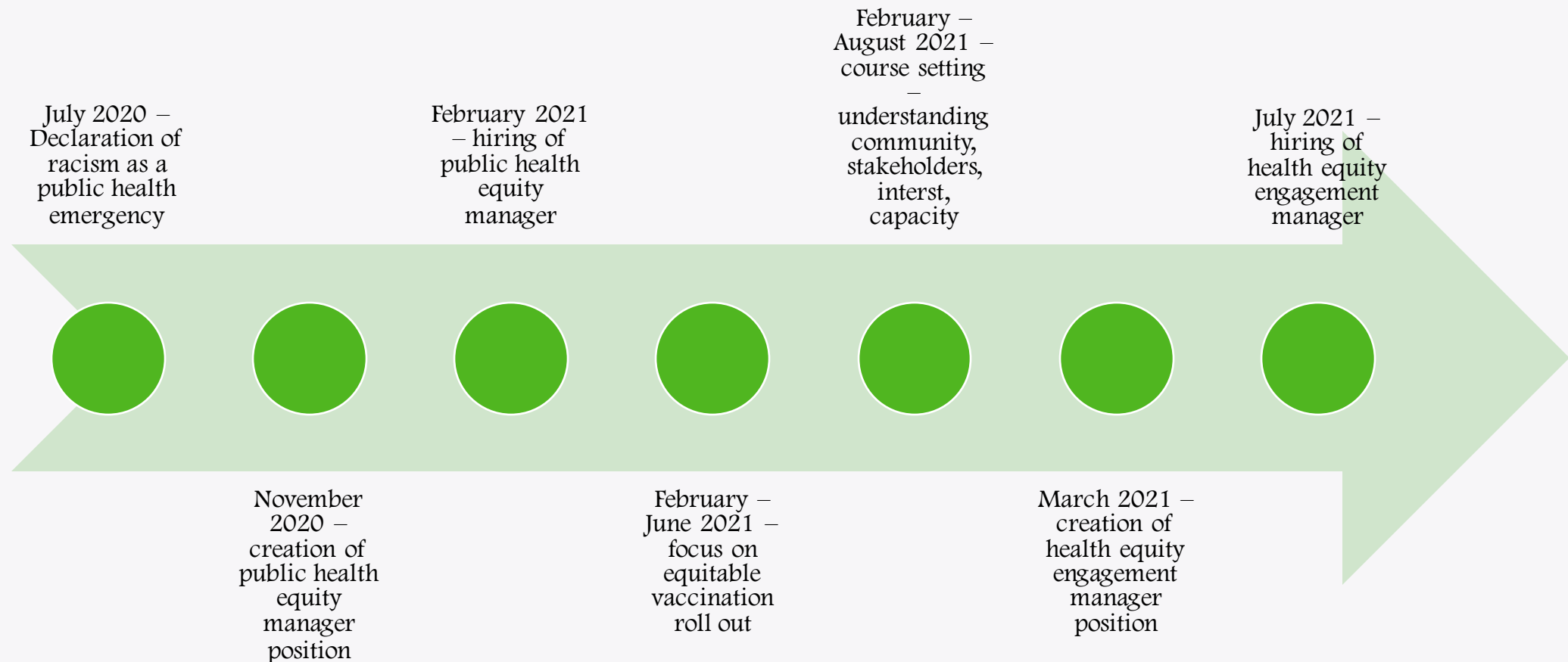Marielle Matthews

Nyla Ruiz

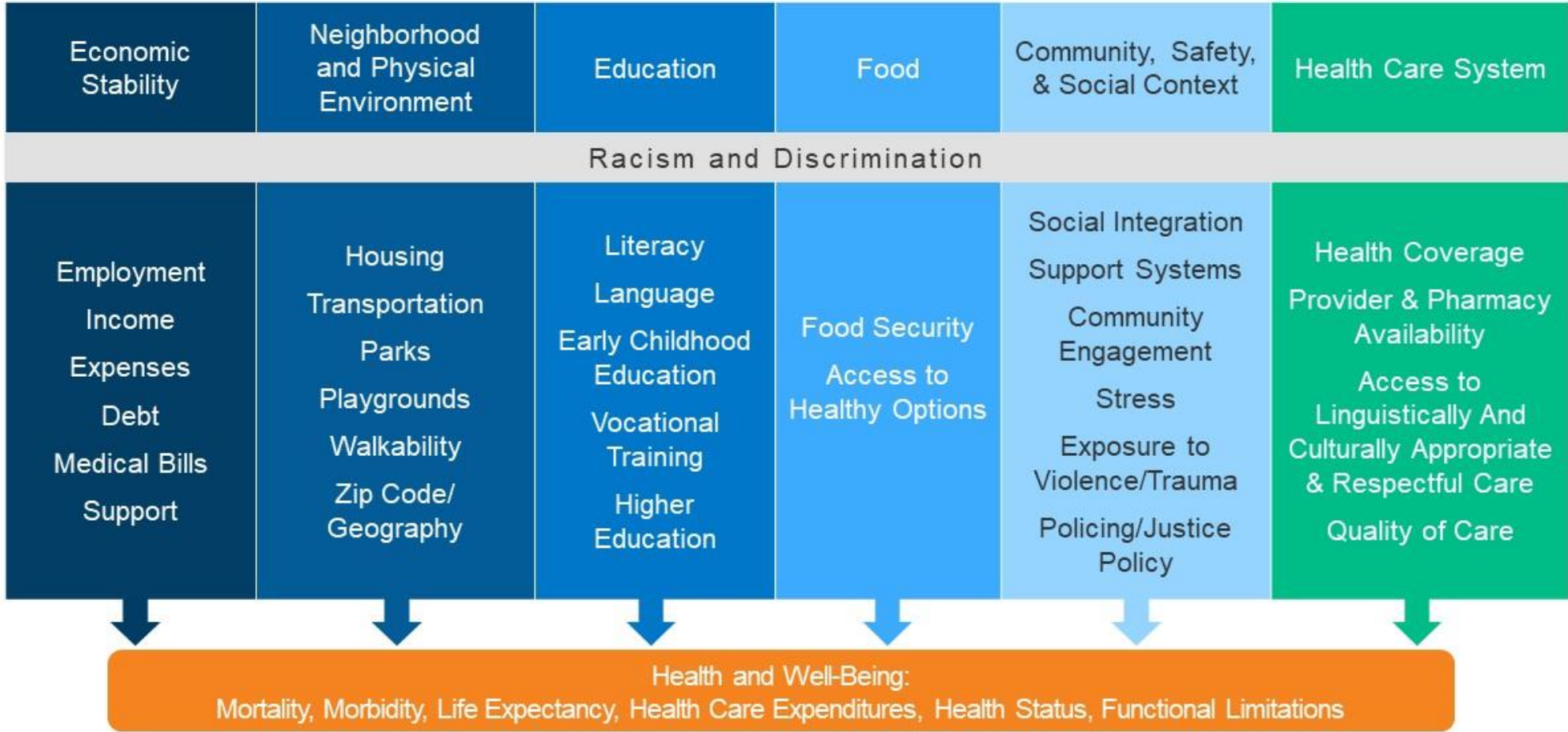# Racism as a Public Health Emergency

Let's be clear:

"The history of public health is a complicated story of science and colonial, post-slavery social systems where good faith policy narratives implicitly and/or explicitly put into practice violent systems of restrictive health access that perpetuate inequity."

Source: Paine L, de la Rocha P, Eyssallenne AP, Andrews CA, Loo L, Jones CP, Collins AM and Morse M (2021) Declaring Racism a Public Health Crisis in the United States: Cure, Poison, or Both? Front. Public Health 9:676784. doi: 10.3389/fpubh.2021.676784

What's happened in the last year

July 2020 – Declaration of racism as a public health emergency

February 2021 – hiring of public health equity manager

February – August 2021 – course setting – understanding community, stakeholders, interst, capacity

July 2021 – hiring of health equity engagement manager

November 2020 – creation of public health equity manager position

February – June 2021 – focus on equitable vaccination roll out

March 2021 – creation of health equity engagement manager position

Social Determinants of Health

Economic Stability	Neighborhood and Physical Environment	Education	Food	Community, Safety, & Social Context	Health Care System
Racism and Discrimination					
Employment Income Expenses Debt Medical Bills Support	Housing Transportation Parks Playgrounds Walkability Zip Code/ Geography	Literacy Language Early Childhood Education Vocational Training Higher Education	Food Security Access to Healthy Options	Social Integration Support Systems Community Engagement Stress Exposure to Violence/Trauma Policing/Justice Policy	Health Coverage Provider & Pharmacy Availability Access to Linguistically And Culturally Appropriate & Respectful Care Quality of Care

