.
- The solutions that will be most impactful in advancing equity are those focused on creating communities of opportunity for all, going beyond a focus on human services and education to realize the link between equity and sustaining and growing our local economy through strategies related to housing, economic development, and infrastructure.
- Fairfax County is part of a regional racial equity learning cohort with the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments and the Government Alliance on Race and Equity (GARE) in 2019-2020. Fairfax County is also one of over 160 jurisdictions nationwide who are members of the GARE.
- Community members and partners have shown great interest in advancing equity in Fairfax County and support for the Boards' adoption of the One Fairfax Resolution and Policy. A One Fairfax Community Roundtable, co-chaired by Leadership Fairfax and the Northern Virginia Health Foundation, has convened and engaged representatives of the civic, nonprofit, philanthropic, and corporate sectors. The Roundtable is creating space to foster cross-sector dialogue and alignment, expanding our community's understanding of the strategic importance of achieving



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equity to ALL residents, articulating how the doors of opportunity have been opened or closed to populations and places, and facilitating the development of alliances to form the solutions that will shape the structure of opportunity in Fairfax County.



Fairfax County Strategic Plan

Tollgate #1

Summary



Strategy Teams

Cultural and Recreational Opportunities: Lloyd Tucker (lead), Janet Burns, Cheri Danaher, Nargis Fontaine, Christine Hodgson, Jason Im, John Jacobs, Melissa Jun, Wendy Lemieux, Raymond Morton, Maggie Shea • **Team Champion:** Joe Mondoro

Economic Opportunity: Aimee Brobst (lead), John Alexa, Katie Antonucci, Theresa Benincasa, Regina Coyle, Alan Fogg, Marijke Hannam, Victoria Kairys, Douglas Miller • **Team Champion:** Joe Mondoro

Education and Lifelong Learning: Karla Hardy (lead), Shaheeda Al-Marghandiwal, Amy Bain, Nelvina Da Rocha, Ana Ealley, Julie Fowler (Head Start), Julie Fowler (FCPS), Andrea Goutam, Eric Mills, Justin Nejad, Gary Scales, Stephen Walker • **Team Champions:** Marty Smith, Bryan Hill

Effective and Efficient Government: Sara Brinkmoeller (lead), Avery Church, Lindsey Culin, Eric Eisinger, Danielle Hopson, Leia Huggins-Ellis, Brandon McCadden, Linda Moore, Stewart Reid, Joey Taguding, David Weand • **Team Champion:** Tisha Deeghan

Health and Environment: Vickie Anglin (lead), Shahab Baig, Alisa Brooks, Hans Christensen, Marie Custode, Brian Edmonston, Elif Ekingen, Victor Mealy, Amy Moxley, Josie Rainey, Martin Thompson, Latesa Turner • **Team Champion:** Rachel Flynn

Housing and Neighborhood Livability: Chris Caperton (lead), Dennis Cate, Elisa Johnson, Sara Morgan, Patricia O'Reilly, Anna Ricklin, Alexis Robinson, Annjanette Rodriguez, Navneet Sohi, Dana Thompson, Lisa Thompson, Kehinde Walker • **Team Champion:** Tisha Deeghan

Mobility and Transportation: Paul Cleveland (lead), Patrick Balsamo, Michelle Beeman, Marsha Collins, Ricky Foley, Greg Fried, Tonny Kim, Brent Riddle, Doug Shawley • **Team Champion:** Rachel Flynn

Safety and Security: Kim Panzer (lead), Chris Dang, Ron Erb, Tom Jackson, Lisa Jacobs, Ryan Morgan, Jim Piccolo, Douglas Povich, Laurie Stone, Jason Travis, Michael Voigt • **Team Champion:** Dave Rohrer

Self Sufficiency for People with Vulnerabilities: Stephen Hartman and Elisa Lueck (leads), Nesanet Berhane, Jill Clark, Ramiro Gálvez, MaryJo Hensler, Amanda Kastl, Mahina Katiby, Brian Kincaid, Catherine Lunsford, Marla Zometsky • **Team Champion:** Dave Rohrer

