Overview of COVID-19 Impacts on BIPOC Communities in King County

July 2020
Context for work

The COVID-19 pandemic is already having far-reaching destructive effects across the region. The pandemic and recent increased, racist violence are laying bare racial and economic inequities that have long existed—and must be addressed systemically. As Seattle Foundation navigates how best to address pressing community needs right now, it is also looking ahead. One concern we have is about the state of the nonprofit ecosystem. Seattle Foundation knows that the impact—in the short and long term—is going to be significant, beyond anything we have seen. We understand that for many, the old way of doing things was not working. Rather than rebuilding the flawed models of the past, there is an opportunity and need to reimagine something different to support equitable outcomes in our community.

It is already clear that these crises will require significant public and private investment in the coming months and years to help reinvent what our region can become. Seattle Foundation aims to ensure that every resident in the greater King County region can thrive, and to connect capital to the most critical issues in the community. We see our role within the broader response and rebuilding efforts as creating new pathways of philanthropic investment that support an inclusive recovery led by community and buoyed by the nonprofit sector. The Foundation recognizes that effective solutions have come from and will continue to come from the populations who are being disproportionately impacted and who have lived experience with the challenges we are trying to solve—namely, Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC). In response, for this report and research, we are prioritizing the impacts on and experiences of Black, Indigenous, and People of Color as our focus populations. We anchor on race in our analysis because holding all other factors constant, one’s race is more likely to predict outcomes than other factors on almost every issue. That said, we also recognize that structural racism is interconnected with other systems that also marginalize populations along lines of identity and difference. Vulnerabilities will be compounded in this epidemic and require intersectional responses to reach the most marginalized.

In some areas, current approaches are not working. Guided by a set of key principles (see Appendix 1), we are working together with partners and stakeholders to first, develop a set of “impact ready” investments to address community priorities aimed at gaining the support of private funders and philanthropists, and second, to address areas of impact with system-level, cross-sector solutions. The rapidly developed “impact ready” investment ideas (complete by end of August) should be able to be made immediately to gain traction, recognizing that addressing many areas of impact will require further work, cross-sector collaboration, and reinvention. We note: this is one piece of a broader reinvention and rebuilding effort. For example, private funders are already investing in anchor grantees to ensure their ongoing viability. Here, we are focusing our energy and resources to support those who face structural inequities to recovering from the current crises.

Purpose of this report

At the heart of this effort is an intention to shift power to BIPOC communities. As a first step, we wanted to focus on areas for short-term investment that have been elevated as priorities for and by those communities. To accomplish this goal, we worked closely with the COVID-19 Response Fund Community Advisory Group to prioritize issues for investment (as captured in the “Community Prioritization” section). The Community Advisory Group was assembled by the Seattle Foundation to guide its COVID-19 Response Fund and is comprised of members who have direct, trusted relationships with our focus populations. Given their vantage point, they are uniquely positioned to elevate priorities based on their own lived experience and knowledge of the BIPOC groups they know well.

This report was primarily created to inform the prioritization process by complementing the Advisory Group’s personal experience and community knowledge with a data-based overview of COVID-19 impacts on BIPOC communities and on supporting non-profits. The issue areas covered across the document reflect a holistic set of interconnected needs, which is consistent with the Seattle Foundation’s Blueprint for Impact. The Blueprint for Impact is a strategic framework that guides the Foundation’s philanthropy, which is anchored on three pillars of a

---

thriving region: a Just Democracy, which ensures fair representation, resident political power, and equitable participation in public policies and processes; an Equitable Economy, which ensures inclusive growth and fundamental financial security for all; and a Resilient Environment, which ensures that all individuals thrive in a healthy built and natural environment.

The materials synthesize a large amount of quantitative and qualitative research from the city, county, state and national levels. In addition to serving as input to the Community Advisory Group’s prioritization process, this report is intended to be shared broadly, particularly with individual and institutional philanthropists who are concerned about where to direct dollars in the near-term to support communities most impacted. The report may also serve as a resource for other action on community-elevated focus areas, such as efforts by business or government.

Community prioritization

The Community Advisory Group was asked to provide feedback on the content of the report and to prioritize areas where there is both urgent need and opportunity for immediate action. The Advisory Group discussion reinforced the historic disinvestment and disempowerment of BIPOC communities, as well as the untapped community expertise that can provide clarity on the assets they have and the resources they need. With that in mind, the Advisory Group quickly prioritized two areas as critical areas for investment:

- Supporting BIPOC-led nonprofits
- Civic participation” (defined broadly to include community power and capacity building)

In determining which specific issues to prioritize, the group noted the interconnected nature of many of these issues, and they challenged the idea of “pitting oppressions against one another,” highlighting the importance of taking a holistic approach to solutions. Through the conversation the group collectively aligned on five additional issue areas that covered basic needs, resources to build health and skills, and structural inhibitors. Specifically:

- Criminal justice
- Education (including childcare/early learning, K-12, and postsecondary/career prep)
- Food Security
- Housing and homelessness
- Behavioral health

In addition to guidance on which priorities to elevate for this initial round of investment, the Community Advisory Group elevated three additional considerations about how to approach this work. First, while this effort has an explicit focus on BIPOC communities, there was an emphasis on recognizing how disparate impacts affect other marginalized populations as well (e.g., undocumented people, people with disabilities), many of which have significant overlap with BIPOC communities. Second, there was a call to situate potential investments within the broader funding context, weighing which organizations and leaders have already benefited from COVID emergency funding versus those who haven’t. This is critical given the systemic barriers to capital that are faced by BIPOC leaders in particular. Finally, the Community Advisory Group reinforced the role of this initial effort as a starting point, needing to connect these short-term responses to longer, structural change. There were questions about how near-term strategies will impact policy and long-term regional development, and we will aim to balance near-term solutions (e.g., increasing shelter beds) with seeding longer, systemic change (e.g., supportive housing policy).

These priorities, supported with ongoing input and guidance from the Community Advisory Group (initial input captured in appendix 2) and other community leaders and issue experts, will be the areas for which we develop actionable “impact ready” strategies where capital can be put to work immediately.
# Table of Contents

Pre-Crisis: Systemic Inequality in Greater King County Region ................................................................. 5

Post-Crisis: Challenges facing Focus Communities ....................................................................................... 7

- Civic participation ................................................................................................................................. 7
- Criminal justice .................................................................................................................................... 8
- Health .................................................................................................................................................... 10
- Healthy Economy .................................................................................................................................. 12
- Household Economic Stability ............................................................................................................. 14
- Education ............................................................................................................................................. 15
- Food security ......................................................................................................................................... Error! Bookmark not defined.

Affordable Housing and Homelessness .................................................................................................... 18

- Climate ................................................................................................................................................... 20
- Public Transit ........................................................................................................................................ 20
- Xenophobia .......................................................................................................................................... 20

Challenges for non-profit sector, and specifically organizations led by people of color ...................... 211

Next Steps ............................................................................................................................................... 221

- Appendix 1: Principles ....................................................................................................................... 232
- Appendix 2: Preliminary Community Advisory Group Feedback ...................................................... 23
- Appendix 3: Key indicators ................................................................................................................ 265
- Appendix 4: Sources .......................................................................................................................... 298
Pre-Crisis: Systemic Inequality in Greater King County Region

“The persistence of poverty amid Seattle’s growing affluence is striking. While many people benefit from our strong local economy, we should keep in mind that 1 in 9 Seattle residents lives below the poverty line”

Jennifer Romich, Director of University of Washington’s West Coast Poverty Center (source)

The Greater King County area has been one of the fastest-growing major metro areas (across population, economic activity, employment) in the nation over the last decade. However, this overall picture ignores the inequality that exists and has increased as a part of that growth. A variety of systemic factors, including racism and xenophobia, are embedded into the norms, cultures, and institutions within the region – as they are across the United States. Consequently, people of color, immigrants, and other marginalized groups frequently find themselves experiencing lower gains and worse outcomes than their peers. Note: We recognize that there is significant variation in outcomes within the category of “people of color,” and where possible, have further disaggregated the data to reflect that diversity. Further, a history of residential segregation and other explicitly racist policies have grouped these communities together – thus, concentrating geographic pockets across the Puget Sound area in which the most vulnerable populations tend to be surrounded by the least of resources.

