DATE: August 25, 2020
TO: Board of Supervisors
FROM: Martha Wapenski, Deputy County Executive
SUBJECT: Supporting Black Lives Matter and Eliminating Systemic and Institutional Racial Inequities

RECOMMENDED ACTION
Under advisement from June 23, 2020 (Item No. 12): Receive report from the Office of the County Executive relating to the County's internal and external efforts, timeline, and goals to eliminate systemic and institutional racial inequities.

FISCAL IMPLICATIONS
There is no impact to the General Fund by receiving this informational report.

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION
At the June 23, 2020 Board of Supervisors meeting (Item No. 12), the Board approved a referral from Supervisor Chavez and Supervisor Cortese directing Administration to report to the Board of Supervisors in August 2020 regarding the County's internal and external efforts, timeline, and goals to commit to the Black Freedom Struggle and the role of the organization for action and reform towards the fight against racial injustice, police brutality, oppression, and violence.

Also, during the June 23rd meeting, the Board adopted a resolution affirming that Black Lives Matter, condemning racial violence, and committing to equity, justice, and inclusive collaboration with and for Black communities towards elimination of systemic and institutional racial inequities. The Board’s adoption of the resolution was an affirming moment for the County and paves the way for future significant efforts that build on the work already accomplished.

The referral response framework includes:

1. County’s Current Internal and External Efforts
2. Definition of the County’s Role for Action and Reform
3. Recommendations for Community Partnerships
4. Addressing the County’s Workforce
5. Timelines and Goals

1. County’s Current Internal and External Efforts

The Government Alliance on Race an Equity (GARE) is a national network of government working to achieve racial equity and advance opportunities for all. GARE has established a robust website (https://www.racialequityalliance.org/) with information and tools that are valuable to understand their work. Currently, the Public Health Department and the Social Services Agency have active membership with GARE and Public Health’s Racial and Health Equity Senior Manager is on the national GARE steering committee. Additionally, the Public Health Department has an active contract with Race Forward, which is a joint project of GARE and the County remains actively engaged in GARE membership initiatives. While there were initial plans for onsite trainings, both GARE and the County have shifted to virtual trainings and meetings.

With approval of a referral from Supervisor Chavez by the Board of Supervisors on March 19, 2019 (Item No. 16), work commenced for county-wide participation in GARE. The Racial Equity Steering Committee began work on implementing a Racial Equity Approach. There are three key pillars to implementing a Racial Equity Approach:

Racial Equity Learning Cohort

GARE offers a learning year program, Racial Equity Learning Cohort, to help government jurisdictions begin building the infrastructure and capacity to support racial equity work. The Racial Equity Steering Committee is using the GARE learning year curriculum to implement Race, Equity, and Leadership (REAL) cohorts. A consecutive implementation cohort is necessary to provide technical support to move departments toward implementation guided by a racial equity organizational assessment. Each learning and implementation year will be reviewed to make any adaptive or technical modifications for the next cohort.

Departmental Action Teams

Through participation in the REAL Cohorts, departments will use the GARE organizational assessment to develop and implement Racial Equity Action Plans. Racial Equity Coordinators will provide technical and coaching support to participating departments.

County-wide Racial Equity Strategy toward Collective Impact

A county-wide racial equity action plan is critical to ensure measurable change in the experience of customers receiving County services and observed outcomes. The County-wide Racial Equity Steering Committee, for example, would provide oversight and work with County leadership to identify priority areas to serve as demonstration projects for applying racial equity across all levels of the work. Current initiatives such as the Universal Access
Pilot, Systemwide Coordinated Prevention (CAST), Joint Foster Youth Initiative, or Juvenile Justice Reform (JJSC) may be considered.