Core Team

James Patteson, Manager, Countywide Strategic Plan
Tom Arnold
Karla Bruce
Esha Doshi
Christina Jackson
Dean Klein
Michael Lane
Greg Licamele
Allison Mulligan
Kelly Naylor
Fred Selden
Chase Suddith
Sarah White
Robin Wilson

Subject Matter Experts

One Fairfax – Robin Wilson
Communication/Engagement – Greg Licamele
Innovation/Smart Cities –Eta Nahapetian
Budget – Christina Jackson
Performance Measures/Data Governance – Marijke Hannam
Demographics – Fatima Khaja
Organizational Development and Training – Allison Mulligan
Adult and Youth Surveys and HHS Data-Michelle Gregory
FCPS Strategic Plan-Julie Fowler

Challenge Statements

The first tollgate for the Countywide Strategic Planning Project focuses on **Challenge Statements**.

These Challenge Statements provide each of our nine strategy teams the opportunity to frame their priority outcome area in terms of:

- The data [indicators] we propose using to assess whether Fairfax County is making progress, and what we propose to use to report on that progress to the community.
- The key emerging challenges that we will need to address if we are going to “move the needle” on those indicators.

Each of the strategy teams has compiled four things for you to consider. They are:

Outcome

A brief statement of the ultimate goal for this priority area.

Indicators

Indicators are ways to measure the county’s progress, both for the community at large and for county government. They are clear, quantifiable and they help manage progress toward achieving strategies in the strategic plan. They are statements that express what we hope to achieve. These are NOT specific performance metrics (we will get to that later in the process).

Challenge Questions

A Challenge Question is a clear articulation of the diagnosed problem/opportunity that people are experiencing. It is informed by evidence, data, subject matter expertise, outside-in perspectives and on-the-ground realities. Challenge questions are phrased in a way that drives toward an impact, allowing for a variety of solutions.

Summary

This is a short explanation of the nature of the challenges and why it is important. These explanations may provide background on the strengths of the community regarding the issue, weaknesses and challenges in addressing the situation.

Cultural and Recreational Opportunities

Outcome

In the area of Cultural and Recreational Opportunities, Fairfax County is a place where all residents, businesses and visitors are able to participate in world class arts, sports, recreation and culturally relevant activities.

Indicators

1. Accessibility to the county's cultural and recreational opportunities (affordability, availability, proximity and ability).
2. Growth in awareness, appreciation and connectiveness to the diverse cultures in our communities.
3. Satisfaction with cultural and recreational opportunities (arts, heritage, park, rec center, community centers, programming, etc.).
4. Quantity of cultural and recreational opportunities that represent/promote all cultures and heritages, including underrepresented communities.

Challenge Questions

1. How will Fairfax County effectively and reliably connect the community to cultural and recreational opportunities?
2. How will we ensure equitable access to parks, trails, open spaces and recreational opportunities regardless of race, ethnicity, ability, gender, age, education, geographic location and income level?
3. How will we inclusively honor and preserve Fairfax County's unique and diverse culture, history and traditions?
4. How will the county maintain, grow and support enriching and quality cultural and recreational opportunities?
5. How will we measure whether people have a "quality" cultural or recreational experience when that is such a subjective assessment in a large, diverse community like Fairfax County?

Summary

Cultural and recreational opportunities offer the county economic value, health and environmental benefits and social relevance. The county invests in these opportunities by providing the arts, sports, recreation programs, parks, trails, libraries, historical landmarks and facilities. However, with development and population growth, the county is experiencing changing socio-economic and demographic trends that account for growing differences in race, ethnicity, gender, age, abilities, education, geographic location and household incomes. Barriers like language, transportation, awareness, cost, convenience and attractiveness of programs and activities can prevent some community members from taking advantage of existing opportunities. According to the Fairfax County Equitable Growth Profile, the demographic nature of the county will change dramatically over the next 10-20 years. Given the changing population and diverse nature of county residents, attention is needed from an equity approach to account for these growing differences and changes.

