



# CONTRA COSTA COUNTY

## AGENDA

### Equity Committee

Supervisor Ken Carlson, Chair

Supervisor Shanelle Scales-Preston, Vice Chair

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**Monday, June 30, 2025**

**1:00 PM**

**1026 Escobar Street Rooms 238, 239  
Martinez, CA |**

**<https://cccouny-us.zoom.us/j/826591075>**

**72 | Call in: 214-765-0478 access code:**

**544753**

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**The public may attend this meeting in person at above location. The public may also attend this meeting remotely via Zoom or call-in.**

Agenda Items: Items may be taken out of order based on the business of the day and preference of the Committee.

Introductions

Public comment on any item under the jurisdiction of the Committee and not on this agenda (speakers may be limited to two (2) minutes).

1. RECEIVE and APPROVE the Record of Action for the May 19, 2025 meeting of the Equity Committee, with any necessary corrections. [25-2613](#)

**Attachments:** [Equity Committee Mtg Notes Record of Action 5.19.25\(draft\)](#)

2. RECEIVE updates on Services and Access For Everyone (SAFE) Center development. [25-2614](#)

3. RECEIVE updates and PROVIDE direction on Implementation Planning for the African American Holistic Wellness and Resource Hub. [25-2615](#)

**Attachments:** [AAHWRH Implementation Report\\_draft\\_Equity Committee\\_6.26.25](#)

4. RECEIVE and DISCUSS the findings and recommendations from the Office of Racial Equity and Social Justice FY25-26 Budget Equity Statement Review. [25-2616](#)

**Attachments:** [Equity Committee June 30\\_Budget Equity Update](#)

5. RECEIVE updates from the Office of Racial Equity and Social Justice [25-2617](#)

The next meeting is currently scheduled for July 21, 2025 at 10:30am

Adjourn

General Information

This meeting provides reasonable accommodations for persons with disabilities planning to attend a the meetings. Contact the staff person listed below at least 72 hours before the meeting. Any disclosable public records related to an open session item on a regular meeting agenda and distributed by the County to a majority of members of the Committee less than 96 hours prior to that meeting are available for public inspection at 1026 Escobar St., 2B, Martinez, during normal business hours. Staff reports related to items on the agenda are also accessible on line at [www.co.contra-costa.ca.us](http://www.co.contra-costa.ca.us).

HOW TO PROVIDE PUBLIC COMMENT:

Persons who wish to address the Committee during public comment on matters within the jurisdiction of the Committee that are not on the agenda, or who wish to comment with respect to an item on the agenda, may comment in person, via Zoom, or via call-in. Those participating in person should offer comments when invited by the Committee Chair. Those participating via Zoom should indicate they wish to speak by using the “raise your hand” feature in the Zoom app. Those calling in should indicate they wish to speak by pushing \*9 on their phones.

Public comments generally will be limited to two (2) minutes per speaker. In the interest of facilitating the business of the Board Committee, the total amount of time that a member of the public may use in addressing the Board Committee on all agenda items is 10 minutes. Your patience is appreciated.

Public comments may also be submitted to Committee staff before the meeting by email or by voicemail. Comments submitted by email or voicemail will be included in the record of the meeting but will not be read or played aloud during the meeting.

For Additional Information Contact: Kendra Carr ([kendra.carr@oresj.cccounty.us](mailto:kendra.carr@oresj.cccounty.us)) and Peter Kim ([Peter.Kim@oresj.cccounty.us](mailto:Peter.Kim@oresj.cccounty.us))



# CONTRA COSTA COUNTY

1025 ESCOBAR STREET  
MARTINEZ, CA 94553

## Staff Report

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**File #:** 25-2613

**Agenda Date:** 6/30/2025

**Agenda #:** 1.

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### EQUITY COMMITTEE

Meeting Date: 6/30/25

Subject: Record of Action

Submitted For:

Department: Office of Racial Equity and Social Justice

Referral No:

Referral Name: Record of Action

Presenter: Kendra Carr

Contact: Kendra.Carr@oresj.cccounty.us

### **Referral History:**

County Ordinance requires that each County body keep a record of its meetings. Though the record need not be verbatim, it must accurately reflect the agenda and decisions made in the meetings.

### **Referral Update:**

Attached for the Committee's consideration is the draft Record of Action (Meeting Minutes) for the May 19, 2025 meeting.

### **Recommendation(s)/Next Step(s):**

Staff recommends approving the Record of Action for the May 19, 2025 meeting of the Equity Committee, with any necessary corrections.

### **Fiscal Impact (if any):**

**None**

## **Equity Committee**

### **Record of Action for May 19, 2025**

#### **Committee Members Present:**

Supervisor Ken Carlson, BOS District 4, Committee Chair; Supervisor Shanelle Scales-Preston, BOS District 5, Committee Vice Chair

#### **Staff Present:**

Kendra Carr and Peter Kim, Co-Directors, Office of Racial Equity and Social Justice (Staff to Committee); Adam Nguyen, Finance Director, CAO; Emlyn Struthers; Jessica Shepard; Ann Elliot, Director, Human Resources Department; Lavonna Martin; Nicole Bilich, Manager, Human Resources Department; Gilbert Salinas, Chief Equity Officer, Health Department; Rhonda Smith, Assistant to Chief Executive Officer, Health Department; Ellen McDonnell; Ali Saidi; Carrie Ricci; Cindy Shehorn; Alejandra Sanchez, Field Representative, District 4; David Frasier, Chief of Staff, District 5; Jill Ray, Field Representative, District 2; Peter Myers, Deputy Chief of Staff, District 3; Sonia Bustamante.

#### **Public Attendees:**

Kerby Lynch; Gigi Crowder; Shantell Owens; Doug Leich; Phil Arnold, Liliana Gonzalez; Leslie May; Maria Dominguez; Neill and Yvette; Phyllis Howard; Stephanie Taddeo Y'Anad Burrell; Zelon Harrison, Kathy Wally; Lilia Williams Cheuk; Mariana Moore; Melody Howard Weintraub; Deb Vinson.

#### **Introductions**

*Supervisor Carlson convened meeting at 10:30 AM.*

*Supervisor Carlson, Committee Chair, and Supervisor Scales-Preston, Committee Vice Chair, introduced themselves. Offered words to recognize the passing of Supervisor Federal Glover and honor his service, contributions, and legacy to Contra Costa County.*

#### **Public Comment**

*Gigi Crowder: offered words of memory, appreciation and loss in regard to Federal Glover's passing; would like to remind group of wish to name hub after him.*

*Mark Joffe: Santa Clara County using grants to non-conformist policies in defiance of federal govt orders; consider this as you deliberate and not jeopardize federal funds*

*Zelon Harrison: offered condolences to family of Federal Glover; commented on federal govt orders; stand together and continue to fight, use our dollars to resist any attacks on the Blackcommunity*

*Roxanne Carillo Garza; expressed her appreciation for Federal Glover's support and leadership over the years; his support for creation of ORESJ, of immigrant health care, equity and justice issues more broadly; also regardless of the federal attack on DEI, we need to lean into equity more than ever.*

*Phil Arnold: sad day, loss a friend of 30 years; offered scripture as a testament to fleeting nature of life;*

*Shantell Owens: devastating loss, but still here in spirit; remembered personal interactions; our hope and prayer was to name the Hub after him. Call for unity and togetherness.*

*Kendra Carr: we literally would not be here without Federal's leadership, advocacy, time, mentorship, advice, wisdom. He gave his life to this work, his family sacrificed so much, and don't want to see that work to be in vain.*

*Ken Carlson: the fact that he continued to attend these meetings a reflection of his belief, pride, and commitment to this work of expanding equity and in particular of opening the Hub and giving the community what it deserves.*

*Shantell Scales Preston: on way here, thinking of him, his mentorship and commitment, and his excitement and optimism to move this work forward, so on us to see it through.*

