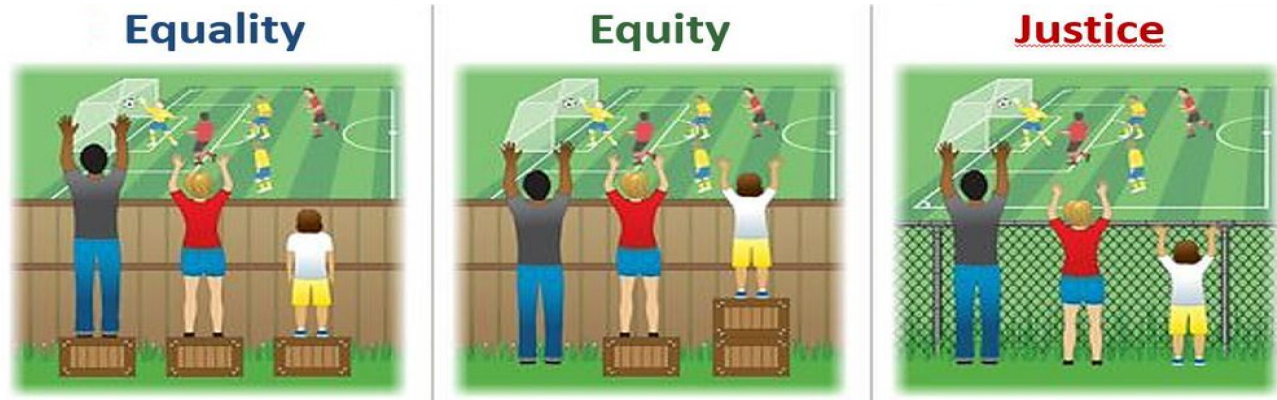


# Equity & Social Justice

## A City Council Initiative

### **What is Equity?**

⇒ Equity, like equality, is focused on ensuring fairness, however, instead of making sure everyone has the same resources, equity strives to meet people where they are and provide resources in proportion to each person's need.



### **What is Social Justice?**

- Social justice is a movement that fights for fairness for people who have been historically oppressed, particularly Black, Indigenous and People of Color (BIPOC).
- Due to racially discriminatory laws, BIPOC communities have been disproportionately subjected to generational gaps in wealth accumulation, lack of access to housing, inadequate healthcare, and less healthy neighborhoods.
- The ultimate achievement of a truly just society is when the discriminatory systemic barriers to achieving one's full potential are removed.

### **Purpose of the Community Workshops: The City Initiative**

The City of Twentynine Palms passed Resolution 21-21 (see attached) which declares that racism is a public health crisis, and also confirms the City's commitment to ensuring racial equity and diversity in its policies, programs, and services. Additionally, the City is developing a new General Plan element called the Equity and Social Justice Element to foster these values and to leverage the City's numerous partners.

We are asking for the community's input. Please share your ideas, experiences, and responses to this initiative.

# Educational Equity



## What is “Equity” and how does it relate to Education?

We are blessed with a diversity of educational opportunities. A single learning standard or practice applied to all students does not always lead to equal results. Students are individuals and all have different needs. By tending to the individual needs of each student, we can ensure the greatest possible outcomes. To achieve equity in education we must encourage and support leaders who can transform our institutions by eliminating inequitable practices and cultivating the unique gifts, talents, and interests of every child. Then **success and failure will no longer be based on student identity** - racial, cultural, economic, or any other social factor.

### Inequality in Education Nationwide



- Public school districts receive the majority of their funding through property taxes. Because of this, school districts in areas with higher property values receive more funding and vice versa. This means that the historic link between housing, poverty, and race also correlate with educational inequity. The first step in correcting this problem is through the acknowledgement and mitigation through a redesign of education and its funding.

### Examples of Equitable Practices in Education

- Allowing students with disabilities to take breaks
- Giving students the option to take exams in separate rooms under a controlled environment to eliminate anxiety
- Lending laptops and providing hotspots to students without access to the internet
- Adopting dress code exemptions for different cultural or religious backgrounds

## Solutions to Advance Equity in Education

### Recognize Where Individual Needs are Not Being Met: Encourage schools to ⇒

- ⇒ Increase communication with parents, teachers, and students
- ⇒ Hire staff trained to recognize individual student needs (Disability, language barrier, lack of resources).
- ⇒ Acknowledge the external factors which contribute to a lack of performance or engagement