Health and Well-Being:
Mortality, Morbidity, Life Expectancy, Health Care Expenditures, Health Status, Functional Limitations
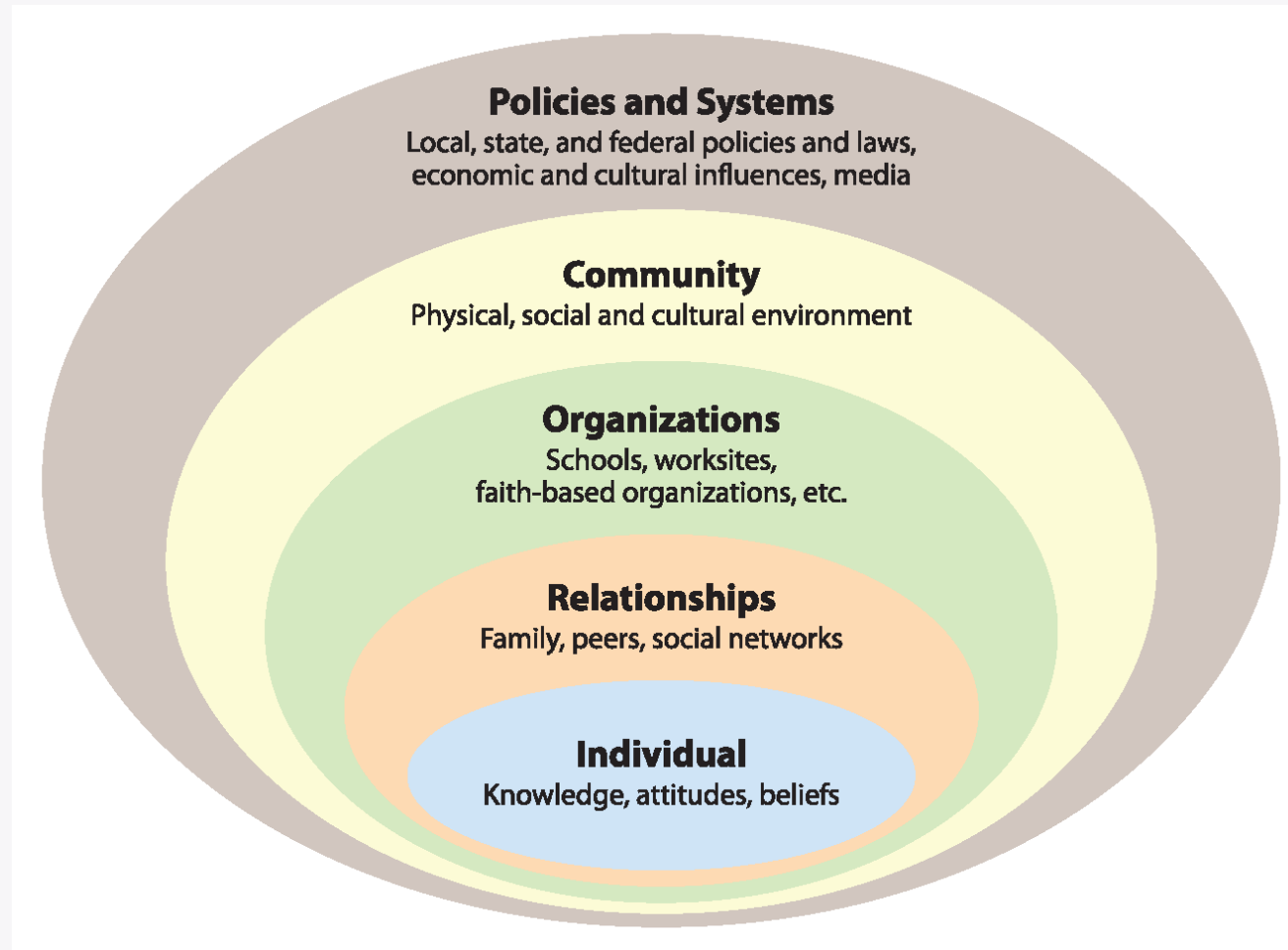
A holistic approach