*Neill and Yvette: Federal was often the lone Black voice in the room, he spoke for us; he showed we can rise above the racism and lead with integrity and vision; when you deny us a seat at the table you deny what could be; I want to express my admiration for his leadership and ability to bring the public, the youth, the community into the conversation; he reminds us of the need to increase representation of Black leaders.*

**1. RECEIVE and APPROVE the Record of Action from the May 2, 2025 meeting of the Equity Committee, with any necessary corrections.**

Public Comment

*No comment.*

*Committee received and approved the Record of Action with no corrections.*

*Vote was taken – two (2) ayes. This item was passed.*

**1. ACCEPT the Small Business Enterprise Program Report, reflecting departmental program data for the period: July 1 through December 31, 2024**

*Cindy Shehorn, Procurement Services Manager, See attachments in agenda packet.*

*Carlson: No questions*

*Scales-Preston: No questions*

*Public comment:*

*Shantell Owens: As a minority small business owner, I have never heard of this program; what are the RFP opportunities that exist, and how did the info go out? How many Black community members were engaged and took part? Can we receive the data?*

*Carlson: is it possible to track the SBE data by race and other demographics?*

*Shehorn: currently track disabled, veteran, women, minority owned, and 2 other categories; Black businesses can be and are included among all 6, though currently we don't pull out data particularly by race.*

*Scales Preston: is there a way to ensure that in our outreach, and who receives notifications, we include Black and other marginalized groups?*

*Shehorn: I will talk to my deputy and bring back an update on how we do that; currently, through our Purchasing Portal, folks can register and be included in announcements; Can send the brochures to Supervisors offices to share with residents.*

*Scales Preston: yes, please send to our offices, and we can also work with ORESJ to share the information*

*Carlson: Can ORESJ add a banner on your website?*

*Carr: yes, we can work with the communications team to add that and make sure the announcements are included; and we can also host a webinar with Purchasing that walks through the process for community members.*

*Zelon Harrison: agree that there is a need to consistently collect the information by race to ensure*

*Mariana Moore: as someone who believes in importance of inclusion, I suggest we move beyond just compliance, and to deeply and actively and intentionally including community in outreach processes (e.g. mixers, gatherings, info sessions) to truly nurture a welcoming culture.*

*Phil Arnold: Glover used to convene an annual grantwriting seminar, helped people come away with deeper understanding of how to apply, write grants, etc.*

*Scales Preston: yes, we have a grantwriting seminar coming up, David Frasier will put out two on next few months, one in East and one in West (June 12 in Ambrose Center); working with CCTV to record and broadcast.*

*Roxanne Carillo Garza: MXCAB offered a document to Equity a few months ago on best practices on procurement and contracting practices; our hope is to have that implemented in policy in future years.*

*Vote was taken – two (2) ayes. Update was accepted with additional direction: Include a way to track data by race, and add SBE to updates Supervisors and ORESJ communications in the future.*

**1. RECEIVE updates and PROVIDE direction on Implementation Planning for the African American Holistic Wellness and Resource Hub.**

Staff presented, see attachments.

Carlson: Stressed need to partner across County and CBO's and include it in any potential RFQ and contracts. And lifted up the need to embed services in CBO sites across county as a way to meet broad need.

Scales Preston: Need for something to see as a representation and symbol of our commitment demonstrated by our currently funded programs; would like to see us go out to the sites to document and share with community what is being done.

Staff: We will work with communications consultant and East Bay Community Foundation on exploring what is possible.

Carlson: what is the contract period of current contracts?

Staff: One year, they conclude in March/April 2026.

Public Comment:

*Shantell Owens: as a recipient, now we are moving fast to make up for the one-month delay in receiving funds, but we have those funds are moving. A reminder that this is 3 phases, and this is a progressive plan, and not to get hung up on a brick and mortar site if that means this work will stall.*

*Phil Arnold: I have a sense of urgency for this, but I want to remind us to not always use acronyms, and to be explicit on the purpose of the project by articulating the name.*

*Carlson: agreed, acronyms are everywhere and makes it challenging to follow and not get confused.*

*Kerby Lynch: had honor of working with Glover on ORESJ and Hub; he was a strategist and a mentor that made space at the table and let community wisdom be incorporated; I believe what we need now is an equity analysis by zip codes, a readiness review what depts are poised to deliver (staff time, flexibility), budget direction (internal signal from CAO or BOS for depts to prioritize this work and not rely on a volunteer ask; and remind us that the community survey expressed desire to name after Federal Glover.*

*Doug Leich: MultiFaith Action Coalition fully supports the Hub and thanks the BOS their recent vote to move on the implementation plan; raised the importance of the grounding of hubs*

*like these in the CA Reparations Report recommendations, including establishing and funding community wellness hubs in Af Am communities as a form of healing from the legacy of enslavement; their recommendation is very similar and in alignment with this project's contours.*

*Zelon Harrison: the harm is so large and deep that the Black community needs to see something now, we lose hope fast, providing us transparent information and progress updates, opportunities to partner, etc; we don't want to be treated as if a fad.*

*Katherine Wally: Nothing about us without us, policies and practices that impact any group must be rooted in that group's expertise and leadership; I want to reiterate asks of Safe Return Project: for the Hub to be community-led, not County-led; also suggest a participatory budget approach, to complete the budgeting with transparency and clarity;*

*Lilia Williams Cheuk: attended a Town Hall meeting in Danville for this Hub, I appreciated the effort to receive that info and be kept in the loop; want to encourage continued efforts to include updates; appreciate Dr Lynch's updates; acronyms, systems-speak, bureaucratic language are all overwhelming so please use plain language*

*Vote was taken – two (2) ayes. Update was accepted.*

## **2. RECEIVE and DISCUSS the preliminary analysis and recommendations from the Office of Racial Equity and Social Justice 2025 Budget Equity Review.**

Staff presented, see attachments.

Stressed importance that these are reflections, not formal recommendations, as we are not quite there yet. Soliciting feedback and insights from Equity Committee that will help us inform and refine these reflections. We will also solicit review and feedback from CAO and depts before we submit a fuller report at the June meeting.

Carlson: Budget season is challenging for all involved, including and especially the depts. Want to recognize that up front, that this is daunting work as we begin to adjust and shift. Change is hard. But my hope is that once we've implemented it, the energy, effort, and labor will become more manageable over time.

Scales-Preston: it is important as a way to move forward, that we be intentional in how that change happens, and that being intentional in how that changes routine and structure. Without it, we run risk of moving fast but not truly changing and improving processes and outcomes.

Public Comment:

*Mariana Moore: so excited that this process is moving forward, after many years of this being a community effort; I want to lift up ORESJ's professionalism and genuine openness to partnering with community and involving community voice; want us to consider how much ORESJ is asked to do, and the sustainability is not feasible given the load and the lack of*

*staffing capacity; the office must be sustained as a matter of equity and in order to ensure the success*

*Doug Leich: Multifaith Action Coalitio, wants to reiterate the appreciation and support of the ORESJ*

*Kerby Lynch: reiterate the importance of budget processes to include the investment and resources that actually carry forward the great ideas and language that we insert; equity is a matter of robust fiscal planning that accounts for staffing and time*

*Deb Vinson: appreciate the work of the ORESJ, and want to uplift the need of self-care of such a small team being asked to carry so much; will AI be used to support the analysis? In the health world, we are using AI in new ways that we can learn from.*

*Staff: did participate in an AI demo hosted by the CAO.*

*Stephanie Taddeo: want to lift up the great work that ORESJ is doing, and reiterate the need to address the capacity and sustainability of the office.*

*Shantell Owens: raised importance of using technology tools to track impact and outcomes.*

*Vote was taken – two (2) ayes. Update was accepted.*

### **3. RECEIVE updates from the Office of Racial Equity and Social Justice**

*Staff presented, see attachments.*

*Public Comment:*

*No comment.*

*Vote was taken – two (2) ayes. Update was accepted.*

### **4. Next Committee meeting is scheduled for June 16, 2025 at 10:30 AM. But looking at rescheduling the meeting due to scheduling conflicts.**

### **5. Adjourn**

*Meeting was convened at 12:20 PM in the loving memory of Federal Glover.*



# CONTRA COSTA COUNTY

1025 ESCOBAR STREET  
MARTINEZ, CA 94553

## Staff Report

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**File #:** 25-2614

**Agenda Date:** 6/30/2025

**Agenda #:** 2.

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Equity Committee

Subject: RECEIVE updates SAFE Center development

Presenter: Ali Saidi, Director of Stand Together Contra Costa

### Information:

The vision for the SAFE Center is to have a vibrant community **where immigrants and non-immigrants are fully included**, celebrated, and experience a profound sense of belonging. Through inclusion, innovation, and collaboration, the SAFE Center aims to create an environment that promotes hope and healing.