A national cultural preservation movement is taking place that recognizes the need for a more complete, inclusive representation of communities across the nation that is increasingly socio-economically, racially, ethnically, culturally and generationally diverse. Fairfax County's preservation efforts should prioritize inclusion in order to tell a holistic, relevant and accurate story.

Cultural equity calls for Fairfax County to become more reflective of the communities it serves. The county should focus on presenters who are on stage, on the page, on the walls, on screen, on the field or court or coming out of the speakers — and the cultural narratives they represent. It is important to be flexible and engage the community throughout planning processes and encourage participation in new and varied activities

Economic Opportunity

Outcome

In the area of Economic Opportunity, Fairfax County is a community where all people, businesses and places are thriving economically.

Indicators

1. Economic health of local businesses and industry diversification.
2. Personal/family financial viability and economic mobility.
3. Skill level and readiness of local workforce.
4. Amount of innovation-related activity in local economy.
5. Vibrancy of all neighborhoods and business areas.

Challenge Questions

1. How will Fairfax County continue to transform into an innovative economic center that can successfully compete nationally and globally?
2. How will Fairfax County ensure all workers are well-positioned to attain the skills that will be needed to meet the requirements of the jobs of the future?
3. How will Fairfax County continue to expand non-federal sectors of the local economy?
4. How will Fairfax County position itself to best compete in, collaborate with and maximize its economic opportunity within the regional economy?
5. How will Fairfax County continue to support a culture of entrepreneurship and small business development where all have opportunities to thrive?
6. How will Fairfax County cultivate the full economic potential of all community members and places across all areas of the county, leveraging diversity as a competitive advantage for its economy?

Summary

The vision of Economic Opportunity is defined as “a community where all people, businesses and places are thriving economically.” Our first step was to identify the main segments of the community — people in every zip code and businesses of all sizes — that would benefit most from the actions we planned to take in our strategic planning focus area.

We used the first round of feedback from the survey and community conversations as a starting point and focused on the importance of good paying jobs, an improved business climate, opportunities for training and skills development and support for entrepreneurial activity and small business.

The team expanded on these initial themes through extensive research (reviewing a wide range of local documents including the Economic Success Plan, as well as trend data at the regional, state and national levels) and conducting multiple interviews with key stakeholders from community-based nonprofits and chambers of commerce from various parts of the county.

The team also worked with a wide range of subject-matter experts, including staff from One Fairfax, staff working on economic initiatives and the Health and Human Services Office of Strategy Management. Embedded within the team are additional subject matter experts who are well-versed in the areas of economic development, human services, planning and zoning and the public workforce system.

Ultimately, the team identified a set of challenges, both in terms of big-picture, high-level, long-range issues like industry diversification, innovation and regionalism, as well as promoting economic mobility for workers at all skill levels, ensuring that county businesses have access to a world-class workforce.

Education and Lifelong Learning

Outcome

In the area of Education and Lifelong Learning, Fairfax County fosters education that promotes a responsive, caring and inclusive culture where all feel valued and that all are reached, challenged and prepared for success in school and life.

Indicators

1. Readiness for kindergarten.
2. Academic attainment.
3. Career-based education attainment.
4. Effectiveness of learning-related technology and learners' access to it.
5. Language and communication proficiency.

Challenge Questions

1. How will we ensure that all children have access to quality early learning opportunities?
2. How will we adapt our approach to effective lifelong learning and education as our county experiences changing demographics and gaps in language/communication proficiencies?
3. How will we ensure that we equitably and effectively support all county residents seeking to acquire the career and technical skills that employers want?
4. How will we ensure that social and racial factors do not predetermine residents' access to high-quality lifelong learning opportunities?
5. How will we more effectively engage partners (FCPS, technical schools, higher education and employers) to provide education to meet the demand of the market and provide opportunities for all county residents?
6. How will we keep up with and provide equitable access to new and innovative learning technologies (whether within schools or in public learning arenas)?

