



City of Sanford Equity Task Force Findings and Recommendations

November 2021

The City of Sanford Equity Task Force Findings and Recommendations was prepared by staff at the Building Integrated Communities initiative in collaboration with the Sanford Equity Task Force. The findings and recommendations were presented to the Sanford City Council on November 9, 2021. For more information about Building Integrated Communities, an initiative of the Institute for the Study of the Americas at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, visit <https://migration.unc.edu/building-integrated-communities/>

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To submit feedback about the Sanford Equity Task Force, visit:

<https://www.sanfordnc.net/752/Equity-Task-Force-Initiative>



TABLE OF CONTENTS

A Letter to the City Council	4
A Guide to Reading the Report	5
The Sanford Equity Task Force Process	6
Task Force Members	7
Findings and Recommendations	
A. Communications and Community Responsibility	8
B. Criminal Justice	10
C. Education	17
D. Health	22
E. Housing and Home Ownership	29
F. Leadership and Inclusion	33
G. Wages and Income	35
References	41
Appendices	46

November 1, 2021

Dear City Council,

We are delighted to share the Sanford Equity Task Force Recommendations in response to your charge to serve. First of all, we would like to say it has been a pleasure for us to serve our community. Although this has been a time of historic challenge for our city amidst a global pandemic, we have been committed and dedicated to our assignment.

We spent twelve months engaged in a process of collaborative research and visioning from September 2020 to September 2021. We have had numerous committee and sub-committee meetings. We have learned from knowledgeable people in community organizations, businesses, City and County departments, and educational institutions. We have also sought the expertise of more than twenty experts to inform our work.

In this report and action plan, we provide a framework and recommendations for addressing equity and moving toward practical solutions. Specifically, we have identified findings and recommendations centered around housing and home ownership, wages and income, criminal justice and law enforcement, leadership and inclusion, health, education, communication, and community responsibility.

This report comes from a group of people that have a heart for their community. We acknowledge that building a more equitable City is an ever evolving, ongoing process, and we are committed to continuing this work beyond our one-year charge as Task Force members. We thank you for your consideration of these recommendations and look forward to collaborating with you to bring these ideas to fruition and make Sanford a more equitable place.

Sincerely,

The Sanford Equity Task Force

A GUIDE TO READING THE REPORT

“The Sanford Equity Task Force Findings and Recommendations” begins with a history and description of the process. The following sections are organized around six key areas of concern: Communication and Community Responsibility, Criminal Justice, Education, Health, Housing and Home Ownership, Leadership and Inclusion, and Wages and Income.

The report includes a section for each area of concern that includes data and background information, recommendations, and a chart with details about how each recommendation can be implemented. Details in the charts include performance measures, partners, resources, and a timeline for each recommended action.

★ Stars beside recommendations represent Task Force priorities.

A references page at the end includes hyperlinks and more information about all resources and data cited in the report.

THE SANFORD EQUITY TASK FORCE PROCESS

In the summer of 2020, Councilman Buckels discussed equity disparity trends present in Sanford's underserved communities with City staff, the mayor, Councilman Post and Hannah Gill, director of the Building Integrated Communities (BIC) initiative. This meeting led the City to invite the research staff with the BIC initiative at the Institute for the Study of the Americas at UNC Chapel Hill to compile a preliminary report. In August 2020, a community assessment titled "Equity and well-being in Sanford and Lee County," provided background data to establish the mandate for the Task Force. The assessment presents an overview of disparities in the region with a focus on poverty, wages, housing, health, and education. The findings, which were prepared in accessible language for public audiences and communicated through the Sanford Herald, underscore persistent inequalities for Black and Latinx/a/o communities. This community assessment was brought before the City Council which then voted unanimously to create an Equity Task Force to collaboratively examine and work to dismantle disparities in the lives of Sanford residents.

After launching the Sanford Equity Initiative and Task Force in September 2020, the City received a \$5,000 grant from the Duke Energy Foundation to support the yearlong equity initiative. Sanford resident and leader Bishop Charles Mellette facilitated Task Force convenings with support from UNC BIC team members Hannah Gill, Brianna Gilmore, Daniela Cerón and Pierce Holloway. The City Council appointed 13 Task Force members with expertise related to education, workforce development, criminal justice, health care, social services, economic development, and housing.

The Task Force identified six areas of concern through discussion and by participating in a survey at the beginning of the process (Appendix III). These areas of concern are Communication and Community Responsibility, Criminal Justice, Education, Health, Housing and Home Ownership, Leadership and Inclusion, and Wages and Income. Between October 2020 and May 2021, the Task Force convened eight virtual public meetings and an additional 42 sub-committee meetings to create strategies and recommendations. The Task Force invited 17 community experts (see below) with a deep knowledge of community histories, assets, and areas of concern to inform the work of the Task Force.

Marshall Downey, Sanford Planning and Development Director
Karen Kennedy, Sanford Community Development Manager
Kerry Bashaw, Brick Capital CDC Executive Director
Bob Hughes, S3 Housing Connect
Sandra Thompson, Spectrum Recovery, Inc
Heather McKenzie, Advisor at Lee County High School
Nicholas Testa, Advisor at Lee Early College
Erin Parish, City of Durham
Laura Holland, Director of Fair Chance Criminal Justice Project (FCCJP), NC Justice Center

Mayor Jacques Gilbert of the Town of Apex
Pamela Glover, Chair of the Juvenile Crime Prevention Council
William Hall, H3 Health Healing Hope Clinic at Bread for Life
Jeannette Peace, Chairwoman of the White Oak Foundation
Mark Shelburne, Novogradac housing policy consultant
Lara Abels, Advisor at Southern Lee High School
Jairo McMican, Director of Pathways and Equity, CCCC
Quisha Mallette, Staff Attorney of FCCJP, NC Justice Center

The Task Force solicited feedback through a bilingual form on the City website, which received six responses inquiring about public meetings. In conclusion of the year-long process, the Equity Task Force met on June 19th for a retreat to prioritize recommendations.

SANFORD EQUITY TASK FORCE MEMBERS



Robert Bridwell
Deacon at St. Stephen's Church
AICP



Felicia Crittenden
Associate Dean in
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Central Carolina
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Jeanette Peace
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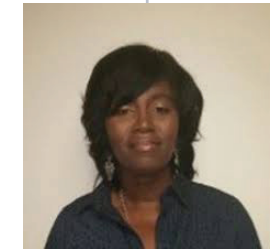
Vonda Reives
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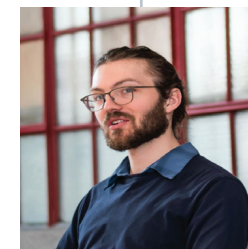
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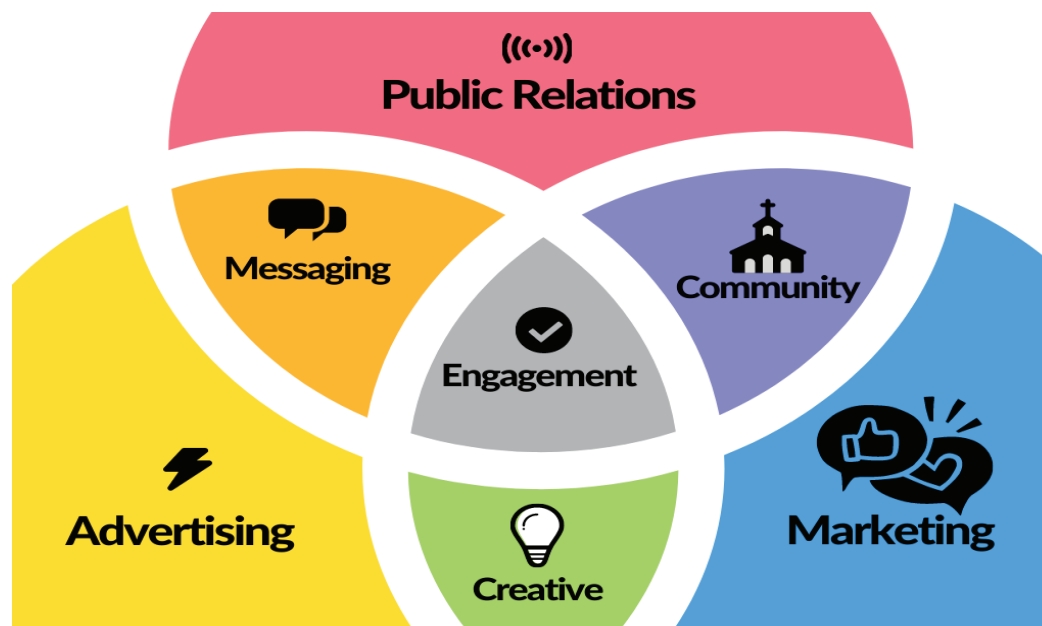
Bishop Charles Mellette
Facilitator

COMMUNICATION AND COMMUNITY RESPONSIBILITY

Goal: Build communication networks with underrepresented communities to make City meetings, jobs, leadership positions, and other opportunities and information more accessible.

While many opportunities exist in our City, not everyone has equal access to information or the ability to engage in civic processes. Language barriers, internet connectivity, unfamiliarity with City services and processes, work and childcare demands, and distrust of government are all factors that impact residents' civic participation.

The Task Force researched strategies for the City of Sanford to build better communication networks and activate civic engagement in historically underrepresented communities.



The Task Force recommends that the City share meeting information and a monthly news update with partners.

The Task Force recommends that the City expand communications through utility bill inserts, a bilingual text notification system, and in-person outreach and flyers in neighborhoods, churches, and hair salons.

The Task Force recommends creating a City guide that is bilingual and available online and in print.

The Task Force recommends creating an online form on the City website for residents to request language interpretation services at public meetings.

COMMUNICATION AND COMMUNITY RESPONSIBILITY

Goal: Build communication networks with underrepresented communities to make opportunities and information more accessible.

