

[equitypartners2021@gmail.com](mailto:equitypartners2021@gmail.com)

POB 1271, Eureka CA 95502

775-338-1909



equity partners

# Racial Equity Policy Facilitation Services for the Arcata General Plan and Gateway Plan Updates Fall 2022

Prepared by Sharrone Blanck & Meridith Oram  
Owners and Facilitators  
Blanck & Oram equity partners, LLC

## **Recognizing Where We Are**

We acknowledge that the land that many of us are on as we gather virtually is likely unceded territory of the Wiyot peoples.

Arcata, known in the Wiyot language as Goudi'ni, means "over in the woods". As well as being the aboriginal territory of the Wiyot, this region of Northern California is also the traditional, ancestral, and present homeland to several indigenous nations including the Hupa, Karuk, Mattole, Tolowa, Wailaki, and Yurok peoples.

Today we come with respect to the tribes who have been here for millennia and model how to live in a sustainable relationship with the land. We take this opportunity to consider what action steps we can take to support local tribal communities and cultivate our own relationship with the land beyond simply acknowledging it.

*Informed by the work of Dr. Cutcha Risling Baldy, Chair of Native American Studies, Humboldt State University*

**Consider donating to the Wiyot Tribe at <http://www.honortax.org/>**

## **Labor Acknowledgement**

We must acknowledge that much of what we know of this country today, including its culture, economic growth, and development throughout history and across time, has been made possible by the labor of enslaved Africans and their descendants who suffered the horror of the transatlantic trafficking of their people, chattel slavery, and Jim Crow. We must acknowledge the tremors of that violence throughout the generations and the resulting impact that can still be felt and witnessed today. We are indebted to their labor and their sacrifice. We work to center the joy, creativity, accomplishments, resilience, and strength in the Black communities on the international, national, and local levels.

*This has been modified from Dr T J Stewart's Labor Acknowledgement which can be found at <https://www.diverseeducation.com/demographics/african-american/article/15108677/on-labor-acknowledgements-and-honoring-the-sacrifice-of-black-americans>*

**Consider donating to the Black Community in Humboldt at <https://www.inkpeople.org/dreammaker-data/black-humboldt>**

## **Acknowledgement of Participants**

equity partners expresses gratitude and appreciation to the sixteen community members from Arcata that shared ten hours of their time to bring the voices and experiences of a diverse group of residents to the center. Community members reflected multiple identities across race, culture, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, age, ability, and family makeup. Their willingness to share joys and concerns while caring for each other's well being was impressive. We are grateful for their trust.

## Executive Summary

In efforts to gather input from the public to inform the Gateway and General Plans, the City of Arcata contracted with equity partners to create a space to engage with Arcata community members of marginalized identities who have been underrepresented and historically excluded from such processes in the past.

The goal of this project was to amplify the experiences, needs, and desires of a diverse group of community members to inform the priorities and policies of the plans with the understanding that centering marginalized voices and making decisions accordingly improves things for everyone in the community. This input along with input collected by the City of Arcata offers a fuller sense of the whole community's needs.

In eight hours of virtual group meeting time, equity partners facilitated conversations with 16 community members that addressed the areas of culture, employment, health, housing, mobility, recreation, and transportation. The voices of community members of color were prioritized with opportunities for white-identifying community members to share as well. Sessions were not recorded, but a City employee took notes during each session to capture all that was shared. In addition to live sessions, equity partners surveyed the group related to each topic area covered.

Irrespective of the topic discussed, the lack of physical, mental, and emotional safety and the creation of designated places for cultural celebration and community building were identified as the greatest needs. Systems of accountability were also highlighted by participants as essential community needs to prevent discrimination and offer support and recourse when it does occur.

Recommendations to the City include increasing overall safety by improving infrastructure with street lighting, flat sidewalks, and more public bathrooms and showers; prioritizing the community benefits of more housing as well as increasing active and creative transportation options; and outreaching more intentionally to reach more Arcata members about already-existing and new developments in transportation, programs, and facilities.

Where the experiences, needs, and desires identified by community members extend beyond the scope of the General and Gateway plans, we recommend bridging City entities and area organizations to meet community members' needs. Recommendations are made to bridge with grassroots organizations like Cooperation Humboldt, large institutions like, Cal Poly Humboldt and the Area One Agency on Aging, and established local identity-based organizations that support justice and belonging like Black Humboldt and Queer Humboldt.

In addition to gathering input for the Gateway and General plans, the City of Arcata contracted with equity partners to create a replicable framework to support the City's goal of outreach to diverse groups of community members moving forward. equity partners recommend that a system of continuous improvement be integrated into the plans, and that it be explicitly created to amplify the voices of marginalized community members whose input will inform decision making and policy shifts for the betterment of all community members.

## Table of Contents

I.	<b>Acknowledgements</b>	1
II.	<b>Executive Summary</b>	2
III.	<b>Table of Contents</b>	3
IV.	<b>Background/Overview</b>	4
V.	<b>Process</b>	5
VI.	<b>Key Terms</b>	7
VII.	<b>Demographics</b>	10
VIII.	<b>Community Input, Key Observations, and Recommendations</b>	13
	A. General Recommendations	13
	B. Key Observations and Recommendations by Topic	14
	1. Culture	14
	2. Employment	15
	3. Health	16
	4. Housing	17
	5. Recreation	19
	6. Transportation/Mobility	20
IX.	<b>Community Benefits</b>	21
X.	<b>What People Like about Arcata</b>	23
XI.	<b>Next Steps</b>	23
XII.	<b>Limitations of Project</b>	23
XIII.	<b>Framework for Project Design to Gather Community Input</b>	25
XI.	<b>Resources</b>	27
XI.	<b>Appendix A- List of Questions Asked of Participants per Session</b>	29

## **Background/Overview**

The City of Arcata has participated in ongoing work for racial equity and has come to know that centering marginalized voices and making decisions to improve systems and services for folks most systematically disadvantaged improves quality of life for everyone in a community.

Despite attempts to solicit input from a diverse group of community members, City of Arcata planners were less successful than they had intended in gathering comprehensive input to inform the plans. Fortunately, instead of speeding through the process to finalize the plan without more community input, they slowed their process and sought support regarding how to obtain contributions from a more diverse group of Arcata residents.

The City of Arcata contracted with Blanck and Oram Equity Partners LLC to convene a diverse group of community members to share about what they envision Arcata to be in the next ten to twenty years. The goal was to amplify residents' experiences, needs, and desires for Arcata, and to have those directly shape policy and priorities in the General and Gateway plans.

Blanck and Oram Equity Partners LLC (equity partners) is a small business owned by Sharrone Blanck and Meridith Oram. equity partners was created to support racial equity work in the community, to grow the capacity of a diverse group of folks doing racial equity work in the region, and to create a structure to support people from marginalized identities to be centered and prioritized in decision making and structural change efforts while being compensated for their time, energy, and expertise.