**Economic Mobility in King County (with Seattle detail)**

The map above displays a snapshot of economic mobility in King County. The map depicts median income by adults for the children who grew up in that neighborhood (e.g., if one grew up in Renton, but moved to Shoreline, one’s income would still be reflected in the Renton area of the map). More red areas means that the children who grew up there make less money now as adults, and more blue indicates that the children who grew up there make more money. Despite overall growth across the region, the color variation on the map demonstrates that gains from
economic growth have not been held equally across groups. Disparities in economic mobility are rooted in a variety of interrelated factors and long-standing structural racism and inequity, including legalized segregation, redlining and other housing discrimination, labor market discrimination, and mass incarceration. Below we include some examples where specific groups in King County were particularly left behind across key dimensions (see appendix 2 for additional indicators).

**Just democracy:**
Ensuring that all residents are fairly represented, hold political power, and equitably participate in public processes – including fair criminal justice and immigration systems

**Equitable economy:**
Ensuring inclusive growth and fundamental financial security for all

**Resilient environment:**
Ensuring that all individuals thrive in a healthy built and natural environment
Post-Crisis: Challenges facing Focus Communities

During times of crisis, existing inequities often intensify. The most vulnerable and marginalized populations bear a disproportionate share of the hardship— and are often excluded from response and recovery efforts. In this section, we describe how the recent crises have already worsened (or are expected to worsen) existing inequities due to systemic bias and racism in the Greater King County area.

Most if not all of the topics and inequities highlighted are highly interrelated. For example, discriminatory housing policy is not just a housing/homelessness issue, but also a primary driver of the wealth gap between Blacks and Whites. However, in this needs assessment, we have largely approached each topic separately, noting particularly strong interconnections.

Similarly, since systemic bias and racism are common drivers of these different forms of inequity, in addition to the topic-specific drivers detailed in the sections that follow, there are cross-cutting barriers that have implications across multiple areas, specifically:

1. **Limited knowledge of / ability to access government services**: Accessing public benefits can be complex and time-intensive. As such, lack of access to internet (see below), language barriers, or general knowledge/networks to guide through the process of obtaining benefits may prevent people from successfully receiving them. Additionally, not all focus populations are eligible for these services: undocumented, seasonal, or informal workers may not be eligible to receive many government benefits, including recent CARES resources.

2. **Digital divide**: Accessing information, resources, and supports increasingly relies on internet access, digital literacy, and facility with English. The importance of technology has been demonstrated by the COVID-19 health crisis which shifted many in-person services to virtual environments to comply with social distancing protocols and reduce the likelihood of disease spread. In fact, 67,000 households in King County (7.5%) have no internet access. This creates a meaningful barrier to accessing necessary supports for Black/African American, Hispanic/Latinx and Native communities who have more limited broadband access than their White counterparts (even when income is controlled for).

3. **Lack of trust in government**: Decades and centuries of government sanctioned and direct discrimination have contributed to low levels of trust among some focus populations. According to Pew research, while 27% of White Americans have high trust in the federal government, only 13% of Black Americans and 12% of Latinx Americans do. As a result, members of these groups may be less willing to participate in government programs. For example, according to Colleen Echohawk, Executive Director of Chief Seattle Club, a nonprofit that works with the city’s Native population, when members of the Native community who are experiencing homelessness are assigned permanent housing, 84% do not take advantage of it. Additionally, segments of the BIPOC community, including undocumented individuals, live in fear of government retaliation and/or government agencies including ICE. These fears have only been magnified under the current administration given anti-immigrant rhetoric, polices and heightened enforcement.

---

2 For example, for household income of $35,000 to $60,000, White families are six percentage points more likely to have home internet than Black/African American or Hispanic/Latinx families of similar income level
Just Democracy

Civic Participation

“Residents who don’t have access to leaders, civic skills or knowledge of democratic power structures to advocate for themselves and their families lack the agency they need to improve their lives. This perpetuates a civic underclass.”

Seattle City Club [source]

Washington has one of the highest voter turnouts in the country. Though Washington, and King County specifically, have made many efforts to support equitable voting, including automatic voter registration, voting rights restoration upon completion of prison, parole, and probation, and bipartisan approval of redistricting to reduce gerrymandering, significant disparities in voting rates continue to exist.

Percentage of Greater Seattle population that voted

In 2017, in the Greater Seattle area, 43% of people of color voted while 63% of White people voted. Institutional racism, language barriers, poverty, and unequal access to education depress the ability of people of color to consistently engage civically.

Washington has a well-established mail-at-home voting infrastructure that mitigates many of the common barriers to voting, and provides important protection against the risk that COVID-19-related health concerns may depress voting in this year’s elections. However, the present moment may pose further challenges for participation by focus populations. The way government handles the recent crises of the pandemic and police brutality may have a significant role in influencing civic participation. The second most common reason for not voting is thinking one’s vote does not have an impact, and a poor response threatens to further decrease public trust in government, which is already near historic lows. The Free Capitol Hill movement is a reflection of this lack of trust, where Seattle residents are using occupation as a pathway to make their demands heard and promote greater change.

Further, traditional methods to increase awareness through Get Out the Vote and other civic education campaigns rely on face-to-face canvassing that may not be possible given COVID-19, and will instead rely on technology, direct mail, and phone-banks that is not equally accessible to all residents, potentially reducing turnout, especially for focus populations.

Criminal justice

“No water. No access to (the) bathroom. No egress in case of emergency. Older men are having accidents in their cell. Next day, still not cleaned up. No clean masks.”

Mother of a person in Coyote Ridge prison in eastern Washington [source]
Recent COVID-19 prison outbreaks and increased racialized violence have laid bare some of the disparities plaguing the criminal justice system across the nation. While Washington has a lower incarceration rate than the national average (480 vs. 698 per 100,000), the recent crises have indicated similar challenges to those experienced throughout the country.

Focus communities experience disparate treatment and outcomes from childhood through each stage of the criminal justice system. As children, similar behavior practices—from attendance-related offenses to violence—are viewed far more negatively by teachers when committed by people of color. As a result, Black/African American, Hispanic/Latinx, and American Indian/Alaska Native students are overrepresented in disciplined students, and therefore put into contact with the juvenile justice system and eventually the adult criminal justice system both earlier and at higher rates than White students creating a “school-to-prison pipeline.”

Within the criminal justice itself, starting from initial arrests, people of color are over-policed; in 2016, Black Americans comprised 27% of all individuals arrested in the United States—double their share of the total population. Analysis of Seattle’s police enforcement also showed that people of color were frisked more regularly than White people after being stopped by an officer. Police engagement has also proven deadly. As elevated by the recent protests, police brutality is overwhelmingly being borne by people of color, with Black/African American and Native populations facing higher probabilities of being killed by police. Regarding pre-trial, Black/African American and Hispanic/Latinx people are more likely than Whites to be denied bail, to have a higher money bond set, and to be detained because they cannot pay their bond. They are often assessed to be higher safety and flight risks because they are more likely to be economically vulnerable and to have criminal records. These disparities continue to sentencing. Overall, research focused on Washington’s criminal justice system found that Black/African American people are charged or convicted at a rate more than three times that of White people.

These forces contribute to much higher rates of incarceration for focus populations that place them at differential risk of contracting COVID-19.