### Referral History and Update:

**On January 28, 2025**, the Board of Supervisors received public comment in support of the establishment of an Immigrant Services Center in Contra Costa County. Support of the formation of a center is in response to the news and events across Contra Costa County that affect the immigrant community. Supervisor Ken Carlson assumed the lead on this topic and assembled a core team to discuss the formation of the Services & Access For Everyone (SAFE) Center, formerly known as the WISH Center.

**On April 9, 2025**, Supervisor Carlson hosted a countywide provider convening where over 50 different community-based organizations and community partners gathered to learn more about the SAFE Center and to gauge community interest. Based on meetings and discussions with the core group and community, the SAFE Center would start as a three-year pilot program that would function like the Family Justice Center, with the opportunity to grow and sustain itself long-term via philanthropic funding and grants.

### Recommendation(s)/Next Step(s):

RECEIVE updates and RECOMMEND next steps.



# CONTRA COSTA COUNTY

1025 ESCOBAR STREET  
MARTINEZ, CA 94553

## Staff Report

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**File #:** 25-2615

**Agenda Date:** 6/30/2025

**Agenda #:** 3.

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### Equity Committee

Subject: RECEIVE updates and PROVIDE direction on Implementation Planning for the African American Holistic Wellness and Resource Hub.

Presenter: Peter Kim, Co -Director Office of Racial Equity and Social Justice

Contact: Peter.Kim@oresj.cccounty.us

### Information:

To support strategic implementation of the African American Holistic Wellness and Resource Hub (AAHWRH), ORESJ led a comprehensive pre-planning process in collaboration with key County departments. This included surveying Contra Costa Health, Employment and Human Services (EHSD), Probation, the Library, and the Public Defender's Office to assess existing programs and services that reach vulnerable and impacted communities, with particular focus on African American residents. Leveraging the Phase 1 Service Description from the AAHWRH Feasibility Study, the team identified critical service gaps and opportunities where County infrastructure could be complemented by community-based organizations (CBOs).

### Referral History and Update:

ORESJ presented an early stage workplan on May 19<sup>th</sup> and returns with data driven strategy and implementation update.

### Recommendation(s)/Next Step(s):

RECEIVE updates and PROVIDE direction on Implementation Planning for the African American Holistic Wellness and Resource Hub.

Fiscal Impact: None

# **African American Holistic Wellness and Resource Hub**

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*Recommendations for Implementation (DRAFT)*

June 2025

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## 1. AFRICAN AMERICAN HOLISTIC WELLNESS AND RESOURCE HUB FEASIBILITY STUDY

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From August 2024 through March 2025, Ceres Policy Research conducted a feasibility study for an African American Holistic Wellness and Resource Hub in Contra Costa County. The feasibility study process began with a [comprehensive community needs assessment](#) and included research of similar wellness models, identification of potential funding sources, landscape review of potential physical sites/locations, and a set of recommendations for design and implementation. The [findings and recommendations](#) were presented to the Board of Supervisors on April 15, 2025. Informed by 4,074 survey responses, 16 listening sessions, 8 district town halls and stakeholder interviews input, the study offered the following recommendations towards a phased approach:

- Phase 1: Immediate activation of mobile services and leveraging of County-led rapid-response services that target high-need groups such as elders, unhoused, geographically isolated, etc.
- Phase 2: Engage and fund CBOs to fill service gaps by delivering dispersed “satellite” services through a sub-regional approach that prioritizes high-need Districts.
- Phase 3: Establish a physical site in Antioch, CA by 2028 that delivers medical, mental health, social and economic support through co-location of County and community services

Ceres Policy Research’s recommendations for immediate action steps included:

- Hire an implementation lead (e.g. executive director) within 90 days
- Expand and extend Steering Committee role/function to Oversight and Advisory Body
- Activate rapid-response services by Jan 2026

The Board of Supervisors directed the Office of Racial Equity and Social Justice (ORESJ) to return to Equity Committee for further direction, with the goal of returning to full Board in summer 2025 with a fully developed and actionable implementation plan that builds off the Ceres Policy Research report and that also addresses the following:

- Conduct an inventory analysis of existing County-run services and programs that support and/or prioritize the improved health and wellness of African American communities and individuals.
- Explore sub-regional approaches that meet the unique strengths, needs and concerns of the diverse African American communities throughout the County’s supervisorial districts.
- Prioritize investment recommendations of the current approved allocation of \$7.5 million to initiate efforts and services toward establishing a hub, and propose a long-term sustainability plan that includes non-County funding sources.
- Propose a governance structure other than a Joint Powers Authority (JPA) that allows for more flexibility and nimbleness in establishing formal partnerships with stakeholders, encourages shared responsibility, and prioritizes community leadership and partnership.
- Propose an approach to securing an entity and/or staff to carry out the implementation of services and establishment of a hub that does not include hiring new County employees.

Grounded in the vision for community wellness outlined in Ceres Policy Research’s feasibility study, ORESJ developed an implementation plan anchored in the following findings:

- The survey of 4,000+ African American residents indicated a widespread perception of harm within the community, highlighting an urgent need for the county to acknowledge and respond to these concerns.
- The survey and listening sessions uncovered an interest in community healing circles, restorative justice programs, and mental health services.

**These results underscore the community's desire for holistic, supportive strategies to address the impacts of violence.**

<b>What types of support or resources would help you and your community heal from the harm caused by violence, including police violence, homicides, racial violence, or community violence?</b>	
Community Healing Circles or Restorative Justice Programs	47%
Mental Health Services	43%
Legal Advocacy & Support	42%
Trauma Informed Counseling Services	40%
Public Forums for Discussing Safety Concerns	35%

The most frequently cited wellness challenges were caregiving responsibilities, lack of access to healthcare services, and a high cost of services. **These findings show that although Contra Costa County may offer assistance with some of these challenges, many individuals face barriers that could be related to eligibility criteria, lack of awareness, or limited time and energy to navigate the often-complex enrollment process.**

<b>What are the three top wellness challenges to your community?</b>	
Caregiving Responsibilities	42%
Lack of Access to Healthcare Services	41%
High Cost of Services	41%
Lack of Mental Health Resources	38%
Limited availability of services in my area	38%
Housing Instability	38%
Lack of Employment Opportunities	36%

Concerns around safety and police relations (e.g., racial profiling, over-policing)	35%
Lack of Reliable Transportation	30%
Food Insecurity	30%
I have to travel long distances	23%

Findings indicate a demand for comprehensive, accessible services that address the full spectrum of health, economic stability, and basic needs within the community. **This underscores the need to expand program capacity, broaden service offerings, enhance outreach efforts, and increase the availability of enrollment specialists for county services.**

What specific wellness services or practices do you feel are currently missing or would be most helpful to you and your community?	
Physical Health Services	44%
Mental Health Support	40%
Employment Support and Job Training	38%
Nutritional Education and Food Access Programs	38%
Safe and Affordable Housing Services	37%
Substance Abuse Counseling	28%

Based on the findings described, ORESJ recommends that the following service categories be prioritized in the initial development and Phases 1 and 2 of the AAHWRH, and that each set of services are culturally relevant and delivered by local practitioners that are African American and/or have extensive expertise in working with and effectively engaging African Americans.