## Process

In eight hours of virtual group meeting time, equity partners facilitated conversations with 16 community members that addressed the areas of culture, employment, health, housing, mobility, recreation, and transportation. There were opportunities to contribute in various ways. The voices of community members of color were prioritized with opportunities for white-identifying community members to share as well. These virtual meetings were not recorded to create trust and allow members to speak freely. A City of Arcata employee took notes during each session and was present in the session with their camera off.

equity partners invited folks to participate in the group with the goal of having representation from Black, Indigenous, Latinx, Asian, and Native American communities. Additionally, the goal was to invite folks across the spectra of gender identity and sexual orientation. We looked to invite people of varying ages, professions, and abilities. To grow the group of participants, we asked individual community leaders and folks holding formal positions in local Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) organizations like Black Humboldt, Humboldt Asians and Pacific Islanders (HAPI) in Solidarity, and Queer Humboldt for recommendations regarding who lives in Arcata and who might be open to sharing their expertise to inform the Gateway and General Plans.

To begin the process, equity partners led an introductory session to learn about how long folks have lived in Arcata and what they might desire from a “perfect” home and community where all their needs and their family members’ needs were met. Subsequent sessions were held with a focus on housing, transportation and mobility, recreation and culture, and health.

All sessions were held virtually to accommodate participants caring for babies and children, families, and tending to evening routines while also being able to give input and share experiences. Attendance in all sessions was not obligatory; instead, participants were compensated \$50/hour for up to eight hours of attendance at meetings. The hourly rate was intentional so people could attend as much as they could and not lose out on income or the opportunity to share experiences, wants, or needs if they could not attend all sessions.

Virtual sessions opened with a general check in followed by facilitators’ reflections from the previous gathering. This was an opportunity for participants to confirm what was shared and clarify that details were recorded accurately. Each session had questions that drove the conversation and participants had various ways to share with the goal of maximizing input and offering options to support different communication styles. Participants had the opportunity to share aloud, in the chat, or contribute to a Google document during sessions. Between sessions, participants were free to add to the google document or handwrite in reflection journals that were provided.

In addition to gathering information in the virtual zoom, the chat, and the Google document, we surveyed participants for demographic data and information related to each of the areas of the plan for which they offered input. This allowed us to gather qualitative and quantitative

information from participants related to the six areas of culture, employment, health, housing, recreation, and transportation/mobility.

After the first four meetings, facilitators compiled the information shared from notes, the chat, and the Google document into a large spreadsheet. equity partners then reconvened the group to confirm that what was recorded was indeed what participants shared. In that gathering, participants had the opportunity to confirm, clarify, and add to what was already documented. Creating a meeting for the participants to review the compiled information contributed to building trust.

## Key Terms

equity partners offers definitions of the following terms to support the use of a shared language in creating a shared context for this project and this report.

**BELONGING:** a feeling of being happy or comfortable as part of a particular group, and having a good relationship with the other members of the group because they welcome you and accept you. [Cambridge Dictionary](#)

A healthy community in which all members feel a sense of belonging. A goal is that all residents of Arcata feel a sense of belonging, that they can show up as their true selves and be accepted by one another, that they can see each other's humanity.

**CULTURE:** “... a society's style, its way of living and dying. It embraces the erotic and the culinary arts; dancing and burial; courtesy and curses; work and leisure; rituals and festivals; punishments and rewards; dealings with the dead and with the ghosts who people our dreams; attitudes toward women and children, old people and strangers, enemies and allies; eternity and the present; the here and now and the beyond. A civilization is not only a system of values but a world of forms and codes of behavior, rules and exceptions. It is society's visible side-institutions, monuments, works, things—but it is especially its submerged, invisible side: beliefs, desires, fears, repressions, dreams.”

equity partners learned this definition of culture from Drs. Melanie Tervalon and Jann Murray-Garcia, who created the framework for cultural humility. This definition of *culture* is described by Octavio Paz, the late Mexican poet and diplomat, who wrote an essay for *The New Yorker* in 1979 illustrating how Mexico and the United States illustrate two ways to exist in Western civilization. equity partners uses this definition because it communicates the fullness that is culture. When we think about the culture(s) of Arcata, we consider all of these elements.

**DIVERSITY:** the condition of having or being composed of differing elements, variety.

Diversity means that there are people of different identities in a space or community. Diversity is who is present in numbers. Diversity is data, it is demographics. A goal is to have a diverse group, and Arcata is increasingly diverse. That said, a diverse group does not mean that all people's experiences are represented, nor does it mean that discrimination or injustice no longer exists in a space or community. Diversity as the only goal is lacking. [Merriam-Webster Dictionary](#)

**RACIAL EQUITY:** The condition that would be achieved if one's racial identity no longer predicted, in a statistical sense, how one fares, including life expectancy. Racial equity is one part of racial justice, and must include work to address root causes of inequities, not just their manifestation. This includes elimination of policies, practices, attitudes, and

cultural messages that reinforce differential outcomes by race or that fail to eliminate them. [Racial Equity Tools, Center for Assessment and Policy Development](#)

equity partners begins with racial equity because racial inequities persist in every system across the country, without exception. Baked into the creation and ongoing policies of our government, media, and other institutions – unless otherwise countered – racism operates at individual, institutional, and structural levels and is therefore present in every system we examine. Secondly, when looking within other dimensions of identity – income, gender, sexuality, education, ability, age, citizenship, and geography – there are inequities based on race. Finally, race is intentionally centered because inflaming racial tension has been a deliberate political strategy by those seeking to maintain their own power.

The Gateway and General Plans must counter racism head on in its policies and practices. This is the only way to shift systems and structures that have advantaged some and disadvantaged many more. [Why Lead with Race? www.HealthEquityGuide.org](#)

**INCLUSION:** the act or practice of including and accommodating people who have historically been excluded (as because of their race, gender, sexuality, or ability).

[Merriam-Webster Dictionary](#)

A sense of inclusion relates to *how it feels* to be part of a place. A goal for the City of Arcata is that all residents feel a part of the community. The goal of inclusion is NOT that people in power invite historically excluded folks to participate and attend, but instead that power be redistributed so that decision making is held by all members of the community, especially with representation from those that have been historically excluded and marginalized.

**INTERSECTIONALITY:** operates under the premise that people possess multiple, layered identities, including race, gender, class, sexual orientation, ethnicity, and ability, among others. Intersectionality refers to the ways in which these identities intersect to affect individuals' realities and lived experiences, thereby shaping their perspectives, worldview, and relationships with others. Exposing these multiple identities can help clarify the ways in which a person can simultaneously experience privilege and oppression. For example, a Black woman in America does not experience gender inequalities in exactly the same way as a white woman, nor racial oppression identical to that experienced by a Black man. [Intergroup Resources; Intersectionality-Learning for Justice](#)

We all have multiple identities that intersect to make us who we are. We must see that in ourselves and each other to understand our own and other community members' experiences. Dr. Kimberle' Crenshaw coined this term in the 80s while studying the impacts of racism and sexism on Black women and how they were different from the

experiences of white women. The term is now used to examine the impact of multiple identities across overlapping systems of privilege and oppression. As equity partners convened community members, the goal was to bring together Arcata residents of multiple intersecting identities to learn about the variety of experiences of community members to inform the plans.