**Washington Incarceration Rates by Race/Ethnicity per 100,000**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Race/Ethnicity</th>
<th>Rate per 100,000</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Black</td>
<td>2,372</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>American Indian/Alaska Native</td>
<td>1,427</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latinx</td>
<td>601</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>392</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Effectively controlling the spread of COVID-19 requires robust preventative measures, social distancing, and a strong healthcare system, all of which are lacking in America’s current incarceration system. As a result, there have been multiple COVID-19 outbreaks in prisons as the disease has taken advantage of overcrowding and poor medical care to quickly spread across the population. By late April, the prisoner infection rate was 2.8x of that of the general U.S. population. In response to public outrage and prison riots, including one in Washington State after several people in prison tested positive for the virus, measures were proposed to release early certain incarcerated persons, but were limited to those convicted of non-violent crimes, were at greatest risk of disease, and whose release date was within 60 days. These reduction efforts have been small; the typical prison has only reduced its population by 5%, leaving a large population of incarcerated people of color at risk.

---

3 In comparison, at the national level the incarceration rate per 100,000 was 450 for Whites, 831 for Hispanics/Latinx, 2,306 for Blacks/African Americans, and 895 for American Indian/Alaska Native.
Xenophobia

“It made me feel super unsafe...white supremacists could literally be your neighbor.”
Monyee Chau, local artist [Crosscut]

Since the beginning of the year, there has been a spike of xenophobic and racist activity targeted toward Asian and Asian-American individuals and communities. The STOP AAPI HATE Reporting Center documented 1,843 self-reported incidents of anti-Asian discrimination nationally due to COVID-19, and this number likely undercounts the full toll as not all incidents are reported. Local media has covered anecdotal evidence of these trends in the King County area, including verbal harassment at the University of Washington and physical assault on the streets of Seattle. Furthermore, even before strict shelter-in-place measures were put in place, restaurants in Seattle Chinatown were reporting revenue decline as high as 60% in due to Coronavirus fears. While anti-Asian hate crimes are not new, this recent spike in anti-Asian hate activity is due to a variety of COVID-19 related drivers, including misinformation about how the virus spreads and racist modeling from influential leadership (e.g., President Trump referring to Coronavirus as “the China plague”).

Equitable Economy

Health

"Race and place are major predictors of underlying health conditions and health outcomes. These systemic inequities play out profoundly with COVID-19, both in terms of who is getting infected and at greater risk for severe complications from COVID-19."
Matías Valenzuela, Equity Director for Public Health – Seattle & King County [source]

The first confirmed coronavirus case and death in the United States were in King County. Washington state leaders took rapid and aggressive action to limit the spread of the disease, quickly enacting restrictions on group gatherings then moving to a shelter-in-place ordinance. These actions have helped contribute to a significantly lower infection rate than the national average and a declining growth curve.

However, despite the overall positive trajectory of COVID-19 infections, minority populations of King County have been particularly affected by the disease from infection to hospitalization to mortality. As of June 14, 8,751 King County residents have tested positive for COVID-19, and 6.6% of all positive cases (574) have resulted in death. These health outcomes are disproportionately borne by POC in King County.

---

4 Experts suspect that the self-reported nature of these figures underestimate the actual magnitude of anti-Asian racist incidents

5 Some figures in the charts, particularly for Indigenous groups, may not be statistically significant given low n-values. Figures are presented here for comprehensiveness and to suggest emerging patterns
COVID-19 Statistics in King County by Race per 100,000 Residents (June 14, 2020)

The COVID-19 crisis has also had dramatic mental health impacts. While studies are currently underway to assess the full psychological toll of COVID-19, a wide base of research has already demonstrated the deeply negative impacts on well-being of prolonged isolation and heightened anxiety, as well as increased instances of intimate partner violence and child abuse. People of color are confronted with a range of challenges that make them more vulnerable to the physical and mental impacts of the virus, including:

1. Higher rates of chronic health conditions and risk factors: Heightened levels of pollution, food deserts, and structural and environmental racism have contributed to elevated rates of chronic conditions and mental health challenges for focus communities. COVID-19 mortality rates are highly influenced by the presence of pre-existing conditions, including higher rates of asthma, diabetes, obesity, HIV/AIDS, and other chronic conditions that disproportionately affect people of color. As a result, people of color are at greater risk of becoming seriously ill or dying if infected by the virus.

2. Living conditions create barriers to social distancing: Residential segregation in the United States has restricted people of color to the more densely populated parts of metropolitan areas in which they live, making social distancing challenging. Moreover, people of color are more likely to live in multigenerational housing situations and rely on public transportation, further exacerbating the challenges of social distancing. These challenges extend to incarcerated populations and people experiencing homelessness who are disproportionately people of color.

3. Inability to work from home (see Healthy Economy section): People of color are also highly represented in industries that have been deemed essential during the pandemic; for example, 60% of home healthcare workers are people of color. Black and Hispanic/Latinx workers are also much less likely than White workers to be able to telework, and have less access to paid sick leave and paid leave for child care. In

---

6 The rate of asthma among American Indians/Alaska Natives in King County is four times that of Asian adults
7 Diabetes rates among African American/Black adults in King County are significantly higher than the county average and nearly twice the rate among Asian adults
8 The top three causes of death among Native Hawaiians/Pacific Islanders in King County are related to obesity (heart disease, cancer, and diabetes) – this group has the third highest obesity rate (28%) behind American Indians/Alaska Natives (44%) and Black/African Americans (33%)
9 HIV disproportionately affects Black individuals. In WA 4% of residents are Black, but 16% of persons diagnosed with HIV are Black. In King County, these respective estimates are 6% and 19%. HIV disproportionately affects Hispanic and Latinx individuals. In King County, 10% of Latinx are infected with HIV, but 13% of persons diagnosed with HIV are Latinx. In WA, these estimates are both 13%
10 In King County, 38% of Hispanic/Latinx households have four or more inhabitants, more than any other group
11 Native American, Asian, and Hispanic/Latinx households in King County are three times more likely than White households to include members of three or more generations
12 See Traffic section
13 See Criminal Justice section
14 King County’s homeless population is approximately 50% people of color, with African American/Blacks being represented threefold
addition to placing workers at greater physical risk, these front-line roles also contribute to higher stress and anxiety.

(4) **Barriers to quality healthcare:** Information, financial, and language barriers, along with discrimination and bias in the healthcare system, often create challenges for people of color seeking medical and mental health care. People of color are more likely than White Americans to lack health insurance and, among non-elderly adults, more likely to report going without needed care due to cost. Even if people of color are able to access healthcare, the care they receive is often of poorer quality and less intensive relative to care received by White patients. Moreover, people of color are underrepresented in clinical trials as a result of barriers including financial and logistical challenges and mistrust of medical practitioners and scientific experimentation based on past injustices. Lack of representation is particularly salient given that drugs may have different effects on different populations, and early access to experimental drugs could extend life spans or improve quality of life.

**Healthy Economy**

“There was already a vulnerability in [low-paying] jobs, a questionable amount of job security in the jobs people of color had access to. When there was this much downward pressure on the economy, those were the first to go.

Marcy Bowers, Executive Director of the Statewide Poverty Action Network [source]

The COVID-19 health crisis has precipitated a deep economic recession across the country and in King County. The Bureau of Economic Analysis forecasts the worst national economic decline since the Great Depression. In Q2 the economy is forecasted to contract by 11%, (in contrast, the largest quarterly drop in GDP during the 2008 recession was 8.4%), and by the end of the year U.S. GDP is projected to drop 6.1%. As one of the first places to lock down businesses in the country, the economic impact has been particularly felt in King County. Taxable retail spending in King County is projected to drop 22% in 2020 relative to 2019, significantly lower than 6.5% projected decline in retail spending nationally.

The impact of the crisis on the private sector has been far reaching. More than 4,500 businesses in Seattle have closed down temporarily or permanently, the majority of which are small businesses that have limited options for remote work. Additionally, independent contractors that form part of the gig economy have also been particularly impacted by the drop in commercial activity.

While initial unemployment claims are beginning to trend downward, cumulatively they amount to 381,500 since March 1, representing 26% of King County’s labor force (roughly similar to the statistic at the national level).

