

Washtenaw Equity Partnership (WEP) Prevention & Front-End Subcommittee Meeting

June 14, 2022 5:00-6:30 pm

Meeting Minutes

Attendees:

Victoria Burton-Harris (Co-chair)

Heather Martin (Co-chair)

Dez Simmons (Co-chair)

Daicia Price

Tish Lee

Gina VanDuinen

Darnesha Pickens

Belinda Dulin

Tara Dhanraj (Vera)

Angie Carpio (Vera)

- Vera staff member kicked off meeting. Goals for the meeting include reacting to the research questions developed during in the last month. The subcommittee broke into smaller groups and met in the last month to develop research questions for each priority area.
- Priority area: Impact of system involvement on housing and other needs
 - What barriers do people with system involvement in Washtenaw County experience as it related to access to basic needs such as housing?
 - Subcommittee member mentioned access to housing for families vs a single person when reentering.
 - How do policies related to and surveillance of affordable housing impact people living in those communities?
 - Subcommittee member clarified person from Legal Services – very aware of criminal records on access to housing and issues that impact people’s ability to access housing.
 - How can Washtenaw reduce barriers to employment for residents with system involvement?
- Priority area: Lack of community alternatives to police
 - What are the reasons people in Washtenaw County call the police that are not crime related/what do people call 911 for?
 - Subcommittee member mentioned coding of calls and standards for selecting codes.
 - Focus on why people call 911
 - What is the perception of local politicians, administrators (school K-12 and higher ed), policy and decision makers to alternatives to police?

- What current alternatives exist in Washtenaw County? What are the strengths, weaknesses and gaps?
 - Subcommittee member wanted to know what alternatives are on the books vs what other mutual aid groups do.
- What do Washtenaw County residents think could be an alternative response to police?
- Priority area: High police presence in specific neighborhoods and harms caused
 - What are the effects of high police presence on certain neighborhoods in Washtenaw County?
 - How do law enforcement agencies surveil communities and what accountability and transparency exists in Washtenaw County?
 - What is the financial cost of high police presence/surveillance of certain communities in Washtenaw County?
- Youth Arts Alliance summer program for youth at Sycamore Meadows- could be a good opportunity/time to speak with youth about their thoughts on police surveillance and alternatives.
- Priority area: Need for culturally responsive social services that address basic needs
 - What culturally responsive social services (to address basic needs) exist and could be implemented in Washtenaw County?
- Subcommittee member noted data points where police commit crimes; sometimes not coded as crimes. Looking at harms caused by police. Is there something that looks at and highlights those issues?
- Subcommittee mentioned public private partnerships, such as downtown development authority or businesses. In City of Ypsilanti there was a proposal around setting up surveillance downtown.
- Subcommittee member mentioned Michigan state police has a large contract for surveillance.
- Google doc available for subcommittee members to add people to talk to, materials to review, etc.