"SDoE [Social/structural determinants of equity] challenge the current distribution of SDoH by addressing factors that determine the range of contexts observed in each place and time and the distribution of populations in those contexts. SDoE focuses on structural or root causes, **recognizing that addressing health disparities requires a holistic perspective**; **authentic processes** in mitigating inequity require **addressing the unequal allocation of power and resources**"

Source: *Paine L, de la Rocha P, Eyssallenne AP, Andrews CA, Loo L, Jones CP, Collins AM and Morse M (2021) Declaring Racism a Public Health Crisis in the United States: Cure, Poison, or Both? Front. Public Health 9:676784. doi: 10.3389/fpubh.2021.676784*

Table 1. Mapping the Metrics of Systemic Racism onto Social Determinants of Health and Health Impacts

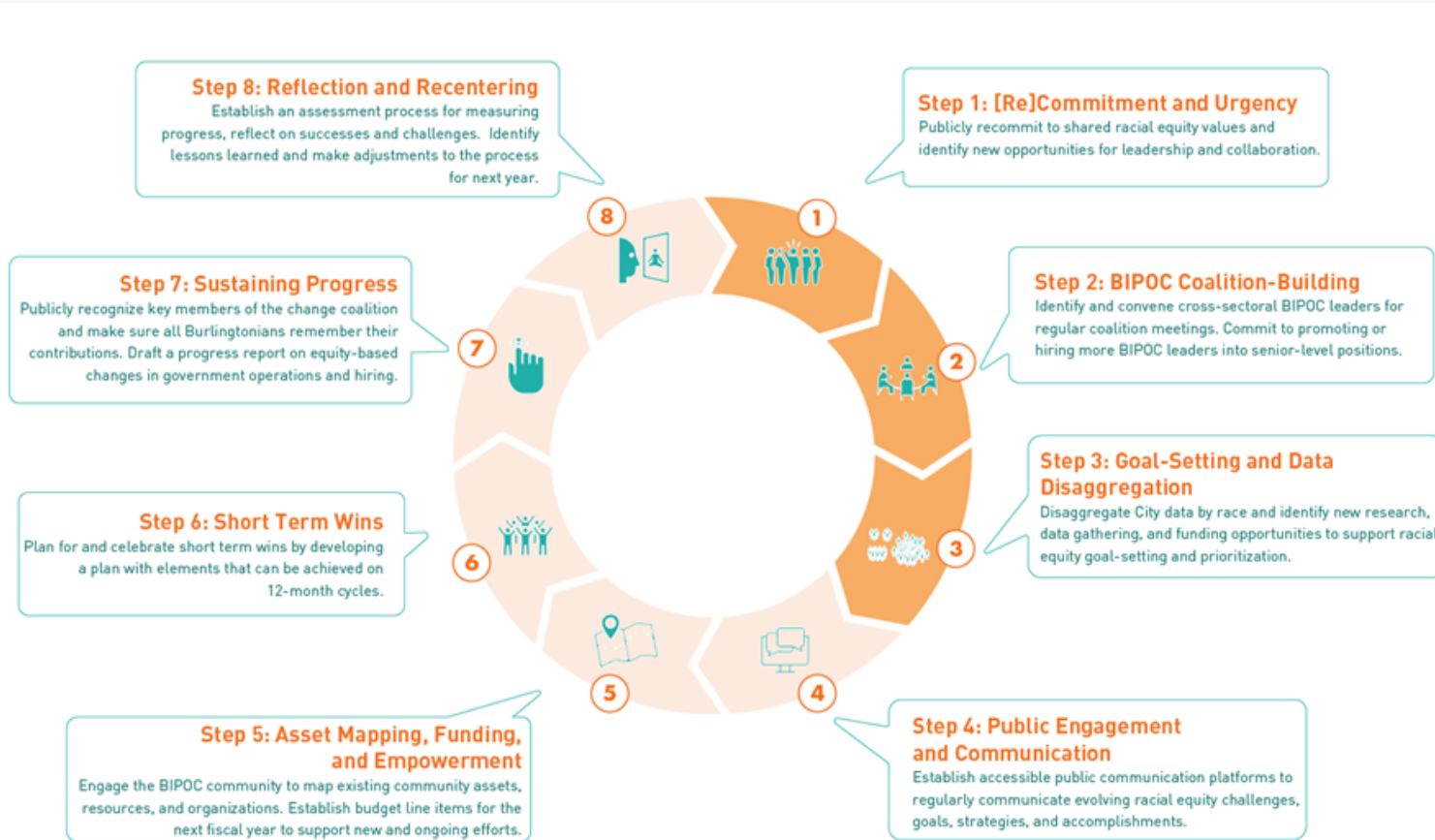| Policy Sector	Relevant Policy	Metrics	Social Determinants of Health	Health Impact
Housing	Redlining[32,34] Homestead Act[33]	*Index of dissimilarity*: proportion of Blacks or Whites who would have to move out of their neighborhood to achieve an even distribution, or complete integration[32] *Isolation*: degree to which Blacks have potential contact with non-Blacks[32]	Lower quality housing and schools[106] Food deserts[107] Environmental racism[108]	Reduced access to health services[109] Segregated hospitals with lower quality of care[108] Primary care shortage[108] Decreased utilization of services[110] Shortened life expectancy[111] Higher risk of COVID-19[112]
Criminal Legal	War on Drugs[113] Policing[113] Mass incarceration Sentencing disparities Mandatory minimums	Proportions of Blacks to Whites who were[35,38]: incarcerated disenfranchised felons on death row	Generational poverty Single-parent households	Black-White gaps in depressive symptoms[39] Adverse childhood experiences (ACEs)[114] Elevated mortality risk[115] Higher community-level incidence of HIV[115] Decreased utilization of health care[116]