This reduction in private sector activity has direct implications for nonprofits and government sectors – some of which are only just starting to be seen. Social distancing guidelines have eliminated many fee-for-service revenue channels, while broader economic downturn may significantly depress philanthropic funding. Further, in the public sector, decreased economic activity will reduce the taxable economic base. The City of Seattle may lose between $210 million and $300 million in tax revenues in 2020, likely requiring deep service cuts and additional job cuts (local government accounts for 12% of the labor force).

---

15 Hispanic/Latinx adults in King County are least likely of all groups to have healthcare coverage, with an uninsured rate nearly three times the county average. Black and Hispanic/Latinx residents were most likely to report having unmet medical needs due to cost
16 If the projection is accurate, 6.1% would be the second highest GDP decline since 1932, which saw a drop of 13%
17 320,000 workers or 9% of Washington State’s workforce rely on contract work as their primary source of income
Focus populations have borne the brunt of the economic crisis. Racial minorities overall represent 20% of the labor force but 25% of the newly unemployed. Additionally, these stark figures likely undercount the full toll as undocumented workers who generally do not have access to government benefits such as unemployment, as well as workers who rely on the informal economy are not captured in these figures. While COVID-19 impact data on minority-owned businesses is still limited, between February and April there was a 41% nationwide decrease of active Black business owners, compared to a 22% decrease of active business owners overall. The closure of casinos run by tribal governments, which employ more than 30,000 people in Washington and are a primary source of revenue for Native Americans ($2 billion a year statewide), provide another example of the economic repercussions on focus populations.

In addition to the barriers highlighted in the Health and Household Economic Stability sections (including lack of access to basic benefits such as insurance, childcare, paid leave), BIPOC communities have been particularly impacted by the COVID-19 economic crisis for three primary reasons (1) overrepresentation in vulnerable jobs, (2) inequitable hiring and firing practices, and (3) barriers to receiving small business aid.

(1) **Overrepresentation in vulnerable jobs:** Vulnerable jobs in the current context are those that do not allow for remote work options and are thus most likely to be disrupted given shelter in place ordinances. Industries in which these jobs tend to be concentrated include accommodation and food services; arts, entertainment, and recreation; other services (except public administration); construction; retail trade; and manufacturing. People of color are overrepresented in these industries, and this overrepresentation is tied closely to differential rates of educational attainment by race. Given educational inequity, minority students earn bachelor’s degrees at rates lower than White students (see education section), limiting their ability to compete for more secure jobs. While 30% of White workers can work from home, only 16.2% of Hispanic/Latinx workers and 19.7% of Black/African American workers have jobs that can be done remotely.

(2) **Inequitable hiring and firing practices:** Discriminatory employment practices, and in particular the last hired, first fired trend, also contribute to the deeper impact on focus populations. Typically, unemployment for people of color rises faster than for White employees during a recession and stays higher for a longer period of time. Evidence from the Great Recession shows that the unemployment rate for Black/African Americans increased 6.4 percentage points while the unemployment rate among Whites only increased by 4.3 percentage points. Once the recovery started, the unemployment rate for Whites started declining earlier than that of Black/African Americans. Job qualifications aside, discrimination and implicit bias are also likely to play a role.

(3) **Barriers to funding:** Businesses owned by people of color have reported challenges accessing the funding earmarked toward small and medium businesses. These businesses are less likely to access capital from banks to help them stay afloat; historically, 60% of loans sought by White small-business owners are approved vs. 50% for Hispanic/Latinx, and 29% for Black/African American. Since many banks prefer to

---

18 The informal economy is defined as remunerative work that is not recognized, regulated, or protected by existing legal or regulatory frameworks

19 Approximately 124,000, out of the 5.7 million employer firms in the U.S., are Black-owned, representing 2.2% of all businesses. Given the 14% share of the Black population relative to the U.S. population as a whole, Black business ownership is vastly underrepresented among business owners. Further, Black-owned employer businesses are smaller, with fewer employees. They also generate lower average revenues, and lower average payroll expenditures [link: https://www.thenewlocalism.com/newsletter/small-business-on-the-eve-of-covid-19/
deal only with existing customers when making loans through federal programs, this may have restricted access to federal aid for businesses owned by people of color.

### Household Economic Stability

“For decades, the income and wealth gaps in the Seattle-King County area have been vast. The pandemic certainly didn’t create these gaps, but it is definitely revealing them. [We] worry that the economic impact of COVID-19 will weigh most heavily on our communities of color—and widen the gaps even further.”

United Way of King County [source]

While King County entered the crisis in a relatively strong and improving economic position with growing average household income of $95,000 in 2018 (a 6% increase from 2017) and below-average poverty rates of 9.3% (vs. a national rate of 12.4%), the economic crisis created by COVID-19 threatens to undo many of the recent household economic gains, particularly for households that were already in a precarious state.

While poverty is a lagging indicator, as unemployment surges (see Healthy Economy section), poverty is forecasted to grow as well. An analysis by Columbia University, suggests that, nationally, poverty could grow from 12.4% to 15-18.9% due to recent crises, assuming an unemployment rate of 10-30%. In King County, the unemployment rate hit 14.9% in April (national rate: 14.7%), suggesting these forecasted national poverty rates may be relevant at a local level.

The increase in poverty is likely to impact people of color differentially, as they are already more likely to be economically vulnerable. For instance, in 2018 the poverty rate for Black/African Americans was over 2.5x that of Whites. The Columbia analysis highlights that the poverty rate for Blacks/African Americans and Hispanics/Latinx could increase significantly (see figure). These disparate impacts are borne out by recent experience. During the Great Recession, the poverty rates for people of color grew more than that for Whites.20

King County is already seeing early signals of inequitable economic impact. King County 2-1-1 calls,21 which provide connections to health and human services, have increased 50% since the COVID-19 crisis. While African American/Black and Hispanic/Latinx constituents represent 17% of the King County population they made up 64% of callers seeking supportive services.

---

20 During the Great Recession, between 2007 and 2010, the poverty rate at the national level increased by 3.7 percentage points for Black non-Hispanics (from 19.6 to 23.3 percent), 4.5 points for Hispanics (from 17.9 to 22.4 percent), and only 2.2 percentage points for White non-Hispanics (from 7.7 to 9.9 percent)

21 2-1-1 connects people to the help they need by providing the most comprehensive information on health and human services in King County
Differential effects on Household Economic Stability are a result of existing income inequalities and racial wealth gaps that combined provide limited financial cushion for households to manage through times of crisis, worsened by difficulty accessing the supports needed to weather the current challenges.

(1) **Income inequality:** Adults in low-wage occupations (e.g., retail, food preparation) struggle to make a living in high-cost King County, and these adults are disproportionately from focus communities. This is the case even when employed at both the County and State level. In fact, when COVID-19 hit, over 670,000 households in Washington were already one emergency away from financial ruin – the highest level in ten years. Given educational inequities and employment discrimination, low-income jobs are disproportionately held by people of color. In King County, a family of four requires combined income of almost $35 per hour to exceed the low income threshold, but many of the roles held by people of color pay far less (e.g., retail pays a median wage of $15.37, while food preparation pays $12.95). As a result, African American/Black and Hispanic/Latinx workers are 3-4x as likely as Whites to be among the region’s working poor.

(2) **Racial wealth gap:** Discrimination in access to wealth-building opportunities have resulted in White households in King County having a median household net worth of $456,000, against a net worth of $90,000 for Hispanic/Latinx and $23,000 for African American/Blacks. This is an even starker gap than nationally, where the net worth of a White household is nearly ten times greater than that of an African American/Black household ($171,000 vs. $17,150). People of color have long been systemically inhibited from building wealth and discriminated against and exploited in the labor market through legalized segregation, redlining, labor market and housing discrimination, predatory lending, and mass incarceration (see housing/homelessness and criminal justice sections). Overall, households that have built a measure of wealth experience less economic stress. As a result, families led by people of color are less likely to be able to save for the potential rainy days. In fact, only 23% of lower-income households have reserves for three months compared to 48% of middle-income households and 75% of upper-income households.