**MONOLITH: A group of people who are thought of as being all the same.** [Cambridge Dictionary](#)

equity partners includes this word to note that no group of community members is a monolith. This means that no two Black-identifying folks will have the same experience in Arcata, nor will they have the same needs or priorities. Same goes for two Arcata residents who identify as members of the queer community. It is possible that there is overlap in experience, needs, and priorities amongst members of a group, but not necessarily. It is important to recognize the individual experiences of community members even if there might be some overlap in experience with more members of the same community group. For this reason, equity partners celebrates the input gathered from the group of community members who shared their experience and expertise in this project while also acknowledging that there is still more to do to understand the range of experiences of residents that identify as members of the BIPOC and/or queer communities.

## Demographics

The goal of identifying community members to take part in these conversations was to invite people that hold different aspects of identity. Sixteen people agreed to participate. Each person that participated was asked to be part of the group due to the multiple identities that they hold. Community members with these identities have not been centered previously in City of Arcata public forums when community members provided input to the General and Gateway Plans.

Each person provided the following information: first and last name; best email; current physical address; phone number; length of time lived in Arcata (by range); current age (by range); ethnic/racial identity (self report); gender identity (self report); and method for participating in the virtual meetings.

Although the purpose was to center the experiences of people of color (13 of the 16 participants identified in whole or in part as Black, Indigenous, or people of color), we asked three white people to participate because of the marginalized identities they hold outside of being white. Of the three white participants, one was homeless in Arcata for years and has an invisible disability, one person has a visible disability and one person is a parent of a person with a visible disability. We also included three people that lived in Arcata in the past but currently live elsewhere in Humboldt. Each of them lived in Arcata from 1.5 years to 5 years, has attended Cal Poly Humboldt, and/or is part of a community organization based in Arcata.

We included people as young as 17 and as old as 56. The group is composed of high school students, medical professionals, people in the media, teachers, graduate students, full-time care providers for a visibly disabled person, community volunteers, nonprofit employees, and retail workers.

Our intention to bring together community members who are not typically centered during City of Arcata community feedback sessions was achieved. Below you will find data about the participants.

### Age of participants:

38% (6 people) are 19-25

25% (4 people) are 31-35

19% (3 people) are 56 to 65

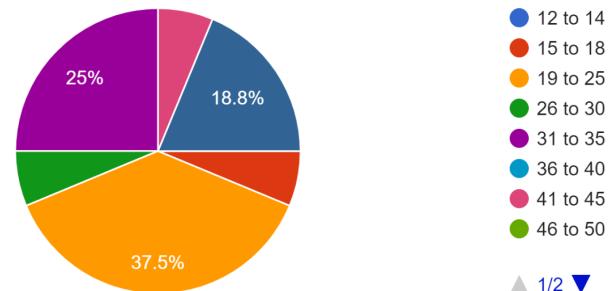
6% (1 person) is 15-18

6% (1 person) is 26-30

6% (1 person) is 41-45

Please indicate your age.

16 responses



▲ 1/2 ▼

### Length of time participants have lived in Arcata:

31% (5 people) have lived in Arcata 6-7 years  
19% (3 people) do not currently live in Arcata  
13% (2 people) have lived in Arcata 2-3 years  
13% (2 people) have lived in Arcata 8-10 years  
6% (1 person) have only lived in Arcata  
6% (1 person) have lived in Arcata 16-20 years  
6% (1 person) have lived in Arcata 1 year or less  
6% (1 person) have lived in Arcata 6-7 years

How long have you lived in Arcata?

16 responses



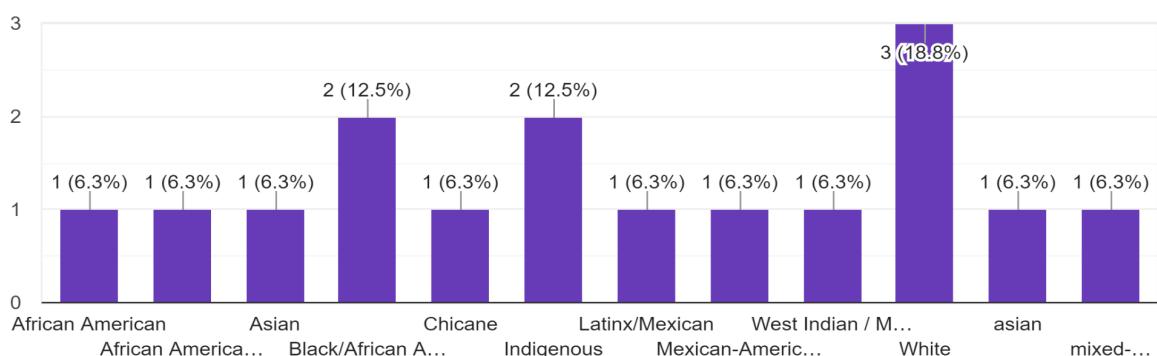
Equity Partners intentionally created an opportunity for people to **self identify** ethnically/racially as well as with respect to gender.

### Ethnic/Racial Identity

25% (4 people) identify as African American or Black  
19% (3 people) identified as White  
13% (2 people) identified as Indigenous  
12% (2 person) identified as West Indian/MultiCultural/Black and Mixed - Black/Samoan/White  
12% (2 people) identified as Asian  
12% (2 people) identified as Mexican-American/Mexican or Latinx  
6% (1 person) identified as Chicane

How do you identify ethnically /racially?

16 responses

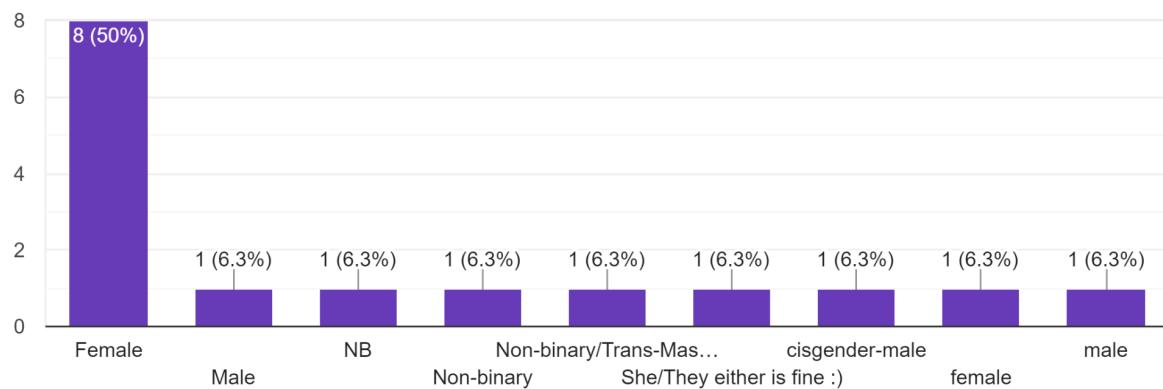


## Gender Identity

56% (9 people) identify as female  
19% (3 people) identity as male or cisgender-male  
13% (2 people) identify as non-binary  
6% (1 person) identified as she/they  
6% (1 person) identified as non-binary/trans-masculine

How do you identify your gender?

16 responses



## Community Input, Key Observations, and Recommendations

General recommendations are listed here as well as recommendations by topics that were covered in the input sessions. There are similar recommendations in multiple areas. This is intentional because the suggestions have common themes and are nuanced. There is great work happening in our region, and where impact is being made to get to the root of system inequities and address problems, we suggest connecting and building relationships with the people and entities who are doing it well, learning with and from them, and using that learning to inform work in Arcata.