Summary

The team set out to define “lifelong learning” as encompassing all county residents and including the concept that learning occurs in three stages: early literacy; kindergarten — 12th grade; and post 12th grade. The One Fairfax Policy provided our framework for inclusion. Research regarding local economics, competing priorities and the landscape of learning informed the indicators and challenge questions.

Many collaborative partnerships among publicly and privately funded learning institutions, private sector businesses, nonprofit organizations, neighborhood associations and chambers of commerce successfully provide educational opportunities for all ages. Fairfax County is home to several large universities, technical schools and workforce development partnerships, which attract students and provide local industries with well-equipped employees who possess marketable skills, credentials, degrees, professional designations and licenses.

The county is ripe for expanded academic and career opportunities. Advances in technology and rapidly changing demographics present unique possibilities. Digital learning could increase as the use of traditional “brick and mortar” learning spaces decreases. Anticipated growth in the senior and English language learner populations could trigger unprecedented collaborative efforts.

Although the county has very low unemployment, high median income and a very successful publicly funded school system, gaps exist in kindergarten readiness, on-time high school graduation and university degrees awarded. We know which groups enter kindergarten without early literacy skills and that levels of poverty are almost double for those without a high school diploma. English language learners and minorities have the lowest on-time graduation rates and most university graduates are white. There is tremendous potential to broaden existing efforts that address gaps in access, opportunity and achievement through ongoing and new partnerships.

With a richly diverse community, prospering business scene and respected learning institutions, Fairfax County is positioned to be a leader in collaboration, growth and opportunity for all.

Health and Environment

Outcome

In the area of Health and Environment, Fairfax County responsibly stewards environmental resources, advances sustainability and promotes optimal health and well-being for all.

Indicators

1. Air, water and land quality.
2. Implementation of policies, practices and behaviors that improve the natural and built environments.
3. Physical and behavioral health conditions.
4. Adoption of healthy behaviors.
5. Equitable accessibility to quality services and infrastructure that facilitate health improvement.

Challenge Questions

1. How will Fairfax County proactively create the community conditions that ensure equitable opportunities for all to attain their highest level of health and well-being?
2. How will Fairfax County promote behaviors that contribute to positive health outcomes and make healthy options more readily available, especially for communities at highest risk?
3. How will Fairfax County remove barriers and ensure equitable access to needed physical, behavioral, oral and long-term health services and resources in our community?
4. How will Fairfax County maintain and improve the quality of our air, water and land for the protection of our environment and our residents and foster a thriving biodiversity as our population grows, changes and densifies?
5. How will Fairfax County engage with our residents and businesses, while holding ourselves accountable to adopt conservation practices that address climate change and foster environmental sustainability?

Summary

Community health and environment are inextricably linked and are foundational for a thriving county. Healthy residents in healthy environments contribute to individual and community prosperity.

Health and well-being are influenced by many factors, including education and income, food insecurity, choices we make, access to services and resources and the quality of the environment we live in. For some, essential elements for a healthy life are readily available; for others, opportunities for healthy choices are significantly limited. Social determinants of health, access to services, health behaviors and environmental quality each impact one's ability to make healthy choices.

Equitable access to affordable, quality and timely physical, behavioral, developmental, oral and long-term health services and resources can help to prevent disease and disability; detect, treat and manage health conditions; and avoid preventable death. The demand for services exceeds capacity, especially substance use treatment options and affordable mental health care. The county offers services that can enable individuals to live longer, healthier, more fulfilling lives, however barriers such as availability, cost, stigmas and transportation often prevent resource use.

