



ARLINGTON
- TEXAS -

Unity Council Report

FEBRUARY 2021

IMPLEMENTATION PLAN
March 30, 2021

Report Categories

- General Summary
- Housing
- Education & Workforce Training
- Health and Wellness
- Economic Disparities
- Policing and Criminal Justice





CONCERNS, RECOMMENDATIONS & IMPLEMENTATION PLANS

General Unity Council Concerns

1.1 City of Arlington should have a permanent community-based group tasked with monitoring racial and ethnic disparities, as well as bridging racial and ethnic divides.

1.2 City of Arlington needs an adequate data source for monitoring racial and ethnic disparities.

1.3 Arlington City Manager's Office needs a staff member charged with monitoring various matters relevant to race and ethnic relations.

1.4 City of Arlington should establish a form of public transportation that is more accessible to low-income residents.

1.5 There are growing levels of concentrated poverty in particular neighborhoods in Arlington.



General Recommendations

1.1.A Establish a **permanent task force** charged with directly engaging local residents, organizations, and institutions on matters regarding race, ethnicity, and other forms of diversity in Arlington.

City Facilitator - CMO

Timeframe - Short term (6-12 months)

Actions:

- CMO will work with the City Council to create recommended structure for continuation of Unity Council.

1.2.A Enhance Arlington's "**City Services Satisfaction Surveys**" to include a wider range of important variables such as race/ethnicity, income, and education.

City Facilitator – Finance Department

Timeframe - Short term (6-12 months)

Actions:

- The Finance Department will work with the City's survey vendor, City staff and City Council to modify the survey to ensure that the annual survey includes a variety of diversity.
- Revised survey will be used in fall of 2021 for 2022 survey release.

1.3.A Establish a **Chief Diversity Officer** who will create various programs that aim to enhance diversity, equity, and inclusion.

City Facilitator – CMO

Timeframe - Medium term (1-2 years)

Actions:

- CMO will finalize a job description for Chief Diversity Officer
- City will hire a Chief Diversity Officer as a part of the City Manager's Office.

General Recommendations

1.4.A Develop a pilot-program for local residents who qualify for free or **reduced rates on VIA Rideshare** by collaboration with Tarrant County WIC and the Arlington Housing Authority.

City Facilitator – Office of Strategic Initiatives

Timeframe - Medium term (1-2 years)

Actions:

- CDBG CARES funding has been provided to the three Arlington shelters and the Housing Authority to offer free Via rides for those in need
- Provide Via and Handitran rides to receive the COVID-19 vaccine at no cost to riders.
- Review ways to include non-CARES CDBG funding for this initiative in the PY21 Action Plan.
- Review CDBG funded Via ride program to determine how it needs to be changed to better provide for Arlington residents in need.

1.5.A Establish **anti-poverty programs** in targeted neighborhoods that focus on job training, community clean-up, as well as public and private investment.

City Facilitator – CMO, PDS and OSI

Timeframe: Long term (3-5 years)

Actions:

- City staff works to identify two to three neighborhoods which would benefit from focused attention from City and NGO programs.
- City staff explores case studies and best practices to target CDBG support programs in specific neighborhoods with needs related to income disparities.
- Results from pilot program are evaluated and refined for replication in other neighborhoods.

Housing Subcommittee Concerns

2.1 Existing zoning ordinance disadvantages older or established neighborhoods at a disadvantage for redevelopment.

2.2 Zoning ordinances can be barriers in developing sustainable, equitable communities which include housing that is affordable.

2.3 There are insufficient resources for the public to learn about home rental, buying and home ownership.

2.4 There is inadequate housing inventory that is affordable and accessible for all income levels.

2.5 Arlington neighborhoods do not uniformly represent the diversity of the city's population.



Housing Recommendations

2.1.A Establish different standards **infill development**.

City Lead – PDS

Timeframe - Short term (6-12 months)

Actions:

- Begin discussion of UDC revisions at April Council retreat.
- Continue discussions with Municipal Policy Committee to create revisions for Council review, discussion and action

2.2.A Examine existing ordinances to eliminate barriers to **develop housing that is affordable**.

City Lead – PDS and Housing

Timeframe - Medium term (1-2 years)

Actions:

- Begin discussion of UDC revisions and housing development tools at April Council retreat.
- Continue discussions on UDC revisions with Municipal Policy Committee to create revisions for Council review, discussion and action.
- Continue discussions on housing development tools with Community Neighborhood Development Committee to create toolbox for Council review, discussion and action.
- Develop a Housing Strategic Vision.