### General Recommendations for Gateway and General Plans

#### Short Term

1. Improve infrastructure to support safety and access to basic needs.
2. Prioritize the community benefits of housing creation and systems of recourse and accountability to support fair housing practices.
3. Increase transportation options and frequency.
4. Improve communication about existing and new services and programming to reach more Arcata residents.

#### Long Term

5. Create an entity like The Center, a branch of the [McKinleyville Family Resource Center](#), in partnership with Cal Poly Humboldt.
6. Build intentional, reciprocal relationships with community organizations to increase collaboration, share decision making (understand the needs before creating solutions) and ability to engage community members that are marginalized.
7. Establish a system to study what works and how to produce replicable structures.

Consider the [Improvement Science model](#).

#### Improve Infrastructure to Support Safety:

- More lighting on roads to walk safely at night including on Alliance Boulevard and at transportation stops.
- Repair uneven and broken sidewalks to support more community members to walk safely in and around Arcata.
- Provide more resources to those experiencing homelessness, addiction, and /or mental health challenges to house more community members and get people the various supports they need.
- Create a system to make business' bathrooms available to the public and/or build more public bathrooms and show services to help families, houseless community members, tourists, and everyone frequenting Arcata.

#### Create Systems of Recourse and Accountability

1. Consider a Renters' Commission as the City of Seattle, WA, has done that gives [renters more say in the creation of policy](#) and serves in an advisory role to the Mayor and City Council about the realities of renting a place to live.
2. Create an association of landlords to:

- a. Discuss application processes, standards for landlords, and uniform policies to support community members to better access rental opportunities.
- b. Establish requirements to complete the Humboldt Tenant Landlord Collaboration and receive recognition for their learning and understanding.
- c. Consider alternatives to security deposits as done in Cincinnati, Ohio with the passing of the Renter's Choice Law in 2020.  
<https://www.nbcnews.com/news/us-news/cincinnati-passes-bill-giving-renters-alternatives-security-deposits-n1120796>
- d. Consider sub-groups for management companies and mom-and-pop independent landlords like the Coalition of Small Rental Owners in Los Angeles, CA. <https://smallrentalowners.com/>

3. Consider a first come first serve process to offering rental units to applicants:  
<https://www.avail.co/education/articles/first-in-line-renter-law-heres-what-it-means-for-small-landlords>

### Bridging with Organizations in the Community

- 1. Partner with [Cooperation Humboldt](#) and the [Cal Poly Humboldt Student Housing Advocate Alliance](#) to address housing access and tenants' rights. Create a housing authority and/or tenants rights organization to support more equitable housing access and fair housing options.
- 2. Coordinate with large entities to facilitate access to medical support and locations to support activities of daily living:
  - a. With Cal Poly Humboldt for groceries and laundry services
  - b. With [Area One Agency on Aging](#) to support getting to and from medical appointments
- 3. Partner with established organizations to create places to celebrate culture and build community including Black Humboldt, Centro del Pueblo, Humboldt Asians and Pacific Islanders in Solidarity (HAPI), and Queer Humboldt.

### Key Observations and Recommendations by Topic

In addition to the overarching suggestions made above, key takeaways from each topic area along with suggested recommendations are identified below. **What community members shared is offered in BLACK. Corresponding recommendations made by equity partners are in RED. Suggestions referenced elsewhere in the report are noted in ORANGE.**

#### Culture

Enhancing wellness, through building culture and community, and improving safety are primary concerns.

- 1. Support the creation of businesses that offer a more diverse range of products, including favorites and necessities for BIPOC and queer folks. Have businesses in areas that are easy to access so they will be frequented more often as a way

to build community. [Increase visibility of North Coast Small Business Development Center resources](#). (Also listed under Employment and Transportation)

2. Increase partnerships with existing organizations ([Black Humboldt](#), [Queer Humboldt](#), [Humboldt Asians & Pacific Islanders in Solidarity](#), [Centro del Pueblo](#), [Eureka NAACP](#), [Two Feathers Family Services](#), [HC Black Music and Arts Association](#)) to create more safe places around a community center. Reach out to build relationships and follow the lead of the organizations. Create a system to engage, listen, shape work, get feedback, and repeat – an iterative process.
3. Create an easily accessible system to support block parties. Streamline processes and increase the visibility of the process. Decrease barriers.
4. Provide more support to houseless community members including harm reduction, including safe needle disposal, and mental health. Increase partnership with [AHHA Care-A-Van](#) and consider a satellite of DHHS at the City of Arcata building (see the model used by [The Center in McKinleyville](#)). (Also listed under Health)
5. More bathrooms for everyone around town. Partner with local businesses, pay them a monthly fee so that they allow people to use their restrooms. (Also listed under Health)
6. Safer plaza (no intoxicated folks catcalling girls and women). Change licensing to decrease the number of businesses that serve alcohol around the plaza.
7. Increase public art. Explore opportunities to hire BIPOC, physically and mentally disabled, and Queer artists first.

## Employment

Employment is dependent on communication about and promotion of opportunities as well as bridging and collaborating amongst existing entities.

1. Have one place to list jobs from Cal Poly Humboldt, City of Arcata, Humboldt County Office of Education, local schools and businesses, and other top employers. Promote and make it easily accessible. Coordinate through the Communications department and consider an app like Instagram.
2. Support increased transparency of the hiring process with major employers including Cal Poly Humboldt. Consider holding regular Job Fairs or Career Expos.
3. Increase ties with Cal Poly Humboldt so that graduates have the skills needed for the jobs available in the area. Work with the Chamber of Commerce and Cal Poly Humboldt to create clear pathways.
4. Support the creation of businesses that offer a more diverse range of products, including favorites and necessities for BIPOC and queer folks. Have businesses in areas that are easy to access so they will be frequented more often as a way to build community. [Increase visibility of North Coast Small Business Development Center resources](#). (Also listed under Culture & Health)
5. Support existing organizations that help businesses serving BIPOC/queer people. These businesses are regularly targeted by non-BIPOC community members with anti-Black

hate and homophobia. Organizations such as Black Humboldt and Queer Humboldt provide support for these businesses. Find ways to support organizations like Black Humboldt and Queer Humboldt. Also promote Black Humboldt's registry of [Black Owned Businesses](#) and [BIPOC Owned Businesses](#).

## **Health**

Health encompasses many areas including [physical and mental well-being](#), [safety](#), and [access](#). Local systems and services that work well in other areas of Humboldt are identified here.

### Physical and Mental Well Being

1. Support houseless community members with harm reduction, including safe needle disposal, and mental health. Increase partnership with [AHHA Care-A-Van](#) and consider a satellite of DHHS at the City of Arcata building (see the model used by [The Center in McKinleyville](#)). (Also listed under Culture)
2. More bathrooms for everyone around town. Partner with local businesses to pay a monthly rate to businesses that open their bathrooms to the public. [See example in Germany](#). (Also listed under Culture)
3. Provide publicly-funded vouchers for laundry for low-income and unhoused neighbors.
4. Provide more green space for gardens to support food sovereignty. Partner with [Cooperation Humboldt](#) to create more mini gardens.
5. Provide access to diverse and affordable groceries and care products. Have food and care items at affordable prices help Arcata residents with their culture, self care, and well-being. (Also listed under Culture & Employment)
6. Create more community kitchens to feed and support folks who are houseless for economic, mental health, and/or addiction reasons. Consider possible partnerships with places of worship that have kitchen facilities on site.