Our community is car dependent. Infrastructure supporting healthy transportation options, especially safe biking options, encourages less car dependence and an active lifestyle. Studies have found that people who are physically active tend to live longer and have lower risk for chronic disease, including heart disease, stroke, Type 2 diabetes, depression and some cancers. Physical activity promotes health and well-being, weight control and better mental health. Spending 60 minutes of daily commuting above average is associated with a 6% decrease in aggregate health-related activities — spending an additional 120 minutes is associated with a 12% decrease.

High quality air, water and land is imperative for the safety and well-being of all residents. Our environment and community conditions face significant challenges from population growth and the corresponding increase in vehicle traffic. An unhealthy environment affects our residents for generations. Renewable/alternative energy, green roofs, vegetative cover, stream restorations, healthy wetland habitats and green spaces enable healthy lifestyles in a healthy environment. Taking a comprehensive, systematic approach to promoting healthy and environmentally sound habits and systems is important for our community.

Housing and Neighborhood Livability

Outcome

In the area of Housing and Neighborhood Livability, Fairfax County is a place that fosters an enjoyable, affordable living experience for all people.

Indicators

1. Quantity and density of housing stock in relation to county population growth (per sub-county geographic units).
2. Quality and affordability of housing stock.
3. Accessibility/proximity of county residents to desired amenities, including transit.
4. Flexibility in, and adaptability of, land use regulations in response to market demands.
5. Community health (measured at the neighborhood level).

Challenge Questions

1. How will the county encourage/incentivize and collaborate with developers/builders (for-profit and nonprofit, faith-based landowners, etc.) to address affordable housing and a range of housing options while maintaining the quality and desirability of built communities (new and redeveloped)?
2. How will the county address trends — desirability, neighborhood choice for existing and future residents — to support regeneration, so that housing and neighborhoods both maintain the residents and the desired features/elements, while addressing evolving wants and needs?
3. How will we ensure that Fairfax County is welcoming to seniors and ensure that our seniors have the livability resources to age in place or otherwise stay within the county?
4. How will we encourage healthy placemaking without “homogenizing,” while continuing to welcome newcomers of different ages, family status and economic status and ensuring the desired housing type is available to them?
5. How will the county provide a framework that allows higher density, mixed-use and pedestrian-oriented development where it is most appropriate (e.g., near

transit) and provides for thoughtful transitions to less densely developed areas, while promoting the delivery of affordable units?

6. How will the county support creation and evolution of communities where people can live, work and recreate so that residents can reduce reliance on a car and walk/bike and take transit more frequently? What can we do to incentivize living near work?
7. How will the county educate residents on the many livability and affordable housing resources available (transit, public facilities, housing voucher program, etc.)?

Summary

In Fairfax County, nearly 45% of renters are cost-burdened, paying more than 30% of their monthly income to rent; other evidence shows that close to 22% of homeowners also put 30% of income toward housing. Over the past 20 years, the cost of housing has climbed at a faster rate than average incomes, while the limited availability of housing that is affordable for people at a range of incomes, and especially for lower income households, continues to dwindle. In 2018, the county released a Communitywide Housing Strategic Plan, which provides extensive recommendations for policy, funding and partnerships to increase the number of affordable units.

Still, the challenge is broader than housing only. Based upon feedback from the community survey, for the county to foster an enjoyable, high quality of life for all residents, attention must also be given to community features, assets and connectivity in addition to affordability. Those features include amenities for recreation, shopping and transportation options that meet the needs of people of all ages, abilities and family structure. It requires attention to neighborhood safety, as well as strategies that encourage living near work or having the opportunity to walk and bike. Together, such factors contribute to a sense of community livability, well-being and health. To get there, we must take a holistic approach to housing affordability, placemaking and the policies that govern land use.

We must ensure that as our county grows, we are able to strike a balance between the desire to maintain our strengths valued by current residents, while also welcoming newcomers — and ensuring everyone has an affordable place to live. The Housing and Neighborhood Livability team examined such questions and together determined that the indicators and challenge questions capture both the depth and breadth of this complex, highly meaningful issue.

