STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK FOR ADVANCING EQUITY
Nearly every quality of life indicator shows disparities in outcomes by race in Baltimore and across the United States. Racial disparities have also existed within the Baltimore Police Department (BPD) in one form or another since its founding over 150 years ago. Many of these gaps persist today, in addition to other disparities based on gender, gender identity, ethnicity, and other dimensions of identity. We find these conditions unacceptable.

Through the federal Consent Decree and the City’s Equity Assessment Program, we have been working to create more equitable outcomes in BPD’s interactions with the public and in the experiences of our members. To become the fairest, most transparent, diverse, and inclusive BPD possible, we are adopting the agency’s first **Strategic Framework for Advancing Equity**.

The Strategic Framework is publicly available online, and we will be partnering with BPD members, City agencies, and other Baltimore community members to build a suite of tactical plans to address each area of the Framework. We expect the scope and intensity of this work to accelerate over time. To start, the Baltimore Police Department commits to the following:

- Establishing a department-wide understanding of equity and inclusion principles
- Engaging the internal and external communities—especially those most impacted by identified disparities—in the development, implementation, and evaluation of BPD equity initiatives
- Systematically gathering and analyzing disaggregated data from across the institution
- Conducting a systems analysis of root causes of inequities
- Identifying strategies and targeting the human and financial resources to address root causes of inequities
- Conducting equity impact assessments for all policies and decision-making; and
- Continuously evaluating effectiveness and adapting strategies as a part of the Department’s strategic planning process

BPD also acknowledges that race does not exist in a vacuum, so our equity work will also aim to address disparities based on sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, religion, age, ethnicity, national origin, disability, and other dimensions of an individual’s identity that they cannot control.

The Baltimore Police Department understands and appreciates the path toward equity will be long and difficult, but we are not shrinking from the challenge. We look forward to working with our employees and other members of the Baltimore community to ensure that access to public safety is no longer limited by a person’s identity.

**Police Commissioner Michael Harrison**
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STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK FOR ADVANCING EQUITY
This document proposes a framework for the long-term process of institutionalizing equity across the **Baltimore Police Department (BPD)**.¹

BPD leaders have committed to the following:

1. Establishing a department-wide understanding of equity and inclusion principles
2. Engaging the internal and external communities—especially those most impacted by identified disparities—in the development, implementation, and evaluation of BPD equity initiatives
3. Systematically gathering and analyzing disaggregated data from across the institution
4. Conducting a systems analysis of root causes of inequities
5. Identifying strategies and targeting the human and financial resources to address root causes of inequities
6. Conducting equity impact assessments for all policies and decision-making; and
7. Continuously evaluating effectiveness and adapting strategies as a part of the Department’s strategic planning process²

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¹ See Appendix 1 for more information about the Baltimore Police Department
² The practice of organizing equity work into seven strategic steps was first proposed by Annie E. Casey Foundation. You can read more about this best practice here: *Annie E. Casey Foundation. 2015. Embracing Equity: Race Equity and Inclusion Guide. Baltimore, MD.*
1. Commitment & Common Language:

Strategic Objective: Establish an institution-wide understanding of equity and inclusion principles

a. **OUTCOME 1:** Members of BPD senior leadership and the City of Baltimore’s Office of Equity and Civil Rights (OECR) will adopt a common language used to discuss issues, present data, describe conditions, and track outcomes of diversity, equity, and inclusion.

b. **OUTCOME 2:** BPD leadership commits to dismantle institutional and systemic oppression, including racism, in the wider community and to build clear lines of accountability to marginalized communities.

c. **OUTCOME 3:** BPD will effectively communicate to the organization and wider community that all dimensions of equity are important and benefit the entire organization and community, regardless of each individual’s identity. The Department’s work will begin with confronting racial and gender inequities as foundational elements of disparate outcomes.

d. **OUTCOME 4:** BPD leadership commits to adopting and implementing a tactical plan for each of the equity themes in the equity framework and strategic plan.