### Safety

7. Hospitals cannot discharge a patient without a follow plan for care BY LAW under the Emergency Medical Treatment and Labor Act.  
<https://www.findlaw.com/healthcare/patient-rights/what-is-the-emergency-medical-treatment-and-labor-act-emtala.html>.
8. Training is needed for medical staff so they can better serve patients with disabilities and people escaping domestic violence. Coordinate partnerships with [Redwood Coast Regional Center](#) and [District Attorney's Office](#) or [Humboldt Domestic Violence Services](#).
9. Establish a Civil Rights Commission to address issues of discrimination. Establish a [Civil Rights Commission](#) with clear pathways to file complaints. Partner with [Eureka NAACP's Legal Redress Committee](#). Consider establishing a [Human Relations Commission](#).
10. It is unsafe when walking day or night, especially when folks don't drive. Put up more street lights and repair / build sidewalks that are easy to navigate. Fewer bushes and trees along the walkway will improve visibility.
11. Need more self-determination for folks with disabilities. Can do more independently than with what the Regional Center offers.

## Access

12. No interpreters for monolingual Spanish-speaking patients in local hospitals. Hospitals must require interpreters by law [www.calcivilrights.ca.gov](http://www.calcivilrights.ca.gov) and [https://www.ccah-alliance.org/providerspdfs/Regulations\\_Summary.pdf](https://www.ccah-alliance.org/providerspdfs/Regulations_Summary.pdf). Connect hospitals with the Interpreter Certification program at Cal Poly Humboldt. Encourage the hiring of interpreters in accordance with state law.
13. Increased access to medical, dental, and psychological services, especially psychiatric services.
14. Open Door Eureka-great for patients with disabilities when refused care by all Arcata clinics

## Replicate What Works

15. Props to Arcata Fire for compassionate and competent care. Open Door in Arcata is AMAZING with trans people – kind, patient, transparent. Meet with Arcata Fire and Open Door in Arcata and find out how they provide the services they provide. What works and how do they do it? Is it replicable? Share findings with other healthcare providers and first responders.
16. Arcata Open Door can be accessed by car, private wheelchair van or bus.
17. Can walk to North Country Clinic—good services there.

## **Housing**

Safe housing means increasing access by decreasing barriers and establishing systems of accountability.

## Increasing Access

1. Build more ADA units - A participant reported only 3 ADA units in Humboldt County.
2. Improve bus routes. Make them more reliable, frequent, ADA accessible, and inexpensive.
3. Transitional housing for folks experiencing domestic/financial abusive partners. Explore possible partnership with DHHS.
4. Resources needed for tenants to look up housing laws to know rights. House information on City of Arcata (COA) website and share it regularly through COA social media. Consider tabling at farmers markets and Cal Poly Humboldt events to make the information easy to find.
5. Mixed income, diverse neighborhoods with diverse goods in stores; safe play spaces.
6. Community center: run by elders; legal/tutoring/afterschool/maker space/sharing library; safe place for kids to play; community classes with scheduling that works for working parents' schedules; more diversity; affordable programming and after school stuff; community gardens. See [The Center at McKinleyville Family Resource Center](#) as a model.

### Decreasing Barriers

7. Need alternatives to demonstrate that people are good tenants beyond a high credit score or having a cosigner.
8. Need a place to store belongings for a reasonable cost when a quick move is necessary.
9. Ensure no discrimination against applicants to rent based on kids, age, or race.
10. Accountability is needed: for landlord discrimination; for landlord and tenant learning; for ADA accommodations for tenants.
11. Mixed income, diverse neighborhoods with diverse goods in stores; safe play spaces

### Establishing Systems of Accountability.

See one resource and one model identified below the list of community concerns.

12. Accountability structure for landlords when discrimination happens.
13. Can the Student Housing Advocate Alliance become a union?
14. No way to report neighbors or ill-kempt property (difficult in landlords are out of the area)
15. Need local options when relying on state/federal agencies. It can take years for response when working with these agencies.
16. Landlords unaware of / not looking out for safety of BIPOC/queer/trans tenants
17. Too many applications and too many fees (\$50/application) **Establish universal rental application for full consideration from all property managers and independent landlords. One set fee for applicants decided together with other landlords.**
18. Hard to get a security deposit back even when done due diligence of cleaning. **Provide services to videotape the entire property and store with COA or Housing Authority.** Consider a security deposit held by COA or Housing Authority.

**Use this existing local resource with tenants and landlords:** [The Humboldt Tenant Landlord Collaboration \(HTLC\)](#) is an educational program designed to promote best practices for tenants and landlords throughout the Humboldt community. The 10-module certification program will help students, renters, and property owners build positive and equitable relationships. Access the Canvas Module for Community Members: <https://canvas.humboldt.edu/courses/39896>.

**Use this existing in-state model to support housing conflicts:** [San Luis Obispo has city, university, and community mediation](#) for roommate disputes as well as landlord and tenant conflicts.

## **Recreation**

Recreation focuses on dedicated spaces, a variety of activities, physical accessibility and increased visibility of offerings. Aspects of Culture and Mobility are reflected in this section.

### **Dedicated Spaces & Variety of Activities**

1. Need center with makerspace and space for workshops that are community organized and maintained. **Possible partnership with Pathmakers and HCOE regarding makerspace. Partner with community organizations to create culturally-specific workshops for the public.**
2. Daycare for studying/working parents.
3. Community Center/Youth Center with consistent offerings.
4. Summer and after-school programming with ample space for families to enroll.
5. Programming to accommodate working parents.
6. More summer camp offerings.
7. All-age venues.
8. Summer theater.
9. Warm therapy pool.
10. More sober spaces to gather.
11. Mixer spaces for younger crowds – like the Chamber of Commerce but different.
12. Programs for folks with disabilities. Zero programming specifically designed for folks with disabilities – not even in the schools.
13. Community professional kitchens.

### **Physical Accessibility**

14. Make parks ADA accessible.
15. Build restrooms at every park.
16. Adjust and update equipment in parks so elders and kids can all play.
17. Arcata Community Pool is great. Make the hot tub accessible. **Build an accessible family shower and bathroom.**
18. Offer more shares at Bayside Farm's Community Supported Agriculture program.
19. Offer a shuttle to the pool.
20. Need more access points for gardening, theater, maker's spaces, and for art and culture beyond the cliquiness of existing spaces and networks.

### **Increased Visibility of Offerings**

21. Place at farmers market to promote/advertise/recruit events.
22. Hard to find information about COA offerings.
23. Share information on programming in multiple ways - Instagram for younger folks; FB for older folks.
24. Find events on radio, Lost Coast Outpost, and North coast journal.
25. Online newsletter would be nice.
26. Need a streamlined event page for COA.

## **Transportation/Mobility**

General concerns with transportation and mobility are centered around infrastructure, access, and safety.