	STRATEGY	TIMELINE	PERFORMANCE MEASURES	PARTNERS	RESOURCES
★ 1.1	<p>Share City meeting information and a monthly news update including open city staff postings, board seats, and other opportunities with partners.</p> <p>Share through a variety of communication methods including email, social media, utility bill insert, and in-person outreach in neighborhoods, churches, and hair salons.</p> <p>Public initiatives and planning forums that impact a specific neighborhood should be publicized and communicated in advance through flyers posted in the area to engage community member involvement in public meetings.</p>	<p>3-6 months</p> <p>February-May 2022</p>	<p>Number of people reached by communications efforts; increase in resident participation in local government events, meetings, opportunities, and leadership; increase in growth of contacts on the Sanford Equity Communications Network.</p>	<p>Sanford Equity Communications Network; Sanford Boards and Commissions; neighborhood liaisons; Lee County Schools' Peachjar platform; Regional colleges, specifically Minority Serving Institutions (MSIs) and Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs).</p>	<p>Staff time, funds for printed flyers and mail inserts.</p>
★ 1.2	<p>Establish accountability measures for all equity actions which include quarterly updates on progress and an annual report.</p>	<p>3-6 months</p> <p>February-May 2022</p>	<p>Communicating quarterly updates and annual report in a timely manner with community members and track number of page hits or downloaded copies on website.</p>	<p>See above</p>	<p>Staff time</p>
1.3	<p>Create a guide to City leadership positions, boards and local government functions that is bilingual and available online and in print.</p>	<p>3-6 months</p> <p>February-May 2022</p>	<p>Number of people who receive printed copies of guide; number of page hits or downloaded copies on City website.</p>	<p>See above</p>	<p>Staff time, budget for marketing materials.</p>
1.4	<p>Create a bilingual text notification system for upcoming public meetings. Include the phone number and instructions for public comment.</p>	<p>3-6 months</p> <p>February-May 2022</p>	<p>Number of people who open text alerts, number of public comments.</p>	<p>See above</p>	<p>Translation services; bilingual staff.</p>
1.5	<p>Create an online form on the City website for residents to request language interpretation services at public meetings.</p>	<p>3 months</p> <p>February 2022</p>	<p>Number of requests for interpretation.</p>	<p>See above</p>	<p>Building Integrated Communities technical support.</p>

★ *The yellow stars indicate a Task Force priority

CRIMINAL JUSTICE

Goal #1: Strengthen Community-Police relationships and mental health crisis resources.

Building trust between communities and the police improves public safety. Historically disadvantaged victims of crime may fear the state response more than the behavior that caused their victimization ([NC Governor's Task Force 2020](#)).

Community policing is an approach to law enforcement that builds bridges with local residents, neighborhoods, and organizations “to proactively address the immediate conditions that give rise to public safety issues such as crime, social disorder, and fear of crime” ([U.S. Department of Justice - Community Policing Defined 2014](#)).

Community policing techniques such as walking patrols in lieu of driving, collaborations with local partners, and participation in community events equip law enforcement officers with a better understanding of the socio-economic and religious dynamics of a community and provide support for those residents while building trust.

The Task Force also found a need for more mental health crisis training. Criminal justice systems are dealing with a significant increase in the number of people experiencing mental health and/or substance use disorder crises. This public health emergency requires more resources and training for law enforcement, emergency departments and jails.

The Task Force recommends that the Sanford Police Department implement training initiatives focusing on community policing.

The Task Force recommends that community policing efforts take place in challenged communities that experience a high volume of police calls or activity.

The Task Force recommends that the City offer pay incentives for bilingual officers and recruit employees with Spanish language fluency.

The Task Force recommends the the Sanford Police Department establish a Mental Health Crisis Rapid Response Team with mental health professionals and expanded training opportunities.

CRIMINAL JUSTICE

Goal #2: Invest in youth recreation.

Preventing adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) can provide an opportunity to decrease crime and violence. ACEs increase children's risk to substance and alcohol abuse, poor educational attainment, and mental health problems ([Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2019](#)). Poverty is strongly associated with ACEs.

Youth gain resilience against ACEs when they are connected to caring adults and activities such as mentoring and after-school programs. In addition to providing opportunities for personal growth, skill development, and academic success, after-school programs provide adult supervision between 3:00pm to 6:00pm, when youth crime and violence peaks ([CDC, 2019](#)). Mentoring and after-school programs can reduce the prevalence of crime, violence, and other adolescent risk behavior and pave the way for positive outcomes in adulthood ([Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2016](#)). The Task Force found that there are not enough opportunities for adolescents aged 12-17 in Sanford and Lee County.

Mentoring and after-school programs can reduce the prevalence of crime, violence, and other adolescent risk behavior.

The Task Force recommends creating an accessible Youth Center for recreation and mentoring programs that is in Sloan Park on Bragg Street; Downtown Jonesboro; or the Kendale Shopping Center.

The Task Force recommends joining the Lee County Parks and Recreation Commission and the Sanford City Parks Commission to plan parks for impact in urban, high-density low-income neighborhoods for youth, including adolescents.

CRIMINAL JUSTICE

Goal #3: Decriminalize poverty

There is a perpetual cycle of devastating outcomes that results from an individual's inability to pay traffic court fines and fees. By NC law (G.S. 20-24.2), failure to pay leads to license suspension. People who continue driving (to get to a job out of necessity, for example) can receive more serious criminal charges and more fines and fees.

When an individual fails to pay, a judge has the discretion to issue an arrest and a financial bond, which requires that a defendant pay a sum of money before appearing in court or be jailed.

As of February 2021, **3,078** people had suspended licenses because of unpaid traffic fines in Lee County ([Appendix I](#)). **48%** of these people are Black, **21.6%** are Latino and **26.5%** are White. The average length of unpaid tickets is around 8 years ([Appendix I](#)). The Task Force also found that in Lee County, financial bonds account for **78%** of bonds issued for misdemeanor charges and **79%** of bonds issued for felony charges ([UNC School of Government Crime Lab Report 2019](#)).

The Task Force identified the connection between these criminal justice practices and persistent equity issues in the city of Sanford. Not only do driver's license suspensions and jail time impact jobs; a criminal record impacts future employment opportunities. The Task Force found that Lee County could eliminate traffic court debt, restore driver's licenses, and release low-risk defendants who cannot pay their bonds.

The Task Force recommends clarifying that all initial applications do not require applicants to disclose prior criminal convictions, but will contain a prominent notice informing applicants that the position may require a background check and unless required by state law, a record of conviction will not automatically exclude you from consideration for employment.

The Task Force recommends collaboration with Lee County to:

- 1.) establish a program to eliminate traffic court debt and restore driver's licenses.
- 2.) reduce the use of money bail.
- 3.) eliminate incarceration for failure to pay fines and fees.

People of color are disproportionately impacted by criminal legal debt and license suspensions.

CRIMINAL JUSTICE

Goal 1: Strengthen community-police relationships and mental health crisis resources

	STRATEGY	TIMELINE	PERFORMANCE MEASURES	PARTNERS	RESOURCES
★	<p>1.1 Implement training initiatives focusing on community policing techniques.</p> <p>Suggested community policing techniques: Create a departmental policy to increase walking patrols in lieu of driving patrols.</p> <p>Spend non-enforcement time in neighborhoods through collaborations with local partners.</p> <p>Increase law enforcement marketing team presence at community events.</p>	<p>6-12 months</p> <p>May - November 2022</p>	<p>Reduce the number of calls to police in challenged communities that experience a high volume of police calls or activity.</p> <p>Conduct surveys that focus on safety and livability to obtain community opinion.</p>	<p>Sanford Police Department; LeeCAN; CCCC; Sandhills Center; NAMI Lee County; Lee County Department of Social Services; Private mental health counseling agencies - (Daymark, Solo Behavioral Services)</p> <p>Sanford Lee County Planning and Development Department; Social Services Housing Authority; Recreation Department; Boys and Girls Club; Sanford Equity Communications Network.</p>	<p>Federal Government/ Department of Justice grants; HUD grants; USDA; NC state funds; COVID funds (21st Century Guide to Policing: Community Policing Defined; NC 2020 Governor's Task Force).</p>
	<p>1.2 Offer pay incentives for bilingual officers and recruit employees with Spanish language fluency.</p>	<p>3 months</p> <p>February 2022</p>	<p>Increase in employees who have Spanish language fluency.</p>		<p>Blue Lights College, Building Integrated Communities</p>
★	<p>1.3 Establish a Mental Health Rapid Response Crisis Team with mental health professionals.</p> <p>Chosen model should track metrics and provide training on mental illness, autism, intellectual disabilities, substance misuse, and homelessness to all system stakeholders, including emergency dispatch operators, to ensure that these models are implemented in a racially equitable way.</p>	<p>2 years</p> <p>November 2023</p>	<p>Track number of emergency service calls that require police dispatch and calls that require mental health team model.</p>	<p>Sanford Police Department; LeeCAN; Daymark Recovery Services; North Carolina Justice Academy; North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services; Emergency dispatch operators; District Attorney's Office; Local Bar Association.</p>	<p>Salary for mental health rapid response team; physical space for new employees; trainings for all public safety stakeholders.</p> <p>See Durham Crisis Intervention Team plan and/or Chapel Hill Crisis Unit and/or LEAD in Seattle.</p>

CRIMINAL JUSTICE

Goal 1: Strengthen community-police relationships and mental health crisis resources

	STRATEGY	TIMELINE	PERFORMANCE MEASURES	PARTNERS	RESOURCES
I.4	<p>Implement training initiatives with law enforcement and emergency responders focused on mental health crisis:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> --Trainings on behaviors associated with mental health and drug use for all officers, especially new officers. --Invite expert to give trainings on Adverse Childhood Experiences 	<p>6-12 months</p> <p>May-November 2022</p>	<p>The Police Department sets a goal for 100% of their eligible officers to complete CIT training, thus increasing the number of officer CIT certified.</p> <p>See reduction of 8% in arrests of people with mental illness.</p>		<p>Expert on Adverse Childhood Experiences</p>

CRIMINAL JUSTICE

Goal 2: Invest in youth recreation.