2.2.B Find tools to develop affordable neighborhoods with accessible services.

Housing Recommendations

2.3.A Work with educational institutions to **include financial education** to ensure that graduates are financially responsible.
2.3.B Review homebuyer and renter education to see if it is sufficient.
2.3.C Seek to implement changes where resources are insufficient

City Facilitator – Housing, Grants (OSI) and Code

Timeframe - Medium term (1-2 years)

Partners – ISD's, TCC, UTA

Actions:

- Review first time homebuyer and other existing City resources.
- Convene a working group of K-12 and higher education institutions to inventory universe of homebuying education resources.

2.4.A Research how to include household debt in the evaluation of housing cost burden
2.4.B Use the data in the **Housing Needs Analysis and debt burden data** to identify housing needs and target solutions to gaps.
2.4.C Reduce barriers to renting.

City Lead – Housing, Grants (OSI) and ED

Timeframe - Medium term (1-2 years)

Actions:

- Conduct research of best practices used in other cities to evaluate housing cost burden.
- Study the benefits of creating a Housing Strategic Plan.
- Review possible elements of Housing Strategic Plan with Community and Neighborhood Development Committee.
- Focus economic development strategies on improving resident job skills and increasing availability of jobs with wages that would allow residents to afford existing housing stock.

Housing Recommendations

2.5.A Examine possible reasons behind the current housing map by race and ethnicity.

2.5.B Encourage **development of proximate housing** that varies by affordability and type with access to services throughout the city.

City Facilitator – PDS, Housing, Code and ED

Timeframe - Long term (3-5 years)

Partners: ARBOR, TCAA

Actions:

- Work with partners in housing industry to examine strategies to achieve recommendation 2.5.B.



Education & Workforce Subcommittee Training Concerns

- 3.1 Improved internet access is needed for families with limited resources or in an area with low connectivity.
- 3.2 Community is not aware of available community resources such as educational assistance, job training, work opportunities, etc.
- 3.3 Increase low-income student and parent participation in ISD programs.
- 3.4 Increase racial, ethnic and cultural diversity in curriculum.
- 3.5 Address microaggressions occurring in schools.
- 3.6 Increase availability of counselors to students to address mental health issues.
- 3.7 Increase higher education preparedness in high poverty high schools.



Education & Workforce Training Recommendations

3.1.A Increase **internet availability**

3.1.B Increase free public WIFI hot spots throughout Arlington.

City Facilitator – IT, Asset Management, Parks and Recreation and Libraries

Timeframe - Medium term (1-2 years)

Actions:

- Review results of CARES investment Neighborhood Wi-Fi program.
- Seek funding for additional expansion

3.2.A Create **Community-Outreach-Networking-Empowerment-Communication-Tool (CONNECT)** – centralized location for resources and assistance.

City Facilitator – CMO & City Council

Timeframe - Short term (6-12 months)

Partners – ISD’s

Actions:

- Convene a working group of K-12 institutions to explore this recommendation.

3.3.A Conduct **“Education & Workforce Training Fair”** twice annually in public areas throughout where needed the most.

City Facilitator - CMO & City Council

Timeframe - Short term (6-12 months)

Partners – ISD’s, TCC, UTA, Workforce Solutions of Tarrant County

Actions:

- Convene a working group of K-12 and higher education institutions to explore this recommendation.

Education & Workforce Training Recommendations

3.4.A Diversify **lesson plans and curriculum** to be inclusive of relevant culture and identity.

City Facilitator - CMO & City Council

Timeframe – Long term (3-5 years)

Partners – ISD's, TCC, UTA

Actions: Convene a working group of K-12 and higher education institutions to explore this recommendation.

3.5.A Require **diversity training** for students and teachers & organize conversations on same.

City Facilitator - CMO & City Council

Timeframe – Medium term (1-2 years)

Partners – ISD's, TCC, UTA

Actions: Convene a working group of K-12 and higher education institutions to explore this recommendation.

3.6.A Hire additional **guidance counselor resources** for school districts.

City Facilitator - CMO & City Council

Timeframe – Medium term (1-2 years)

Partners – ISD's

Actions: Convene a working group of K-12 institutions to explore this recommendation.