### Infrastructure

1. Need more streetlights.
2. Improve concrete sidewalks so they are smooth and safe for walkers and wheelchairs.
3. Cal Poly Humboldt is not accessible.
4. OVERALL poor infrastructure in the region for folks with disabilities.
5. Valley West is surrounded by freeways – it is hard to get about on a bike.
6. More bike lanes and bike only roads/trails.

### Access

7. Student Disability Resource Center— It is difficult to get transport; only offer support on campus, not off.
8. Need more cheap buses with multiple and overlapping routes (currently limited on the hour and run late).
9. No buses on Sundays! **Establish bus service seven days per week.**
10. Lyft/Uber are so expensive. Cabs are sparse and expensive – not all run 24 hours.
11. **Consider public car models with shared transportation in the same direction.**
12. Parking fees and tickets are common, and parking is not available near Cal Poly Humboldt during events.
13. In stores: electric carts are not charged or maintained.
14. Bikes – gear is cost prohibitive; they are hard to use for families with small children and people going long distances; the weather and mountainous terrain limit riding.
15. Consider a system to connect people traveling to the same locations and needing transportation including Cal Poly Humboldt, College of the Redwoods, Winco, Target, and Social Services. **Establish and coordinate carpooling database and van services.**
16. Coordinate bus lines to places of business and services. **Share Transit Application that participant recommended about bus locations and bus arrival times.**
17. Improve access to buses for folks with physical disabilities. **Work with the Redwood Regional Center and the Student Disability Resource Center at Cal Poly Humboldt to increase, advocate, and coordinate transportation services.**

### Safety

18. Need safer accessible, maintained, consistent bike routes with fewer cars.
19. Need a plan to get cars out of bike lanes.

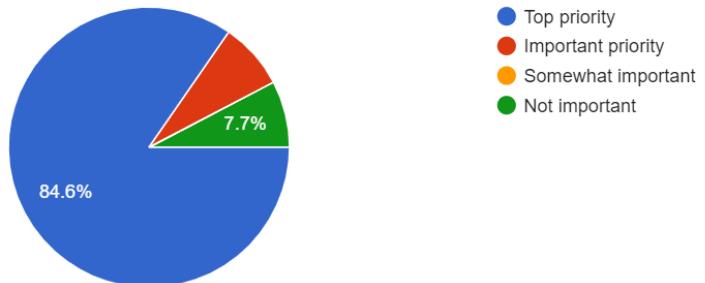
## Community Benefits

The results of this community benefits survey align closely with the Planning Commission's Community Benefits priorities. (Note added, April 2023.)

### Housing Creation

*92% identified this as top priority or important priority.*

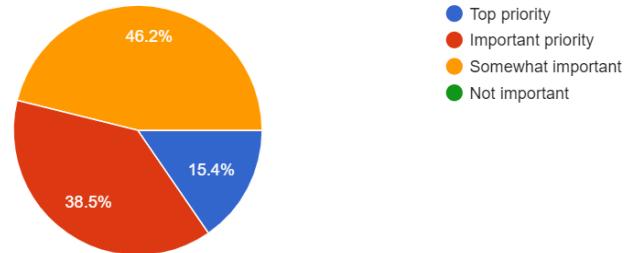
Rapid production of new housing, high-density housing, small units (which are naturally more affordable), multi-bedroom units for families, owner-occupied multi-family development, single-room occupancy, preservation of existing affordable housing, creation of new deed-restricted affordable housing, and related amenities that create valued forms of housing.



### Arts and Culture

*54% identified this as top priority or important priority.*

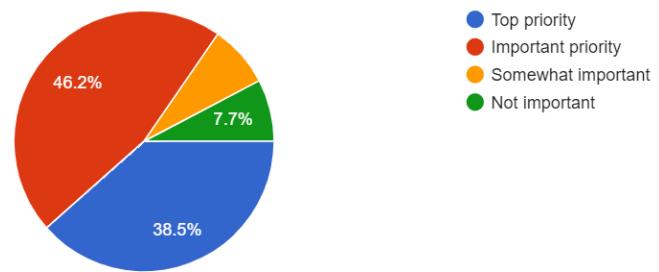
Public art, murals, pedestal for sculptures, performing arts spaces/arts/culture free program, art live-work housing, and related amenities that facilitate the inclusion of arts/culture into development projects.



### Open Space

*85% identified this as top priority or important priority.*

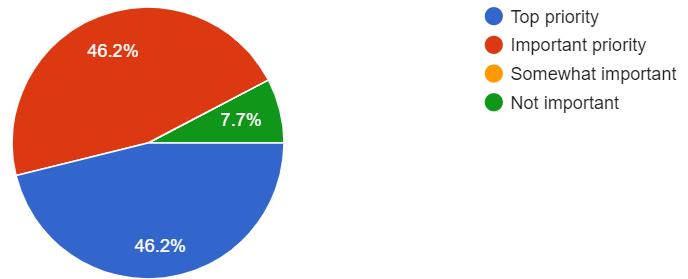
Creek day lighting, dedicated open space, open space fee program, community gardens, and related amenities that support trees, landscaped areas, open space, and public-use areas.



## Green Building and Sustainability

*92% identified this as top priority or important priority.*

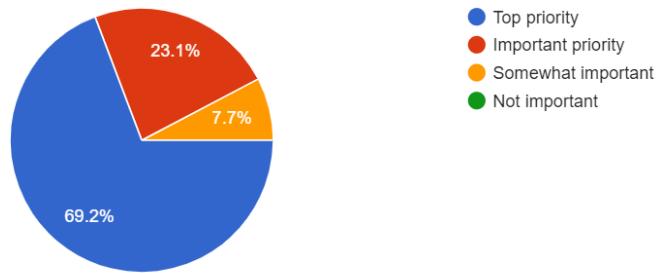
LEED certification (or built to LEED standards), mass timber construction, renewable energy generation, contamination remediation, street trees, rainwater management, light pollution reduction, and related amenities that reduce energy use, reduce carbon output, or facilitate a more sustainable environment.



## Active and Alternative Transportation

*92% identified this as top priority or important priority.*

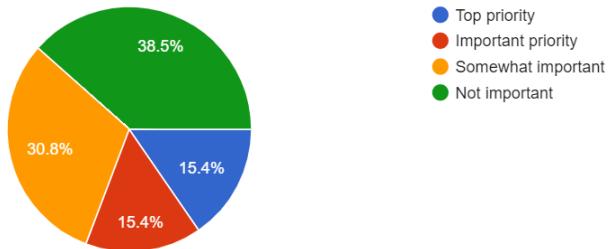
Electric vehicle charging stations, employee showers, on-site bike parking, bus passes for residents, dedication of parcel frontage for transportation uses, utility undergrounding, and related amenities that stimulate non-motorized and zero-carbon transportation options.



## Enhanced Architectural Features and Exterior Design

*31% identified this as top priority or important priority.*

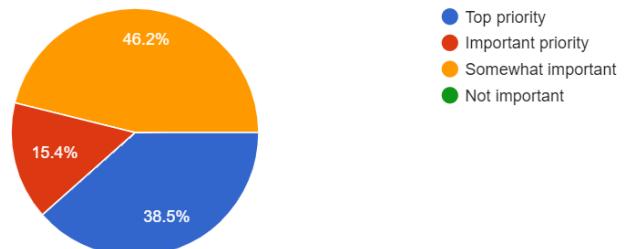
Roof form variation, detail, and ornamentation; horizontal articulation; cantilevered upper floors; and related amenities that enhance the quality and appearance of buildings.