	STRATEGY	TIMELINE	PERFORMANCE MEASURES	PARTNERS	RESOURCES
2.1	<p>Create a collaborative youth center in one of the suggested locations below. This is a physical location for youth to gather and participate in multi-faceted youth recreation programming (sports, arts, education, etc.). The space could be available to a variety of youth-oriented programs from local organizations.</p> <p>Potential Locations: Sloan Park on Bragg Street; Downtown Jonesboro; Kendale Shopping Center</p>	<p>2-3 years</p> <p>November 2023-2024</p>	<p>Strategic planning for site location and site design and secure funding by 2023. Site acquisition and construction by 2025.</p>	<p>Juvenile Crime Prevention Council; Sanford Police Department</p>	<p>Facility, money for building/ operation costs, staff, volunteers.</p> <p>See YouthWorx on Main, a youth-serving nonprofit collaborative that is a physical home to many community organizations.</p>
2.2	<p>Create an accessible form of transportation for middle school and high school students to attend the youth center.</p>	<p>2-3 years</p> <p>November 2023-2024</p>	<p>Strategic planning of routes from schools to youth center location. Create transportation partnerships.</p>	<p>Boys and Girls Club, YMCA, COLTS, Corporate Partnerships, Sanford Equity Communications Network.</p>	
2.3	<p>Create a joint parks and recreation department between the Lee County Parks and Recreation commission and the Sanford City Parks Commission to evaluate and strategically and equitably plan parks for impact in urban, high-density low-income neighborhoods for youth including adolescents.</p>	<p>18-24 months</p> <p>May-November 2023</p>	<p>Create a plan to form a joint parks and recreation commission between Lee County and the City of Sanford by July 2023.</p>	<p>Lee County Parks and Recreation commission; Sanford City Parks Commission; Boys and Girls Club</p>	<p>Hire a consultant to collect, maintain data about parks.</p> <p>See Raleigh's Parks Equity Information Sheet.</p>

CRIMINAL JUSTICE

Goal 3: Decriminalize poverty

	STRATEGY	TIMELINE	PERFORMANCE MEASURES	PARTNERS	RESOURCES
3.1	Establish a program to eliminate traffic court debt and restore driver's licenses.	6-12 months May-November 2022	A reduction in the amount of "failure to comply" statuses by July 2023.	NC Justice Center; NC Second Chance Alliance (provides a comprehensive presentation on the disparities and need for reform); local court officials, including district attorneys, district court judge, and clerk court.	See NC ProBono Resource Center ; NC Fair Chance . See Town of Chapel Hill Criminal Justice Debt Program . See Durham Expunction and Restoration Program .
3.2	Recommend that the Lee County District Attorney's Office reduce the use of money bail, reduce pretrial confinement and comply with statutory restrictions on secured money bonds.	6-12 months May-November 2022	An increase of 40% in the use of non-financial forms of pretrial release. An increase in the use of citations in lieu of arrest for low-level offenses.	District Attorney's Office	UNC School of Government Crime Lab Report 2019 ; Kentucky bail reform data ; Washington D.C cash bail reform ; NC ACLU
3.3	Update City job applications with a prominent notice informing applicants that the position may require a background check and unless required by state law, a record of conviction will not automatically exclude you from consideration for employment.	3-6 months February- May 2022			See NC ProBono Resource Center ; NC Fair Chance
3.4	Recommend that the Lee County District Attorney's Office eliminate incarceration for failure to pay fines and fees.	6-12 months May-November 2022		District Attorney's Office	See NC ProBono Resource Center ; NC Fair Chance
3.5	Recommend that the state of North Carolina eliminate or reduce Pay to Stay (\$10 a day) *G.S. 7A-313 sets out a jail fee for "persons who ordered to pay jail fees pursuant to a probationary sentence."	2 years November 2023-2024		District Attorney's Office	See NC ProBono Resource Center ; NC Fair Chance



*The yellow stars indicate a Task Force priority

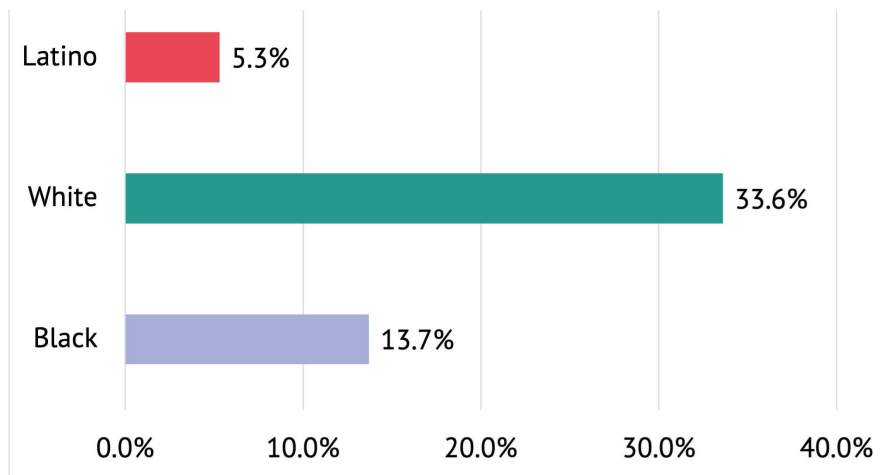
EDUCATION

Goal #1: Understand student and family economic disadvantages. Address school disciplinary actions.

Advancing educational equity positively impacts many areas that impact City governance, from workforce development to home ownership to poverty and homelessness. The Task Force found disparities in economically disadvantaged students and post high school education attainment rates. For example in both public high schools, Lee County High School and Southern Lee High School, more than **50%** of the students identify as economically disadvantaged ([North Carolina School Report Cards 2019-2020](#)).

The Task Force found a need to address suspensions and disciplinary action in schools. Black students in NC public schools are 4.1 times more likely than their white counterparts to receive short-term suspensions, which can increase a child's involvement with the criminal justice system ([Racial Equity Report Card](#)). The recommendations focus on supporting, collaborating, and communicating with the Lee County Schools.

Bachelor Degree Attainment in Sanford by Race & Ethnicity



American Community Survey 2019 5-year estimates.
Tables C15002B, C15002H, C15002I

The Task Force recommends that the City Council invites the Superintendent of the Lee County Schools to provide a report on the issues that minority students face and the schools' current actions to close educational gaps.

The Task Force recommends that the City organize a State of the Schools public forum with Principals to provide information and answer questions about school discipline rates, poverty, and resource allocation.

EDUCATION

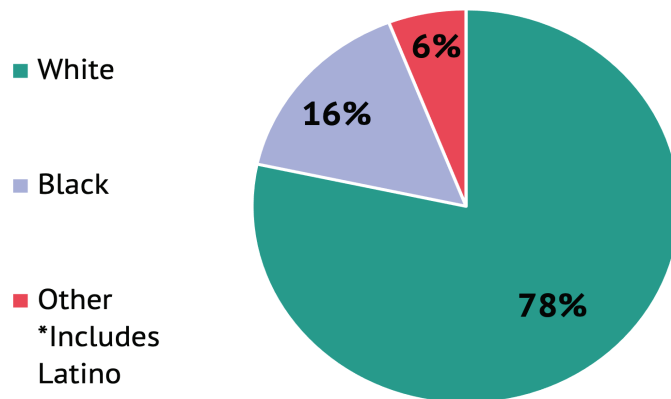
Goal #2: Collaborate with Lee County Schools to adopt measures to diversify staff.

Ensuring that school staff represents the demographics of the student body is an important way to equalize opportunities for underrepresented communities. A diverse educator workforce is beneficial to all students, but especially for students of color ([Developing a Representative and Inclusive Vision for Education](#)).

The Task Force found that people of color are underrepresented in teaching, administrative, and other staff positions in Lee County Schools. For example, in the 2020-2021 school year, only **15%** of school employees were Black, followed by **7%** “other” which includes Latinos ([NC Statistical Profile](#)). **78%** of all employees and **78%** of administrators were White ([NC Statistical Profile](#)). The Task Force also found that there is a need for more data about the Spanish language ability of school staff.

The Task Force recommends that the City strengthen communication collaboration and outreach with Lee County Schools by maintaining a community contact list and intentionally sharing employment opportunities through that list and online networks which will widen the pool of qualified and diverse candidates.

Race and Ethnicity of Lee County Schools Administrators



2020-2021 school year; NC Statistical Profile

The Task Force recommends that the City convenes with Lee County Schools to address the following needs:

- 1.) Support networks for educators of color.
- 2.) Provide professional development that fosters inclusive school environments.
- 3.) Create new entry points into the school system based on models with proven success.

The Task Force recommends that the City invites Lee County School leaders, including the Board of Education, to give a report on key performance indicators, specifically diversity goals which promote a commitment to increasing the racial, ethnic, and linguistic diversity of the educator workforce.

The Task Force recommends that the City collaborates with Lee County Schools on sharing job postings and information.

EDUCATION

Goal 1: Understand student and family economic disadvantages. Address school disciplinary actions.

	STRATEGY	TIMELINE	PERFORMANCE MEASURES	PARTNERS	RESOURCES
1.1	Invite the Superintendent of the Lee County Schools to provide a report on the issues that minority students face and the school system's current actions to address those issues and close educational gaps.	End of 2021-2022 school year.	Schedule an annual meeting with the superintendent starting with the end of the 2021-2022 school year. After a 4-year period of reports, an assessment can be done to review the progress made.	Lee County Schools	
1.2	Organize a State of the Schools public forum with Principals to provide information about and answer questions about school discipline rates, poverty, and resource allocation.	End of 1 st quarter in 2022-2023 school year.	Same as above	Lee County Schools; Charter Schools	

EDUCATION

Goal 2: Collaborate with Lee County Schools to adopt measures to diversify staff.

	STRATEGY	TIMELINE	PERFORMANCE MEASURES	PARTNERS	RESOURCES
2.1	<p>Convene with Lee County Schools to:</p> <p>1)Support networks for educators of color.</p> <p>2)Organize professional development that fosters inclusive school environments.</p> <p>3)Create new entry points into the school system based on models with proven success.</p>	<p>12-18 months</p> <p>November 2022 - May 2023</p>	<p>The City and the Lee County Schools will convene to discuss methods to strengthen and foster inclusive school environments.</p> <p>Conduct survey among Lee County Schools employees on inclusive and culturally responsive environments and practices.</p>	<p>Lee County Schools; Lee County District Improvement Team</p>	<p>“Educators of Color” mentorship programs</p> <p>Developing a Representative and inclusive vision for education</p>
2.2	<p>Convene with Lee County Schools stakeholders to expand and develop entry points into the school system that are based on models with proven success in recruiting racially, ethnically, and linguistically diverse school system employees.</p>	<p>12-18 months</p> <p>November 2022 - May 2023</p>	<p>The City and Lee County School system will discuss and choose models to recruit a diversity of employees with respect to race, ethnicity and language ability.</p> <p>An increase in the diversity of employees with respect to race, ethnicity, and language ability of 5% by 2025.</p>	<p>Lee County Board of Education; Lee County District Improvement Team; CCCC; Chamber of Commerce; NCAE, PENC</p>	<p>Developing a Representative and inclusive vision for education</p> <p>Models to follow: “Grow Your Own”</p>
2.3	<p>Invite Lee County School District and Lee County Board of Education to give a report to the City and community organizations about measures to diversify staff, including key performance indicators and goals for increasing the racial, ethnic, and linguistic diversity of the educator workforce.</p>	<p>12-18 months</p> <p>November 2022 - May 2023</p>	<p>An annual report on progress and action plans presented to City by the end of 2021-2022 school year.</p> <p>An increase in the diversity of employees with respect to race, ethnicity, and language ability of 5% by 2025.</p>	<p>Lee County Board of Education; Lee County School System</p>	<p>Developing a Representative and inclusive vision for education</p>

 *The yellow stars indicate a Task Force priority

EDUCATION

Goal 2: Collaborate with Lee County Schools to adopt measures to diversify staff.

