

**COMMUNITY HEALTH AND EQUITY  
COUNCIL COMMITTEE MEETING  
FEBRUARY 25, 2021 2:00PM  
VIDEOCONFERENCE**

<b>Members Present:</b>	Councilmember Ana Sandoval, Chair, <i>District 7</i> Councilmember Robert Treviño, <i>District 1</i> Councilmember Jada Andrews-Sullivan, <i>District 2</i> Councilmember Rebecca Viagran, <i>District 3</i> Councilmember Shirley Gonzales, <i>District 5</i>
<b>Staff Present:</b>	David McCary, <i>Assistant City Manager</i> ; Douglas Melnick, <i>Director, Office of Sustainability</i> ; Zan Gibbs, <i>Chief Equity Officer, Office of Equity</i> ; Dr. Anita Kurian, <i>Assistant Director, Metro Health Department</i> ; Julia Murphy, <i>AICP Deputy Chief Sustainability Officer</i> ; Kathleen Shields, <i>Public Health Administrator, Community Health Division, Metro Health Department</i> ; Nancy Cano, <i>Office of the City Clerk</i>
<b>Others Present:</b>	Dr. Barbara S. Taylor, <i>Co-Chair, COVID-19 Community Response Coalition, Associate Professor of Infectious Diseases and Associate Dean, UT Health</i>

**Call to order**

Chairwoman Sandoval called the meeting to order.

**Public Comment**

None.

- 1. A briefing providing updates on the COVID-19 Community Response and Equity Coalition (CREC) including the new structure of the Coalition and the emphasis on health equity.** [Anita K. Kurian, MBBS, MPH, DrPH, Assistant Director, Health]

Dr. Barbara Taylor explained that the COVID-19 Community Response and Equity Coalition (CREC) evolved from the formation of the Testing Task Force in March 2020 which generated a Health Transition Team Report (HTT) based on equity as its core guiding principle; thereafter, the COVID-19 Community Response Coalition (CRC) was formed in response to the HTT in May 2020, and the City's Resolution on Racism which was passed in August 2020 influenced the restructuring of the CRC to the current iteration of CREC.

Dr. Taylor reported that health equity meant that the City's policy-making, service delivery, and distribution of resources accounted for the different histories, challenges, and needs of the people served and that equity was achieved when one's identity and socio-economic status cannot predict one's health outcomes. She cited examples of health equity in action that included the addition of targeted free walk-up testing sites on the southside assessed and established in the early days of the COVID-19 Pandemic, targeted areas for vaccine registration informed by the equity index, prioritization of the inclusion of race/ethnicity data in COVID-19 case data, and period reports on racial disparities and COVID-19.

Dr. Taylor reported that the CREC consisted of an Education Workgroup, a Policy and Advocacy Workgroup, and five Advisory Committees: PreK-12 Consultation Group, Contact Tracing, Health Alerts, Testing and Lab Reporting and Indicator Monitoring. She noted that CREC used a peer influencer model to move community action forward in community-driven way.

Kathy Shields provided information on the CREC membership survey. She reported that 85% were Hispanic or Caucasian; 75% were 35-64 years old; 65% were women; 32 of 44 members identified as heterosexual; 95% were fully employed; all members had completed one year of college; and household incomes ranged between \$25,000-over \$200,000. She added that approximately 35% of CREC members had family members that tested positive for COVID-19; 50% had received the vaccine and those who had not yet received it planned to; and less than 5% polled had tested positive for COVID-19.

Ms. Shields provided an update on the CREC Education Workgroup. She stated that a Community Health Worker Summit was held on January 12, 2021 and included a mix of local community health workers from San Antonio and beyond that discussed challenges, successes and methodologies used to address COVID-19 outreach to local communities. She added that other summits would follow. She noted that the Education Workgroup developed a Vaccine FAQ list and a Post-Vaccine FAQ list to address the public's concerns, both of which were posted to the City's COVID-19 website at [www.COVID19.sanantonio.gov](http://www.COVID19.sanantonio.gov). She added that the lists were distributed throughout the City by community health workers.

Ms. Shields provided an update on the Policy & Advocacy Workgroup. She stated that over 35 community partners were convened to identify priority policies that addressed inequitable impacts of the COVID-19 Pandemic, as follows:

- Access to Health Services
- Housing Security
- Food Security
- Social Support
- Economic Security
- Digital Equity
- Safe Spaces for Physical Activity
- Fair Policing and Justice Systems
- Transportation Access

Ms. Shields stated that the CREC Equity Plan of Action was to build a public understanding and a broad base of support for these priorities. She added that tools and resources would be identified to address the root causes of COVID-19 disparities; outreach and strategic messaging would spread the message of the essential social determinants of health; and elected officials, institutional leaders, and champions would be identified to adopt priorities and enact recommendations. She stated that next steps included continual performance evaluations to measure successful efforts. She added that CREC would pivot in a strategic response as the pandemic evolves every few months, and would continue to strategize for sustainability.

Item 3 was addressed at this time.