**Education**

“At Garfield, our racial, cultural, linguistic, and socioeconomic diversity is the perfect Petri dish to measure this new crisis: guaranteeing all students access to technology. While the wealthy and the homeless share the same school building in ‘normal’ times, COVID-19 has ripped down the wizard’s curtain and revealed the socioeconomic hardships many students struggle to overcome outside of school.”

Adam Gish, Language Arts Teacher at Garfield High School in Seattle [source]

Education is a critical component for a thriving region, often touted as a key lever to support people in achieving economic mobility and escaping poverty. The region has been seeing steady educational gains, exemplified by Seattle’s rise in high school graduation rates (82% in 2017, up 11% from the 2013 rate). But these gains have not been experienced equally across groups – Hispanic/Latinx, Pacific Islander, and Native American students particularly lag behind their peers.

However, the economic and social consequences of COVID-19 are significantly disrupting the region’s (and the nation’s) education and other youth-focused systems, from early childhood to K-12 to postsecondary. As a result of COVID-19, the majority of child care centers and all K-12 and postsecondary institutions have been closed, with schools closing in early March and nearly half of all childcare centers reported closed as of June 15. Additionally, COVID-19’s economic consequences are causing significant uncertainty about institutions surviving and reopening post-crisis.

---

22 These households are referred to as ALICE (Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed)
23 The working poor are people who spent at least 27 weeks in the labor force but whose income still falls below the official poverty level
These closures have strongly impacted focus communities.

- **Early childhood**: Given that people of color disproportionately make up the essential workforce, and are thus less likely to work from home, the lack of childcare availability across the King County is likely creating an extra burden on communities of color. On the employer side, women of color are more likely than White women to own or staff child care centers—which places their households’ stability at risk as child-care services are restricted.
- **K-12**: Schools across the Puget Sound area, like the rest of the country, are being disrupted and transitioning to online learning. However, the use of alternative, remote teaching leaves behind many students. For example, Tacoma public schools were unable to engage 20% of its students by late May. Research based on learning loss from out-of-school time during summer indicates that, while all students will lose some learning gains as a result of this, students of color are likely to experience greater learning loss compared to their peers.
- **Postsecondary education**: Local colleges and universities are expecting significant cuts from two major sources of revenue: both public funding and tuition (as a result of expected declines in enrollment). Colleges and universities are projecting up to a 20% decline in fall freshman enrollment. Students of color are particularly likely not to attend, with national surveys indicating that 41% of high school seniors of color saying they might not attend college in the fall (compared to 24% of their White peers). Further, as overall higher education funding declines, this may impact financial aid availability, which will disproportionately impact students of color.

These COVID-19 related challenges to child-care and education build on existing systemic failures and gaps, including (1) local funding disparities, (2) challenging at-home learning environments and (3) inequitable COVID-19 relief.

1. **Inequities in local funding**: Washington state and local governments are expected to cut budgets as the recession’s consequences become even direr. This is likely to yield a disparate impact on schools serving communities of color, given existing disparities in local funding flows. Reliance on local funding for school supports means that low-income communities of color have operated with less resources than their peers, despite similar levels of state funding. Further, many wealthy communities rely on PTAs to fundraise and supplement what their schools receive from public sources. However, research has shown that Black and brown communities are less likely to have this fundraising cushion, exemplified by the fact that 9 of the 10 schools with the highest percentage of African American/Black students have almost no PTA funding.

2. **Challenging at-home learning environments**: As the education system turns to digital solutions, it is becoming increasingly apparent that students of color in particular lack the necessary home environments to enable them to participate effectively via a remote format. First, students of color and low-income students are particularly likely to lack the internet access and technology hardware at home to engage with online learning. Additionally, families of color are experiencing higher death rates, more layoffs, and more participation in frontline essential work, meaning parents may not have the capacity to effectively support their children who are now learning at home.

3. **Inequitable COVID-19 relief**: Federal, state, and local governments have developed sizable relief packages in order to respond to immediate needs generated by COVID-19. However, these relief packages’ limitations fail to address deep inequities that are arising. A coalition of childcare experts advocated for a $50 billion bailout required for the childcare system to survive the crisis and reopen responsibly (e.g., with masks, smaller class sizes), which dwarfs the $10.5 billion targeted toward childcare. As a result, the childcare industry is anticipating many closures, which is likely to yield a particularly negative impact on the many women of color who own and staff these centers. Further, the CARES Act currently excludes undocumented immigrants and their children from accessing its benefits, which – among other consequences – is disrupting many families’ abilities to set up their children for at-home learning environments.

---

24 American Immigration Council estimates that Washington state includes ~240K undocumented immigrants, making up 23% of the overall immigrant population and 3 percent of the total state population in 2016.
Resilient Environment

Food Security

“We’ve got a lot of kids who are homeless and kids who get their only meals here [David T. Denny International Middle School]...I’ve been through earthquakes, fires, meningococcal scares — I’ve never seen anything like this.”

Doree Fazio-Young, manager of the school’s kitchen, in response to providing lunches despite school closures [source].

Despite King County’s rapid growth over the past several years, 10% of the population struggles with consistently providing affordable, nutritious food for themselves and their families.25 Younger and older residents are particularly at risk of hunger, and often rely on institutions like schools and food banks for nutritious meals.26

The COVID-19 health and economic crises have already significantly increased rates of food insecurity/hunger across the country.27 Nationally, food banks and other food assistance programs have been overwhelmed by new clients, primarily due to the sudden and drastic loss of employment that is pushing many people into poverty and reducing their ability to afford nutritious food.28 Price increases on core staples due to strained supply chains, as well as food hoarding by families that can afford it, have had a disproportionate impact on low-income families as well as food banks that rely heavily on donations from food stores. Public schools moved quickly to establish meal distribution sites to provide meals to any student, not just those that qualify for free and reduced lunches. However, school districts faced challenges related to steady supply of food as well as food service workers falling ill. Similarly, food banks have reported increased demand, but a drastic decrease in available supply and volunteers, all factors exacerbating accessibility to food.

Across King County, 112,810 households (approximately 12.5% of all households) received Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits in May 2020, representing a 12.8% increase from May 2019. While we do not yet have disaggregated data on which households are increasingly food insecure due to COVID-19, focus populations are likely to be disproportionately

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Race/Ethnicity</th>
<th>Food Insecurity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black/African America</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Native American or Alaska Native</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multiple Races</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic/Latinx</td>
<td>31%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Data Source: King County Hospitals for a Healthier Community, 2013

25 The USDA defines food insecurity as, “a lack of consistent access to enough food for an active, healthy life.”
26 By 2016, participation in food assistance programs had not returned to pre-recession levels and was increasing for older adults, especially in the South Region
27 Food banks nationally are seeing a 40% increase in clients
28 Feeding America analyzed projected changes to poverty and unemployment to estimate that Americans experiencing food security will climb from 37.2 million to more than 54 million
impacted, as households and children in King County that were already food insecure are overwhelmingly people of color. In particular, Hispanic/Latinx populations experience food insecurity at higher rates than other populations, and lower rates of enrollment in government nutrition programs. Only one half of eligible Hispanic/Latinx households participate in the program. One deterrent to enrollment in public benefit programs is the misconception that mixed immigration status within the household makes the whole household ineligible.

Drivers of food insecurity are very closely tied to the drivers articulated in the Healthy Economy and Household Stability sections. In addition, food insecurity is also caused by food deserts/swamps and lack of access to culturally relevant foods:

(1) **Food deserts and swamps**: Lower-income neighborhoods with a higher percentage of Black/African American or Hispanic/Latinx populations do not have large food stores that have a breadth of healthy food options. In the Seattle area, the most affordable healthy food options are in warehouses/superstores, which are located outside of low-income neighborhoods. During the pandemic, taking public transportation to a more distant grocery store with healthier options presents too much risk. People in low-income neighborhoods rely on smaller food stores, which do not provide the same breadth of healthy foods. The higher price points of healthier foods skews low-income families toward unhealthy food, such as fast food. People of color are more likely to live in “food swamps,” or areas inundated with fast food and less healthy food options. In the Seattle area, specifically, clients of food banks expressed the desire for consistent access to quality food such as fresh produce and proteins.