	STRATEGY	TIMELINE	PERFORMANCE MEASURES	PARTNERS	RESOURCES
2.4	<p>The City of Sanford and Lee County Schools can collaborate on sharing job postings and information.</p> <p>The City of Sanford and Lee County Schools can collaborate on maintaining a community contact list that includes regional Minority Serving Institutions (MSIs) and Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs).</p>	<p>3-6 months</p> <p>February-May 2022</p>	<p>Identify City staff member and Lee County School system employee to lead efforts.</p> <p>Set up a workflow to post jobs and info to the created list of community partners and HBCUs.</p> <p>Share local government and education postings on City of Sanford notice system and on Public Access channel.</p> <p>Conduct community outreach in churches and hair salons and post flyers around the city and in utility bills.</p> <p>Add a question to City and School job applications asking, "how did you hear about the job?" to evaluate outreach efficacy.</p> <p>Track attendance and participation rates of families and adolescents at city wide events.</p>	<p>Lee County Board of Education; Triangle South Workforce Development Board; Lee County Human Resources Team</p>	<p>Handshake; HBCU Career Center; HBCU Lifestyle Career Hub; The HBCU Foundation Career Center;</p> <p>Peachjar Network</p> <p>The Rant, Sanford Herald, Radio</p>

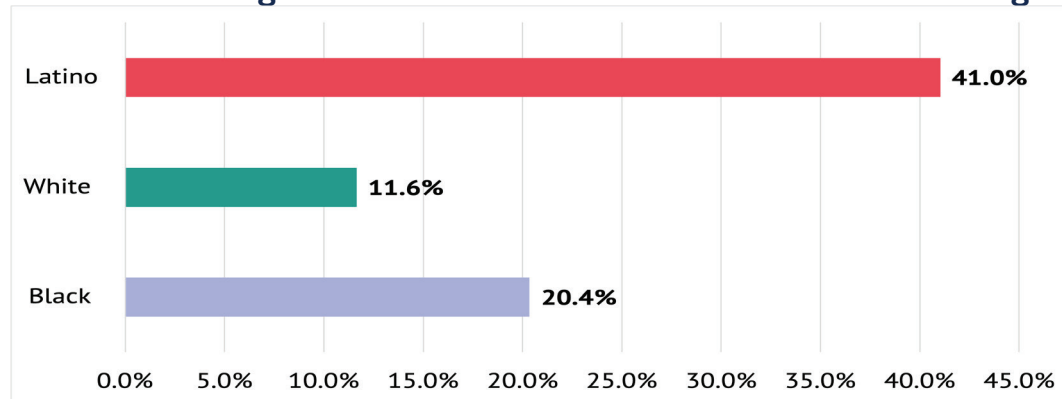
HEALTH

Goal #1: Expand access to healthcare for underinsured and uninsured populations.

The Task Force health recommendations are intended to guide collaborative efforts with the County, schools and other stakeholders. The health recommendations expand access to local healthcare for underinsured (people without Medicaid) and uninsured populations; expand city and community awareness of addiction and substance abuse; and increase access to free and affordable mental health services.

Transportation is an important factor in accessing health services. The County of Lee Transit Services (COLTS) provides free transportation for people with Medicaid and a \$4 one-way fee for the general public within City limits. Transportation outside of the City limits (e.g. to specialists in the Triangle) is \$35 round-trip. In recent years, COLTS discontinued scheduled routes that stopped at Pine Village and Thornwood mobile home communities, [places identified with a high need](#) of transportation access. Language accessibility is also a challenge; while COLTS has a part-time bilingual employee, Spanish-speaking clients may be referred to a third party.

Individuals ages 19-64 without Health Insurance Coverage



American Community Survey 2019 5-year estimates.

Tables used C27001B, C27001C, C27001D, C27001E, C27001F, C27001I

The Task Force recommends the City work with County partners to create an affordable Community Care Clinic with a Health Liaison/Health Navigator.

The Task Force recommends the City work with COLTS to expand transportation services to health service providers for uninsured and underinsured people. Specific actions include:

- 1) Reinstate COLTS DASH stops at mobile home communities, such as Dreamland and Pine Village.
- 2) Establish regular routes that connect low-income communities to Central Carolina Hospital, Walmart pharmacy, the Dialysis Clinic, and other critical services.
- 3) Reinstate a full-time bilingual dispatcher who can directly speak to clients.
- 4) Launch an outreach campaign with regular communications on Facebook and in low-income neighborhoods to expand awareness about services.

HEALTH

Goal #2: Expand city and community awareness of addiction and substance abuse.

Addiction and substance abuse are serious problems in Sanford and Lee County, reflecting a nationwide opioid crisis. Opioid overdoses in Lee County more than doubled in the spring of 2021.

Risk factors for addiction and substance abuse include homelessness, isolation, job loss, and poverty—all areas of concern addressed by the Equity Task Force.

Local leaders have acknowledged this public health crisis, creating the [Sanford Opioid Abuse Epidemic Commission](#), [participating in a national settlement](#) against pharmaceutical distributors, and equipping first responders with the drug Narcan to treat opioid overdoses, among other efforts. The Task Force contributes to these efforts by making the following recommendations.

Deaths in Lee

The rate of unintentional overdose deaths among residents of Lee in 2020

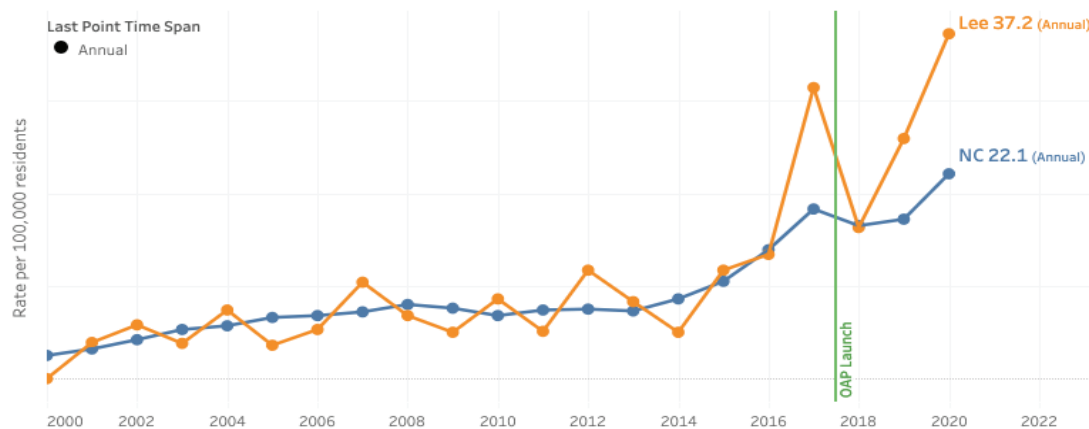
(Annual) was **37.2**.

(Rate per 100,000 residents. Number of deaths: 23)

Place Rank

High

Compared to other Counties*



[NC Department of Health and Human Services](#)

The Task Force recommends that the City require law enforcement and other first responders to complete sensitivity trainings for interacting with people struggling with drug addiction.

The Task Force recommends that the City collaborate with Lee County Schools to develop age-appropriate training/education curriculum on addiction and substance use for classrooms.

The Task Force recommends that the City collaborate with Lee County Schools and other stakeholders to develop and implement an awareness campaign or education workshops on addiction and substance use for the community.

The Task Force recommends that the City Council invites experts to present about substance abuse and addiction, particularly as they impact People of Color.

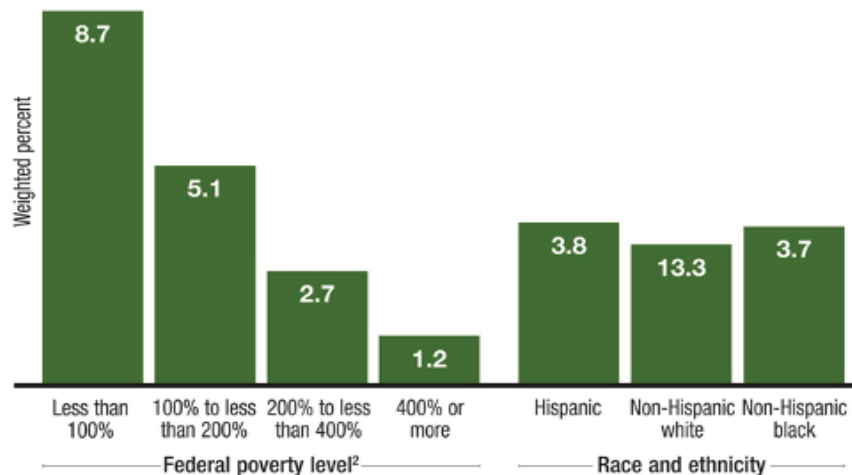
HEALTH

Goal #3: Increase access to free and affordable mental health services.

Poverty in childhood is associated with lower school achievement; worse cognitive, behavioral, and attention-related outcomes; higher rates of delinquency, depressive and anxiety disorders; and higher rates of almost every psychiatric disorder in adulthood. According to the 2019 American Community Survey, **17 %** of Sanford's population is uninsured and **22 %** of the population is living in poverty, this creates a disparity in the ability to access quality mental health care ([American Community Survey 2019](#)).

With the African American population in Lee County earning wages at an average of almost half that of White residents, this population is disproportionately affected. Also, there is a lack of mental health providers in Lee County therefore most referrals are being made out of county. Furthermore, with no public transportation in Lee County, those affected are at even more of a disadvantage.

Figure. Age-adjusted percentage of adults with serious psychological distress, by income relative to federal poverty level and by race and ethnicity: United States, 2009–2013



¹Significantly lower than for other races and ethnicities.

²Significant decreasing linear trend by poverty level.

Source: CDC/NCHS. National Health Interview Survey, 2009–2013

The Task Force recommends that the City create a 24 hour crisis center or hotline.