Another key component for implementation of a Racial Equity Approach is utilizing GARE’s “Racial Equity Toolkit: an Opportunity to Operationalize Equity,” which can be found on their website (https://www.racialequityalliance.org/2015/10/30/racial-equity-toolkit/) along with other tools and resources. This is the tool the County is currently utilized to evaluate budget items and will be tailored to the County’s specific needs prior to being formalized. Elected officials have the opportunity to use a racial equity tool to set broad priorities, bringing consistency between values and practice. When our elected officials are integrating racial equity into their jobs, it will be reflected in the priorities of the jurisdiction, in direction provided to department directors, and in the questions asked of staff. By asking simple racial equity tool questions, such as “How does this decision help or hinder racial equity?” or “Who benefits from or is burdened by this decision?” on a routine basis, elected officials have the ability to put theory into action. These questions and tools are built into the workplan included with this report as, “Attachment II: Draft Equity Workplan,” and explained further later in this report. The Objective and Strategy numbers referenced below are cross-refenced in the attached workplan.

In terms of the County’s external efforts, as the Administration works with County departments and the Racial Equity Team to coordinate efforts, there is a need to standardize the language utilized county-wide to eliminate systemic inequities and increase access to services for all community members. The County efforts will utilize the GARE framework for goals and action plans. The overarching goals to eliminate systemic inequities both internally and externally are:

- **Normalize** conversations about race to build a shared understanding. This goal focuses on racial equity transformation of government by creating a way of doing County business where Race and Equity are imbedded into systems, programs, and practices. For this process to be successful the following action steps are needed (**Objective 1**):
  - **Build Capacity** by identifying staff within departments to engage in the process and become champions of change. (**Strategy 1.1**)
  - **Share** experiences and ideas to contribute towards the development of County-wide strategy. (**Strategy 1.2**)
  - **Learn** about Racial Equity, Structural Racism and how the County contributes toward inequities. (**Strategy 1.3**)
  - **Visualize** what an internal and external equitable community would look like and develop a shared vision to work towards. (**Strategy 1.4**)
• **Organize** efforts to shift institutional culture and practice by implementing a county-wide racial equity strategy. This will be achieved by identifying action-oriented, system-wide strategies to advance racial equity, transform systems, and improve outcomes for communities of color. Activities to achieve this goal will include, but not be limited to *(Objective 2)*:

  o **Focus Areas for Transformation Change** such as the Re-Entry Resource Center where a multi-disciplinary team of County employees and community members can shift service-delivery models. *(Strategy 2.1)*

  o **Engage the Community** through partnerships with Community-Based Organizations serving Marginalized Communities such as African Americans, Latinx, Native Americans or Pacific Islanders, Individuals with Disabilities, LGBTQ+ Community, Incarcerated and Formerly Incarcerated individuals, Undocumented Immigrants and Mixed Immigration Families and Communities. *(Strategy 2.2)*

  o **Establish Operational Teams** of government staff and elected officials that can effect change and work towards county-wide equity. *(Strategy 2.3)*

• **Operationalize** application of racial equity tools to advance racial equity in services and systems. This includes a racial equity analysis that will outline the process, guide the development, implementation, and evaluation of policies, initiatives, programs, and budget to address the impacts of racial equity. Current potential strategies to achieve this objective include, but are not limited to *(Objective 3)*:

  o **Outcomes** will be determined by key outcomes for racial equity to guide analysis. *(Strategy 3.1)*

  o **Stakeholders Involvement and Data Analysis** Information gathering from Community Allies and the County on how programs, policies or initiatives racially benefits or burdens the community. *(Strategy 3.2)*

  o **Benefit and/or Burden** Analyze the data to determine the impacts and alignment with racial equity outcomes. *(Strategy 3.3)*

  o **Advance Opportunity and Minimize Harm** Develop strategies to create greater racial equity or minimize unintended consequences. *(Strategy 3.4)*

  o **Evaluate, Raise Racial Awareness and Be Accountable** Track positive or negative impacts overtime, continue to communicate and involve stakeholders and document issues. *(Strategy 3.5)*

While a significant portion of external work will be completed in partnership with community partners, the County is also involved in encouraging and facilitating GARE partnership with cities within the county. In July, the County provided a GARE presentation to the Cities Association Mayors and City Managers meeting to encourage participation in
GARE and to offer guidance and support to assist other jurisdictions with beginning racial equity work. This is work that will continue to achieve the goal of having the community experience racial equity county-wide, regardless of the area where they may reside or location where they may choose to obtain services.