### Expand Resources, Apply Accommodations, and Change the System

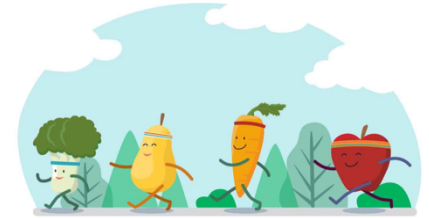
- ⇒ Advocate for school program funding beyond property taxes
- ⇒ Encourage individual tutoring programs for students who are struggling or have special needs
- ⇒ Encourage in-class accommodations for students with disabilities
- ⇒ Encourage resources in multiple languages for students with multi-lingual backgrounds
- ⇒ Replace punitive punishment with restorative action to combat the school-to-prison pipeline
- ⇒ Encourage associate level and vocation education that complement local job opportunities

### Educational Equity Is:

- Ensuring **equally high outcomes for all participants** in our educational system
- **Removing the predictability of success or failures** that currently correlates with any social or cultural factor
- Remediating inequitable practices, examining biases, and creating **inclusive multicultural school environments** for adults and children



# Food Equity



## What is “Equity” and how does it relate to food and nutrition?

“**Food equity** takes into account factors including targeted food marketing, and structural racism that has led to neighborhood segregation, unhealthy built environments, and food and nutrition insecurity.”

- Partnership for a Healthier America



“**Food and nutrition security** exists when all people, at all times, have physical, social and economic access to food which is safe and consumed in sufficient quantity and quality to meet their dietary needs and food preferences, and is supported by an environment of adequate sanitation, health services and care, allowing for a healthy and active life.”

- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

**Food is a fundamental human right.** Reliable access to nutritious and affordable food is essential to an active, healthy life. Conversely, food insecurity may lead to an increased risk of disease and other negative health outcomes.

Source: Partnership for a Healthier America



## What is a Food Desert?

Food deserts are “*low-income census tracts with a substantial number or share of residents with low levels of access to retail outlets selling healthy and affordable foods.*”

- Census tracts qualify as food deserts if they meet the following thresholds:
  - Low-Income—poverty rate of 20% or higher, or the median household income (MHI) is at or below 80% of the statewide MHI.
  - Low-Access— in rural communities, at least 500 people and/or 33% of the population lives more than 10 miles from a supermarket or large grocery store.

Sources: USDA, Department of Treasury, and Department of Health and Human Services

## Supporting Equity in Food and Nutrition



**Address food deserts by promoting a healthy food supply in the schools, grocery stores, and non-profits (e.g. Twentynine Palms Community Food Pantry).**

**Support local food production, including through the promotion of community gardens and continuing to support the weekly farmer’s market.**

**Promote knowledge, skills, and awareness to empower people to select good foods and prepare them quickly at home.**



Source: Partnership for a Healthier America

# Health Equity

## What is "Health Equity"?

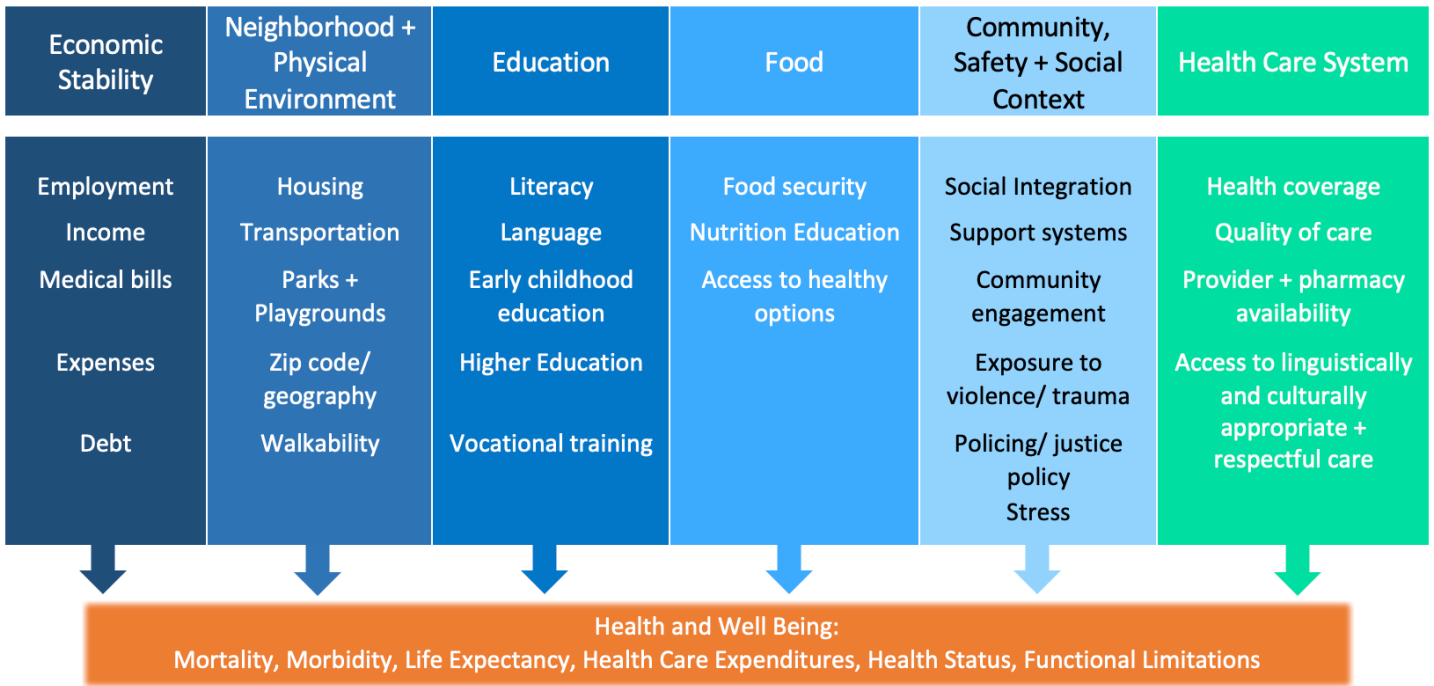
Health equity is achieved when every person has the opportunity to "attain his or her full health potential" and no one is "disadvantaged from achieving this potential because of social positions or other socially determined circumstances. (Center for Disease Control)