The Task Force recommends that the City create a free and/or a reduced cost mental health Community Care Clinic.

The Task Force recommends that the City collaborate with Lee County Schools to increase access to free mental health care for teenagers/children within the schools by

- 1) Providing onsite psychologists/social workers/trained therapists that rotate between schools weekly.
- 2) Providing a curriculum/class that focuses on taking care of your mental health.

HEALTH

Goal 1: Expand access to healthcare for underinsured and uninsured populations.

	STRATEGY	TIMELINE	PERFORMANCE MEASURES	PARTNERS	RESOURCES
1.1	Modify/Update health resource list (in both English and Spanish) and distribute widely in the community.	6-12 months May-November 2022	<p>Increase in # of agencies who distribute resource list over the course of 6 months.</p> <p>Increase in engagement with online resource list.</p> <p>Increase in # of people who are referred to agencies on the list over the course of a year.</p> <p>Increase in the awareness of affordable services and providers available to uninsured and underinsured individuals and families.</p> <p>Increase of providers who accept Medicaid and serve the uninsured.</p> <p>Increase knowledge/awareness of services who provide telehealth.</p>	Lee County Health Dept, LeeCan, Lee County DSS, Schools, Local churches, Local non-profits, COLTS Transportation services, Haven 2017 resource list, Partnership for Children & Family resource list.	<p>Staff Time to complete/update resource list</p> <p>Translation services</p>
1.2	Create an affordable Community Care Clinic with a Health Liaison/ Health Navigator.	2-3 years November 2023 - November 2024	<p>A Health Liaison will put local providers in touch with one another in order to refer the patient to the appropriate resources/services.</p> <p>Better case management for patients.</p> <p>Increase in the # of people served at providers in the network.</p> <p>Increase in inter-provider referrals.</p> <p>Increase in # of people/provider of people in Health Network.</p> <p>Increase in types of services offered to uninsured patients (acute care, mental health counseling, chiropractic).</p>	United Way, CCCC (nursing program-an intern), Other health providers, Social services, mental health providers, COLTS Transportation, White Oak Foundation, CC Hospital; Salvation Army (Navigation Center)	<p>Full-time Staff/ Person who is local or has knowledge of local health providers and resources and money for salary.</p> <p>Building/Financial resources for centrally-located clinic.</p>

HEALTH

Goal 1: Expand access to healthcare for underinsured and uninsured populations.

	STRATEGY	TIMELINE	PERFORMANCE MEASURES	PARTNERS	RESOURCES
I.3	<p>Work with COLTS to expand transportation services connecting uninsured and underinsured people to health service providers, including specialists in the Triangle area. Specifically:</p> <p>a) Reinstate COLTS DASH stops at mobile home communities, such as Dreamland and Pine Village.</p> <p>b) Establish regular routes that connect low-income communities to Central Carolina Hospital, Walmart and other pharmacies, the Dialysis Clinic, and other places identified as critical health services.</p> <p>c) Reinstate a full-time bilingual dispatcher who can directly speak to clients.</p> <p>d) Launch an outreach campaign, including Facebook, in low-income neighborhoods to expand awareness about services.</p>	<p>12-18 months</p> <p>November 2022 - May 2023</p>	<p>An increase in the number of people accessing/using transportation services</p> <p>An increase in number of people without Medicaid using transportation services to get to a medical/health provider both within Sanford and in the Triangle area (specialists)</p>	<p>COLTS, CC Hospital</p>	<p>Funding for a bilingual full-time staff position.</p> <p>Building Integrated Communities Sanford Report.</p>

HEALTH

Goal 2: Expand city and community awareness of addiction and substance abuse.

	STRATEGY	TIMELINE	PERFORMANCE MEASURES	PARTNERS	RESOURCES
2.1	Require law enforcement and other first responders to complete sensitivity trainings for dealing with people struggling with drug addiction.	12-18 months November 2022 - May 2023	A minimum of two trainings attended by law enforcement personnel/first responders annually. Increased staff capacity to deal with people in crisis who are dealing with drug addiction and increased compassion for people struggling with addiction.	NAMI Cumberland ; CIT International ; Sanford Opioid Task Force (Law/Government Relations sub-committee)	Funding for additional trainings.
2.2	Collaborate with Lee County Schools and other stakeholders to develop age-appropriate training/education curriculum on addiction and substance use to be used in classrooms.	12-18 months November 2022 - May 2023	Decrease in drug abuse and overdoses among teenagers and young adults. Greater awareness among children about the negative effects of drug use and how to manage peer pressure. Expanded communication between educators and children/teens.	Lee County School Nurses/Social Workers; Sanford Opioid Task Force (Education & Awareness sub-committee)	Funding for curriculum.
2.3	Develop and implement awareness campaign or education workshops on addiction and substance use for the community (with diverse representation); educate and equip the public on the use of the drug Narcan to treat opioid overdoses.	12-18 months November 2022 - May 2023	Reduction of EMS calls and visits, an increase in home-administered Narcan, a reduction in ER visits and deaths for drug overdoses, increased enrollment in recovery programs. Availability of Narcan in community spaces and trained people to administer it.	Spectrum Recovery ; Sanford Opioid Task Force (Education & Awareness sub-committee), Local churches, Boys & Girls Club, YMCA, EMS.	Funding for workshops, billboards, public service announcements.
2.4	Invite experts to present to the City Council on substance abuse and addiction, particularly as they impact People of Color	3-6months May - November 2022	Presentation to City Council. Increased awareness among City leadership.	Spectrum Recovery	



*The yellow stars indicate a Task Force priority

HEALTH

Goal 3: Increase access to free or affordable mental health services.

	STRATEGY	TIMELINE	PERFORMANCE MEASURES	PARTNERS	RESOURCES
3.1	Create a 24 hour crisis center or hotline.	2-3 years November 2023 - November 2024	A decrease in suicide attempts.	Local mental health professionals. Lee County Health Department.	Funding for mental health service pradditional trainings.
3.2	Create a free/reduced cost mental health clinic.	2-3 years November 2023 - November 2024	Increased utilization of free mental health counseling offered. Promote access to care for uninsured/underinsured.	Lee County Health Department. Helping Hand Clinic, Local mental health counselors in private practice, White Oak Foundation; Salvation Army (Navigation Center)	Local churches (offer free space for counselors to meet with clients); the Mann Center/Helping Hand Clinic/ Salvation Army Navigation Center (free space); funding for Community Care Clinic/counselors.
3.3	Increase access to free mental health care for teenagers/children within the schools by providing: 1) Onsite psychologists/social workers/trained therapists that rotate between schools weekly. 2) A curriculum/class that focuses on taking care of your mental health.	2-3 years November 2023 - November 2024	More students getting access to mental health care in school. A reduction in stigma concerning mental health and counseling. A decrease in punitive actions/expulsions and increase in meetings with psychologists/therapists as “first stop” after behavior issue.	Lee County Schools Mental Health Support Team/School Social Workers/School Counselors, Partnership for Children & Families, Boys & Girls Club.	Lee County Schools.

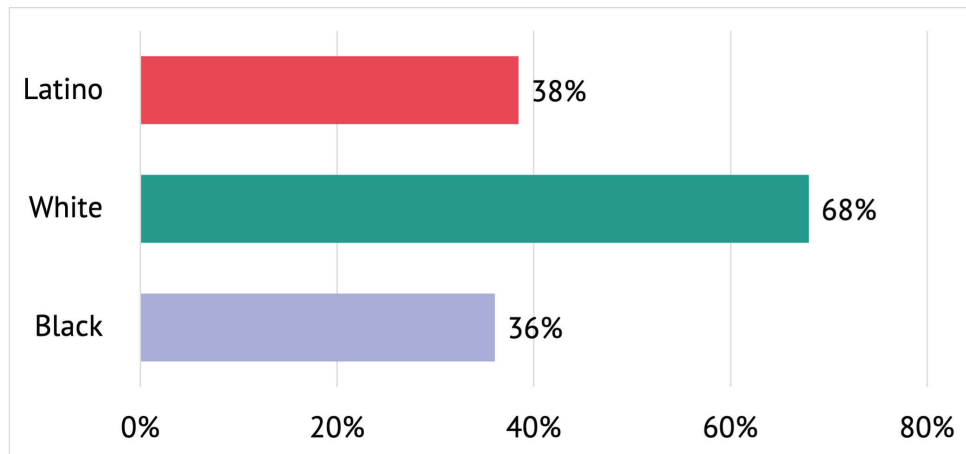
HOUSING AND HOME OWNERSHIP

Goal #1: Expand access to housing options for historically marginalized communities.

Population growth, a rapid increase in home prices in 2021, and rising inflation present an urgent need for a comprehensive affordable housing plan. The Task Force found the need for more “workforce housing” that is affordable for people earning a range of 80% to 120% below annual median income of Lee County. The Task Force also found a need for the revitalization of current housing stock in East Sanford, Washington Avenue, Woodland Avenue and Jonesboro.

The housing and home ownership recommendations work to ensure that every individual and family in Sanford has access to a variety of safe and affordable housing regardless of race, income, or ethnicity. Recommendations aim to increase the accessibility of home ownership in traditionally marginalized communities, aiming for an increase of 50% above the current baseline (see graph) by 2030.

Home Ownership in Sanford by Race and Ethnicity



American Community Survey 2019 5-year estimates.

Tables used B25003B, B25003H, B25003I

The Task Force recommends that the City:

Create a Livable Housing Initiative with bond issues and/or general funds to support and attract innovative affordable housing development through infrastructure funding (water and sewer, curb and gutter, streets, sidewalks, open space, parks, community facilities) in **target areas of East Sanford, Washington Avenue, Woodland Avenue, and Jonesboro.**

Rehabilitate housing in target areas with a minimum of 25 substantial rehabs per year.

Pursue an increase of at least 20% of new or rehabilitated affordable housing units each year.

Initiate an Urban Redevelopment Area process in East Sanford to buy distressed housing stock, make repairs, and resell with covenants that protect the affordability of the home.

Expand staff resources devoted to housing and community development to secure external funding for expansion of affordable housing stock.

Create new mechanisms in City regulatory and development policy and regulations to encourage innovative residential development and high performance standards.

HOUSING AND HOME OWNERSHIP

Goal #2: Expand community partnerships to increase and enhance affordable housing.

Sanford and Lee County are home to dynamic organizations, companies, and partnerships working to address issues of affordable housing and homelessness. The Task Force supports continued and expanded collaboration with community partners to increase the availability of affordable housing.