Mobility and Transportation

Outcome

In the area of Mobility and Transportation, Fairfax County is a community where residents, businesses, visitors and goods can move efficiently, affordably and safely throughout the County and beyond via our well-maintained network of roads, sidewalks, trails and transit options.

Indicators

1. Efficiency of the county's multimodal transportation network (congestion, travel time, etc.).
2. Condition and cost of transportation-related infrastructure (technology, brick and mortar, communication).
3. Safe and secure transportation network for all users (drivers, cyclists and pedestrians).
4. Affordable and equitable accessibility to transportation options.
5. Sustainability and environmental impact of transportation-related network and activity.

Challenge Questions

1. How will Fairfax County implement and maintain a comprehensive multimodal transportation network that serves all users equitably while adapting to the projected growth within the county and region?
2. How will Fairfax County better collaborate with businesses, community organizations, government partners and residents to plan and deliver transportation solutions that reduce demand, promote smart growth and serve the region?
3. How will Fairfax County construct and maintain transportation options that are financially and environmentally sustainable?
4. How will Fairfax County incorporate advances in technology to create "smart" transportation alternatives that adapt to changing needs and are accessible to all users?

5. How will Fairfax County maintain a safe and secure transportation system and lower the risk of travel related injuries?
6. How will Fairfax County leverage our land use regulations and economic development strategies to improve connectivity and efficiency within our transportation network?

Summary

Our vision of Mobility and Transportation sees Fairfax County as a place where all residents, businesses, visitors and goods can move efficiently, affordably and safely throughout the county and beyond via our well-maintained networks of roads, sidewalks, trails and transit, and where all people are connected to the amenities and services that make Fairfax a great place to live, work and play.

Feedback from the community survey and focus groups identified several themes for us to pursue. The survey showed that affordable and efficient transportation is key to the success of county residents. It is also important to the community to apply principles of sustainability to transportation to reduce pollution, noise, traffic congestion, land devaluation and urban sprawl. And it is vital that every aspect of our transportation network, including walkers and bicyclists, are safe.

Our team also examined a variety of reports and data sources to help us frame our challenges, including Fairfax County demographic commuting patterns; the county's Comprehensive Plan; the Silver Line Metro project data; the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments reports on emissions and energy consumption; data on pedestrian and cyclist fatalities; and various reports on creating sustainable cities.

Fairfax County's immense size, the wide variations of land uses — ranging from rural to distinctly urban — and economic disparities among residents and visitors mean that Fairfax County requires a comprehensive transportation system that includes a wide variety of mobility needs. While the county's transportation network is addressed in different ways at the regional, state and federal levels, coordination among these different levels presents a significant challenge. In addition, multiple variables such as concentrated density, distracted driving, congestion and a growing population have amplified the dangers within our transportation network. Land development patterns and growth need to be managed in a manner that supports mobility and transportation goals, as well as economic development goals.

Ultimately, the team identified several challenges related to mobility and transportation, ranging from better collaboration with regional partners and identifying transportation options that are financially and environmentally sustainable to incorporating advances in smart transportation technology, managing growth and redevelopment and maintaining a safe and secure transportation system. Ultimately, we are challenged to ensure that we achieve mobility outcomes that will improve and sustain the quality of life for our community.

Safety and Security

Outcome

In the area of Safety and Security, Fairfax County is a place where all people feel safe at home, school, work and in the community.

Indicators

1. Voluntary compliance with laws, regulations and standards (actual level and community perception).
2. Timeliness and quality of emergency response.
3. Level of emergency preparedness and recovery.
4. Effectiveness and equity of administration of justice.
5. Reliability and security of critical infrastructure.