Unfortunately, many social and environmental factors can limit a person's access to, and continued use of, good health practices and healthcare. These are health inequities.

Research shows that problems like poverty, unemployment, low educational attainment, inadequate housing, lack of public transportation, exposure to violence, and neighborhood deterioration (social or physically) shape health and contribute to health inequities. (National Academy of Sciences)

## Health Disparities are Driven by Social and Economic Inequities



## How Can the City Promote Health Equity?

- Improve access to affordable, stable, inclusive, and healthy housing
- Promote diverse education and local employment opportunities
- Promote improved diversity and availability of healthcare within the city
- Reinforce social connections and community safety
- Encourage investment in public health infrastructure



# Housing Equity

## What is "Equity" and how does it relate to housing?

Equity recognizes that advantages and barriers exist and acknowledges the problematic housing practices that have led to systemic inequality that disproportionately affect minorities, low-income households, the elderly, and other special groups. To ensure equity, we must make a commitment to correct and address discrimination in housing.



### California Law

Fair housing laws make it illegal to discriminate against any person because of race, color, religion, sex, disability, familial status, national origin, ancestry, marital status, sexual orientation, source of income, and age in the rental or sale, financing, advertising, appraisal of housing, provision of real estate brokerage services, etc.

### Historic Patterns & Discriminatory Housing Practices Nationwide



- Redlining
- Racially restrictive housing covenants
- Exclusion from the G.I. Bill and other federal homeownership initiatives
- Demolition of Black neighborhoods as part of urban renewal or highway construction
- Exclusionary zoning
- Predatory lending

### Common Signs of Housing Discrimination Today

- ! Refusal to rent or sell housing or refusal to make a mortgage loan or issue insurance
- ! Set different terms, conditions or privileges for sale or rental
- ! Blockbusting (persuade owners to sell property cheaply due to fear of another race or class moving into neighborhood, and thus profiting by reselling at a higher price)

## Solutions to Advance Equity in Housing

**Invest in Distressed Neighborhoods** to increase home values and expand affordable home ownership opportunities

- ⇒ Home repair and rehabilitation assistance programs
- ⇒ Assistance programs for home upgrades including weatherization and energy efficiency upgrades
- ⇒ Invest in neighborhood amenities including parks, schools, alternative transportation

**Increase Home Ownership** for minorities, low-income households, and other disadvantaged groups through assistance programs and access to affordable housing options

- ⇒ Increase access to down payment assistance
- ⇒ Invest in the construction of affordable housing in neighborhoods with access to economic and social opportunities and infrastructure like public transportation
- ⇒ Promote land use and zoning practices that encourage mixed-income neighborhoods