- Behavioral Health services and supports, particularly for African American males
- Housing Navigation services and supports, particularly for those at immediate risk for loss of housing and those with young children, including African American males
- Preventative health care, check-ups, and screenings, especially for elders and young children
- Infant and Maternal health care services and supports
- Resource Navigation to enroll in Medi-Cal, Cal Fresh, and other public benefits, and navigate social welfare and public systems more broadly
- Reentry support for those transitioning from incarceration and restorative alternatives for those engaged in the criminal legal system, especially African American males

## 2. INTERNAL ANALYSIS OF COUNTY SERVICES

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In May 2025, ORESJ surveyed and analyzed the public programs currently offered in Contra Costa County. The departments contacted included: Employment and Human Services (EHSD), Contra Costa Health (CCH), Library, Probation, and the Public Defender. Each department provided a list of the programs they administer along with brief descriptions (**see Appendix A** for a list of program names). This information was then compiled and analyzed to develop an overview of the county's existing public service infrastructure. We are currently in continued conversation to further develop and refine this analysis.

The results (to-date) were then compared to the set of recommended services outlined in the feasibility study, which are based on community input, survey data, and research on effective strategies to improve wellness in Black and African American communities.

The findings revealed that while several of the needed services are currently offered across departments in Contra Costa County, significant gaps remain. Programs such as childcare services, parenting classes, doula and midwife services, food security programs, youth mentorship, and digital literacy training are available through departments like EHSD, Health, and the Library. Additionally, reentry support is being provided by Probation and the Public Defender's Office. However, many critical services including youth mental health support, fitness and stress relief programs, safe recreational spaces, housing navigation, peer support groups, financial literacy, caregiver support, community healing, and spiritual wellness are either limited or not currently available. A full list of the recommended services and their availability status can be found in **Appendix B**. As mentioned, we are currently in continued conversation to further develop and refine this list for completeness and accuracy.

The current findings suggest that while Contra Costa County has a robust service infrastructure in place, there is significant opportunity to strengthen and expand the infrastructure and delivery strategies to more effectively meet the needs of the African American community and other vulnerable populations. The analysis reveals notable gaps in wellness services that are essential for fostering long-term health, stability, and equity. To address these gaps and build a more inclusive system of support, several strategic approaches can be considered:

### **Restructure and Realign Existing Programs**

Conduct internal reviews to assess how current programs are being delivered and explore opportunities to modify or redesign services in ways that more directly meet the lived experiences and cultural needs of African American communities.

### **Strengthen Partnerships with Community-Based Organizations (CBOs)**

Collaborate with and fund established CBOs that are already serving or are well-positioned to serve the African American community. Leveraging these organizations' cultural expertise, community trust, and existing infrastructure can accelerate service delivery and ensure more responsive and equitable outcomes.

### **Increase Capacity of County Departments**

Allocate additional resources to existing county departments to scale up services and tailor them to better support African American residents. This could include expanding eligibility criteria, increasing staff capacity, provide racial equity and community engagement trainings, or launching targeted wellness initiatives.

## 2.1. SERVICE LOCATIONS

Currently, health care and social services are offered across the county. Both EHSD and Health have a significant presence in East and West County. This correlates with the areas of the county that are associated with the most need based on the Social Vulnerability Index (SVI), as well as the Healthy Places Index (HPI). Despite this alignment, significant barriers may still exist, particularly related to limited public transportation options and the geographic spread of cities, which can make it difficult for residents to access services efficiently.

In order to develop a more detailed understanding of Contra Costa's most vulnerable populations, ORESJ referenced the Healthy Places Index. The Healthy Places Index analyzes 23 social indicators of health that are positively associated with life expectancy at birth, from multiple peer-reviewed sources to create an index.<sup>1</sup> The indicators include employment rates, educational attainment, homeownership, and insurance coverage.

The analysis identified 12 census tracts (**see Appendix C**) in Contra Costa County with a significant African American population that fall under the 25th percentile of the Healthy Places Index (HPI), indicating that these areas are performing worse than the majority of census tracts across California. These tracts are located within the cities of North Richmond, Richmond, Pittsburg, and Antioch. The census tract with the lowest HPI score, 5.3, was located in Antioch, reflecting particularly severe challenges in that area.

Within the identified census tracts, there was only one library, no regional medical centers, or community health centers.<sup>2</sup> There were several EHSD offices for workforce services, childcare centers, and a service integrations team site. In future drafts, we will extend the analysis to include sites within 5 miles of the identified census tracts. Being that oftentimes the most vulnerable communities do not have reliable transportation<sup>3</sup>, it is important that African American Wellness and Resource Hub (AAHWRH) services are located nearby and/or accessible by public transportation.<sup>3</sup>

Due to these findings, the ORESJ recommendation is to dispatch services throughout multiple locations. That way, neighborhoods or census tracts with the most severe social vulnerability can benefit from the AAHWRH. This approach is supported by data from the survey conducted during the feasibility study, in which 63% of respondents preferred decentralized services (specific programs offered at various sites throughout the county) and 43% favored having multiple service locations across the county. The survey data highlighted a community preference for more accessible service points across the county. Still, in the East County listening sessions with service providers and their clients and district community cafes with residents, there was an overwhelming response and desire for a centralized physical site in the Antioch/Pittsburg area in addition to a broader network of community-based comprehensive and coordinated services.

In future drafts, ORESJ will analyze the public transportation options of those who reside in the most vulnerable census tracts including distance to bus stops and total travel time.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.healthyplacesindex.org/>

<sup>2</sup> This does not include population specific health centers such as school clinics.

<sup>3</sup> [https://ccta.net/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/d212e7\\_17065ead5e7a4124bf45a8401ff0e23a.pdf](https://ccta.net/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/d212e7_17065ead5e7a4124bf45a8401ff0e23a.pdf)

### 3. ORESJ RECOMMENDATION FOR IMPLEMENTATION

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At the April 15, 2025 Board of Supervisors meeting, ORESJ was tasked with building upon the Ceres Policy Research recommendations to create an actionable implementation plan. Further, ORESJ was directed to work with and receive direction from the Equity Committee and return to the Board of Supervisors with a final plan in Summer 2025. Below is ORESJ's initial recommendation for an implementation plan.

The AAHWRH will ensure a culturally-responsive, compassionate, and comprehensive response to the needs of vulnerable members of the African American community and build on the success of prior County efforts and models, such as the Contra Costa Family Justice Alliance (administered by EHSD) and the Reentry Success Network/Center (administered by Probation). The AAHWRH will provide a formalized structure for shared governance and sustainability of a wide network of County and community-led programs and services in order to ensure the efficient use of resources, consistent access to quality services across communities, streamlining of policies, and a coordinated focus on the needs of Black families experiencing intense disparities and inequities in Contra Costa County. The AAHWRH will leverage the combined strengths of local and regional public, nonprofit, and private partners to improve outcomes for individuals and families in a way that will be responsive to the diverse needs, geographies, and cultures of the western, central, and eastern regions of the county. Ultimately, the AAHWRH will coordinate a comprehensive countywide safety net for vulnerable African Americans and other marginalized residents in need of greater safety, connection and belonging, and improved access to health, mental health and other support services that meet their immediate needs.

Specifically, the AAHWRH will:

- Facilitate collaboration and communication among County, community-based, and other partners in order to align and integrate programs and services offered via mobile, pop-up, and satellite sites;
- Support and facilitate referral and coordination processes that recognize the fluid and ever-shifting dynamics of migration and community formation among Black residents throughout the County
- Support integration of data and tracking of outcomes by:
  - Working with partners to use common data collection tools,
  - Identifying outcomes for all partners to track, and
  - Encouraging data sharing among partners as appropriate, without compromising participant confidentiality, trust and safety;
- Identify and share promising and community-defined evidence-based best practices with partners;
- Work with public system, business, community and philanthropic partners to identify and pursue funding opportunities to support these activities;
- Coordinate capacity building and training opportunities for all partners engaged in service provision; and
- Once a facility is established in East County, provide infrastructure, including workspace, supplies, and communications, for partners who co-locate services at the site.

