



National League of Cities: Leadership Training on Racial Equity



LOCAL AND REGIONAL
GOVERNMENT ALLIANCE ON
RACE & EQUITY



★ Agenda ★

March 11, 2017

The objectives of this workshop are to:

- Gain understanding of racial equity concepts
- Build skills at analyzing policies and practices from a racial equity perspective
- Expand leadership skills to advance racial equity in multiple environments

Time	Topic
2:00 – 2:15	Welcome and group introductions
2:15 – 3:15	The importance of government / the importance of leadership
3:15 – 4:15	Normalizing racial equity – affirming a shared understanding and common definitions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scenario, part 1
4:15 – 4:45	Operationalizing racial equity – using a Racial Equity Tool <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scenario, part 2
4:45 – 5:00	Organizing to advance racial equity – building a movement within government to advance racial equity
5:00 – 5:30	Communicating about race change theory <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scenario, part 3
5:30 – 6:00	Leadership strategies and challenges

Drivers of Inequity Scenario¹

Narrator: Recent media reports have highlighted the changing demographics in many neighborhoods. A newly proposed subsidized housing complex has led to tension in one neighborhood. A community meeting is taking place to discuss the new housing and the public safety concerns expressed by some residents.

Andi, from the city is facilitating the conversation, and two city staffers are there to help respond to questions, Laverne who works in planning and zoning and Officer Melton, who is a police officer in the neighborhood. The manager for the new complex, Eduardo, is also in the room. The room is packed, with meeting participants clearly divided, including Patty and Nick who are opposed to the housing and Darlene who has been on the wait list for housing for 8 months and is eager to move in.

Andi: Welcome to tonight’s discussion. I want to start by sharing a few of the results of the recently released “Community Equity Profile: Housing.” As stated in that profile, our vision is that we have an adequate amount of safe and affordable housing for all income groups. The data collected in that profile illustrates that we have work to do, especially since there are big differences based on race – 10% of Whites pay more than 50% of their income on housing, as do 36% of Blacks, and 27% of Asians. There just is not enough affordable housing for people who need it. The city has approved the permits for the new project, and we are excited that this new housing will help to close the gap. We also understand that there have been a lot of concerns expressed about the safety of the neighborhood. We want to talk tonight about how this new project can benefit both the new neighbors and the existing neighbors. Thanks to everyone who has signed up to share your perspectives – we have two hours scheduled and fifty people who would like to speak. That means that you should keep your comments short. Let’s start at the top of the list with Patty.

Patty: I can’t believe the city approved this project. This is in the middle of a single-family neighborhood. Having all these people move into our neighborhood means an increase of crime and more traffic. It just isn’t right. The city has to stop.

Andi: Nick is next.

Nick: I’ve already seen an increase in loitering and you know that those people are dealing drugs. Our children are not safe. If this project gets built, I’m not sure I will even want to keep my children in our local school. It has always been a good school until now. I want to know what the police are going to do.

Andi: Ben is next.

Nick: Wait, I said I want to know what the police are going to do! Can’t Officer Melton respond? He works in this neighborhood and I want to know what he thinks. Officer Melton?

Officer Melton: I used to work at one of the other complexes, and when people missed too many months of rent, I was the one who had to evict them. I hated to do that, but that was what had to be done. We used to have a social services aide who tried to help people get assistance, but when there wasn’t any assistance, I just had to put their stuff out on the street. That’s not why I signed up to be a police officer.

Nick: See, he works for the city, and he doesn’t even like it.

Andi: We need to get back to the list; there are a lot of people who want to speak.

Nick: Sure, in a minute, but we need to know how this project is going to be managed. What are they going to do to keep our neighborhood safe?

¹ Based on an exercise from RaceForward (<https://www.raceforward.org>) and adapted by the Seattle Race and Social Justice Initiative and Government Alliance on Race and Equity.

Eduardo: Safety is our number one concern. We will be doing criminal background checks to make sure that nobody with a record moves into our project. As you can see by the design posters in the back, this will be a pretty project and we want to keep it that way.

Nick: And what about the permit approval, that doesn't seem right. Lavern, what did you have to do with that. Was this some sort of buy-off?

Laverne: No, this is a good project and I can tell you more details.

Darlene: I'm sorry to interrupt, but I didn't know I was going to have to wait two hours to say something. I rushed here after work, and have to pick my kids up at their childcare program and it is about to close. I really need housing. I've been paying two-thirds of my paycheck for rent, and can't even pay other bills some months. I'm trying hard to make it, but just can't when the pay is so low. I have to go now, but I would like to be a part of this neighborhood.

Part 1: What are examples of implicit bias, and individual, institutional and structural racism in the scenario?

Part 2: How could a Racial Equity Tool be used to address racial inequities in this scenario?

Part 3: What would you have to say to Darlene? Nick? Andi? Others?