**Address Homelessness + Increase Housing Stability** for low-income households with economic policies and programs

- ⇒ Mortgage forbearance and foreclosure prevention programs, emergency rental assistance programs
- ⇒ Attract higher paying employment opportunities to the City
- ⇒ Alleviate cost burdens with public investment and vouchers for rent and homeownership
- ⇒ Rapid Re-Housing case management and/or similar services to address homelessness



# Public Services Equity

*“The greatness of a community is most accurately measured by the compassionate actions of its members.”*

- Coretta Scott King

## What is “Equity” and how does it relate to Public Services?

*Equity is the absence of avoidable, unfair, or remediable differences among groups of people, whether those groups are designed socially, economically, demographically, or geographically or by other means of stratification.*

– World Health Organization



### What is a Public Service?

A public service is any government service that addresses specific needs of the community. Public services are available to people within a city or other jurisdiction as provided directly through public sector agencies or via public financing to private businesses or voluntary organizations.

### Reducing inequity in Providing Public Services?



- Community outreach efforts to increase engagement and knowledge of Public Services
- Transparency & Accountability of public and government institutions
- Racial sensitivity and de-escalation training
- Provide language options for Public Services (e.g. Spanish, Chinese, Tagalog)
- Increased funding for career development

### Examples of Public Services

- 👤 Police Department
- 👤 Fire Department
- 👤 Healthcare
- 👤 Transportation
- 👤 Utilities
- 👤 Parks & Recreation
- 👤 Libraries
- 👤 Schools
- 👤 Post office

## Why Equity in Public Services is Important

- ⇒ The equalizing effect of public services is multiplied when delivered by staff in decent employment conditions with full access to labor and trade union rights, benefitting not only public service user and their communities, but also businesses and the economy as a whole.
- ⇒ When Public Services are treated as a commodity and **profitability is the main goal**, unequal access, and marginalization of those who cannot afford to pay follow. **Poorer urban and rural areas are often left behind.**
- ⇒ Universal access to quality public services is critical to achieve equality, to realize social justice in communities and societies, to promote democracy and to enable people to live safe, meaningful, and dignified lives. COVID-19 has exposed the connection between lack of equitable public service access and inequality.
- ⇒ Free, universal access to public health and education services alone has a **greater equalizing effect than progressive taxation and social benefit systems combined**, and the equalizing effect of public services is further multiplied for the poor.
- ⇒ When public services are publicly run, long term funding can be invested in the service to expand access, reduce the user price for poorer households and address territorial inequalities, instead of being paid out to shareholders.



# Transportation Equity



## How does equity relate to transportation?

- Transportation is essential to access schools, work, health services, housing options, as well as civic, social and recreational opportunities.
- Inadequate and unaffordable transportation systems mean some communities, particularly communities of color and low-income communities, may experience fewer of the benefits and opportunities associated with transportation, and a disproportionate share of the negative impacts.
- Transportation equity means access for all to safe, affordable, and reliable transportation options that meet the needs of EVERYONE in the community.

## Transportation Equity: Key Considerations

### Service and Infrastructure Issues

- Bus service (frequency of service, routes, location of stops)
- Sidewalks and bicycle lanes and paths
- Availability and diversity of active transportation infrastructure
- Accessibility (options for those who can't drive, availability of paratransit service)

### Affordability

- Options for regional travel and longer trips
- Cost of taxis, ride-hailing (Uber, Lyft), and other alternatives
- Cost of bus transit services
- Access to automobiles (especially for longer and more complex trips)

### Access to Opportunities

- Access to health services
- Access to work or job interviews
- Access for K-12, vocational school, and higher education
- Access to social, recreational, and cultural events

### Health and Safety

- Safety at bus stops, on transit, and when travelling at night
- Active transportation (availability of sidewalk and bike routes)
- Collisions (speeding, pedestrian crashes, other hazards)

## Initiatives Advancing Equity in Transportation

### Twentynine Palms Volunteer Driver Program

- ⇒ Transportation Reimbursement Escort Program (TREP) is a mileage reimbursement transportation service that compliments public transportation. Volunteer drivers transport seniors, people with disabilities, persons with low and limited income, as well as other vulnerable residents to medical services, grocery shopping, banking, and other important destinations.

### San Bernardino County Transportation Authority – SB Loop

- ⇒ An SB Loop vanpool is a carpool of five or more individuals who live near each other and share a common schedule, commuting to work or school in a month-to-month leased vehicle partially subsidized by the San Bernardino County Transportation Authority.

### San Bernardino County Non-Motorized Transportation Plan

- ⇒ This plan provides guidelines for the development and expansion of safe, interconnected cycling and walking facilities throughout the County, including the Morongo Basin.