## **Proposed Design and Timeline:**

### **Phase 1 | 6 months | July-Dec 2025**

ORESJ will oversee and administer the release of an RFQ to secure a community-based entity with demonstrated experience and success in establishing community based, community-led health and wellness centers for Black communities to serve as a lead agency and fiscal sponsor. This initial contract will be for a period of 3.5 years, with potential opportunities for renewal in future years based on outcomes and success, project need, and availability of funds.

ORESJ (or other designated County agency) will also release an RFP for community-based service providers to deliver programs within priority service categories determined by data analysis (see “Key Implementation Priorities for Phases 1 and 2” below). Service contracts will be for a period of 3.5 years, with potential opportunities for renewal in future years based on outcomes and success, project need, and availability of funds. Service providers that serve specific areas/regions, as well as those that serve multiple regions countywide, will be encouraged to apply, as long as those areas include the priority census tracts communities identified.

### **Phase 2 | 3.5 years | January 2026 – June 2029**

Once selected and Board-approved (during Phase 1), the contracted lead agency will hire an executive director to lead the implementation efforts which will include: creation of an independent and self-sustaining 501(c)3 nonprofit organization for the Hub; recruitment and assembly of a Board of Directors; recruitment and assembly of a Community Council(s); recruitment and hiring of program staff; administration and coordination of provider contracts; managing partnership relationships with system partners; and developing a 10-year fund development and sustainability plan.

The contracted lead agency will provide the executive director with technical support, strategic planning, and clear direction on how to design and implement the above; serve as the employer of record for the executive director and any program staff; provide the organizational infrastructure, administrative support, and resources for AAHWRH staff to carry out programming and duties.

A Board of Directors (BOD) will be comprised of individuals with strong community ties, as well as positions of influence in public system. The BOD will include community seats with representation from faith communities, service provider organizations, and specific impacted communities, along with institutional seats with representation of government agencies including the Board of Supervisors, County departments (CCH, EHSD, and ORESJ), and local municipal Mayor or Councilmembers. This structure would allow for the agility of an independent nonprofit organization while maintaining buy-in and support from local community groups as well as government partners at the county and city levels.

The Community Council(s) will provide insight, subject matter expertise, and lived experience to help guide and inform the shaping and implementation of the Hub and related activities. The Community Council will be comprised of African American community members with professional and/or lived expertise representing the target priority populations served by the Hub. The Community Council will be comprised of regional (e.g. East, West, Central, South County) sub-committees.

Simultaneously, the contracted service organizations (selected and Board-approved during Phase 1) will deliver direct services in collaboration with County services, while receiving coordination support, technical assistance, and capacity building opportunities from the contracted lead agency.

### **ORESJ's Role in Phase 1 and Phase 2**

ORESJ will oversee the procurement and selection processes for both the contracted lead agency and for the service provider organizations. ORESJ will bring together an AAHWRH Transitional Community Advisory Body (T-CAB) to support the creation and design of the procurement, review and selection processes for the contracted agency, and support the design of eligibility and recruitment and selection criteria for the executive director. Members will demonstrate lived experience and professional expertise specific to African American community health, safety and wellness. The T-CAB will serve as a non-County appointed body and will serve during the initial period of development of the Hub. Once a lead agency has been selected, a 501c3 has been established and a Board of Directors is in place, the T-CAB will transition from its duties and form the foundation of the inaugural Community Council as described above.

In addition, ORESJ will work with and support the executive director hired by the contracted lead agency in establishing and maintaining partnerships with county agencies and other appropriate public system partners with the goal of establishing effective collaboration, communication and coordination with regard to referral processes, service alignment, and leveraging of shared resources and services.

In partnership with the contracted agency and the Community Council, ORESJ will also engage health system partners, local municipal leadership and community organizations in order to garner support, buy-in and commitment from key stakeholders regarding long-term service partnerships and sustainability.

### **Key Implementation Priorities for Phases 1 and 2:**

- Expand mobile physical health services in collaboration with CCH and establish partnerships with transportation services and CBOs.
- Expand systems navigation and service linkage support in collaboration with County departments, as well as expand supports to unhoused and housing insecure families.
- Establish partnerships with CBOs to provide credible messengers, pop-up sites, and wraparound supports.
- Fund community-based mental health healing circles and counseling programs in partnership with trusted local providers.
- Implement restorative justice and re-entry support in collaboration with the Public Defender and Probation Departments.
- Fund supportive services that prioritize African American males, mothers and infants, and elders.
- Focus initial services across multiple neighborhood sites in Districts 1 and 5 to meet urgent resident needs and ensure accessibility.

### **Phase 3 | July 2029 – ongoing**

This phase includes the establishment of a physical site at County-owned property located at 1650 Cavallo Road in Antioch, CA that serves as an anchor institution from which the executive director and staff will be based and carry out the vision and goals of the AAHWRH.

The final decision of whether the proposed Cavallo Road site is feasible will be determined by further analysis of actual costs involved in renovation/construction, facility management and regular maintenance, potential leasing/ownership structures, and other financial dynamics, along with considerations regarding accessibility and public transportation, community safety, and projected utilization. We will also engage Public Works, EHSD, and CAO to determine all necessary County processes and a realistic timeline. It should be noted that this location is currently occupied by EHSD staff and will not be vacated until 2028/2029 at the earliest.

#### **AAHWRH Project Budget for 2026-2029**

On April 22, 2024, the Board of Supervisors allocated \$7.5 million of one-time Measure X funds towards the establishment and operation of an African American Holistic Wellness and Resource Hub. On June 10, 2025, the Board of Supervisors allocated \$400,000 of one-time Measure X funds to meet the needs of African American males and assigned these funds to ORESJ to administer as part of the establishment of AAHWRH. ORESJ will oversee and administer allocated funding in accordance with county fiscal policies. The following project budget includes the annual expenses for each fiscal year, beginning with FY 25-26.

<b>Proposed 3.5 Year Budget</b>	
<b>January 2026 - June 2027 (1.5 years)</b>	
Lead Agency	\$500,000
Service Contracts w/ CBOs	\$1,250,000
<b>Total FY 25-26 and FY 26-27</b>	<b>\$1,750,000</b>
<b>July 2027- June 2028 (1 year)</b>	
Lead Agency	\$750,000
Service Contracts w/ CBOs	\$1,250,000
<b>Total FY 27-28</b>	<b>\$2,000,000</b>
<b>July 2028 - June 2029 (1 year)</b>	
Lead Agency	\$900,000
Service Contracts w/ CBOs	\$1,250,000
Antioch Site Renovation*	\$2,000,000
<b>Total FY 28-29</b>	<b>\$4,150,000</b>
<b>January 2026 – June 2029 Total (3.5 years)</b>	
<b>\$7.5M Measure X Allocation (+ \$400k for African American Males)</b>	<b>\$7,900,000</b>

\*ORESJ anticipates the need for a capital campaign to secure additional investments for any site renovation project. ORESJ has and will continue to engage in conversations with interested public and philanthropic partners as the implementation process evolves.

#### **4. COMMUNITY-BASED SERVICE CENTER AND/OR HUB MODELS**

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The AAHWRH model is a widely recognized best practice for integrating the work of public and private organizations to provide wrap-around services for vulnerable community members and their families. Community-embedded wellness centers address the unique needs of specific populations, and help communities use existing resources in new ways to ensure easier access to high-quality services, build safer and healthier communities, and promote sustainable well-being.

ORESJ engaged administrators of several community wellness and resource centers throughout the region and conducted site visits and key informant interviews to glean best practices, community engagement and service utilization strategies, and potential funding structures for administering community-embedded wellness clinics and centers. These visits and discussions informed ORESJ's recommendations included in this implementation plan. The following is a list of existing community health and wellness centers across the Bay Area, and highlighted are those that ORESJ had the privilege of engaging directly.