2. Definition of the County’s Role for Action and Reform

The actions listed above, are not intended to serve as a finalized list. Instead, they serve as a framework to continue conversations with the internal County departments, as well as the external partners outlined below. Defining goals and identifying action steps to achieve those goals is an iterative process done in partnership with the community. For the County to engage in successful community engagement that will lead to true partnership, the work needs to be co-designed and co-lead by both the County and the community. For equity work, community engagement will be defined as bringing the community and the County together to, take on the responsibility of co-design and development efforts.

The Administration is approaching equity as a county-wide systemic issue with an expansive definition of equity that reviews accessibility, service delivery, and how to balance equity through many perspectives such as race, gender, health, geography, environment. For future efforts, it is important to note that we are looking at equitable access, instead of just equal access.

The County recognizes the need for a broad definition of equity that can be applied universally throughout the County that is inclusive of access. These definitions should be derived through coordination with community and remain iterative as the collective work continues towards equity in all aspects of County operations.

3. Recommendations for Community Partnerships

As the racial equity work moves forward, there is a need to build upon existing partnership with the County’s contracted community-based organizations and local small businesses that are rooted in the community. Not only do these partners provide valuable insight, they can work with the County to review our service delivery through an equity and culturally responsive lens and can bring the voice of the community to policy decision making. To ensure community partnership, the County will be following the example of previous Public Health initiatives that fosters community allies from key organizations that are trusted members of the community and can share ownership of program design with the County. In response to the referral, the County will prioritize partnerships with African Ancestry community leaders, with the intention to solicit feedback from all community organizations that advocate for equity in Santa Clara County. The list of Community Allies below is a starting point for County staff, and provides flexibility for Community Allies to also tell the County who should be involved:

- 100 Black Men of Silicon Valley
Community allies will be selected by the organizations listed above and each organization will designate their representative. Designees should have decision-making power for their organization, but more importantly they should agree with and support the cause of equity.
and access. Allies should be willing to share the risk in the planning process, be ready to quickly build upon the existing work, and have sufficient capacity to help get the work done. As we formalize partnerships with community partners, joint solutions will be co-developed through community listening opportunities that incorporate their thoughts and ideas to ensure shared ownership of work moving forward.

4. Addressing the County’s Workforce

The County’s internal efforts began in 2015 when the Public Health Department first engaged with GARE. In 2016, Public Health embarked on the one-year GARE Learning Year. Additional County employees representing multiple departments have also completed the GARE learning year and those who have completed the Learning Year now serve as the County’s Racial Equity Steering Committee which convenes and facilitates county-wide efforts. The steering committee meets regularly and covers various topics aimed at identifying what it will take to achieve systemic transformation. Steering committee members are co-designing the county-wide strategy and informing department level strategy. They also serve as trainers, technical support, and departmental liaisons for departments who are ready to take on equity and access initiatives.

The nine Racial Equity Steering Committee members are joined by eight Racial Equity Allies who are committed to addressing racial inequity, are ready for action, and are available to support steering committee initiatives and pilots, despite not yet completing the Learning Year. They also serve as important thought partners to expand the work and be responsive to the needs and requests from individual departments. Collectively, the Steering Committee and Allies are the County’s Racial Equity Team. Below is a brief overview of internal efforts that are currently underway:

**Educating the County’s Workforce:** This is the first step towards transformation. The foundational goal of racial equity work is to normalize the conversation around race. This is a difficult conversation for many people to have and may be even more challenging in a workplace environment. Yet it is critical that tough, uncomfortable conversations are had to gain insight into other’s lived experiences and to develop racial equity terminology. Recognizing that employees may be at varying stages in their own personal experiences, Administration will utilize the County’s Employee Connection “The Bridge” to increase awareness of County efforts towards racial equity, recommend reading and educational materials, and establish a virtual book club to foster communication.