The Task Force recommends that the City:

Create a Livable Housing Forum with representation from Black and Latino communities, non-profits, Housing Authority, SAGA, S-3, Lee-Harnett Community Development, Board of Realtors, Homebuilders, and the Planning Board that annually reports on progress in affordable housing and provides recommendations.

Establish commitments to public/private partnerships with SAGA, City Council, and other groups to achieve measurable, annual improvement in affordable, quality housing and neighborhoods.

Expand bilingual education about home-buying with an emphasis on outreach in Black and Latino communities.

Collaborate with SAGA to restart the Housing Commission.

Aggressively pursue minimum housing standards and enhance housing quality by working with owners, landlords, and property management companies.

HOUSING AND HOME OWNERSHIP

Goal 1: Expand access to housing options for historically marginalized communities.

	STRATEGY	TIMELINE	PERFORMANCE MEASURES	PARTNERS	RESOURCES
★ 1.1	Create a Livable Housing Initiative with bond issues and/or general funds to support and attract innovative affordable housing development through infrastructure funding (water and sewer, curb and gutter, streets, sidewalks, open space, parks, community facilities) in target areas of East Sanford, Washington Avenue, Woodland Avenue, and Jonesboro.	2-3 years November 2023 - November 2024	Increase in the accessibility of home ownership in traditionally marginalized communities, aiming for an increase of 50% above the current baseline by 2030.	City Planning Department	
1.2	Rehabilitate housing in target areas with a minimum of 25 substantial rehabs per year.	2-3 years November 2023 - November 2024	More affordable housing options are available for purchase and leasing for potential buyers. Increased # of affordable housing options available for purchase and leasing within the area when compared to a baseline of Q4 2020.	City Planning Department, City Council, Private Developers, S3, Brick Capital, Habitat for Humanity.	
1.3	Pursue an increase of at least 20% of new or rehabilitated affordable housing units each year.	2-3 years November 2023 - November 2024	See above.	City Planning Department	
1.4	Initiate an Urban Redevelopment Area process in East Sanford to buy distressed housing stock, make repairs, and resell with covenants that protect the affordability of the home.	2-3 years November 2023 - November 2024	See above.	City Council; City Planning Department	UNC School of Government
1.5	Expand City staff capacity and resources devoted to housing and community development to secure external funding for expansion of affordable housing stock and inclusionary development.	12-18 months November 2022 - May 2023	# new or rehabilitated affordable housing.	City Planning Department	

★ *The yellow stars indicate a Task Force priority

HOUSING AND HOME OWNERSHIP

Goal 2: Expand community partnerships to increase and enhance affordable housing.

	STRATEGY	TIMELINE	PERFORMANCE MEASURES	PARTNERS	RESOURCES
2.1	Create a Livable Housing Forum consisting of representation from the Black and Latina/o/x communities and community organizations (see partners) that annually reports on progress in affordable housing and provides recommendations.	6-12 months May-November 2022	Enhanced momentum towards more affordable housing units. An annual meeting is setup and pursued with commitments from the relevant agencies.	S3, Brick Capital, SAGA housing commission, Johnston-Lee-Harnett Action Community Agency, Habitat for Humanity, Board of Realtors, City Planning Staff Representative, SAGA, Homebuilders	
2.2	Expand bilingual education about home-buying with an emphasis on outreach in Black and Latino communities.	6-12 months May-November 2022	Double current course offerings (10) to enroll at least 20 people/month.	Brick Capital and other community organizations UNC Building Integrated Communities team	
2.3	Establish commitments to public/private partnerships with SAGA, City Council, and other groups to achieve measurable, annual improvement in affordable, quality housing and neighborhoods.	3-6 months February-May 2022		SAGA, City Council, S3, community organizations	
2.4	Collaborate with SAGA to restart the Housing Commission to focus on workforce housing development.	12-18 months November 2022 - May 2023		SAGA	
2.5	Aggressively pursue minimum housing standards working with owners, landlords, property management companies to address issues of substandard housing and enhance housing quality in a sustainable and equitable manner.	18-24 months May-November 2023	An improvement in the baseline housing conditions available to renters/buyers in the city. There is codified city policy to enforce minimum housing standards within the city.	City Planning Department, Lee County Planning Department	Time and funds to support research

LEADERSHIP AND INCLUSION

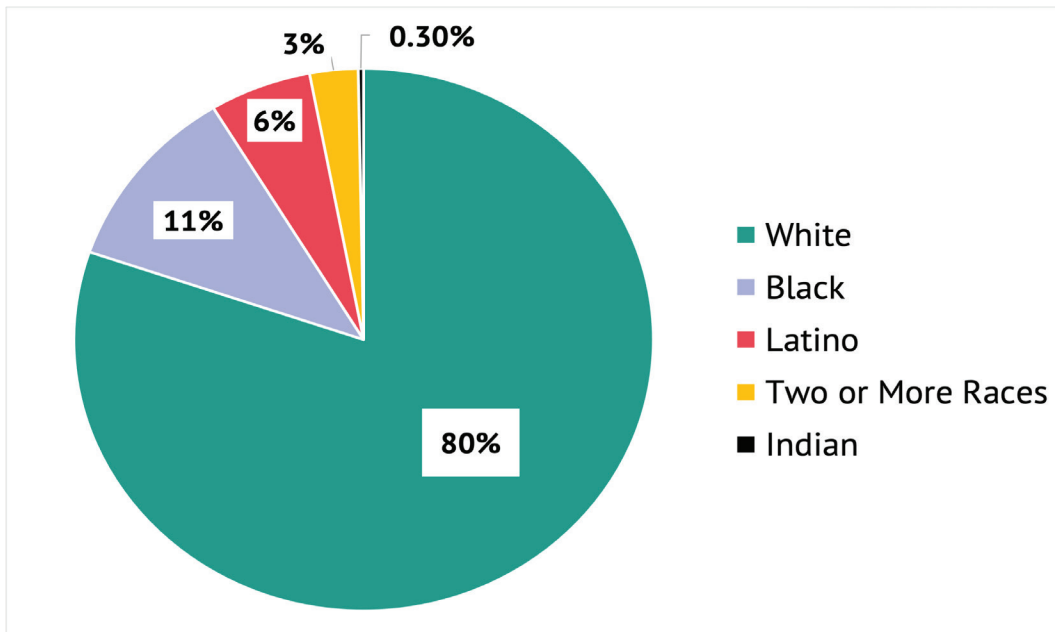
Goal: Build equitable representation in City staff positions and elected and appointed leadership positions.

The leadership and inclusion action plan addresses the historic underrepresentation of minority communities in local government leadership and managerial staff positions.

The Task Force found the need for the City to build relationships of trust and directly recruit within historically underrepresented Black and Latino communities.

The Task Force found the need to build capacity within the City staff to implement equity recommendations.

Race and Ethnicity of City Staff



January 2020 Employee Data

The Task Force recommends that the City create a staff position to oversee the implementation of the Equity Action Plan and future equity efforts.

The Task Force recommends that the City create a City of Sanford Equity Advisory Board.

The Task Force recommends that the City recruit residents for the Advisory Board at community and church meetings and at HBCUs for staff and leadership board positions.

The Task Force recommends that the City hold some public meetings in places such as churches or community centers.

LEADERSHIP AND INCLUSION

Goal: Build equitable representation in City staff positions and elected and appointed leadership positions.

	STRATEGY	TIMELINE	PERFORMANCE MEASURES	PARTNERS	RESOURCES
★ 1.1	Create a City staff position to oversee the implementation of the Equity Action Plan and future equity efforts.	6-12 months May-November 2022	Quarterly updates on completing Equity Plan objectives. Historically underrepresented communities will feel more comfortable and welcomed visiting local government spaces.	The City of Sanford	Salary for a full-time permanent employee.
★ 1.2	Create a City of Sanford Equity Advisory Board.	6-12 months May-November 2022	Approval by the City Council. Appointment of Board members within 6 months. Board members will work with City staff to implement the City Equity Plan.	The City of Sanford	The Equity and inclusion position will be the city staff liaison(s), City Council liaison.
1.3	Recruit residents at community and church meetings and at HBCUs for staff and leadership board positions.	6-12 months May-November 2022	More residents will apply for staff and leadership positions. Regular, monthly activity	Sanford Police Department; Sanford Equity Communications Network; Sanford Boards and Commissions	
1.4	Hold government meetings in places such as churches or community centers.	6-12 months May-November 2022	Increase in participation in public meetings.	Sanford Equity Communications Network	

★*The yellow stars indicate a Task Force priority

WAGES AND INCOME

Goal #1: Promote values of diversity and inclusion in hiring and promotion of City employees.

The wages and income recommendations address the need to expand income equity, livable wages, and job mobility for working residents of Sanford. The top concern of Sanford and Lee County residents is the need for “higher paying employment” ([2018 Lee Community Health Assessment](#)). Wages and income are vital to the health and well-being of a community, impacting access to housing and home ownership, education, medical services, and many other basic needs. There are significant disparities in wages, income, and poverty levels: for example, the median household income in Sanford in 2019 was **\$61,250** for White residents, **\$46,083** for Latino residents, and **\$27,373** for Black residents. ([U.S. Census, American Community Survey 2019 5-year estimates](#)).

Goal 1 focuses on how the City can provide leadership for the public and private sector. The recommended strategies can build organizational capacity so that employees have the understanding, competencies, skills, and resources needed to promote values of diversity and inclusion and prevent bias in hiring and promotion. These strategies can advance City efforts to employ an equitable and representative percentage of individuals in terms of age, race, ethnicity, gender identity, sexual orientation, veteran status or ability.

The Task Force recommends that the City commit to an equity statement or resolution.

The Task Force recommends that the City create an affordable/free orientation program to City services, boards and commissions, and host the program in community spaces.

The Task Force recommends that the City engage in education and recruiting efforts for leadership and staff positions in historically underrepresented communities.

The Task Force recommends that the City use equity tools for policy and process decision making.

WAGES AND INCOME

Goal #2: Support the private sector in promoting values of diversity and inclusion in hiring and promotion of employees.

The Task Force found significant income disparities in Sanford industries. For example, in 2019, Black employees earned **39%** less than White employees on a monthly basis in manufacturing. This disparity in wages has been increasing since 2000, when African Americans earned **25%** less than White employees in manufacturing. In the health care and social assistance sector, Black employees earned **45%** less than White employees on a monthly basis in 2019 ([U.S. Census Bureau, Center for Economic Studies, LEHD](#)).