3.7.A Add programs and resources such as college **advisors and internship programs.**

City Facilitator - CMO & City Council

Timeframe – Medium term (1-2 years)

Partners – ISD's, TCC, UTA

Actions: Convene a working group of K-12 and higher education institutions to explore this recommendation.

Health & Wellness Subcommittee Concerns

- 4.1 Communities of color are disproportionately affected by gaps in physical and mental healthcare services.
- 4.2 Entities serving disadvantaged residents could use additional support such as Mission Arlington, Open Arms Clinic, private and nonprofit groups, churches and health organizations.
- 4.3 Physical and mental health disparities exist in some areas of the city especially 76010 and 76011.
- 4.4 Lack of affordable transportation options inhibit ability to receive care and services.
- 4.5 Information regarding health and wellness is not distributed effectively to many residents in need, especially those in poorer areas.
- 4.6 Lack of healthy food choices and presence of "food deserts."
- 4.7 Arlington is consistently ranked low in the healthiest cities identifications.



Health & Wellness Recommendations

4.1.A Create dedicated city staff position of **Chief Equity Officer** to implement and monitor strategies targeted to erase disparity in healthcare for residents of Arlington. This position would report directly to the Arlington City Manager and work in collaboration with health care providers.

City Facilitator – CMO, Fire and Housing

Timeframe - Short term (6-12 months)

Partners – Tarrant County Public Health

- Have Chief Diversity Officer work with Fire to track key health data.
- Expand existing relationship with Tarrant County Public Health to expand health resources available to Arlington residents.

4.2.A Leverage relationships with trusted providers to enable and **support efforts in care delivery**.

City Facilitator – CMO

Timeframe - Medium term (1-2 years)

Partners – JPS Hospital, Texas Health Resources, non-profit agencies

- Chief Diversity Officer convenes a working group of health care providers and non-profit agencies that provide healthcare to explore this recommendation.

4.3.A Support a **mobile health care program** to provide basic primary care, mental health care and referral by exploring funding sources and convening stakeholders to implement.

City Facilitator – Fire and Parks & Recreation

Timeframe - Medium term (1-2 years)

Partners – JPS Hospital, Texas Health Resources

- Meetings with Texas Health Resources and JPS have been held to discuss possible solutions.
- Explore options to fund, implement and manage the recommended solution.

Health & Wellness Recommendations

4.4.A Enact a program to provide **free or subsidized rates on VIA** for residents in need.

City Lead – Office of Strategic Initiatives

Timeframe - Medium term (1-2 years)

Actions:

- CDBG CARES funding has been provided to the three Arlington shelters and the Housing Authority to offer free Via rides for those in need
- Provide Via and Handitran rides to receive the COVID-19 vaccine at no cost to riders.
- Review ways to include non-CARES CDBG funding for this initiative in the PY21 Action Plan.
- Review CDBG funded Via ride program to determine how it needs to be changed to better provide for Arlington residents in need.

4.5.A Explore and implement alternative means of **disseminating information** to all communities.

City Facilitator – Fire and Parks & Recreation

Timeframe - Long term (3-5 years)

Partners – Tarrant County Public Health

Actions:

- Fire Department works with Tarrant County Public Health to explore this recommendation to share health information with the public.
- Parks & Recreation Department works with both Fire and TCPH to include appropriate wellness information in these communications.

Health & Wellness Recommendations

4.6.A Investigate City ordinances and or policies to **promote the presence of healthier food choices** in areas determined in need or identified as food deserts.

City Lead – Lemuel Randolph & PDS

Timeframe - Long term (3-5 years)

Actions:

- Staff brings research on possible solutions to Council committee for review and action.

4.7.A Create a **city-wide awareness initiative** involving city leadership as well as citizen leaders and organizations providing not only examples of healthy living practices, but opportunities to achieve them.

City Lead – Lemuel Randolph & PDS

Timeframe - Long term (3-5 years)

Actions:

- Staff brings research on possible solutions to Council committee for review and action.