**3. Update and briefing on the Racism as a Public Health Crisis Resolution, created in collaboration with Metro Health and Council Districts 2 and 7.** [David McCary, Assistant City Manager; Zan Gibbs, MPH, Chief Equity Officer, Office of Equity]

Zan Gibbs reported that City Council passed a Resolution in August 2020 that identified racism as a public health crisis. She stated that the City would address issues of health disparities through an Implementation Plan for FY 2021 and FY 2022 and nine action plans in the Resolution would be co-managed by the Office of Equity and Metro Health. She explained that City Staff would provide bi-annual presentations to update the community about solution-oriented policies and programs implemented by the City to improve racial equity. She added that the City would review policies and procedures to eradicate implicit and explicit racial bias and would promote racially equitable services, programs, and policies in all realms.

Ms. Gibbs stated that Metro Health would engage historically marginalized communities in the development of policy solutions for local issues related to health equity. She added that Metro Health would improve its data systems to address health disparities, would advance health equity, and would support historically marginalized communities.

Ms. Gibbs reported that the City Council and this Committee would advocate for racial justice as a core element of all policies, programs, and procedures. She stated that in support of the Resolution, City Council would increase advocacy to include State and Federal legislative priorities. She added that this Committee would support community-based groups and initiatives that promoted racial equality; would work with the community to educate and find innovative solutions; and would provide additional resources to specific efforts to dismantle racism.

Ms. Gibbs stated that the Neighborhood Housing & Services Department and the Economic Development Department would work to mitigate housing and job displacement from driving further racial and income segregation by developing strategic initiatives and improving City services to strengthen historically marginalized communities in place.

Councilmember Viagran asked how the 100+ CREC members were recruited. Ms. Shields stated that during the early days of the COVID-19 Pandemic, staff reached out to community members with expertise or involvement in COVID-19 testing; and as the Workgroups expanded, more subject matter was added to the Workgroups.

Councilmember Andrews-Sullivan referenced the survey data that cited the main sources of COVID-19 information for CREC members and requested more information about the CREC members that reported "Other" as their source of COVID-19 information. She asked if an equity map was used to designate vaccinate sites. She requested a review of several plans of action: For vaccine distribution within the inner communities of Council Districts 2, 3, and 4; for hiring disparities within City Departments; for housing vouchers, rental assistance, and homelessness; for strategic COVID-19 vaccine public messages; and for equitable access for seniors in the vaccine registration process. Ms. Gibbs reported that the City's workforce diversity was not specifically included in the Resolution so no action plan was listed. She added that the Office of Equity was in collaboration with the Human Resource Department to develop a departmental equity action plan by March 2021. She identified the Neighborhood Housing and Services Department as one of the primary departments that the Office of

Equity was working with to create an action plan in the areas of housing, food distribution, and homelessness. Dr. Kurian stated that the COVID-19 Index map took into account equity scores, COVID-19 morbidity and mortality scores, and census tracts and was used to scout mobile clinic sites. She explained that Metro Health allocated 900 vaccine slots daily for community healthcare workers to enroll residents and 400 slots were reserved for residents that did not have access to the internet. She indicated that this same approach would be used for mobile clinic sites. She stated that the Committee would be updated when a pilot mobile clinic site would be selected. Sean Green added that he would provide the Committee with the documentation that informed the Policy and Advocacy Workgroup in establishing equity priorities.

Councilmember Treviño highlighted the eviction crisis that impacted Black and Brown communities greatly and saddled many with bad credit which made it difficult for such residents to find another place to live while struggling with food insecurities and possible homelessness. He called for proactive plans of action and resources to be applied within an established timeline. Ms. Shields stated that CREC policy priority document did address housing and homeless on longer timelines. Dr. Taylor stated that food and housing insecurity issues were priority issues and other policy priorities such as Medicare expansion had a long timeline for reform or for advocacy. She noted that structural racism had to do with the impact of redlining within the community over decades of time and that the CREC policy priority document had to be multi-focal while focusing on urgent issues first.

Councilmember Viagran encouraged the reporting of any unintended consequences or of any measures that did not work for learning purposes when staff provided its biennium reporting on racial equity improvements.

Chairwoman Sandoval requested that a central repository for information on CREC be maintained on the Metro Health website for the public and the Committee to refer to. Ms. Shields noted that CREC membership lists, distribution lists, and Working Group documentation could be shared on the Metro Health website.

Item 2 was addressed at this time.

**2. A briefing on the implementation of American Cities Climate Challenge (ACCC) Strategies and the 2019 Municipal Building Energy Benchmarking Report and the Cost-Benefit Analysis of Key Climate Ready Strategies Report.** [David McCary, Assistant City Manager; Douglas Melnick, Chief Sustainability Officer]

Douglas Melnick reported that The SA Climate Ready Climate Action and Adaptation Plan (CAAP) was approved by City Council on October 17, 2019 to meet the City's commitments to climate action as outlined in City Council's resolution of support for the Paris Climate Agreement on June 22, 2017. He stated that the CAAP identified 28 community, 13 municipal climate mitigation strategies and 45 adaptation strategies to set the target of net carbon neutrality by 2050. He added that President Biden entered the U.S. back into the Paris Climate Agreement on January 20, 2021. He noted that the City entered into an agreement with the TXC Texas Creative, Ltd. (TC) Agreement for the SA Climate Ready Public Engagement & Communications Initiative to inform the community about the benefits of CAAP activities. He stated that TC would provide recommended improvements to ensure deep and

wide community engagement with stakeholders and residents, as CAAP commitments required significant changes in operations, behavior and support from the community.