**Providing Accessible Training for Employees:** As teleworking continues for many employees nationally, the County and GARE have shifted focus to providing virtual training. Training will be utilized to connect to the infrastructure and strategies within the GARE framework to County operations. GARE is in the process of converting their existing trainings to a virtual platform and making them available to membership
agencies. The County is also looking at the feasibility of providing virtual implicit bias training that is inclusive of a racial equity lens.

**Internal Champions:** For true transformation to occur, it should come from within the County’s diverse workforce. The Racial Equity Team will provide training, tools, and guidance needed to facilitate transformation, but efforts for individual departments or services cohorts will be led by internal employee champions who are empowered to identify focus areas for analysis of department and government structures, recruit team members, and develop and implement action plans.

**Formalize Review of Legislative Files for Equity Implications:** Currently, legislative files contain a statement on child impact, senior impact, and sustainability implications. As the County works to integrate an equity lens into all areas of county operations, the goal is to integrate new practices into standard operating procedures in a meaningful way. Administration will work with the Clerk of the Board and county-wide agenda coordinators to create equity implications that responds to the key questions “How does this decision advance racial equity or exacerbate racial equity?” or “Who benefits from or is burdened by this decision?” This information will allow the community necessary information to be able to contribute to policy discussions in an informed way and provides the framework for elected officials to review policy from an equity framework. Implementation of this initiative can begin after training on the overall GARE framework is provided to staff so they can provide a meaningful racial impact analysis.

**Application of Racial Equity Tools:** The Racial Equity Tools available through GARE have been included in previous reports to the Board. In June, the County’s Executive Leaders participated in an overview of racism and equity. This was the first step to move towards applying an equity tool to budgeting and policy. Also, on the Board of Supervisor’s August 25th agenda (Item No. 14) is consideration of an Equity Resolution outlining a commitment to making equitable policy and budget decisions. In July, the County’s executive leadership and the Office of Budget and Analysis (OBA) had a workshop which introduced GARE’s Racial Equity Tool. In teams they selected a topic and applied the first steps of the tool:

- What are the goals of the proposal?
- What data is available that can help determine where racial inequities exist? What are the data gaps?
- Who is the proposal’s priority population? How would you engage this population? Challenge yourself to think beyond outreach and input.
Training will be ongoing and provided in modules that build upon previous conversations and exercises. In a phased approach, certain departments are being provided more robust training now on the GARE framework and equity tools that will allow them to prepare equity impact statements as part of the November 2020 budget review. Also, OBA’s instructions to all departments will include first steps of equity considerations in their budget proposals. Administration anticipates having a comprehensive data-informed tool for broad usage by January 2021.

Race, Equity, and Leadership Cohort (REAL): The Racial Equity Team has developed a County-specific Racial Equity academy that will launch in early September 2020. It was developed from the GARE framework and best practice from other government jurisdictions. This is currently planned as a pilot for the Re-Entry Resource Center (RRC) and participants include the various County departments that provide services at the RRC, contracted community and faith-based organizations that serve clients from the RRC, and individuals representing the clients through a similar lived experience, as well as a select group from other County departments. Included with this report is, “Attachment I: 2020 REAL Fact Sheet,” which provides an overview of the GARE framework, County’s efforts to address racial inequity at the department level, roles and outcomes of the REAL Cohort, and the curriculum outline and calendar.

Developing a Racially Diverse Workforce of Change Agents and Decision Makers: The Employee Services Agency has a representative who is on the Racial Equity Steering Committee and has identified an internal champion, which demonstrates their strong commitment to transformation. Work is underway to assess department readiness to participate in the second REAL Cohort.

