

Pursuing Racial Equity in Local Government

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MAMA Luncheon/Metro Regional Meeting

November 29th, 2018 · Brookview Golden Valley

Racial inequity in the U.S.

From infant mortality to life expectancy, race predicts how well you will do...



Racial equity means:

Closing the gaps so that race does not predict one's success, while improving outcomes for all

To do so, we must...

...Target strategies to focus improvements for those worse off

...Move beyond service provision to focus on changing policies, institutions and structures

Asking Different Questions

FROM:



TO:

| |
|--|
| Blame Who's a racist? |
| Intentions What did they mean? What was their attitude? |
| Prejudice What beliefs made them do it? |
| Grievance How can we fix what just happened? |

| |
|---|
| Causes What's causing the racial inequities? |
| Effects What were the actions? What are the impacts? |
| Systems What institutions are responsible? |
| Solutions What proactive strategies and solutions? |

Bias at work

Institutional/Explicit

Policies which explicitly discriminate against a group.

People of color historically prohibited from using libraries by force of law (this occurred in the South and North)

Institutional/Implicit

Policies that negatively impact one group unintentionally.

Library's strict enforcement of fine collection disproportionately creates barriers to people of color, who are overrepresented among low-income populations

Individual/Explicit

Prejudice in action – discrimination.

Library staff person lets a patron know that they are not being served because they are a different race

Individual/Implicit

Unconscious attitudes and beliefs.

Staff decides to renew a lost item, extend return date, mark as "claims returned" or waive charges more often for white patrons than for patrons of color

What racism are we focusing on?

Individual racism:

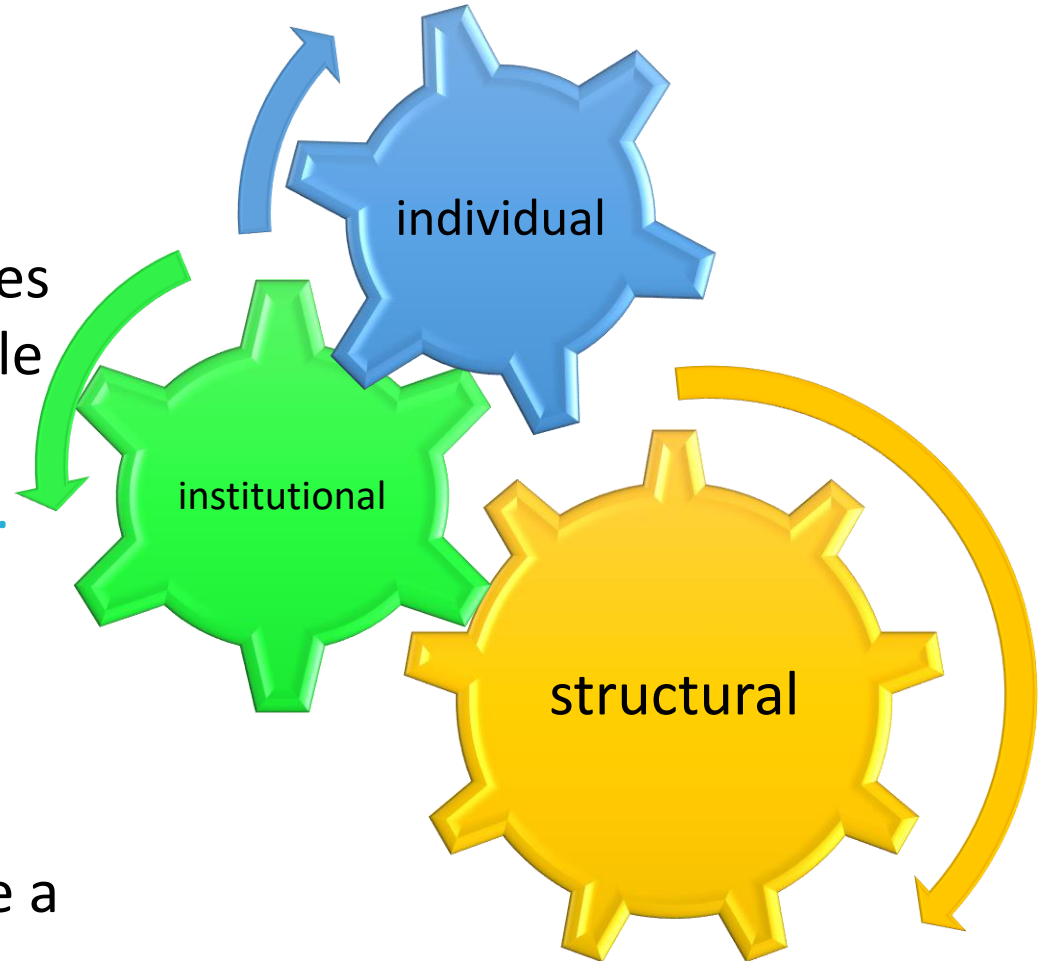
Bigotry or discrimination by an individual based on race.