Mr. Melnick mentioned last week's unprecedented winter storm event and noted that the CAAP included climate projections of increased flooding, extreme storms, and increased cold weather events through the end of the century. He noted that climate change affected everyone, but vulnerable communities were more greatly impacted and did not have the ability to respond quicker. He stated that a climate equity framework prioritized the communities most burdened by climate change to ensure that those communities would have a central role in the just transformation of systems to diminish the unequal burden of climate impacts.

Mr. Melnick reported that addressing climate change required mitigation actions to reduce or prevent emissions from greenhouse gases and adaptation actions to help reduce the negative effects of climate change. He stated that key mitigation and adaptation strategies would be implemented as follows:

#### Energy

- Procure electricity for municipal operations from renewable sources
- Develop Municipal Energy Policy

#### Transportation

- Publicly-accessible EV charging infrastructure on City property
- Vehicle Fleet Environmental Acquisition Policy update
- EV and solar readiness

#### Adaptation

- Heat vulnerability assessment tool (HVAT)
- Cool pavement pilot projects
- Sandia National Laboratory Grid Resilience Project

Mr. Melnick stated that next steps included quarterly meetings of the Climate Equity Advisory Committee and the Technical & Community Advisory Committee that would meet on March 2, 2021 and March 3, 2021, respectively. He stated that the Committees would discuss the winter storm events that unfolded, implementation strategies for the CAAP, and an engagement strategy for TC to start development communications.

Mr. Melnick highlighted that the CAAP goals supported recovery and resilience to protect residents from detriments to health and well-being associated with a changing climate, to ensure that the City maintained its normal functions in response to external stresses and disruptions, and to mitigate infrastructural losses attributed to climate change.

Councilmember Gonzales noted that previous weather events called for warming stations or cooling stations across the City. She asked when the severity of a weather event would determine the need for a City wide response and the call for a mass center. Mr. Melnick stated that staff noted sites throughout the City that did not lose electricity during the winter storm event for future planning. He added that staff would hold a tabletop exercise that would inform future planning of warming and cooling stations and for outreach to local organizations for emergency resources such as medicine and water.

Councilmember Viagran referenced the reported lowest areas of tree canopy and requested a follow up discussion with Mr. Melnick. She referenced the Prioritization of Vulnerable Residents that was ranked 44 under the Adaptation Strategy and asked for the category to be moved up in rank. She noted that it would be more accurate to refer to cooling or warming centers as Resiliency Hubs, as such amenity centers would be equipped to provide a multitude of resources. She called for all amenity centers to be identified and mapped for planning purposes, and for generators and equipment to be housed in locations that were readily accessible for activation. She requested that future discussions be held on owner-occupied rehabilitation programs and retrofitting programs in the CAAP Adaptation Plan. Mr. Melnick noted that the Adaptation Plan was made up of several sections and that the Prioritization of Vulnerable Residents should have appeared at the top of the list and not the bottom.

Councilmember Andrews-Sullivan noted that over 70,000 homes in Council District 2 were older homes in need of weatherization retrofitting and called for a funding plan that outlined best suitable retrofitting materials and associated costs. She asked what weatherized roofing products were sustainable for older homes. She asked if backup generators were factored into new affordable housing developments for seniors. She asked if first responder facilities, vehicles, and equipment had resilient weatherization gear. Mr. Melnick concurred that a tabletop exercise needed to be conducted with staff and internal and external stakeholders. Assistant City Manager David McCary noted that the Adaptation Plan involved various City Departments that would be included in weatherization readiness updates to the Adaptation Plan. He noted that equity would be embedded in roof weatherization plans for 100-year old homes versus 10-year old homes equipped with more updated structures.

Councilmember Treviño noted that the permitting process at the Development Services Department included an energy checklist but did not account for the black roofs that were on trend that created energy waste and absorbed heat. He requested that staff review ways to incentivize highly reflectant roofs or ban dark roofs and noted that roofing products that did not absorb heat lasted longer. He requested a meeting with City staff to collaborate on plumbing infrastructure and the structural integrity of buildings which were impacted by extreme weather conditions.

Councilmember Andrews-Sullivan stated that a local business had 10,000 gallon capacity tanks that could be utilized in local communities as a backup water supply system in recreation centers and to provide use by homeless individuals as a steady source of water during the summer months.

Chairwoman Sandoval noted that a proposed tabletop exercise for extreme weather events should be aligned with the Mayor's Select Committee on the 2021 Winter Storm Preparedness and Response and requested further discussion.

## **Future Items**

- Permitting Process
- Unified Development Code

## **Adjourn**

There being no further discussion, the meeting was adjourned at 4:10 pm.

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*Ana Sandoval, Chair*

*Respectfully Submitted,*

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*Nancy Cano, Office of the City Clerk*