The Racial Equity Team remains dedicated to forward progress on a county-wide strategy and their work is supported by a Deputy County Executive to ensure adequate resources. The current pandemic has slowed recruitment and caused training to be re-imagined, but the County has been able to continue with identifying internal champions and launched the first County of Santa Clara specific REAL cohort.

5. Timelines and Goals
The next critical step is to begin partnership with the community. Once the Board has received this report and provided input on the framework, the Racial Equity Team will reach out to partners to co-develop shared action plans.

To maximize internal and external work already being done and to launch external community engagement, outreach will be divided into three work areas:
1. Systemic Oppression  
2. Racial Injustice and Inequities  
3. Police Brutality and Violence  

Working towards all three goals will happen concurrently with overlapping timelines. Tasks are aligned with the objectives and strategies outlined above. A high-level overview is provided below, with a more detailed draft task plan attached to this report as, “Attachment II: Draft Equity Workplan.” Additional information and content will be provided after consultation with Community Allies.

Phase 1: Normalize (Objective 1)- 2016 through March 2021 with Ongoing Components  
Starting the Conversation- Quantifying and Qualifying the Problem  
- Departmental Townhalls  
- Racial Equity presentations to county departments and county-wide partners  
- The Bridge (employee communications) Spotlight on current and emerging county Racial Equity efforts and partnership with GARE  
- County Internal launch of recommended readings, videos, and trainings  
- Racial Equity Book Club  
- Stakeholder Listening Sessions  
- Facilitated discussions: Why are we talking about structural racism?  
  - Executive Leaders conversation on race  
- Overview of Racial Equity Tool  
  - Executive Leaders and Office of Budget and Analysis  
- Selection of Pilot REAL Cohort #1  
- Finalize county-wide Internal Champions  
- Launching county-wide virtual training  
- Adopt Equity Resolution  

Phase 2: Organize (Objective 2)- September 2020 through December 2020 with Ongoing Components  
Apply Learning to Refine Approach and Strategy  
- SCC Racial Equity and Leadership Cohorts  
  - Departmental Action Plan
• Launching county-wide virtual training
• Departmental equity impact statement for the November Budget process
• Establish regular meetings with Community Allies
• Convene Internal Champions for shared learning and information sharing

**Phase 3: Operationalize** *(Objective 3)- January 2021 through June 2021*

• Review demographic information for service utilization
  o County staffing patterns/make-up
  o Outside indicators to contextualize who we are talking about and why
  o Population that is being impacted
• Departmental equity impact statement for the November Budget process
• Establish Community Allies working groups according to three work areas above
• Present action plan to the community for feedback
• Policies Revisions and recommendations
• Finalize county-wide Racial Equity budgeting tool
• Identifying ongoing trainings and practices
• Join the National movement for racial equity
• Formalize County-wide and Departmental Racial Equity strategies
• Address and Transform racial injustice in departmental policies and practices
• Adopt County-wide Racial Equity Strategy
  o Monitor and report on progress by the County-wide Racial Equity Team

In parallel to this work on equity are efforts to facilitate healing in our community because of historic racial and systemic inequities. On January 21, 2020, the County commemorated the First National Day of Racial Healing. Since the pandemic, efforts have shifted to creating virtual healing spaces for staff, partners, and community.

The County will continue engagement with GARE to evaluate methods for training elected officials and pursue potential study sessions with either the Board or a designated Board committee that will be open to the public and accessible to community partners.

**CHILD IMPACT**

The recommended action will have a positive impact on children and youth. By applying a racial equity lens and county-wide strategy to address equity, children, and youth from
communities of color will gain increased access to diverse, client-centered services and programs to increase their quality of life.

**SENIOR IMPACT**

The recommended action will have a positive impact on seniors. Seniors in Santa Clara County would benefit from racial equity by accessing services that are client-centered, culturally responsive, and provided in accordance with their needs and means of communication.

**SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS**

The recommended action will have positive sustainability implications. Efforts to address structural and systemic racism will increase the quality of life for communities of color and enhance the environment of our entire community.