Institutional racism:

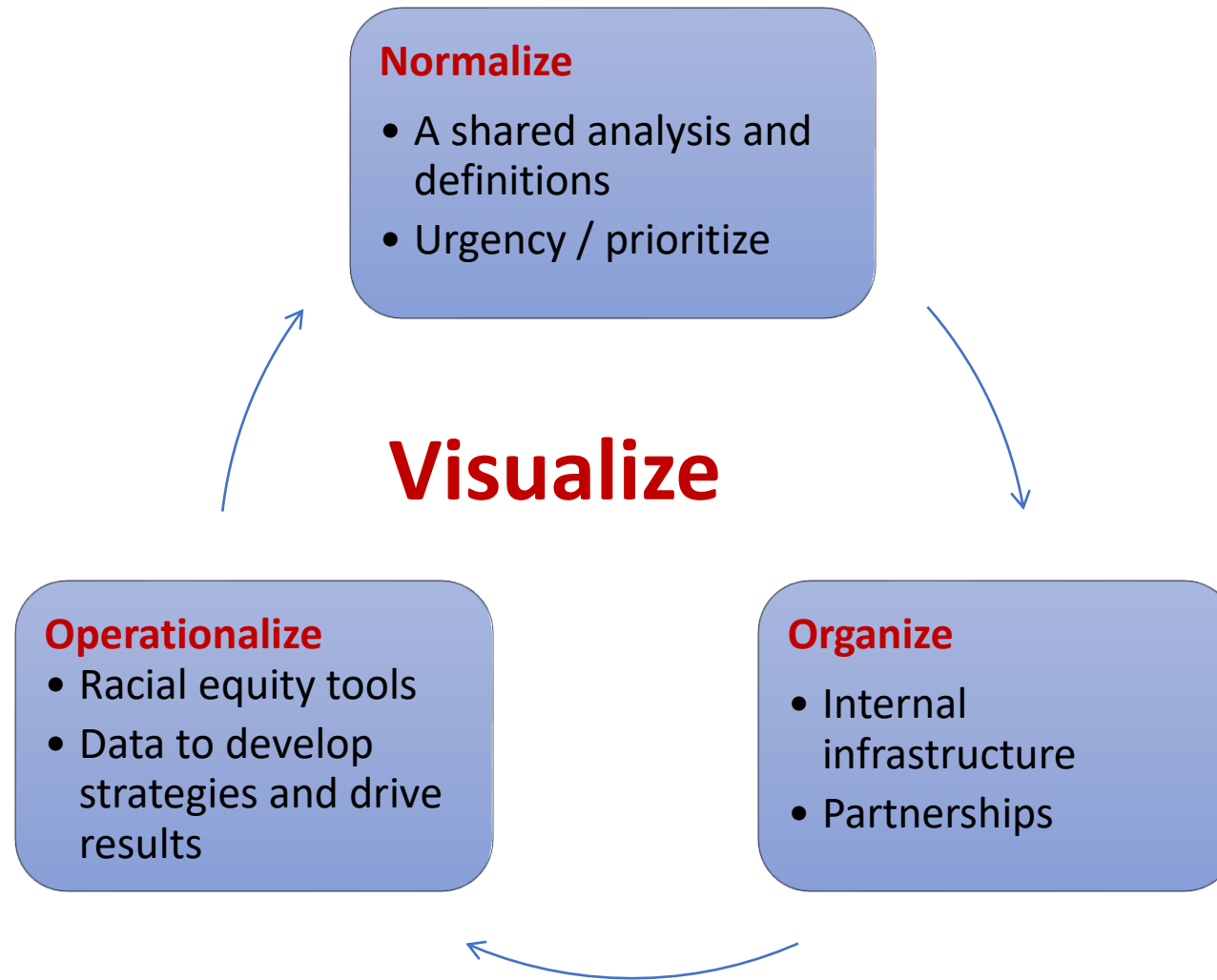
Policies, practices and procedures that work better for white people than for people of color, often unintentionally or inadvertently.