##### **Contra Costa County:**

- African American Family Wellness Center, Village Keepers
- The Family Justice Center
- Reentry Success Center / Reentry Success Network
- RYSE Youth Center
- The SAFE Center
- District Youth Centers

##### **Alameda County:**

- ROOTS Community Health Clinic
- Youth Uprising
- Ashland REACH Youth Center
- African American Wellness Center
- Berkeley African American Wellness Center

##### **Santa Clara County:**

- Vietnamese American Services Center
- ROOTS Community Clinic / Umoja Community Center

##### **San Francisco City and County:**

- Rafiki Coalition for Health and Wellness
- Marin City Health and Wellness Center (SF)

## 5. SUSTAINABILITY PLAN

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The success of the AAHWRH will be in securing long-term sustainability to ensure the countywide service network, coordinated partnerships, and East County site remain in full operation beyond the initial County investment of \$7.5 million in Measure X one-time funds. This initial allocation is a tremendous investment necessary to spur this transformative approach and creates a strong base for sustainability and scale, and a reflection of the Board of Supervisors' commitment to the health and wellness of its most impacted residents and communities.

While the recommendation is to establish the AAHWRH as an independent 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization responsible for developing and implementing a 10-year sustainability plan that leverages public, private, and philanthropic resources, it is vital that the County continue to play a critical role in the sustainability of the AAHWRH to ensure that the Hub remains stable and provides long-term public service to all of Contra Costa County's African American and other vulnerable communities.

ORESJ recommends that beginning in fiscal year 2029-2030, the County allocate an annual baseline award of \$1.5 million from Measure X funds to support base operational expenses of the AAHWRH, including core staffing costs and infrastructure for network coordination activities (e.g. communications, meetings, trainings, grant writers, etc.). In our final recommendation, we will include the feasibility of this proposed baseline allocation based on feedback from Equity Committee and the County Finance Director.

In-kind contributions in the form of leveraged coordinated services from County departments via formal commitments (e.g. MOUs), and possibly in the leasing arrangement between the County and the AAHWRH for a physical site, will also aid in the long-term sustainability.

The AAHWRH has the greatest chance of success if it diversifies its funding sources. ORESJ recommends that by the beginning of Phase 3 (FY 29-30) the AAHWRH secure at least 50% of future revenue from public sources, including Contra Costa County, state and federal grants. In particular, it will be critical to garner support from local cities where significant numbers of African Americans reside and stand to benefit from AAHWRH services.

The lead agency, and ultimately the 501(c)(3) organization, will be responsible for identifying funding opportunities through municipal, county, state and federal agencies that aim to support the needs of vulnerable and marginalized populations (e.g. homelessness, violence prevention, anti-poverty, behavioral health, physical health programs). These funds will be vital in leveraging and growing additional support from private and corporate donors, as well as philanthropic and community foundations, particularly for innovative programs and pilot projects. Other funding streams might include individual donor campaigns, annual fundraising events, and potential program service revenues.

Once a physical site is established, there will be opportunities to generate supplemental revenue through leasing of shared space (e.g. co-location of service providers or retail/small businesses) or implementing other revenue-generating endeavors (e.g. community café, cultural arts programming, facility rental for trainings or events). There will also be opportunity to explore opportunities for cost-reimbursement through delivery of eligible Medi-Cal covered services.

## 6. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS FOR IMPLEMENTATION AND OVERSIGHT

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ORESJ recommends that the coordination and implementation of the AAHWRH is carried out by a contracted entity until a new, independent 501(c)(3) is created to take on the responsibilities, while working in close, strategic, formal partnership with County departments, as described above. However, ORESJ offers two other alternative arrangements for the implementation and oversight of the AAHWRH that the Board of Supervisors can consider:

### **Alternative option #1:**

Issue a competitive solicitation for an established 501(c)(3) nonprofit that demonstrates the experience, expertise and capacity to carry out the same set of tasks and responsibilities as described above. The primary difference with this option is that rather than have a contracted entity create a new nonprofit organization for the sole purpose of establishing an AAHWRH, this established nonprofit agency will enter the process with an organizational identity, developed mission, and service history that will likely shape the AAHWRH in significant ways. Their internal structure regarding how their Board of Directors is composed and their role, whether there exists a community-led advisory function, and their focus on public/private partnerships may vary from the values and priorities that emerged from the research and planning process thus far. In addition, based on previous research and assessment, it may be challenging to identify an existing local nonprofit organization that is positioned in such a way to have earned the trust and credibility across the many Black communities across both East and West County regions. However, the benefit to this option is that an established organization may be able to begin right away in operationalizing services, leveraging its own resources (e.g. service sites, strategic partnerships, existing staff and services, secured funding) and not need to go through the administrative work of establishing a new organization and securing nonprofit status.

### **Alternative option #2:**

Keep the AAHWRH within the jurisdiction of a County-led initiative. As demonstrated by nearby regional efforts, other counties often retain the responsibility of funding, operating, and staffing community-based wellness centers. The added benefit here is the long-term commitment to sustaining the project, embedding its success within the overall County's goals for effective and successful administration and operating of County services, and ensuring the commitment and participation of County departments via Board of Supervisors mandate and direction. However, this counters the very clear demand from community members and advocates that the AAHWRH be Black-led and community-driven in all aspects of development and implementation. It also risks the potential for limiting the incorporation of community-inspired innovation in regard to protocols, processes, and decision-making, since a County-owned initiative is bound within particular, and often rigid, parameters.

## 7. CONCLUSION

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ORESJ respectfully submits this draft implementation plan to the Equity Committee and seeks guidance and direction from the Supervisors to determine next steps and iterations of this draft.

## 8. APPENDICES

### APPENDIX A: LIST OF CURRENT COUNTY SERVICE PROGRAMS THAT SERVE SIGNIFICANT NUMBERS OF AFRICAN AMERICAN RESIDENTS

(NOTE: will be updated for completeness and accuracy)

Program Name	Department
Black Infant Health	Health
CoCo Doulas	Health
Partners in Pregnancy Fatherhood Program	Health
Nutrition Support Program	Health
QIP Child-Adolescent	Health
African American Health Conductor Program	Health
Free WiFi	Library
Wellness Teams	Library
Kindergarten Readiness	Library
Tech Exchange Digital support	Library
Veterans Support	Library
BrainFuse	Library
Teen Afterschool Activities	Library
Homework Help	Library
Holistic Intervention Partnership	Public Defender
Stand Together Contra Costa	Public Defender
Clean Slate	Public Defender
YEIP - Youth Early Intervention Partnership	Public Defender

AB 109/PRCS	Probation
General Felony Supervision	Probation
Pre-Trial	Probation
Transitional Age Youth Supervision	Probation
Juvenile Field Services - Supervision	Probation
Briones Youth Academy (BYA) - Community Success Pathway	Probation
Community Services - Child Care Centers	EHSD
Community Services - Child Care Vouchers	EHSD
Community Services - Home Visiting	EHSD
Community Services - Community Action	EHSD
Community Services - Energy Assistance	EHSD
Children & Family Services - All Programs	EHSD
Workforce Services - CalWORKs	EHSD
Workforce Services - CalFresh	EHSD
Workforce Services - Medi-Cal	EHSD
Navigators	EHSD
Workforce Development - American Job Centers	EHSD
Workforce Development - Youth Services	EHSD
Workforce Development - Employer Supports (Businesses)	EHSD
Workforce Development - Employer Supports (Employees)	EHSD
Aging & Adult Services - Adult Protective Services (APS)	EHSD

Aging & Adult Services - Area Agency on Aging (AAA)	EHSD
Aging & Adult Services - General Assistance (GA)	EHSD
Aging & Adult Services - In-Home Supportive Services (IHSS)	EHSD
Aging & Adult Services - Public Authority	EHSD