e. **OUTCOME 5:** BPD leaders can visualize and articulate a common vision of a BPD and wider community that has overcome institutional and systemic oppression.
2. Inclusive Engagement:

Strategic Objective: Engage the organization and community in the process of advancing equity, emphasizing participation of demographic and geographic groups most impacted by identified disparities

a. **OUTCOME 1:** The Baltimore community has convenient access to timely, accurate, and interactive information regarding the Department’s equity and inclusion outcomes

b. **OUTCOME 2:** All BPD staff have convenient access to timely, accurate, and interactive information regarding the Department’s equity and inclusion outcomes

c. **OUTCOME 3:** The establishment of a formal steering committee composed of subject matter experts, key organizational decision makers, and stakeholders impacted by institutional disparities

d. **OUTCOME 4:** BPD’s organizational culture reflects full participation and shared power with diverse stakeholder groups in determining its mission, structure, policies, and practices.
3. Assessment & Analysis:

*Strategic Objective: Systematically gather and analyze disaggregated data from across the institution*

a. **OUTCOME 1:** BPD will adopt best practices in the systematic collection, disaggregation, and analysis of equity data

b. **OUTCOME 2:** BPD will adopt best practices in making institutional equity data transparent and accessible to all stakeholder groups

4. Identification of Root Causes:

*Strategic Objective: Conduct a systems analysis of root causes of inequities*

a. **OUTCOME 1:** Rigorous quantitative and qualitative data collection will provide the BPD with rich and contextual understandings of the sources of inequities at BPD
5. Strategies and Resources:

Strategic Objective: Identify strategies and target resources to address root causes of institutional inequities

a. **OUTCOME 1:** BPD will adopt systematic processes for reviewing and reforming policies and practices to advance equity

b. **OUTCOME 2:** BPD will leverage its power to advocate changes to government and community policies and practices in order to advance equity

c. **OUTCOME 3:** Equity and inclusion initiatives will receive the dedicated funding and staff to sustainably and effectively meet meaningful goals

d. **OUTCOME 4:** Each bureau and division will have a senior leader who is held accountable for equity and inclusion outcomes at the executive level, and is made a member of the Equity Steering Committee

e. **OUTCOME 5:** BPD will establish an Equity and Inclusion Unit to support the BPD in centralizing and coordinating equity efforts across the institution.
6. Impact Assessments:
Strategic Objective: Conduct equity impact assessments for all policies and decision-making

a. **OUTCOME 1:** BPD leaders and managers will demonstrate competence in reviewing existing and proposed policies, programs, and practices to determine if they are likely to close the gap around specific disparities within their organizational purview.

b. **OUTCOME 2:** Community stakeholders most impacted by BPD policies will be systematically included throughout the lifespan of each equity impact assessment.

7. Evaluation and Adaptation:
Strategic Objective: Continuously evaluate effectiveness and adapt strategies as a part of the BPD’s strategic planning processes

a. **OUTCOME 1:** Timely and comprehensive data, adequate staff and funding, robust community engagement, and institutional commitment promote systematic improvement and adaptation of equity strategies and outcomes.
APPENDIX 1

About the BPD:
The Baltimore Police Department (BPD) was established by the Maryland General Assembly and is now the eighth largest municipal police force in the United States, serving Baltimore, Maryland. The department employs more than 3,000 staff to provide public safety services to Baltimore’s nine patrol districts. The BPD entered into a Consent Decree with the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) in 2017 after the DOJ concluded that the BPD demonstrated a pattern or practice of violating the constitutional rights of Baltimore residents, disproportionately impacting Black residents and other marginalized demographic groups.