Research finds that racial and ethnic diversity in managerial and senior staff results in higher earnings for a company. For example, one study demonstrated how companies' earnings increased for every **10%** rise in "racial and ethnic diversity on a senior-executive team" ([Hunt, Layton, and Prince, 2015](#)). Research also shows that creating diversity task forces or diversity staff positions is among the most effective methods for increasing diversity and reducing bias.

The City can promote equitable practices in the private sector of Sanford and Lee County by making tax grants to companies contingent upon proof of equitable hiring and promotion, and by seeking out collaborations with SAGA, the Chamber of Commerce, and other community stakeholders.

The Task Force recommends that City tax grants to new companies will be contingent upon proof or commitment to equitable hiring practices and racial and ethnic diversity in management and the workforce.

The Task Force recommends the City seek collaboration with SAGA and the Chamber of Commerce to convene the private sector to:

- 1) Create a living wage certification program that recognizes local businesses that pay employees a minimum of \$15/hour.
- 2) Offer an Equity in Hiring online certification course for Human Resources staff of local businesses.
- 3) Encourage business owners to audit salaries for disparities in pay and examine whether corporate leadership includes historically underrepresented minorities.

WAGES AND INCOME

Goal #3: Enhance access to local jobs

Sanford and Lee County are experiencing strong growth in advanced manufacturing, biopharmaceutical, and other economic sectors with well-paying entry level jobs. Education and workforce training are key to Sanford residents' access to these new jobs, and Central Carolina Community College is an important source of recruitment.

The Task Force found a significant under enrollment of Black students in the Lee County Promise Program, a free CCCC program for qualifying high school graduates: in 2019, out of a total of 98 students, only **3%** were Black (**52%** White, **38%** Hispanic)([Appendix 2](#)). The Task Force also found an underrepresentation of Career and College Promise Advisors and high school counselors from underrepresented groups. Only **5 out of 26** guidance counselors in the Lee County Schools are Black; while none are Latino ([NC Statistical Profile](#)). The City can seek out collaborations with CCCC and Lee County Schools to expand equitable access to workforce training programs at Central Carolina Community College, leading to job opportunities in the private sector.

The Task Force found a significant under enrollment of Black students in the Lee County Promise Program: only **3%** out of the total in the 2019-2020 school year.

The Task Force recommends the City expand community awareness and engagement in the free Lee County Promise program and other CCCC educational opportunities.

The Task Force recommends the City collaborate with local businesses and churches to fund and create a STEM summer camp for elementary school students in trusted community spaces.

WAGES AND INCOME

Goal 1: Promote values of diversity and inclusion in hiring and promotion in City of Sanford employees.

	STRATEGY	TIMELINE	PERFORMANCE MEASURES	PARTNERS	RESOURCES
1.1	Commit to an equity statement or resolution.	6-12 months May-November 2022	City of Sanford leaders will sign a resolution advancing diversity and inclusion in hiring and promotion of their employees. City employees will gain a better understanding of the organization's commitment to equity.		
1.2	Create an affordable/free orientation program to City services, departments, elected and appointed opportunities on boards and commissions, and host the program in community spaces.	6-12 months May-November 2022	Diversity in representation of residents who participate in the program. Record the demographic breakdown of attendees at engagement events and activities.	Sanford Equity Communications Network	
★ 1.3	Increase the racial and ethnic diversity of City boards to reflect community demographics by recruiting for leadership and employment positions in underrepresented communities through the Sanford Equity Communication Network.	18-24 months May-November 2023	Sanford communications staff will add to workflow posting jobs to the Sanford Equity Network listserv. Increase in underrepresented communities on boards or other leadership bodies.	Sanford Equity Communications Network	
1.4	Racial Equity Tool: Provide training for all senior administration officials and department heads on the use of racial equity tools for policy and process decision making.	6-12 months May-November 2022	# of staff with completed training requirement. # of departments that adopt tool for regular decision making.		See the Government Alliance on Racial Equity example
1.5	Racial Equity 101 Foundations Staff Training: Implement a requirement that all employees complete this training as a condition of employment every two years.	6-12 months May-November 2022	# of staff with completed training requirement.		See the Government Alliance on Racial Equity example

★ *The yellow stars indicate a Task Force priority

WAGES AND INCOME

Goal 2: Support the private sector in promoting values of diversity and inclusion in hiring and promotion of employees.

	STRATEGY	TIMELINE	PERFORMANCE MEASURES	PARTNERS	RESOURCES
★	2.1 City tax grants to new companies will be contingent upon proof or commitment to equitable hiring practices and racial and ethnic diversity in management and the workforce (see performance measures for examples).	6-12 months May-November 2022	The Board and CEOs of a company adopt an equity statement that promotes values of diversity and inclusion within six months of opening a location in Sanford. Corporate managers participate in equitable hiring trainings and certifications. A company advertises jobs with language that encourages individuals from diverse backgrounds to apply. A company collects demographic information about ethnicity, race, and gender from job applicants and employees. A company shares a public report annually about the demographic composition of job applicants and employees.	SAGA, The Chamber of Commerce	The Government Alliance on Racial Equity (GARE) , The Racial Equity Institute
★	2.2 Seek collaboration with SAGA and the Chamber of Commerce to convene area businesses, community leadership, and other stakeholders to participate in equity initiatives (see examples under performance measures).	1 year November 2022	Convene City leaders, SAGA and the Chamber of Commerce to consider equity initiatives with the private sector, such as: 1.) Create or join a living wage certification program that recognizes local businesses that pay employees a minimum of \$15/hour. 2.) Offer a free equitable hiring online certification course for Human Resources staff of local businesses. 3.) Encourage local business owners to audit/ examine the salaries of employees for disparities in pay and examine whether corporate leadership and managerial positions include employees from historically underrepresented minority communities. 4.) Expand awareness of scholarships for the Leadership Sanford program by sharing opportunities through the Sanford Equity Communications Network.	The City of Sanford, SAGA, The Chamber of Commerce; Sanford Equity Communications Network	Western NC Just Economics

★ *The yellow stars indicate a Task Force priority

WAGES AND INCOME

Goal 3: Enhance access to local jobs

	STRATEGY	TIMELINE	PERFORMANCE MEASURES	PARTNERS	RESOURCES
3.1	Expand community awareness and engagement in the free Lee County Promise program and other CCCC educational opportunities.	1 year November 2022	<p>Convene CCCC and Sanford Lee School leaders to address:</p> <p>1.) the need for more Career and College Promise Advisors and high school counselors from underrepresented groups</p> <p>2.) the need for data related to student eligibility for CCCC programs</p> <p>3.) modes of communication with underrepresented community groups</p> <p>An increase in Black and Latina/o/x Career and College Promise Advisors and counselors.</p> <p>Publicly accessible annual reports from Sanford Lee Schools related to student eligibility for Lee County Promise Programs.</p>	CCCC, Lee County Schools and Sanford schools	The Government Alliance on Racial Equity (GARE) , The Racial Equity Institute
3.2	Collaborate with local businesses and churches to fund and create a STEM summer camp for elementary school students in trusted community spaces.	18-24 months May-November 2023		Sanford Equity Communications Network	Coordinate funding for summer camp

REFERENCES

[American Community Survey Tables: 2015 -- 2019 \(5-Year Estimates\), U.S. Census](#)

Tables used:

C15002B, C15002H, C15002I. Sex By Educational Attainment For The Population 25 Years And Over

C27001B, C27001C, C27001D, C27001E, C27001F, C27001I. Health Insurance Coverage Status By Age

B17020B, B17020C, B17020D, B17020E, B17020F, B17020I. Poverty Status In The Past 12 Months By Age

B25003B, B25003H, B25003I. Tenure

B19013B, B19013H., B19013I. Median Household Income In The Past 12 Months (In 2019 Inflation-Adjusted Dollars)

[“County could get up to \\$4.3 in opioid settlement”, The Sanford Herald; Nancy McCleary, July 2021.](#)

Lee County is to receive \$4.3 million in an opioid settlement that has affected thousands of North Carolinians. The goal is to ensure that as much of the money as possible goes to local governments to combat the opioid epidemic in these communities.

[“Grow your Own Teacher Programs: A Win for All”, Educator FI Website, June 2020.](#)

Educator FI talks about the benefits of “Grow Your Own” Teacher program. “Grow Your Own” programs can include financial support, guidance, and the promise of a job upon graduation. The program is run by a school district, or can be a partnership between a school district, higher education institution, and a community organization.

[A Comprehensive Technical Package for the Prevention of Youth Violence and Associated Risk Behaviors, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention; Division of Violence Prevention, 2016.](#)

Partnering with several community partners, this technical package is based on decades of youth violence prevention research, working to help communities and states prioritize prevention activities based on the best available evidence. The three components that make up this technical package are strategy, approach, and evidence.

[Blue Lights College Website, North Carolina, 2020.](#)

Blue Lights College is a North Carolina Premier Police Prep College where they aim to train a new generation of police officers to approach conflict with compassion. They prepare students for a universe of opportunities through immersive education in three foundational pillars: faith, purpose, and trust.

[Building Integrated Communities, Latino Migration Project, 2020.](#)

The Building Integrated Communities Program is an initiative of the Latino Migration Project at UNC Chapel Hill in collaboration with local governments, community residents and organization leaders. Since 2010, the statewide BIC initiative has partnered with the local governments of Chapel Hill, Siler City, Greenville, High Point, Winston-Salem, and Sanford and has gained national recognition for their work from the U.S. Mayor’s Association.

REFERENCES

[CAHEC Captial Inc., City of Raleigh, 2020.](#)

CAHEC has helped fund and support hundreds of low-income housing, tax-credit preservation, and community revitalization developments throughout our region. CAHEC's mission is to provide communities with affordable housing and opportunities for growth and revitalization by investing in qualified tax credit products.

[CDC/NCHS, National Health Interview Survey, Figure 2, 2009-2013.](#)

The National Health Interview Survey key findings are centered around the serious psychological distress among adults. Figure 2 depicts the age-adjusted percentage of adults with serious psychological distress, by income relative to federal poverty level and by race and ethnicity.

[Community Policing Defined, U.S. Department of Justice Office of Community Oriented Policing Services \(COPS Office\), February 2014.AHEC Captial Inc., City of Raleigh, 2020.](#)

The COPS Office, the component of the U.S. Department of Justice is responsible for advancing the practice of community policing. This report defines and explains the elements and components that allow for community policing to be an efficient practice.