## APPENDIX B: AAHWRH SERVICES – RECOMMENDATIONS AND AVAILABILITY OF SAME/SIMILAR COUNTY SERVICES

(NOTE: will be updated for completeness and accuracy)

Service	Department	Currently Available?
Childcare Services	EHSD	
Parenting Classes	Health	
Doula and Midwife Access	Health	
Food Security Programs	EHSD + Health	
Fitness and Stress Relief		
Youth Mentorship Programs	Library	
Tech and Digital Literacy	Library	
Safe Recreational Spaces		
Mental Health Support	Health	
Behavioral Health Services	Health	
Job Training and Placement	EHSD	
Financial Literacy		
Housing Navigation	Health	
Peer Support Groups		
Caregiver Support		
Health Screenings		
Social Engagement		
Reentry Support	Probation	
Behavioral Health & Addiction Recovery	Public Defender	
Community Healing		
Resource Navigation Hub		
Food Security	EHSD + Health	
Community Kitchen		
Spiritual Wellness		
Safe Spaces for Unhoused People		
Healing Circles		
Workshops and Skills Training	EHSD	

**APPENDIX C: CONTRA COSTA CENSUS TRACTS UNDER THE 25<sup>TH</sup> PERCENTILE IN THE HEALTHY PLACES INDEX**

(NOTE: will be updated for completeness and accuracy)

City	Census Tract	Percent Black/African American	Total Population	HPI Score
Antioch	3072.02	38.60%	4,299	5.3
Richmond (Iron Triangle)	3760	12.40%	6,245	14.2
Pittsburg (Los Medanos)	3050	18.80%	6,561	14.4
Richmond	3810	28.7%	6,521	15
Richmond	3790	24.10%	7,003	16.3
Pittsburg (Los Medanos)	3120	33.60%	2,243	16.6
North Richmond	3650.02	18%	5,590	18.3
Antioch	3072.05	34.40%	7,557	19.8
Richmond	3770	20.60%	7,323	21.4
Richmond	3730	10%	4,468	22.1
Antioch	3071.02	13.2%	5,330	22.9
Richmond	3750	12.50%	4,897	23.5



# CONTRA COSTA COUNTY

1025 ESCOBAR STREET  
MARTINEZ, CA 94553

## Staff Report

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**File #:** 25-2616

**Agenda Date:** 6/30/2025

**Agenda #:** 4.

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### EQUITY COMMITTEE

Meeting Date: 6/30/2025

Subject: Budget Equity Statement Review

Submitted For:

Department: Office of Racial Equity and Social Justice

Referral No:

Referral Name: Budget Equity Statement Review

Presenter: Kendra Carr, Jessica Travenia

Contact: Kendra.Carr@oresj.cccounty.us, Jessica.Travenia@oresj.cccounty.us

### **Referral History:**

Each year, the Office of Racial Equity and Social Justice (ORESJ) conducts a review of the Budget Equity Statements submitted by each County department, a required component of the County's annual budget process. ORESJ presents a summary report of their review and findings to the Equity Committee to support accountability and continuous improvement.

### **Referral Update:**

ORESJ will present a summary report on its 2025 review of departmental Budget Equity Statements.

### **Recommendation(s)/Next Step(s):**

Receive the report and provide input to staff as needed.

### **Fiscal Impact (if any):**

None

## FY 25-26 Budget Equity Statement Review: Preliminary Findings, Recommendations and Engagement Work Plan

### **Background**

In March 2025, the Office of Racial Equity and Social Justice (ORESJ) coordinated with the County Administrator's Office to review budget equity statements for the second year. On March 14, 2025, ORESJ shared a communication with departments that for the second year ORESJ would review budget statements and provide feedback in writing, offer Budget Hearing prep support, and request meetings with each department to discuss findings from the budget narrative review and preliminary analysis. To guide the written feedback, ORESJ developed a list of categories and guiding questions (see below) to establish shared language and facilitate discussion, learning, standards, and best practices around equity assessments.

In the March 14, 2025 communication, ORESJ also introduced the Budget Equity Tool Primer to share the purpose, objectives and potential timeline to embed the use of a Budget Equity Tool (BET) into the annual budget process for FY 27-28. The tool would be co-designed and tested with a pilot cohort of six departments during FY 26-27.

More than a compliance task, the BET is a structured decision-making framework that supports departments in aligning their internal practices, community engagement, and resource allocations with the County's equity values. Through the BET, departments can better assess impact, plan strategically, and budget in ways that close gaps and build trust with communities.

### **FY 25-26 Budget Equity Review Findings**

After the complete review of FY 25-26 Budget Equity Statements, we identified promising practices, challenges and opportunities to advance structural equity. ORESJ's review included analysis across five criteria: Community Engagement, Data, Staff & Accountability, Budget Constraints & Equity Challenges, and Budgeting to Advance Equity.

The guiding questions for the review criteria were as follows:

1. **Community Engagement** – How has the community shaped your budget priorities, and what accountability measures ensure their input drives resource allocation?
2. **Data Collection & Use** – What data will you collect (qualitative and quantitative), and how will it inform equity outcomes and future budget decisions?
3. **Staff & Accountability** – Who is responsible for implementing equity work, and how will leadership ensure workforce equity and accountability?
4. **Budget Constraints & Equity Challenges** – What funding limitations exist, and how is your department mitigating their impact on marginalized communities?

FY 25-26 Budget Equity Statement Review:  
Preliminary Findings, Recommendations and Engagement Work Plan

5. **Using Budgeting to Advance Equity** – How is your department using budget decisions to actively advance racial equity?

***Community Engagement***

Several departments uplifted community engagement as a valuable practice, especially those offering direct services to Contra Costa residents in vulnerable circumstances. Overall, ORESJ noted increased efforts in community engagement through outreach events, advisory boards, and partnerships with community-based organizations (CBOs). While those engagement opportunities appear widespread, ORESJ noted an absence of specific examples illustrating how community input directly influenced a department's budget priorities or resource allocation. In most instances, engagement seems to be more consultative than collaborative.

***Data Collection & Use***

Multiple departments described the ways in which their teams stratify data by race, income, age, gender identity, sexual orientation, and other identity markers and publish publicly accessible dashboards. These departments are collecting and leveraging disaggregated demographic data and utilizing GIS mapping to ensure resources are allocated equitably. Across departments, current practices in data collection and analysis reveal a primary focus on quantitative data. In many cases, the budget equity statements lacked clarity as to how this information will guide future decisions or address equity gaps. There is an opportunity to increase the use of qualitative data methods, such as focus groups, community-led research, focus groups, or storytelling to capture a fuller understanding of community-level impacts.

***Staff & Accountability***

Without staffing and accountability, even well-funded and well-intentioned initiatives will fail to close gaps and sustain change. A few county departments have identified and assigned staff who are responsible for leading equity initiatives throughout the department, with Health having the most robust Equity Team. Additionally, a small number of departments have formed internal equity committees or workgroups. Unfortunately, it appeared that most lack clear goals and accountability frameworks. Equity work often appears as an add-on, rather than embedded into core job functions and priorities. Several departments have provided anti-bias and anti-racism training, building their ability to operationalize practices across the department.

***Budget Constraints & Equity Challenges***

Acknowledging challenges to budgets can be a strength, in that it can encourage solution-based thinking, mobilization and acquisition of resources. In the budget equity statements, several departments cited the anticipation of funding cuts in a context where there is already limited funding and staffing constraints. Several departments described their strategic use of Measure X investments to address the needs of vulnerable community members. Others discussed engaging in public-private partnerships to augment and extend services. However, there is

## FY 25-26 Budget Equity Statement Review: Preliminary Findings, Recommendations and Engagement Work Plan

limited discussion that explicitly enumerates how budget constraints differentially impact marginalized populations or the very services tailored to reduce inequitable disparities. ORESJ also encourages departments to share how equity priorities were maintained (or adjusted) amid financial limitations, enabling shared learning and innovation.