Challenge Questions

1. How will we adapt public safety services to meet the challenges associated with technology, urbanization and a growing diverse population?
2. How will we ensure that criminal justice is administered in ways that are consistent with the goal of racial and social equity?
3. How will Fairfax County cultivate relationships with communities to ensure a proactive and integrated approach toward disaster and emergency preparedness, response, recovery and mitigation efforts?
4. Given potential threats related to cybersecurity and other security risks, how will we reduce the vulnerabilities of our mission-critical infrastructure and ensure that they will be resilient?
5. In light of the dramatic rise in information outlets, how will we align the public's perception of community safety and security with more objective data and information?

Summary

Through this outcome area, Fairfax County seeks to ensure that criminal justice and public safety services are provided to residents in an equitable, collaborative and coordinated approach. We want to be responsive to all so everyone feels safe to live, work, play and learn in any neighborhood of Fairfax County. The public must have the trust and confidence that Fairfax County is effective in safeguarding everyone and appropriate emergency response will be provided in a timely manner.

As Fairfax plans for the future, several challenges need to be highlighted and addressed as noted in the challenge questions to ensure a safe and secure community.

While technology, urbanization and a growing diverse population are challenges that are facing us now and must be addressed, the question aims to get deeper — how do we adapt our public safety services to meet the constantly changing needs of the community over the next 20 years? How do we remain open, agile and responsive?

The concept of equitable administration of justice is one that is being discussed at a national level. If our outcome is to be a place where all people feel safe, then their understanding of and experiences with the public safety system must be equitable regardless of race, gender, age, religion or sexual orientation. A fair public safety and justice system that unites our community is a priority.

Natural disasters are occurring more frequently and with more intensity. The best way to cope with a natural disaster is to have a plan before it occurs. Being prepared not only reduces the impact of a disaster, but also can reduce social vulnerability, the fear and anxiety that accompany disasters.

Our proximity to D.C., as well as the critical infrastructure that resides in Fairfax County, automatically places us at risk. A reliable infrastructure is important. While advancements in technology provide opportunities, they also increase vulnerability in other areas, such as the hacking of Baltimore's government computers in May.

Safety and security is more than just emergency response and preparedness. In a digital age where people are constantly bombarded with nonstop information, it is hard to know what is accurate and what isn't and often the information that gets out there first and is "re-tweeted" the most is what is believed. How we as a county engage with the public through our messaging, in a meaningful way, to instill a sense of safety, is a challenge we will have to confront.

Self-Sufficiency for People with Vulnerabilities

Outcome

In the area of Self-Sufficiency for People with Vulnerabilities, Fairfax County is a place where all residents with vulnerabilities are supported and empowered to live independent lives to their fullest potential.

Indicators

1. Level of respect, understanding and engagement experienced by people with vulnerabilities.
2. Access to needed services.
3. Integration and quality of services provided.
4. Level of self-sufficiency of people with vulnerabilities.

Challenge Questions

1. How will we ensure that we identify people with vulnerabilities?
2. How will we proactively engage people with vulnerabilities?
3. How will we identify and mitigate factors that impede people with vulnerabilities from achieving self-sufficiency?
4. How do we ensure that people with vulnerabilities are able to access needed services within a system that is comprehensive, responsive and built around hearing their story one time?
5. How will we ensure that people with vulnerabilities are stewarded on a path to self-sufficiency in a way that recognizes their existing strengths?
6. How will we promote sustained self-sufficiency among people with vulnerabilities in our community?

Summary

The initial goal of the Self Sufficiency for People with Vulnerabilities strategy team was to identify and explore the factors inhibiting those with vulnerabilities from achieving and maintaining self-sufficiency. Information was drawn from a multitude of internal and external sources. Internal plans that provided significant insight include: the Human Services Needs Assessment, the One Fairfax policy and the Housing Blueprint. External resources include the San Francisco DHS Strategic Plan and academic work such as the University of Washington Self-Sufficiency Standard.