(2) **Culturally appropriate food**: Proximity to larger grocery stores alone will not close the healthy eating gap. Education and nutrition knowledge predict preferences to healthy foods, but closing the healthy eating gap between groups of different races/ethnicities and socioeconomic positions will require culturally sensitive interventions tailored to specific groups. As mentioned, many adults who are food insecure rely on food banks, which often lack culturally relevant foods. Food banks rely heavily on food donations, making it difficult to provide foods that are nutritionally dense and culturally relevant to their clients.

### Affordable Housing and Homelessness

"Seattle's homelessness crisis has been years in the making, and its roots run deep, touching racial inequity, economic disparities, mental health treatment, rising housing costs, mental health, addiction, and so much more. We have a responsibility to be honest that this crisis won't go away overnight. Lasting, meaningful progress will take years. But we still must act - and are acting - to improve life in Seattle."

Mayor Jenny Durkan [source]

Dramatic population growth in the King County area has outpaced housing supply, creating an affordable housing crisis and contributing to a sharp increase in homelessness. King County currently holds the third largest homeless population in the country, and over one third of low-income renters are severely cost-burdened, placing them at significant risk of homelessness given any financial shock. Due to eviction protections currently in place, we do not yet have concrete data on the COVID-19 impact on housing and homelessness. However, COVID-19-related economic shocks and other stresses (e.g., increase in domestic violence) are expected to worsen the housing and homelessness crisis. Initial models expect homelessness to increase by 40-45% this year across the nation. Locally,

---

29 In 2018, 17,535 Seattle Public School (K-12) students were eligible for free and reduced lunch, a proxy for socioeconomic position. Although the majority of public school students are White, students of color represented 69% of students eligible for free and reduced lunch.

30 Severely cost-burdened households are those that spend 50% or more of their income on housing.
a 40% increase in people experiencing homelessness would mean approximately 5,000 additional people. Early signals show housing security is a concern in King County. In March, as the volume of calls to King County’s 2-1-1 information and referral line more than doubled, housing-related assistance was the most common need. Moreover, initial studies have shown an increase in the share of renters who are cost-burdened as a result of recent unemployment.

Homelessness is connected to a range of negative outcomes, particularly higher rates of illness and lower life expectancy compared to the general US population. Within the context of the current COVID health crisis, lack of safe housing is particularly risky. Since mandatory shelter in place orders went into effect, many shelters have been overcrowded, making it difficult to safely socially distance. As of April 20, there were 112 confirmed cases among people living or working in homeless services sites; two weeks prior there were just 27 confirmed cases, demonstrating how fast the virus can spread under those conditions (even recognizing under-reporting given limited testing).

Focus populations are likely to be particularly impacted. Before the crisis even began, people of color were overrepresented among households that are severely cost-burdened as well as among people experiencing homelessness. Furthermore, the number of people within focus communities that are experiencing homelessness, particularly immigrants and American Indians, is likely underestimated. There is also over-representation in housing-compromised situations. American Indians, for example, are more likely to live in overcrowded, intergenerational homes, masking the true share without suitable housing.

On the spectrum of housing security, focus communities are more likely to experience more severe types of housing insecurity. Individuals identifying as multiracial, American Indian/Alaska Native, and transgender or with a gender other than male or female reported the highest rates of being unsheltered. Focus populations, particularly American Indians and Black/African Americans, disproportionately represented the number of people experiencing chronic homelessness.

The drivers of housing inequity are complex and deeply intertwined with economic barriers highlighted in the Healthy Economy and Household Stability sections. Four factors in particular play the most direct role in creating the housing and homelessness crises for focus communities: (1) lower rates of home ownership, (2) higher housing cost burden, and (3) limited community/culturally relevant supports.

(1) **Low levels of home ownership:** Due to a long history of economic and housing inequities, focus populations are less likely than White-led or Asian-led households in King County to own their homes. BIPOC communities continue to face inequitable access to home financing, despite policies that explicitly outlaw discriminatory practices. For example, among applications for mortgages for primary residences in King County, Black/African American households are more than twice as likely to be denied a loan as White households. As a result, in King County, while 62% of White-led households own their own homes, less than 40% of households led by people of color do. Home ownership typically generates wealth and provides extra security during crisis. Renters are easier to evict than home owners with mortgages, and recent federal moratoriums do not cover renters or homeowners with mortgage loans not backed by the government, placing families from focus communities at greater risk.

(2) **High rental cost burden:** Largely due to the influx of giant technology companies, King County has experienced rapid population growth over the past several years. The housing supply has not kept up with demand for a variety of reasons, including stringent zoning laws that limit the development of multi-family housing units. As a result, rent has been rising faster than income. People of color have been disproportionately impacted by rising rents, as they are overrepresented among low-wage jobs. Over the past ten years, King County has lost over 40% of affordable housing units. The resulting increase in housing cost burden reduces families’ ability to create a financial safety net, putting them at an even higher risk of housing instability if current unemployment patterns continue.
Limited community/cultural relevant supports: Although Hispanic/Latinx households are more likely to be cost-burdened, they are underrepresented in households who reside in publicly supported housing. Immigrant households continue to face language barriers, as rental listings and voucher applications are typically only offered in English. Despite 2018 legislation outlawing housing discrimination based on income, members of focus populations who secure Section 8 rental subsidies continue to face illegal discrimination from landlords. When local rent moratoriums expire on August 1, renters must work with landlords to set up repayment plans. Lacking bargaining power and the tools to effectively communicate with one’s landlord, this may be especially challenging for some. Finally, systems in place to support the refugee community are likely not robust enough to ensure near-term and long-term success in the community. Refugees receive eight months of temporary cash assistance upon arrival, but that has been reported as not enough time to find stable employment and obtain affordable housing.

Climate

“There is a glimmer of hope. For if COVID-19 is a precautionary tale, it is also a crash course in the possible.”

Maria Mendiluce, Managing Director, Natural Capital WeMean Business Coalition [source]

Shelter-in-place regulations worldwide have led to a significant decrease in greenhouse gas emissions. The U.S. has seen an estimated 32% drop in emissions since the pandemic started, with a reduction in car traffic a significant part of this decline.\footnote{Nationwide, about 36\% of greenhouse gas emissions come from transportation and other mobile sources} For example, in June, local highway traffic was 40\% lower in King County than the previous June.

However, experts predict that these environmental benefits are likely to be short-lived. As shelter-in-place ordinances are lifted and people begin to return to their normal schedules, car traffic is expected to return. COVID-19 health risks might further entrench Seattle’s car culture (Seattle has more cars per capita than Los Angeles) given fears of potential infection through shared public transit.

Low income and focus populations are particularly vulnerable to climate change and other environmental concerns. Neighborhoods whose residents are low-income or primarily people of color tend to be located close to significant industrial and transportation emission sources, contributing to a higher burden of chronic diseases, such as asthma. Further, given residential segregation patterns and policies, focus communities are more likely to live in areas that are at risk of flooding during extreme weather events correlated with climate change, and are so densely populated that evacuations are more challenging. Any potential increase in greenhouse emissions as the economy restarts is thus particularly worrisome for focus communities.

Public Transit

“As our region feels the strain of rapid growth, our transportation system must evolve into one that is truly multi-modal and works for everyone. This means a system that puts people first with a reliable and frequent transit system that provides easy, safe and affordable options, [...] better serves underserved communities, and makes walking, biking, and other local transportation modes safe and accessible to all.”

King County Council Vice Chair Claudia Balducci [source]
Fears of COVID-19 infection from public transit, has already significantly depressed ridership. Since the start of the crisis, rideship on King County Metro buses is down about 73%, while rideship on Sound Transit’s light rail line has shrunk an estimated 70%.