## Retail and Job Creation

*54% identified this as top priority or important priority.*

Ground-floor retail, outdoor dining rooftop dining job creation, and related amenities that generate desired non-residential uses.



## What People Like About Arcata

Community members shared about what they enjoy about living in Arcata. The number one aspect they identified was Redwood Park/Community Forest. The Marsh was the second area most commented on. People valued having walkable neighborhoods. Several other outdoor spaces mentioned included Arcata Plaza farmers market, Sunnybrae Trail, Shay Park and Greenview Park. Mad River Boat Launch and Trinidad Pier were noted as being ADA accessible. Activities included attending soccer games at Cal Poly, kayaking in lagoons, going to the casino and beach at Moonstone (accessible from Arcata), seeing shows at Arcata Playhouse, attending dance classes at Redwood Raks and kids events on the Plaza. People enjoy access to thrift stores. Several restaurants were mentioned including Japhys, Renata's and ARCADA.

## Next Steps

City of Arcata Community Development team and equity partners have agreed to the following next steps:

1. Convene with equity arcata leaders to create a plan for feedback with racial equity lens.
2. Co-host feedback session with equity arcata members to gather insights regarding how to best utilize community input to shape the plans.
3. City planners review this report, offer feedback to equity partners to finalize the written document.
4. City planners use community input to shape and create policy in the General and Gateway Plans.
5. City planners and equity partners reconvene with community members to review additions to plan based on their input for accountability and building trust.

## Limitations to the Process

Despite a successful first effort, there were several limitations to our efforts to gather input from community members historically excluded from decision making and planning processes in local government. These limitations arose in the composition of the group, the use of our time to gather input, and gathering information within the context of a local government city plan.

### Diversity of the Group

Regarding the demographics of the group, we had few male identifying members of the group. We invited community members to participate based on relationships we had with participants or people who we knew who had relationships with participants with the goal of convening a diverse group across age, race, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, ability, class, education, and more identifiers. A goal for a future cohort of community members would be to include more male BIPOC voices with other intersecting diverse social identities.

With respect to where participants of the group live in Arcata, participants lived south of G Street, in Arcata Bottoms, and in Valley West. There were only two participants that live in the Arcata downtown area or on the east side of Highway 101. This warrants more exploration. A goal for future sessions with community members would be to see if people of diverse intersecting identities live in Arcata downtown or to the east of CA-101. It would be helpful to know the demographics of community members as well as rental prices, and the percentage of rental properties versus owned properties throughout the City.

Because no group is a monolith, the experiences and expertise shared by community members does not represent the experiences of all people of that same identity. For this reason, although the group of participants was diverse, and we can use people's experiences to identify patterns to inform policy change, the information shared still does not touch on every resident's experiences, needs, and desires for Arcata. For this reason, we encourage the City to continue to convene community members of intersecting diverse identities to share what works for them and what can be improved about living in Arcata. This ongoing practice will result in a more nuanced, clearer view of the broad range of experiences of Arcata residents, even where there are overlapping social identities.

#### Facilitation of the Meetings

Regarding equity partners' facilitation of the space, the meetings were successfully run to privilege the voices of BIPOC participants. Additionally, we offered various ways to offer input including aloud in the large space, in the chat, and in a Google document.

Participants were provided journal notebooks for brainstorming and noting feelings, ideas, and experiences during and between sessions. The use of eight hours was sufficient, it would have been helpful to offer 1:1 sessions for participants and facilitators, to give participants the opportunity to share anything they might not share in the large group, and to get deeper into their personal experiences and stories. Furthermore, it would have been beneficial to offer more paired and small group opportunities in the virtual sessions to connect more with participants who might be inclined to be more vulnerable in a small group. In future sessions, modifications to notetaking would be necessary; for this project, we did not have the recording capabilities to capture notes in small groups.

#### Context of Local Government

Although equity partners has convened diverse groups of community members including area BIPOC youth to support shifts for equity in local high schools, this was the first time we supported local government and worked within the context of gathering input to inform plan policy. We identified topic areas for each session in collaboration with City staff, and generated questions based on what might allow us helpful information to inform the plans. We strove to gain insight into what exists that supports community members to thrive and what keeps folks from maximizing the quality of their lives in Arcata.

All of the input we gathered is helpful in understanding the experiences of community members; what is relevant to the plan will be shared with City employees with the goal of shaping the plan.

Where information shared by participants extends beyond the scope of the plan, particularly related to health and medical experiences, we recommend bridging with other community organizations and entities to work to meet Arcata residents' needs.

In hindsight, although our questions related to the Gateway and General Plans, we could have further refined the questions to ensure that participants' input directly related to plan policy. To improve on this with future groups, facilitators must have a better understanding of the scope of the plan and what can feasibly be incorporated into plan policy.

## **Framework for Project Design**

equity partners recommends the establishment of an iterative process that provides a system of continuous improvement integrated into the Gateway and General Plans. This process must be ongoing and explicitly create space to amplify the voices of marginalized community members so that they are at the center of decision making.

### Structure

We suggest that the gatherings be held over Zoom to allow for participants to tend to activities of daily living and family responsibilities as well as be in the space. Allowing children, babies, partners, loved ones, pets, and food in the space allows for people to take care of themselves and their loved ones while also participating.

We suggest a 10-hour commitment from facilitators and participants, or 2 hours per topic of the segment of the plan where community members will offer input. We recommend this to enable sufficient time for participants to share.

We suggest that two or three people facilitate, ideally of differing racial identities (and a mix of dominant and subordinate intersecting identities), to support all members of the diverse group. It is advised that the facilitators have a relationship with at least some members of the group, or that they are connected by someone with whom both facilitator and participant a facilitator and the participant has a relationship. This will facilitate trust and support a willingness to share more deeply and vulnerably.

After input is gathered, it is imperative that facilitators return to the participants with written documents that offer the group the opportunity to confirm that the information recorded is indeed correct. This offers the group opportunities to give correction or clarification if facilitators had incorrectly documented any information.

Finally, there must be an opportunity for community members to see how their expertise and input is integrated into the plan or how it will be integrated into the plan down the line.

### Selection of Group

To continue to diversify the group of community members offering input to the plans, we suggest not having members of this first group return. That said, we do suggest that a relationship with the City and participants in group one be maintained to share updates about the changes made to plans as well as to obtain names of community members who might participate in future community input sessions. It would support transparency to maintain contact with participants and communicate updates about modifications to the plan based on input from subsequent groups.

Using the demographic data collected from each group, holes in who is represented and not represented can be identified to better include a broader range of voices and experiences from the community.

Another way to continue to diversify the group of participants is to reach out to local leaders of B-Black, Black Humboldt, Centro del Pueblo, Humboldt Asian Pacific Islanders in Solidarity (HAPI), Eureka NAACP, Queer Humboldt, Two Feathers Family Services, and the Campus Centers for Academic Excellence at Cal Poly Humboldt to continue to diversify the group of participants offering input.