### ***Using Budgeting to Advance Equity***

Several departments discuss the ways in which they prioritize resources to better serve historically marginalized and excluded communities. Examples included utilizing resources to hire and retain bilingual staff, ensure services are ADA-compliant, outreach to communities that have been disenfranchised, and embed equity into capital projects and operational plans. Many statements lacked plans for *language justice*, particularly for communities beyond Spanish and Tagalog. Additionally, there is limited discussion of the investment in accessible engagement materials and outreach for residents with disabilities. While some departments show a strong alignment between equity goals and funding (e.g. targeted programs for vulnerable populations), there is room for others to clearly demonstrate how budget decisions are used proactively to address racial disparities.

These findings open the opportunity to work with departments further to ground truth the real needs and programmatic and structural aspects of the work that can be strengthened or considered from an equity lens.

### **FY 25-26 Budget Equity Review Recommendations**

At May 2025 Equity Committee meeting, ORESJ shared preliminary reflections and recommendations related to our review of budget equity statements:

1. Integrate Office of Racial Equity and Social Justice in Budget Development
2. Align Budget Narratives with Equity Outcomes
3. Measure and Communicate Impact Through Budget Statements
4. Adopt Meaningful Community-Centered Engagement Frameworks
5. Embed Accountability Structures for Equity
6. Provide Training and Capacity Building
7. Engage in Continuous Learning and Iteration

To build upon these reflections from May 2025, ORESJ recommends the following:

- Adopt and embed culturally-responsive, multilingual outreach and engagement standards. Adopt community engagement frameworks that uplift liberatory design principles.
- Standardize data collection and data disaggregation protocols across departments.

## FY 25-26 Budget Equity Statement Review:

### Preliminary Findings, Recommendations and Engagement Work Plan

- Enhance qualitative data collection. Collect stories, community narratives, and lived experience data through focus groups, open ended survey questions, and/or interviews. Pair that data with quantitative metrics to better reflect complex equity challenges.
- Designate equity leads. Each department should designate a staff member or team to be accountable for equity implementation, with duties tied to performance evaluations.
- Demonstrate commitment from county leaders. Department heads and leadership teams must visibly champion equity work and model accountability in resourcing and prioritization.
- Build internal capacity. Provide ongoing training in equity principles, cultural humility, and data equity. Encourage peer learning between departments advancing innovative practices.
- Institutionalize equity impact statements. Require equity impact statements on all proposed cuts, new programs and new investments.
- Create equity-centered budgeting templates. Standardize the use of tools (like equity impact assessments) in budget development and justification processes.
- Remove barriers to engagement. Move beyond translation to inclusive practices for community members who prefer a language other than English and for residents with various abilities and needs.

### **Budget Equity Progress Update and Department Engagement**

By connecting the preliminary findings from Budget Equity Statements with follow-up conversations and collaborative goal setting, ORESJ aims to move to measurable, systemic change. After providing written feedback to each department, ORESJ staff reached out to request one-on-one meetings with department leaders. ORESJ is currently partnering with receptive departments to develop and/or support equity goals for FY 25-26 and build internal accountability loops.

From May - June 2025, ORESJ staff have met or/are meeting with the following departments related to their budget equity statements: *Agriculture, Clerk Recorder-Elections, Contra Costa County Fire Protection District, Contra Costa Health, County Counsel, Department of Conservation and Development, Library, Public Works, and Risk Management*. ORESJ will continue to meet with receptive departments to set and track equity goals and success metrics.

ORESJ understands that the budget equity work is deeply interconnected with several other core initiatives that support equity and accountability. For those departments already engaging in deep collaboration with ORESJ, we did not seek to recreate new goals, but rather to focus attention on existing initiatives that have already generated momentum.

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**Racial Justice Oversight Board** is space in which community leaders convene alongside the County's criminal justice partners – District Attorney, Probation, Public Defender and the Sheriff – to establish goals and implement initiatives to reduce racial disparities.

Implementation of the **African American Holistic Wellness and Resource Hub** - County departments are committed and deeply engaged in the planning stage – Contra Costa Health, Employment and Human Services, Library, Probation and the Public Defender. These departments are critical partners in addressing the public health crisis facing the most vulnerable and underserved African American communities in the county.

In February 2025, ORESJ partnered with the Animal Services leadership team to implement a one-day **Equity and Belonging training** for the senior leadership (management) team within the department.

ORESJ meets monthly with the County Librarian and the Library's Equity Lead to provide thought-partnership and guidance as the department creates and implements a **Racial Equity Action Plan**. ORESJ Co-directors have facilitated workshops with the department's Anti-Racism Task Team.

ORESJ is a member of the Stewardship Team of the **Contra Costa Accountable Communities for Health** led by Contra Costa Health's Equity Team. This collaborative has hosted a convening of equity practitioners and will soon roll out capacity building, learning opportunities to further the goal of healing, bridging and building.

ORESJ is partnering with the Human Resources Professional and Organizational Development (HRPOD) Team to create and scale a countywide **Anti-Bias Training**. HRPOD developed and has implemented an Implicit Bias training that has reached hundreds of county staff, and they are available as a resource to all departments.

ORESJ seeks to further streamline the budget equity process with these current initiatives. Advancing budget equity is not separate from this work. ORESJ will continue to share updates about the outcomes achieved through the aforementioned equity collaborations, and how departments are allocating resources based on how well these initiatives close equity gaps. ORESJ will provide the Equity Committee with quarterly updates that highlight the departments that are engaging in this work, and the progress toward achieving goals.

### **Budget Equity Next Steps**

#### ***Key Informant Interviews***

In partnership with Budget Justice Coalition, ORESJ is engaged in key informant interviews with seasoned equity leaders—including **Heather Jue Northover (Los Angeles County Anti-Racism**

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**Initiative), Michael Russo (Catalyst California), Kim Desmond (Former San Diego County Race and Equity Chief), and Andrea Aguiar (City of San Jose).** These equity champions have offered critical insights into the real-world application, challenges, and transformative potential of embedding racial equity into public budgeting. These conversations have deepened our understanding of how Budget Equity Tools move from theory to practice—shaping decision-making, driving accountability, and influencing resource distribution. By learning from jurisdictions that have pioneered this work, we can apply tested strategies, avoid common pitfalls, and ensure Contra Costa’s approach is grounded in community-centered, system-changing practices that meaningfully advance equity.

Through this review process, the ORESJ team has gleaned important lessons. First, departments need **clearer criteria, tools and baselines** for defining and measuring equity efforts. ORESJ can contribute to the county’s capacity to advance equity in tangible ways. ORESJ can build capacity of departments through trainings, webinars and skills development opportunities. We can create guides and tools to encourage the use of community-centered practices. Additionally, ORESJ learned that without investment in infrastructure and internal accountability, departments may view equity efforts as symbolic. Finally, this work will take consistent practice and requires a collective comfort with and commitment to continuous learning.

As we continue to move towards a countywide rollout of the Budget Equity Tool, these recommendations can guide implementation, shape capacity-building efforts, and help departments align fiscal responsibility with racial, economic and social justice. This report presents a set of recommendations that build on current efforts and offer strategic guidance for strengthening the County’s equity infrastructure.



# CONTRA COSTA COUNTY

1025 ESCOBAR STREET  
MARTINEZ, CA 94553

## Staff Report

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**File #:** 25-2617

**Agenda Date:** 6/30/2025

**Agenda #:** 5.

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Advisory Board: Equity Committee

Subject: RECEIVE updates from the Office of Racial Equity and Social Justice

Presenter: Peter Kim

Contact: Peter.Kim@oresj.ccounty.us

### Referral History:

Equity Committee regularly receives updates from the Office of Racial Equity and Social Justice.

### Referral Update:

The Office of Racial Equity and Social Justice will share updates related to current projects.

### Recommendation(s)/Next Step(s):

RECEIVE the updates with any additional input or direction, as needed.

### Fiscal Impact (if any):

None.