A long term shift away from public transit toward private cars creates particularly negative effects for focus communities. Public transit is a critical lifeline for many communities of color who often have to leave their local communities to access work and key services. As these public transit systems struggle financially due to decreased ridership and reduced public revenue, it is uncertain whether they will be able to maintain a reliable level of service for people who depend on public transportation. In fact, Seattle Metro has announced that in September 2020, it will restore service to only about 85% of pre-COVID-19 levels, and is preparing for further reductions over the next two years. In addition, capital spending, which could help extend transportation options to “transit deserts,” will be reduced by 30-40%, further constraining mobility for people of color.

Challenges for non-profit sector, and specifically organizations led by people of color

In addition to the direct impacts on focus populations, the recent crises have deeply damaged an already overwhelmed non-profit sector, which many in the community rely on. As discussed, the crisis has created a new set of acute needs for non-profits to address, placing strain on largely under-funded organizations. At the same time, these crises have also decimated revenue streams. Social distancing guidelines have largely eliminated fee-for-service revenue for organizations relying on in-person program delivery as well as in person fundraising events that provide revenue resources. Since philanthropic funding has historically been closely tied to overall economic growth, philanthropic giving may decline considerably in response to the economic crisis, placing the sustainability of many non-profits in question. While this has been the case for nonprofits across the sector, organizations led by and serving communities of color have been hit even harder.

Non-profits led by people of color, which are frequently those that provide critical services and employment in communities of color, are at greater risk of closure due to this crisis. Research on racial equity in philanthropy indicates that leaders of color face substantial barriers to capital. For example, among the highest quality applicants to Echoing Green’s fellowship programs, the revenues of Black-led organizations are 24 percent smaller than the revenues of their White-led counterparts. The unrestricted net assets of Black-led organizations are 76 percent smaller than White-led counterparts, a particularly stark disparity, as unrestricted funding often represents a proxy for trust. Other studies have shown that Black-led organizations, which generally have fewer cash reserves than White-led organizations, are also more dependent on government grants indicating more vulnerability to recessions. These funding disparities are the result of multiple “barriers to capital” across all stages of the fundraising process, including getting connected to funders, building relationships and rapport, securing financial support, and sustaining relationships over time. These problems continue to persist despite greater engagement with diversity, equity, and inclusion work, highlighting the need for more investment, capacity building, and unrestricted support for POC-led non-profits.

---

32 Sound Transit will receive $166 million in federal funds, which represents about 45% of the agency's annual operating budget, and Metro will receive about $244 million in federal aid, shy of its projected losses of $185 million in sales-tax revenue and $80 million in farebox revenue this year.

33 A transit desert is an urban area full of transit-dependent people (usually city residents who are low-income, elderly, disabled, or all of the above) but lacking sufficient transit service.
Next Steps

The seven community-elevated priority areas (see community prioritization section) that this document informed will be the basis of a set of “impact ready” investment strategies to put capital to work immediately. Given the breadth and depth of the problems surfaced, we expect these investment strategies will capture a range of different approaches (e.g., direct operating support, endowments, capacity building support) and organization types (e.g., small grassroots organizations, larger non-profits with broader distribution channels). To source these ideas we will be connecting with issue experts and community members including representatives of local organizations and national thought leaders.

Finally, it is important to remember that this work is envisioned as the first phase of a broader effort to fundamentally reimagine systems and structures to allow every resident of our region to thrive.
Appendix 1: Principles

As we work together and engage with community, we are committed to a set of key principles.

- **Be bold.** This work may bring discomfort, and we will lean into that discomfort. Business as usual and incremental change are not enough to tackle the enormity of the challenges at hand. We have the opportunity and need to reimagine how to deliver social impact, which will require reprioritizing and reinventing.

- **Center equity and justice.** Given the historical and structural nature of the inequities we seek to eradicate, racial and economic justice must be at the center of efforts to achieve significant social impact. Equity and justice will be infused throughout this work—from how we work together internally to our external programs and partnerships—recognizing that everyone benefits when we focus on solutions for those experiencing the greatest inequities. The need to focus on equity is heightened given the deeply inequitable impact of COVID-19.

- **Focus on community-led solutions and perspectives.** Our north star will be the needs expressed by community. We will achieve transformational change when solutions are led by those who are most impacted by what we aim to change. Communities have the knowledge, insights, and experience to develop effective solutions that benefit those on the margins and those in the center.

- **Innovate by building.** Needed solutions already exist within communities that are most impacted by inequities as well as in the lessons of history and best practices from peer foundations. The innovation we seek involves building upon existing innovations.

- **Unleash philanthropy.** Develop best-in-class recommendations that provide a model for other communities and build confidence in greater philanthropic giving.

- **Work in partnership.** Addressing this crisis requires partnership across sectors—and many of those partnerships have already begun. When assessing community need, we must understand where the public and private sectors are investing so that we can accelerate and influence their work and fill gaps.

- **Act for the collective community.** The current crisis is having disparate impact across organizations, but almost all have been hit hard and can benefit from support. Self-advocacy is natural—we are all most familiar with our own work and intentions. To change the status quo and work toward a new, more equitable future, all collaborators should bring the hard-won perspective of their individual experiences and then work together to craft solutions that benefit the collective community, specifically our focus populations.
Appendix 2: Preliminary Community Advisory Group feedback

The Community Advisory Group shared the following initial input and considerations to inform prioritization and development of community investments.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Priority</th>
<th>Guidance from Community Advisory Group</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Affordable housing*</td>
<td>• <em>Specific effort: Policy advocacy regarding low-income housing</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Civic participation | • *Specific needs: More BIPOC in electoral politics; greater language supports and access*  
• *Potential interventions: BIPOC advocacy, mobilization, and leadership development; collective advocacy efforts*  
• *Bright spots: Muslim Community and Neighborhood Association* |
| Criminal justice | • *Potential interventions: Dropout prevention efforts, juvenile justice reform, defunding the police, police system reform, community safety efforts, and restorative justice programs*  
• *Bright spots: Young Warriors Program; Community Passageways; Glover Empower Mentoring* |
| Education: early childhood, K-12, and postsecondary | • *Specific efforts: Bolstering access to online education, investment in BIPOC-led organizations and parent advocacy/engagement, addressing the racial achievement gap*  
• *Emphasis on the need to include youth with disabilities*  
• *Bright spots: Community Parent Resource Center Program; Education with Purpose Foundation for Pacific Islanders; El Centro del Raza José Martí Child Development Center; CISC-Seattle* |
| Food security | • *Potential efforts: Setting up free pantries in ethnic grocery stores, advocacy to reallocate funding to BIPOC-led food assistance hubs, advocacy for farm land accessibility for BIPOC* |
| Health: physical and mental | • *Potential interventions: Access and awareness for free COVID testing; policy and practice efforts to better prepare the mental health system to support people with developmental and intellectual disabilities*  
• *Emphasis on the need for culturally nuanced mental health support in BIPOC communities*  
• *Bright spots: Asian Counseling and Referral Service; Neighborcare; Youth Eastside services* |
| Homelessness* | • Emphasis on policy advocacy required to yield progress on low-income housing |
| Poverty | • *Specific interventions: strengthen family resilience (e.g., financial planning), job training and apprenticeship programs, and supported employment services for people with disabilities*  
• *Bright spots: The Maternal Coalition; Open Doors for Multicultural Families* |
<p>| Supporting BIPOC-led nonprofits | • <em>Potential investments: Capacity building through shared workspaces; developing a multicultural community center; supporting BIPOC nonprofit management and leadership pipelines; increasing wages and salaries for nonprofit employees</em> |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ways for philanthropy to engage</th>
<th>Unemployment and small business support</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Providing non-restricted general operating support; establishing multi-year participatory grantmaking commitments; replacing Euro-centric evaluation methods with community metrics for impact</td>
<td>• Potential efforts: Small business training on safe, socially distant operations; protection from vandalism; reskilling opportunities for unemployed people; case management for services for unemployed people with limited English proficiency in service of accessing unemployment benefits; pipeline programs to develop local nonprofit workforce; targeted supports for undocumented individuals and their families</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bright spots: Racial Equity Coalition</td>
<td>• Bright spots: Communities Rise; White Center Community Development Association</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Homelessness and affordable housing have since been merged into one priority*
Appendix 3: Key indicators

These indicators are tracked by the Seattle Foundation through the framework for shared prosperity.