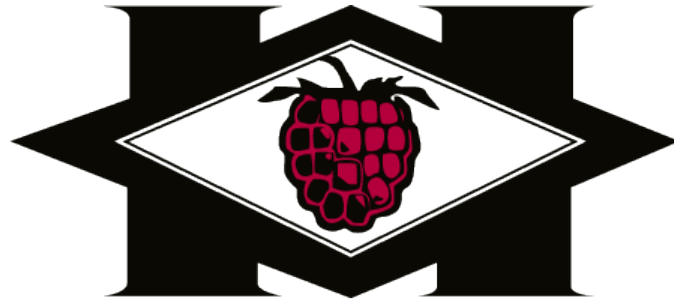
Structural racism:

A history and current reality of institutional racism across all institutions, combining to create a system that negatively impacts communities of color.



National best practice





City of Hopkins

Population: Approximately 19,000
65% Rental, 35% Owner Occupied

City of Hopkins
Race Equity
Team

Government
Alliance on
Race Equity

Hopkins Race &
Equity Initiative

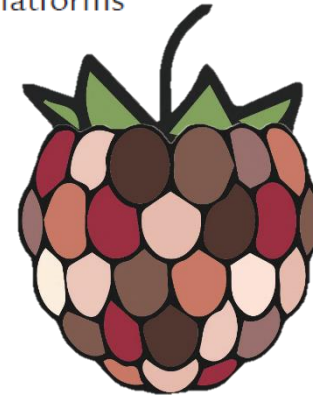
Multicultural
Advisory
Committee

Take It To Them

- » Promote cultural celebrations
- » Explore methods to involve Multicultural Advisory Committee in community building
- » Continue to seek out diversity on boards and commissions
- » Intentionally engage rental communities

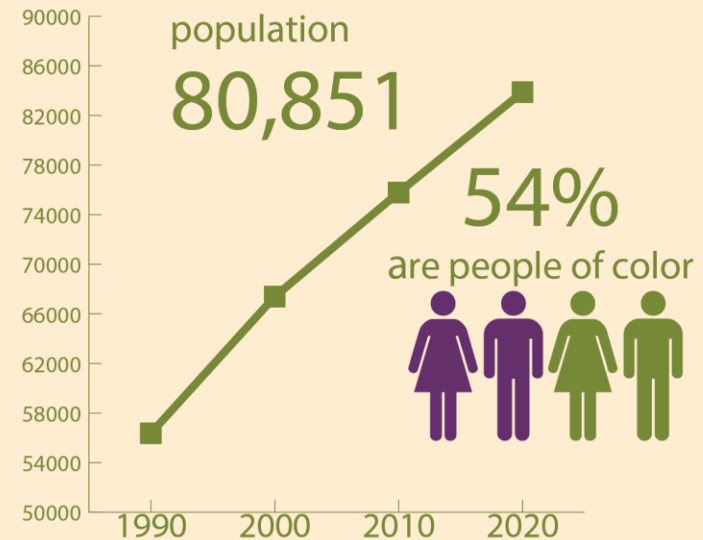
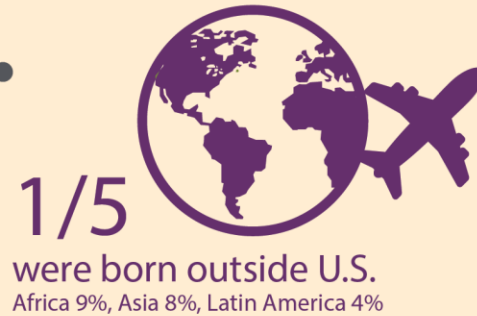
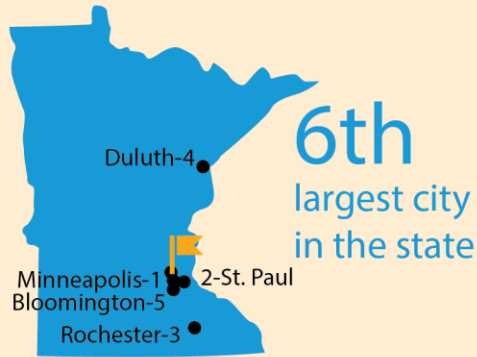
GOALS: ACTION STEPS