BPD Mission:
The Baltimore Police Department is dedicated to upholding the Constitution and enforcing laws in a fair, impartial, and ethical manner. We are committed to creating and maintaining a culture of service that builds trust and legitimacy in all communities, values the sanctity of human life, and provides for the safety and well-being of all.
Baltimore Police Department Vision:

**1. CRIME REDUCTION:** Reducing and preventing crime in the City of Baltimore is a core mission for our department, but it cannot be done by the BPD alone. By working collaboratively with our City’s residents, businesses, advocacy groups, non-profit organizations, faith leaders, elected officials, as well as with other city, state, and federal agencies, we can provide a multi-layer approach to solving underlying issues that lead to crime. BPD will develop effective deployment strategies that focus on those responsible for committing violent and property crimes and work with residents to address disorder problems that affect the quality of life in their neighborhood.

**2. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT & POLICING:** While BPD is responsible for policing our community, it is also an integral part of it. We will only be successful in our crime reduction efforts by effectively engaging and listening to the needs of the people who live in the neighborhoods we protect. Working with and learning from our residents, our officers must focus toward fully understanding issues that impact our communities. We will work collaboratively with residents to create problem-solving strategies tailored to the challenges faced by specific neighborhoods and communities in our City.

**3. CONTINUOUS AGENCY IMPROVEMENT:** BPD will improve policies and training, overhaul antiquated technology, and create accountability systems to provide better services to the community. Through these reforms, BPD will dramatically change its practices to ensure proper uses of force; constitutional stops, searches, and arrests; fair and impartial policing practices; and true community policing operations. BPD must embrace these reforms because the residents of the City of Baltimore deserve a world-class police force that inspires trust, ensures safety, and protects the constitutional rights of the people we serve.
4. CREATING A CULTURE OF SERVICE AND ACCOUNTABILITY: With the reform efforts underway to improve how BPD operates, we must also instill a renewed sense of civic duty, honor, integrity, and a culture of accountability in our department. BPD will implement new performance management practices, better systems of tracking and measuring work performance, as well as new COMSTAT processes that actively challenge its Command Staff to provide strategies and solutions that are responsive to community needs.

5. CONNECTIVITY: BPD will adopt and embrace new technologies and new partnerships within and outside our agency. BPD must become more transparent and more connected, so that we break down information silos and focus our efforts in a coordinated and better organized manner.

6. CAPACITY BUILDING: Leadership development within BPD is the key to our department’s long term success. We will invest in better training, adopt improved systems of accountability, and improve how our department operates by hiring civilian professionals to manage administrative processes. We will also improve our recruitment, hiring, and retention efforts to ensure that we can increase our ranks to be able to fully respond to the needs of 21st century policing.

7. COMMUNICATION: Effective communication has to be at the heart of everything we do in the Baltimore Police Department and we must effectively engage, actively listen, and work collaboratively with our residents to be successful. We will strive to improve and maintain effective lines of communication so that we can strengthen our relationships, build new relationships where there are none, and repair the relationships that were broken in the past.

BPD Core Values:

- Teamwork
- Integrity/High Ethical Standards
- Professionalism
- Fairness and Impartiality
- Efficiency
About the Baltimore Police Department Equity Steering Committee:

The mission of BPD’s Equity Steering Committee (ESC) is to provide recommendations to the Police Commissioner that operationalize and institutionalize the Department’s commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion.

The ESC will fulfill its mission through the following goals:

- Identify opportunities within and outside the Department that enhance training and professional development in valuing diversity and cultural competence.
- Identify and recommend opportunities to improve standards, practices, and procedures to create an organizational culture of inclusion and equity.
- Recognize exemplary practices, programs, and individuals that embody a commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion.
- Ensure that the achievement of diversity, equity, and inclusion are guiding principles in every aspect of the Department’s activities.

**ESC Vision:**

Characteristics such as race, gender, gender identity, religion, sexual orientation, nationality, ethnicity, and disability will not be predictive factors in outcomes related to BPD’s service, enforcement, employment, financial, training, or accountability functions.

**ESC Composition:**

The ESC will comprise the deputy commissioners; chiefs of staff, legal affairs, finance, information technology, forensic sciences and evidence services, patrol, and criminal investigation; Managing Director of Human Resources; Director of Officer Safety and Wellness; chairs of employee resource/affinity groups; two representatives of the Community Collaboration Council; and the BPD Equity Officer.