[County-Level Bail Conditions in North Carolina, UNC School of Government Criminal Justice Innovation Lab, Professor Jessica Smith, November 2019.](#)

This spreadsheet provides data in a comprehensive and user-friendly form about the role of money bail in North Carolina as well as provides 2018 county-level data on the types of pretrial conditions imposed for misdemeanors.

[Crisis Intervention Team International Website, 2020.](#)

Crisis Intervention Team (CIT) program, also known as the "Memphis Model", is an innovative first-responder model that was first developed in 1988 and has since then spread throughout. CIT is a community partnership of law enforcement, mental health professionals, individuals who live with mental illness and/or addiction disorders, their loved ones, and other advocates.

[Crisis Intervention Team \(CIT\), City of Durham, 2020.](#)

The Durham Police Department Crisis Intervention Team is an essential component of the agency's community outreach and engagement efforts. The trainings they provide teaches recognition of mental health signs and symptoms and de-escalation skills and are sponsored by the Durham Chapter of the National Association of Mental Illness (NAMI) and coordinated by Durham's CIT collaborative.

[Crisis Unit, Town of Chapel Hill, 2020.](#)

The Crisis Unit of Chapel Hill is a 24-hour co-response team that provides onsite emergency response with officers to persons in crisis situations. It was established in 1973 as one of the earliest examples of law enforcement and human services professionals working together to respond to a variety of situations.

REFERENCES

[Developing a Representative and Inclusive Vision for Education, DRIVE Task Force, 2021.](#)

The DRIVE Task Force in North Carolina presented this final report to Governor Roy Cooper with recommendations and strategies to diversify the teacher workforce in the state of North Carolina.

[Durham Expunction and Restoration Program, City of Durham, 2020.](#)

Located in Durham, the DEAR program removes barriers to employment and housing by providing free legal services to residents of Durham who cannot afford attorneys to expunge their charges and convictions from criminal records. DEAR also works to restore suspended or revoked drivers' licenses.

[Final Report of the President's Task Force on 21st Century Policing, Office of Community Oriented Policing Services, May 2015.](#)

This President appointed Task Force identified best practices and offered recommendations on how policing practices can promote effective crime reduction while building public trust. The Task Force recommendations are organized around six main topic areas: Building Trust and Legitimacy, Policy and Oversight, Technology and Social Media, Community Policing and Crime Reduction, Officer Training and Education, and Officer Safety and Wellness.

[Find your Local NAMI, National Alliance on Mental Illness, 2020.](#)

A search database on the National Alliance of Mental Illness website allows one to find their local NAMI and their contact information to obtain services and additional information.

[Lead Program for Low-Level Drug Criminals Sees Success, Seattle Times, Sara Jean Green, April 2015.](#)

Lead was launched as a four-year pilot project in October 2011. The Law Enforcement Assisted Diversion (LEAD) program worked towards reducing criminal-recidivism rates by up to 60 percent for the poor, chronically homeless, low-level drug dealers, users, and prostituted people it was designed to help.

[Lee County Community Health Assessment, Lee County of North Carolina, 2018.](#)

The Lee County Health Department and Lee Community Action Network (LeeCAN) conducted and presented the 2018 Community Health Assessment, where they had the opportunity to identify health problems and assets in the community along with policy formulation, implementation, and evaluation.

[“New Data Helps Pave the Way for Bail Reform in Kentucky Analysis”, Kentucky Center of Economic Policy, Ashley Spadling, January 2020.](#)

Data provided by Kentucky Center for Economic Policy shows that releasing more people pretrial does not compromise public safety, emphasizing the need for Kentucky to make emergency release orders permanent and move forward with bail reform. Given this success, expanding this policy elsewhere further narrows the categories of individuals subject to money bail and ensures a defendant's right to a fast and speedy trial in the event they are incarcerated while they wait.

[North Carolina Fair Chance Website, North Carolina ProBono Resource Center; North Carolina Justice Center, 2020.](#)

The North Carolina Pro Bono Resource Center, partners with District Attorneys across the state to eliminate unpaid fines and fees for low-traffic offenses causing long-term license suspensions.

REFERENCES

[North Carolina Pro Bono Resource Center Website, 2020.](#)

The North Carolina Pro bono Resource Center provides pro bono legal services each year to clients unable to pay. Pro bono legal services is one way that legal professionals can ensure access to justice for all of North Carolina state citizens.

[North Carolina School Report Cards, 2019-2020](#)

The North Carolina School Report Cards includes economic, academic, and demographic data from all public North Carolina schools.

[Preventing Adverse Childhood Experiences \(ACEs\): Leveraging the Best Available Evidence, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention; Division of Violence Prevention, 2019.](#)

Written by the National Center for Injury Prevention and Control and the Division of Violence Prevention, this evidence-based publication defines what Adverse Childhood Experiences is and speaks on prevention, sector involvement, monitoring, and evaluation.

[Public School Personnel Summary Lee County Schools, The North Carolina Public Schools Statistical Profile, 2020.](#)

Data provided by The North Carolina Public Schools Statistical Profile shows the race and ethnicity makeup of Lee County School employees for the 2019-2020 school year.

[Racial Equity Report Card, Southern Coalition for Social Justice North Carolina, 2020.](#)

This Racial Equity Report Card uses data to provide a snapshot of North Carolina's school-to-prison pipeline, including any racial disproportionalities that exist.

[Racial Equity Toolkit: An Opportunity to Operationalize Equity, Government Alliance on Racial Equity, September 2015.](#)

The Government Alliance on Race and Equity (GARE) racial equity tool is designed to "integrate explicit consideration of racial equity in decisions, including policies, practices, programs, and budgets". The use of this racial equity tool is to help develop strategies and actions that reduce racial inequities and improve success for all groups.

[Raleigh Equity Information Sheet; Parks, Recreation, and Cultural Resources. 2020.](#)

An equity information sheet written by Raleigh's Parks, Recreation, and Cultural Resources summarizing the five key indicators of community health and well-being that determine Equity Priority: Unemployment, Low Education Attainment, Age Dependency, Housing Vacancy, and Poverty Rate.

[Sanford Building Integrated Communities \(BIC\) Action Plan for Immigrant Integration, Building Integrated Communities initiative at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, 2016.](#)

Sanford BIC was a three-year collaboration between the City of Sanford, the statewide Building Integrated Communities initiative at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and Sanford and Lee County residents. The action plan outlined recommendations to leverage existing community and local government structures, expertise, and relationships to improve several community-identified issues with respect to government- community communications, police, and public transportation, as well as to specifically support Hispanic/Latino leadership and representation within local government.

[Spectrum Recovery Inc. Website, 2020.](#)

Spectrum Recovery Inc. has been serving the Sanford and surrounding communities for over 2 years. Spectrum Recovery is an office-based substance use disorder providing medication-assisted treatment for substance addiction as well as onsite individual and group counseling.

REFERENCES

[Task Force for Racial Equity in Criminal Justice Final Report, North Carolina Governors' Task Force for Racial Equity in Criminal Justice, December 2020.](#)

This governor-appointed Task Force assessed racial equity in the criminal justice system statewide and provided a series of recommendations to improve equity among North Carolina residents.

[The Helping Hand Clinic INC, City of Sanford, 2020.](#)

The Helping Hand Clinic, Inc. serves Sanford and Lee County and seeks to assist low income, medically uninsured clients who are chronically ill by providing quality medical and dental diagnostic and pharmaceutical care at no charge to the client.

[The Mann Center of North Carolina, City of Sanford, 2020.](#)

The Mann Center of North Carolina is in Sanford, NC, and is a nonprofit Performance, Arts, and Community Center that holds open spaces for the community such as office spaces, multi-use rooms, and an auditorium. The Mann Center's present-day role is to be a community resource for all Lee County residents.

[The Racial Equity Institute, 2020.](#)

The Racial Equity Institute process is a 18-month to 2-year process designed to help leaders and organizations who want to proactively understand and address racism, both in their organization and in the community where the organization is working.

[Town of Chapel Hill Fund for Criminal Justice Debt Program Review, NC Second Chance Alliance, February 2020.](#)

The NC Second Chance Alliance is a statewide alliance of people with criminal records, their family members, service providers, congregations, community leaders and concerned citizens that have come together to address the causes of criminal records and the barriers they create to successful reentry.

[Western North Carolina Just Economics website, 2020.](#)

Just Economics works to educate, advocate, and organize for a just and sustainable local economy that works for all in Western North Carolina. We welcome participation in our work from all members of our community.

[“What Changed After D.C. Ended Cash Bail”, NPR Weekend Edition Sunday, September 2018.](#)

D.C. Judge Truman Morrison speaks on the success after D.C. ended the system of cash bail.

[Why Diversity Matters, V. Hunt; D. Layton; S. Prince, February 2015.](#)

The “Diversity Matters” research looked at the relationship between the level of diversity (defined as a greater share of women and a more mixed ethnic/racial composition in the leadership of large companies) and company financial performance.

[YouthWorx, Communityworx NC, 2020.](#)

YouthWorx on Main, a youth-serving nonprofit collaborative working towards tackling racial, ethnic and socioeconomic opportunity gaps, serves as a catalyst for impact, supercharging nonprofits with best practices that improve the lives of underserved youth in the Triangle region of North Carolina.

APPENDIX

I. Failure to Comply Cases by Race and Ethnicity in Lee County. Data retrieved in February 2021 from the Lee County Court of Administration.

	# Of Cases	% Of Cases	Avg Length of Pending FTC
Black	1974	47.901%	2846.37
White	1093	26.523%	2837.27
Latinx	890	21.597%	3574.71
Native American	14	0.340%	2718.5
Asian	2	0.049%	1291.5
Other	141	3.421%	4876.11
Unknown/Other	7	0.170%	2454.71
<i>Total</i>	4121		

II. Enrollment of Lee County Promise Students by Race and Ethnicity for the school years of 2018, 2019, and 2020. Data retrieved from Central Carolina Community College.

Race/Ethnicity	2018	2019	2020
MULTI	1	3	2
White	42	52	64
Hispanic	18	38	30
Black	8	3	7
Unknown	2		1
Asian		1	2
Alaskan Native		1	
Grand Total	71	98	106

APPENDIX

III. Sanford Equity Task Force Preliminary Survey

Please list:

A. Three areas in our community in which you see disparities or issues that need to be addressed.

For each area, please answer:

B. Why do you think it's a disparity issue or community need?

C. What recommendation do you feel could be an effective solution?

D. How should the Sanford City Council be involved in addressing this issue?