- » Encourage volunteerism and expand volunteer opportunities
- » Conduct community meetings at alternative locations
- » Educate the community in the area of emergency preparedness
- » Identify opportunities to partner with youth, schools, businesses and faith-based organizations
- » Promote opportunities to raise awareness and understanding of race, equity and diversity
- » Creatively engage and market the community using technology and unique platforms



Why Brooklyn Park is prioritizing racial equity

Who we are...





United Community



Beautiful Places



Thriving Economy



Healthy & Safe



Increased Equity



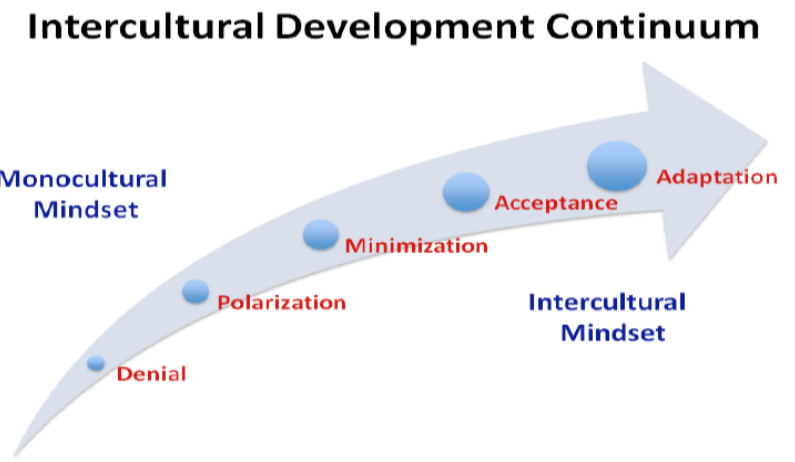
Effective, Engaging Government

How we're Normalizing and Organizing

Racial Equity Team
(approx. 20 staff)

Required of leaders and
aspiring leaders

All staff encouraged to attend



Leadership Skills Development program includes:
Intercultural development Inventory and Intercultural Conflict Styles assessments

Monthly racial equity learning labs

1/2 day Foundations of Intercultural Competence training

How we're Operationalizing

| Department | Policy/practice/procedure/initiative |
|------------------------------|---|
| Administration | Translating fliers and videos into multiple languages. Creating a list of staff interpreters at City Hall. |
| Community Development | <i>BrookLynk</i> youth employment program. |
| Finance | Popular Annual Financial Report |
| Fire | Reviewing Community Risk Reduction program |
| Public Works | Promoting residents' ability to park their vehicles in park parking lots during snow emergencies |
| Police | Lights Out Program. <i>Blue Blocks</i> (intensive community-oriented policing in high crime areas). Collecting demographic data during traffic stops. |
| Rec and Parks | <i>Rec on the Go</i> – bring recreational opportunities to youth |
| Multiple departments | Apartment Action Plan: Improving partnerships and housing conditions with apartment managers and residents |

Questions