**BACKGROUND**

On May 29, 2020, the death of George Floyd catapulted the issue to the forefront of our collective consciousness and sparked nationwide protests demanding reform. Protests were not in response to this single incident, but rather a history of racial inequity. As a governmental entity, the County acknowledges the impact historical racism has played in shaping operations.

To acknowledge the impact the death of George Floyd and the resulting national movement has had on our employees and our community, many County departments hosted town halls with their staff, contracted providers, and the community they serve. These were planned with the intention of creating a space for sharing, healing, learning and discussion.

In addition to public safety related social movements, racial inequities have been prominent during the Novel coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic, which has disproportionately impacted our working communities of color. Response to COVID-19 has challenged the Emergency Operations Center to find new ways to engage the community, build trust, and communicate directly to our communities of color in multiple languages and through varied means. These new initiatives are providing valuable insight into how the County can increase access to services in a way that is language accessible and through culturally centered communications. Lessons learned during the pandemic will guide future program design.

Through the Public Health Department, the County engaged in the Government Alliance on Race and Equity (GARE) beginning in 2015 to learn about equity tools and a framework to inform budgeting and policy decisions.

In its role as a safety net for the most vulnerable of our community, the County has taken many actions aimed at correcting historic, systemic racial injustice. Attached to this report is a matrix of reports (Attachment III: Board Actions on Equity and Access) from 2019 through the present that have an equity component which strive to increase community access to services and support for marginalized populations, including communities of color.

**CONSEQUENCES OF NEGATIVE ACTION**

The Board would not receive this informational report.
LINKS:

- Created: BOS-2020-104 : Consider recommendations relating to the support of the Black Lives Matter movement to maximize the impacts of the movement and eliminate systemic and institutional racial inequities. (Chavez/Cortese)
- References: 99207 : Under advisement from March 19, 2019 (Item No. 16) and May 7, 2019 (Item No. 15): Receive report from the Office of the County Executive, Division of Equity and Social Justice relating to Countywide participation in the Government Alliance on Race and Equity and development of a Countywide racial and social equity strategy.
- References: 99986 : Under advisement from November 19, 2019 (Item No. 22): Approve Request for Appropriation Modification No. 140 - $367,609 transferring funds from the Reserve for Federal and State Impacts to the Office of the County Executive budget, relating to Countywide Racial and Social Equity program. (Office of the County Executive)
- References: 96073 : Under advisement from March 19, 2019 (Item No. 16): Receive report from the Office of the County Executive relating to Countywide participation in the Government Alliance on Race and Equity (GARE) and Development of County Standards of Excellence. (Office of the County Executive)
- References: 95493 : Approve referral to Administration to report to the Board with options for consideration relating to ensuring that every County department and office has a representative on the County's Government Alliance on Race and Equity (GARE) team. (Chavez)
- References: 102189 : Held from August 11, 2020 (Item No. 24): Consider recommendations relating to the commitment of the County of Santa Clara to the Government Alliance on Race and Equity and to making equitable policy and budget decisions. (Office of the County Executive/County Counsel)
- References: 102011 : Consider recommendations relating to the commitment of the County of Santa Clara to the Government Alliance on Race and Equity (GARE) and to making equitable policy and budget decisions. (Chavez)
- References: 99988 : Adoption of Salary Ordinance No. NS-5.20.72 amending Santa Clara County Salary Ordinance No. NS-5.20 relating to compensation of employees adding one Program Manager II position, one Senior Training and Staff Development Specialist or Training and Staff Development Specialist position, and one Training and Staff Development Specialist or Associate Training and Staff Development Specialist II or Associate Training and Staff Development Specialist I position in the Office of the County Executive.

ATTACHMENTS:

- Attachment I REAL Fact Sheet (PDF)
- Attachment II Draft Equity Workplan (PDF)
- Attachment III Board Actions on Equity and Access (PDF)