### Compensation for Participants

Convening community members historically excluded from these types of processes cannot happen unless participants are compensated for their time, energy, and expertise. equity partners offered \$50/hour for up to 10 hours of time so that people could come as often as they were able without mandatory participation that might preclude people from participating at all.

### Facilitator Preparation

equity partners recommends that facilitators leading these groups have a practice of doing their learning to cultivate self-awareness, racial literacy, ongoing learning, and self-critique in an effort to dismantle systems of oppression in themselves that impact how they show up in their daily lives and in relationship with everyone they come into contact with in Arcata.

To best inform facilitators and participants about the plan components being considered, equity partners recommends that a City person offer resources related to each topic that participants will be asked to engage about, as was provided in this project by Gillen Martin. For example, Gillen offered relevant past and current data about the housing market as well as income information of Arcata residents and policy in the plan related to housing. This was helpful to understand the current context, its housing challenges, and what solutions might be possible within the scope of the plan. Additionally, we recommend that a City representative briefly meet with facilitators before each themed session to offer places in the plan that could be shaped by community members' input. This would facilitate the creation of questions that support expertise offered that is related to the plan and not beyond its scope.

## Resources

Ali, Safia Samee. "Cincinnati Passes Bill Giving Renters Alternatives to Security Deposits." NBC News, 25 Jan. 2020, [www.nbcnews.com/news/us-news/cincinnati-passes-bill-giving-renters-alternatives-security-deposits-n1120796](http://www.nbcnews.com/news/us-news/cincinnati-passes-bill-giving-renters-alternatives-security-deposits-n1120796). Accessed 10 Feb. 2023.

This article shares about the Renter's Choice Law that went into effect in Cincinnati, Ohio, in 2020. Renter's choice gives tenants three options: an installment plan, a reduced bulk fee that is no more than 50% of the rent, or renter's security insurance for a monthly fee. These are options for the City of Arcata to consider in an effort to increase access to housing for all residents.

Cambridge University Press. "Cambridge Dictionary: Find Definitions, Meanings & Translations." *Cambridge.org*, 2019, [dictionary.cambridge.org/us/](http://dictionary.cambridge.org/us/).

This website is used to define relevant terms for this project.

Merriam-Webster Dictionary. "Merriam-Webster Dictionary." *Merriam-Webster.com*, 2019, [www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary](http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary).

This website is used to define relevant terms for this project.

Paz, Octavio, and Rachel Phillips. "Reflections: Mexico and the United States." *The History Teacher*, vol. 13, no. 3, May 1980, pp. 401–415. *Society for History Education*, [www.jstor.org/stable/491679](http://www.jstor.org/stable/491679). Accessed 24 July 2019.

This essay includes the definition of culture used in this report when looking to create, support, and sustain a diverse and just culture of inclusion and belonging in Arcata.

O'Sullivan, Feargus. "Germany Found a Cheap Way to Fix Its Lack of Public Toilets: Welcome to the "Nice Toilet.."" *Www.bloomberg.com*, 1 Nov. 2016, [www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2016-11-01/germany-s-nice-toilet-network-delivers-cheap-public-restrooms](http://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2016-11-01/germany-s-nice-toilet-network-delivers-cheap-public-restrooms).

This article illustrates a creative way to increase access to public restrooms for everyone in Arcata by collaborating with local businesses that already have bathrooms in their establishments. The local government pays businesses a small monthly fee to open their restrooms to the public. In turn, the businesses put a stick in their front window to show that they are part of the public restroom program.

"Seattle Renters' Commission - Council | Seattle.gov." *Www.seattle.gov*, [www.seattle.gov/council/Issues/past-issues/renters-commission](http://www.seattle.gov/council/Issues/past-issues/renters-commission). Accessed 14 Feb. 2023.

In March 2017, Seattle started a Renters' Commission that has 15 appointed community members that serve in an advisory capacity to the Mayor and the City Council. Appointments are made to ensure that varied renter perspectives are represented, including renters from historically underrepresented groups, such as low income renters, LGBTQ renters, immigrant renters, renters with felony records, those paying rent with assistance, and renters who have experienced homelessness.

*Why Lead with Race – HealthEquityGuide.org.*

[www.healthequityguide.org/about/why-lead-with-race/](http://www.healthequityguide.org/about/why-lead-with-race/). Accessed 13 Feb. 2023.

This resource speaks to why equity efforts must begin with race. Racial disparities exist in all institutions and across all other social identifiers. When we focus on eradicating racism and racialized inequities, things improve for people of all racial and intersecting identities.

## Appendix A- List of Questions Asked of Participants per Sessions

### 10/3 Introductory Session

Small Group Check In: What were your housing situation and neighborhood like growing up, in Arcata, or someplace else? What did you like? What wasn't so good?

Large Group Check In: Where have you lived in Arcata and for how long?

Follow-up ?s: What caused you to move? What did you look for when you moved to a new space?

#### For Reflection and Discussion:

The Perfect Housing Situation and Really Cool Neighborhood to Live In

- What's there? What's absent?

Think about where you have lived in Arcata.

- What was there that you really liked? Why was that important to you?
- What was missing? Why is that important to you?
- What do you wish was there? Why would it have been important to you to have that particular element as part of your home and/or neighborhood?
- What elements made this place feel/felt like home or not?

### 10/17 Housing

Check In: What is one thing about your home that brings you joy?

Follow Up: What else? What has come up since we last gathered?

#### For Reflection and Discussion:

Decreasing Barriers and Discrimination while Increasing Accountability: When your housing got difficult, what did/do you wish could have happened (with the landlord, the neighborhood, your neighbors, pricing, etc.)?

Community Benefits: What community benefits related to housing are priorities for you? What's missing? What's needed, especially related to recourse and limitations to housing access?

### 10/24 Employment and Transportation

Large Group Check In: What year did you move to Humboldt and what brought you here?

Follow Up: What else? What has come up since we last gathered?

#### For Reflection and Discussion:

What is helpful and unhelpful about your work situation? = location; work environment; wages; growth opp; benefits? Other perks?

Do you have your own business? If so, what is your work? What support did you have to get started? What barriers did you experience? What are the current supports and current barriers that impact your success?

If you don't have your own business, have you considered starting one?

What is helpful and unhelpful about your transportation situation?

- What transportation shifts would bring ease to your daily life?
- What conveniences are within a 10-15 minute walking distance to where you live? (park, grocery, bus, sidewalks, etc.)

What about biking?

## **11/2 Health, Recreation and Culture**

Large Group Check In: What do you like to do and where do you like to go in Arcata for fun?

Follow Up: What else? What has come up since we last gathered?

For Discussion and Reflection:

Where do you seek medical services for yourself and your family members? How do you get there?

- For an emergency?
- For routine care?
- For specialized care?
- As a student on campus?
- As a non-student?
- What is good?
- What is lacking?

What do you know about the City of Arcata's recreational offerings (for kids and adults) and how do you find out about them?

- What City of Arcata recreational programming are you a part of?
- If you plan to host an event, what's good and what needs improvement in the City of Arcata options?
- What specific programming do you want for yourself and your family?