

Commission for Racial Justice & Equality – December Update

*December 1, 2020
Work Session*



LEXINGTON



How Our Work Began

- After we received the report in October, we immediately began to identify recommendations and categorized them as short, medium, and long term projects.
- We went through each subcommittee's report and assigned each recommendation to be examined and acted upon by the appropriate departments and divisions.
- Because many of these recommendations are multi-dimensional, folks from different departments and divisions are working together.
- We have also identified both necessary and desired outside partners to accomplish the goals of these recommendations.



Who's Involved?

- Chief of Staff and Mayor's Office
- Office of the Chief Administrative Officer
- Chief Development Officer
- Commissioner of Public Safety
- Commissioner of Social Services
- Department of Law
- Department of Finance
- Division of Police
- Division of Code Enforcement
- Office of Diversity and Inclusion
- Division of Human Resources
- Division of Purchasing/Minority Business Enterprise Liaison
- Director of ONE Lexington
- Director of Business & Workforce Engagement
- Director of Local Food & Agricultural Development



Accomplishments to Date

- Eviction Prevention Program
- Utility Assistance Program
- Mayor's Mobile Neighborhood Testing Program
- Henry Tandy Centennial Park
- Safety NET
- Funding for Disparity Study
- Body-worn cameras for all police officers



Eviction Prevention/Utility Assistance Program

- Total Funding Allocation -- \$2.052 million
- Housing Stabilization Partnership Program -- \$1.452 million
- Affordable Housing Market Partnership -- \$100,000
- Rental Hardship for Impacted Service Employees (RHISE) – \$500,000
- All programs are active now and ongoing.
- Programs allowed those citizens unable to pay rent because of economic hardship caused by the pandemic to apply to have their landlords reimbursed.
- (Housing & Gentrification Subcommittee, Recommendation 4)

*Housing Stabilization Program and Affordable Housing Market Partnership are funded through COVID-19 expense reimbursement from Governor's office.

*RHISE is funded through CARES Act – Community Development Block Grant



Mayor's Mobile Neighborhood Testing Program

- From the beginning, the program was aimed at targeting those who have historic health disparities and areas that were disproportionately affected by the pandemic.
- Tests are free
- 11 different locations around Lexington (12th will begin testing on Dec. 3rd)
- 68 days of testing
- Nearly 18,000 tests administered
- Offers walk-up options for those with transportation limitations – one of the first to offer walk-up and drive-up options at the same location
- (Mayor's Office Initiative)



Henry Tandy Centennial Park

- In coordination with Take Back Cheapside, the Administration worked with Council to pass an ordinance that renamed Cheapside Park to Henry Tandy Centennial Park.
- To many in our community, the park's previous name served as a painful symbol of racism in Lexington.
- Henry Tandy was a contractor and builder from Lexington, who is well-known for doing the brick work on the old courthouse located next to the park.
- Tandy's place in Lexington history deserved to be recognized, and honoring him by naming the park after him was a much-needed step.
- (Mayor's Office Initiative)



Safety NET

- Mission – To reduce violent crime through law enforcement, Street Outreach Workers & community partners delivering needed services & supports to high risk individuals and households.
- Goals -- To reduce violent crime and connect high risk individuals & households to needed resources & opportunities needed for safety & success.
- How it works – Law Enforcement, ONE Lexington, Street Outreach Workers, and community partners work together to provide resources, mentors, programming, etc. to High Risk Individuals and High Risk Households.
- There have been 25 total referrals to the Safety NET program.
- (Mayor’s Office Initiative)



Disparity Study

- Goal is to determine whether there is a disparity between the availability and utilization of MBE firms in Lexington.
- \$500,000 already allocated
- Anticipate the RFP in early January
- (Education and Economic Opportunity, Recommendation 2)



What are we working on?

- Department of Housing & Community Support – Requesting to present to Council in early 2021 (Housing & Gentrification Subcommittee, Recommendation 1)
- Code Enforcement Loan Program – Requesting to present to Council in early 2021 (Housing & Gentrification Subcommittee, Recommendation 2)
- Permanent Commission – Will launch in early 2021 (Recommendation from co-chairs mentioned in conclusion of Report)
- Crisis Outreach Team Pilot Program – First responders are working to enhance supports for crisis calls involving issues related to homelessness, substance use, and mental health (Mayor’s Office Initiative)
- Body-worn camera expansion and upgrades (Law Enforcement, Justice, & Accountability, Recommendation 3)
- RFP for Palmer Building – No responses received to the RFP (Councilmember James Brown/Mayor’s Office Initiative)



What are we working on?

- Implicit Bias Training for all LFUCG employees – Proposal presented at December Budget, Finance and Economic Development Committee (Law Enforcement, Justice, & Accountability, Recommendation 13)
- Put together a comprehensive MBE list – Working internally (Education & Economic Opportunity, Recommendation 3)
- Increase spending with Minority-Owned Businesses – Will revisit after disparity study is complete (Education & Economic Opportunity, Recommendation 1)
- Institute a “Whole Family Approach” to education and economic family progression – Working through a proposal to utilize LFUCG-owned facilities for job training and placement opportunities with currently funded workforce development partners (Education and Economic Opportunity, Recommendation 2)
- Improve food access and healthy food options – Bluegrass Farm to Table is continuing to co-lead the Kentucky Double Dollars program and plans to partner with Black Soil and other community partners as part of the program (Health Disparities, Recommendation 2)
- Other recommendations that require external partners



What are the next steps?

- Meet with community partners on items that require their participation
- Pursue federal and state funding opportunities
- Continue to work with co-chairs and vice chairs to implement recommendations



QUESTIONS?