**Indicators disaggregated by race**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicator</th>
<th>Overall outcome</th>
<th>POC outcome</th>
<th>White outcome</th>
<th>Geographic coverage</th>
<th>Data year</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Contacted public official</strong></td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>Seattle-Tacoma-Bellevue MSA</td>
<td>2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(% of population surveyed by National Conference on Citizenship that contacted or visited public official)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Voter participation rate</strong></td>
<td>59%</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>63%</td>
<td>Seattle-Tacoma-Bellevue MSA</td>
<td>2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(% of population surveyed by National Conference on Citizenship that voted in local elections sometimes or always)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Change in incarceration rate</strong></td>
<td>1.8%</td>
<td>3.7%</td>
<td>0.2%</td>
<td>King County</td>
<td>2018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(YoY change in King County adult and juvenile detention population)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Postsecondary completion rate</strong></td>
<td>77.60%</td>
<td>66.2%</td>
<td>81.9%</td>
<td>King County</td>
<td>2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(% of population 25+ with some college or associate's degree or higher)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Median household income</strong></td>
<td>$89,675</td>
<td>$49,666</td>
<td>$96,054</td>
<td>King County</td>
<td>2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Homeownership rate</strong></td>
<td>56.6%</td>
<td>27.2%</td>
<td>61.2%</td>
<td>King County</td>
<td>2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(YOY change in percent of people in King County that own a home)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Cost-burdened households</strong></td>
<td>38.0%</td>
<td>56.0%</td>
<td>35.2%</td>
<td>King County</td>
<td>2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(% of renters and owners with housing costs greater than 30% of household income)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Neighbor participation rate</strong></td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>Seattle-Tacoma-Bellevue MSA</td>
<td>2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(% of population surveyed by National Conference on Citizenship that did something positive for neighborhood or the community)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Group participation rate</strong></td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>Seattle-Tacoma-Bellevue MSA</td>
<td>2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(% of population surveyed by National Conference on Citizenship that participates in at least one group)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong># of people moving to King County</strong></td>
<td>164,246</td>
<td>70,088</td>
<td>94,158</td>
<td>King County</td>
<td>2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(population that moved to King County from another county, state, or country)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>On-time high school graduation rate</strong></td>
<td>80.5%</td>
<td>76.1%</td>
<td>85.6%</td>
<td>King County</td>
<td>2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(% of students who start 9th grade and graduate 4 years later)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Public transportation accessibility</strong></td>
<td>64%</td>
<td>65%</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>King County</td>
<td>2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(% of population within a quarter mile walk of a bus stop)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adults with health concerns</td>
<td>13.2%</td>
<td>14.4%</td>
<td>12.9%</td>
<td>King County</td>
<td>2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------------------</td>
<td>-------</td>
<td>-------</td>
<td>------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
<td>------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poor physical health</td>
<td>10.4%</td>
<td>9.0%</td>
<td>10.7%</td>
<td>Seattle-Bellevue- Everett, WA, Metropolitan Division</td>
<td>2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poor mental health</td>
<td>10.0%</td>
<td>11.0%</td>
<td>9.9%</td>
<td>Seattle-Bellevue- Everett, WA, Metropolitan Division</td>
<td>2017</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Non-disaggregated indicators**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicator</th>
<th>Outcome</th>
<th>Geographic Coverage</th>
<th>Data Year</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jobs that pay a family-sustaining wage</td>
<td>70.4%</td>
<td>Seattle-Tacoma-Bellevue MSA</td>
<td>2018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Change in loans to businesses &lt;$1M in revenue</td>
<td>-11.1%</td>
<td>Seattle- Everett-Bellevue</td>
<td>2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Change in employment</td>
<td>2.50%</td>
<td>King County</td>
<td>2018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food insecurity rate</td>
<td>11.5%</td>
<td>King County</td>
<td>2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Change in CO2 emissions</td>
<td>6.6%</td>
<td>State</td>
<td>2016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Change in unhealthy air quality days</td>
<td>-22%</td>
<td>King County</td>
<td>2018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Change in weekday traffic delay</td>
<td>-1.0%</td>
<td>King + Snohomish counties</td>
<td>2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Change in average rental price</td>
<td>-7.0%</td>
<td>Seattle</td>
<td>2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Change in small business employment</td>
<td>-1.85%</td>
<td>Seattle</td>
<td>2019</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| **New private sector establishments**  
(survival of private sector establishments after one year) | 80.90% | State | 2018 |
|--------------------------------------------------------|--------|-------|------|
| **Change in GDP growth**  
(Gross Domestic Product (GDP) is in millions of current dollars (not adjusted for inflation) for all industries) | 6.60%  | Seattle-Tacoma-Bellevue MSA | 2017 |
Appendix 4: Sources

Pre-Crisis: Systemic Inequality in Greater King County Area


King County (2019, January 9). King County Department of Adult and Juvenile Detention and Alternatives Report. https://www.kingcounty.gov/~media/courts/detention/documents/2018-12-kc-dar-monthly-breakouts.ashx?la=en


Seattle Foundation Civic Commons (2020). Scorecard for Shared Prosperity (internal analysis)


Civic Participation


Criminal Justice

Coalition to Stop Violence Against Native Women. *Missing and murdered Indigenous womxn, girls, and two spirit.*
https://www.csvanw.org/mmiw/


Hiruko, A. (2020, June 15). Coronavirus cases pass 100 at Coyote Ridge prison in eastern Washington. KUOW.

https://crosscut.com/2019/05/report-shows-seattle-police-enforcement-still-disparate-along-racial-lines


Santhanam, L. (2019, August 9). *After Ferguson, black men still face the highest risk of being killed by police.* PBS.

http://westwinded.com/blog/understanding-the-school-to-prison-nexus/


---

**Health**


Healthy Economy


Immigrants Rising. (2020, June 15). Tangible support for undocumented communities during COVID-19. https://docs.google.com/document/d/1PxLuuHo-hwHXftUXUeI52Q1qWUDegN8_i1L4ulIFwzk/edit


Household Economic Stability


Cooper, J. (2020, June 16). COVID-19 hit as record number of ALICE families were priced out of survival. United Ways of the Pacific Northwest.


Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis. (2020, June 14). Unemployment rate in King County, WA. https://fred.stlouisfed.org/series/WAKING5URN
Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis. (2020, June 15). *Estimate of median household income for King County, WA.* https://fred.stlouisfed.org/series/MHIWA53033A052NCEN

Kaiser Family Foundation. (n.d.) *Poverty rate by race/ethnicity 2018.* https://www.kff.org/other/state-indicator/poverty-rate-by-raceethnicity/?currentTimeframe=0&sortModel=%7B%22colId%22:%22Location%22,%22sort%22:%22asc%22%7D

King County. (2017, October 27). *King County economic indicators.* https://www.kingcounty.gov/independent/forecasting/King%20County%20Economic%20Indicators.aspx


**Education**


---

**Food security**


Feeding America. (n.d.). *2018 Overall County Food Insecurity in Washington, King County.* https://map.feedingamerica.org/county/2018/overall/washington/county/king


Housing and Homelessness


King County Regional Affordable Housing Task Force. (2018). *King County Housing Affordability and Housing Cost Burden*. [https://www.kingcounty.gov/~/media/initiatives/affordablehousing/documents/Meetings/rah-posters-FINAL-PRINT.ashx?la=en#:~:text=SEVERE%20COST%20BURDEN%3A%20Families%20and,housing%20are%20considered%20cost%20burdened](https://www.kingcounty.gov/~/media/initiatives/affordablehousing/documents/Meetings/rah-posters-FINAL-PRINT.ashx?la=en#:~:text=SEVERE%20COST%20BURDEN%3A%20Families%20and,housing%20are%20considered%20cost%20burdened)


**Climate**


**Public Transit**