The first tasks in addressing this issue are identifying vulnerabilities and defining self-sufficiency. There are a wide range of vulnerabilities that can be grouped into broad categories — economic, health, cultural, age, etc. Further, residents often have multiple or overlapping vulnerabilities. Based on these vulnerabilities, an achievable level of self-sufficiency varies for each resident. These factors make the need for a comprehensive, individualized assessment of each vulnerable resident essential.

Further, it should be recognized that vulnerabilities emerge, evolve and resolve. The community must be diligent in monitoring for new vulnerabilities and adjusting to the needs of those already identified. Those most vulnerable are often the least visible and have the smallest voice. The community should seek to proactively identify vulnerable populations prior to them presenting in crisis. Even for those residents who are vulnerable who do reach out for assistance, often significant barriers exist (transportation, hours, language, etc.). The community must work to break down these barriers. Recognizing the difficulties that many residents who are vulnerable face in accessing services, it is vital that data be shared between and services coordinated between all programs and services. Residents who are vulnerable should only have to tell their story one time.

It must be recognized that the achievement of self-sufficiency is a journey, not a singular event. Further, this journey is often fraught with setbacks. The community must realize that these setbacks are often inevitable and should not see them as a failure. Rather, the community must work to counter this by casting a wide support net and leaving it in place as long as needed — until the resident who is vulnerable has achieved a level of sustained self-sufficiency commensurate with their fullest potential.

Effective and Efficient Government

Outcome

In the area of Effective and Efficient Government, Fairfax County is a place where all residents trust that their government responsibly manages resources, provides exceptional services and equitably represents the community.

Indicators

1. Financial sustainability, competitiveness and trustworthiness.
2. County government and school workforce diversity, capability and engagement.
3. Level of resident engagement among all geographic and demographic sectors.
4. Capacity and condition of the county and schools technology and facilities.
5. Customer satisfaction with county services.

Challenge Questions

1. How will we keep the county on a sustainable fiscal path to meet the needs of a population with increasingly diverse demographic and socio-economic characteristics?
2. How will we transform government culture, policies and business practices to align with changing community goals priorities and demands?
3. How will we attract, retain and develop a highly skilled, talented and diverse county government workforce that advances a culture of engagement and excellence?
4. How will we improve engagement with residents so that we include voices of marginalized communities and capitalize upon the assets of our diverse residents and businesses?
5. How will we maximize the use of evolving technologies and the increasing amount of data to exceed our residents' and other stakeholders' expectations, while appropriately managing the related risks?
6. How will we manage county infrastructure — including our buildings, land, technology and tools — to better meet current and future needs of the community in an environmentally and fiscally sustainable manner?

7. How will we equitably and comprehensively gather and analyze internal and external feedback in a timely and transparent manner to drive process and service improvements?

Summary

The community's vision for effective and efficient government mirrors global values of good governance — transparency, integrity, accountability, fairness and professional excellence. Our residents want to know their government provides valuable services in exchange for their tax dollars. Fairfax County is highly regarded for exceptional services from schools to recreational opportunities; libraries to supportive housing; and public safety to recycling. In addition, Fairfax County consistently demonstrates sound financial practices, however many residents feel burdened by tax rate increases that outpace household income increases. To responsibly meet the needs of our evolving community, we need well-functioning facilities and infrastructure; a workforce ready to meet future demands; and services that meet customer and stakeholder needs and expectations.

The community also has high expectations for their government to implement technologies and effectively use data to make evidence-based strategic and operational decisions. A challenge for local government is to provide user-friendly, online access to information, while safeguarding legally protected information and data that could be used for malicious purposes. These values of transparency and trust are also closely connected to the level of customer satisfaction and community engagement. While many county departments have processes to gather data about department-specific services, we maintain information silos and lack a comprehensive method to measure overall satisfaction with county government. The county's current public engagement process relies heavily on established community organizations and appointed advisory bodies. While this is a strength, we are challenged to create more accessible avenues of participation to improve community connection. Examining these challenges gives us an opportunity to reshape our identity into one that reflects our community's vision of an effective and efficient government that is agile, responsive and forward leaning.