Economic Disparities Subcommittee Concerns

5.1 MWBE spending by the City is not adequate.

5.2 MWBE program needs to be strengthened.

5.3 Commercial capital access for MWBEs needs to be increased.

5.4 More job opportunities are needed in East Arlington.

5.5 Need to increase affordability of transportation to get to work.

5.6 Continued Unity Council effort needed.



Economic Disparities Recommendations

5.1.A Implement **MWBE data collection**

5.1.B Create an Office of Business Diversity

5.1.C Reduce barriers of communication with MWBE's

5.1.D Find solutions to reducing barriers to MWBE's being prime contractors

City Lead – CMO, Finance and ED

Timeframe - Long term (3-5 years)

Actions:

- Implement the 2020 Disparity Study by following recommendations such as hiring additional staff in Purchasing Office, contract specific goal setting and implementing additional outreach to MWBEs

5.2.A Create an **MWBE Department** and develop contracting requirements and accountability for City departments and prime contractors

City Lead – CMO, Finance and ED

Timeframe - Long term (3-5 years)

Actions:

- Implement the 2020 Disparity Study by following recommendations such as hiring additional staff in Purchasing Office, contract specific goal setting and implementing additional outreach to MWBEs

Economic Disparities Recommendations

5.3.A Increase **lending to minority businesses** by connecting MWBEs with banks, encouraging banks to lend more to MWBEs and recruit additional lenders with a track record of lending to MWBEs.

City Facilitator – CMO, Finance, ED

Timeframe - Long term (3-5 years)

Partners – Arlington Chambers of Commerce

Actions:

- Work with Arlington Chamber of Commerce and Arlington banks to explore ways to implement this recommendation locally
- Meet with our major depository banks to ask for their help in achieving these goals
- Communicate newly available resources and how to gain access to them with the community

5.4.A Establish a **job resource center** in the east Arlington library, staffed by at least one individual, encourage companies to conduct job fairs in this area

City Facilitator – Libraries

Timeframe - Long term (3-5 years)

Partner – Workforce Solutions for Tarrant County

Actions:

5.4.B Conduct job and Arlington **Resource Sharing Group fairs** in east Arlington on an annual basis

- Libraries Director to explore ways that this concept can be piloted at the East Library by offering job resource information and tools to patrons

- Hold periodic resource fairs in east Arlington

- Once concept has been developed, expand to all libraries in Arlington

Economic Disparities Recommendations

5.5.A Consider a pilot **program that subsidizes VIA service** for persons with certain income level.

City Lead – Office of Strategic Initiatives

Timeframe - Medium term (1-2 years)

Actions:

- CDBG CARES funding has been provided to the three Arlington shelters and the Housing Authority to offer free Via rides for those in need
- Provide Via and Handitran rides to receive the COVID-19 vaccine at no cost to riders.
- Review ways to include non-CARES CDBG funding for this initiative in the PY21 Action Plan.
- Review CDBG funded Via ride program to determine how it needs to be changed to better provide for Arlington residents in need.

5.6.A Maintain the **Unity Council**, in some form, as a standing committee past delivery of February report.

5.6.B Implement an independent MWBE **public oversight committee** chosen by the City council members.

City Lead- CMO

Timeframe - Short term (6-12 months)

Actions:

- CMO will work with the City Council to create recommended structure for continuation of Unity Council.
- CMO works with MWBE staff in Purchasing Office to determine how best to include public input in that process.

Policing & Criminal Subcommittee Justice Concerns

6.1 There is a deep divide between Arlington's youth and police.

6.2 Some Arlington police officers are not as well educated about or connected with the communities they patrol.

6.3 Stress can put police officer's mental and emotional health at risk and therefore it may prevent them from carrying out their responsibilities as public servants and healthy citizens.

6.4 APD Police Academy and In-Service Training should allow for more community input/interaction and include more training that focuses on police misconduct.

6.5 An abundant amount of data that could assist in identifying racial disparities and behavioral trends of officers in policing exists, but the crime analysis unit is understaffed and unable to adequately utilize this data to enhance and/or create departmental policy that addresses these issues.



Policing & Criminal Justice Recommendations

6.1.A Expand the **Police Athletic League** to include sporting activities throughout the entire school year.

City Lead – PD and Parks & Recreation

Timeframe - Short term (6-12 months)

- PD and Parks work together to determine the amount of and source of resources needed to expand PAL throughout the year and integrate into Parks programs.

6.1.B Build upon the **police ride along program** to include students and young adults.

City Lead – PD and Parks & Recreation

Timeframe - Medium term (1-2 years)

- Police Department will explore how an expanded ride along program could be implemented including an option to merge it into existing mentoring programs such as MAY and Coach 5.0.

6.1.C Start a program to **connect K-12 students with APD** related to similar interests or hobbies.

City Lead – PD and Parks & Recreation

Timeframe - Long term (3-5 years)

- Police Department will examine existing APD mentoring programs and determine how those can be enhanced by encouraging police officers and youth to interact through shared interests or hobbies.

Policing & Criminal Justice Recommendations

6.2.A Pair **new officers with officers of a different race** and background and directly engage with communities of a different race in their districts.

City Lead - PD

Timeframe - Short term (6-12 months)

- Police Department will examine existing training program to determine how a program to pair new officers with those of a different race, ethnicity or background could be included.

6.2.B Create a plan to **encourage patrol officers to attend community events**, patronize diverse restaurants, meet with different community leaders, and make connections with residents.

City Lead - PD

Timeframe - Medium term (1-2 years)

- Police Department will examine existing community connection strategies and find ways to enhance it by encouraging officers to attend and visit entities in the community.

6.2.C Create an **immersion program for officers to connect to the communities** they serve. Suggestions include having officers live in their beat for one week and connect with HOAs and other organizations that serve the area.

City Lead - PD

Timeframe - Long term (3-5 years)

- Police Department and CMO will review this recommendation and bring policy and budgetary changes to Council as indicated while keeping the Council and the community up to date on progress towards this goal.

Policing & Criminal Justice Recommendations

6.3.A Revised **psychological program** to include racially diverse professionals, survey APD about adequacy of current program and implement indicated changes.

City Facilitator – PD and HR

Timeframe - Short term (6-12 months)

- The current Police psychological program is being reviewed by a consultant.
- APD command staff and HR will determine the best way to survey the department about the current psychological programming offered to determine what changes might be needed.
- When the report is completed, Police Department and CMO will bring policy and budgetary changes to Council as indicated while keeping the Council and the community up to date on progress towards this goal.

6.3.B Schedule **regular psychological evaluations** for all officers such as an evaluation administered every 3-5 years and a mandatory evaluation after a traumatic event. Consider hiring a full time **APD Chaplain** as a part of this process.

City Facilitator – PD and HR

Timeframe - Medium term (1-2 years)

- The current Police psychological program is being reviewed by a consultant.
- When the report is completed, Police Department and CMO will bring policy and budgetary changes to Council as indicated while keeping the Council and the community up to date on progress towards this goal.

Policing & Criminal Justice Recommendations

6.4.A Institute a **review process** that includes City Manager's Office and APD leadership, qualified professionals and community members to review and evaluate high profile national incidents of police violence and misconduct to incorporate time sensitive changes in policy, training or other processes.

City Facilitator – CMO and PD

Timeframe - Short term (6-12 months)

- Police Department and CMO will bring policy and budgetary changes to Council as indicated while keeping the Council and the community up to date on progress towards this goal.

6.4.B Invite concerned members of the community to **review training** and add a member of the Unity Council to the Police Training Advisory Board.

City Facilitator – CMO and PD

Timeframe - Medium term (1-2 years)

- When the permanent version of the Unity Council is installed, CMO will work with the Police Chief to complete this recommendation.

6.4.C Institute a bi-annual review process that includes City Manager's Office, APD leadership, qualified professionals and community members to **review current trends, training resources** for possible inclusion into the APD training model.

City Facilitator – CMO and PD

Timeframe - Long term (3-5 years)

- Police Department and CMO will bring policy and budgetary changes to Council as indicated while keeping the Council and the community up to date on progress towards this goal.

Policing & Criminal Justice Recommendations

6.5.A Increase **staff dedicated to analyzing data** by hiring more in-house professionals or contracting to experts.

City Facilitator – PD, CMO and Finance

Timeframe - Short term

- Police Department, CMO and Finance will bring policy and budgetary changes to Council as indicated while keeping the Council and the community up to date on progress towards this goal.

6.5.B Implement periodic **internal and external review of analyzed data** to monitor officer behavior and trends (with respect to disparities) and adjust policies accordingly.

City Facilitator – PD, CMO and Finance

Timeframe - Medium term

- Police Department, CMO and Finance will review current data collection and analysis efforts to maximize the useful information that it can yield particularly around issues of disparity by race and ethnicity.

6.5.C Translate review into layman's terms and disseminate to the public to **seek feedback**.

City Facilitator – PD, CMO and Finance

Timeframe - Long term

- CMO will work with the Police Department to ensure that the implementation status of this and all recommendations from the Unity Council report are shared with the public in a clear manner which also seeks feedback about its effectiveness.



Questions?

Arlington Unity Arch