Source: Racism Measurement Framework: A Tool for Public Health ...https://ojph.org › article › download

Policy Sector	Relevant Policy	Metrics	Social Determinants of Health	Health Impact

Voting	Voter Suppression Laws, including[36,37]:
	  government-issued photo ID require-ments
	  citizenship laws
	  elimination of same-day voter registration
	  reductions of early and absentee voting days
	  restrictions on restoration of voting rights for felons
	  gerrymandering
	  voter purging
		Proportions of Blacks to Whites who[38]:
		  were registered to vote
		  actually voted
		  were elected to the state legislature
			Social isolation[117]
			Limited social capital[117]
			Lower levels of education attainment[117]
			Lower income[117]
				Lower self-rated health[118]
				Worsened psychological health tied to increased allostatic load[119]
				Reduced life expectancy[120]

Source: Racism Measurement Framework: A Tool for Public Health ...https://ojph.org › article › download

Vermont Prevention Framework

Strategic Planning Process

Step 8: Reflection and Recentering
Establish an assessment process for measuring progress, reflect on successes and challenges. Identify lessons learned and make adjustments to the process for next year.

Step 1: [Re]Commitment and Urgency
Publicly recommit to shared racial equity values and identify new opportunities for leadership and collaboration.

Step 7: Sustaining Progress
Publicly recognize key members of the change coalition and make sure all Burlingtonians remember their contributions. Draft a progress report on equity-based changes in government operations and hiring.

Step 2: BIPOC Coalition-Building
Identify and convene cross-sectoral BIPOC leaders for regular coalition meetings. Commit to promoting or hiring more BIPOC leaders into senior-level positions.

Step 6: Short Term Wins
Plan for and celebrate short term wins by developing a plan with elements that can be achieved on 12-month cycles.

Step 3: Goal-Setting and Data Disaggregation
Disaggregate City data by race and identify new research, data gathering, and funding opportunities to support racial equity goal-setting and prioritization.

Step 5: Asset Mapping, Funding, and Empowerment
Engage the BIPOC community to map existing community assets, resources, and organizations. Establish budget line items for the next fiscal year to support new and ongoing efforts.

Step 4: Public Engagement and Communication
Establish accessible public communication platforms to regularly communicate evolving racial equity challenges, goals, strategies, and accomplishments.

Strategic Plan Goals for Health as a Racial Equity Domain

1. Increase in access to food and resources

2. Increase in BIPOC representation in the healthcare system

3. Support public health of BIPOC communities and cultures

4. Increase diversity education for children and adults

Community Engagement Goals

1. Create and sustain a culture that demonstrates commitment to equitable and inclusive community engagement by dedicating resources (space, time, money) to support the work.

2. Listen authentically and create avenues for meaningful collaboration with Burlington BIPOC residents.

3. Assure a shared decision-making process with communities who are affected most by health inequities (i.e., the BIPOC community).

4. Strengthen community relationships by enhancing communication, collaboration, and coordination between REIB, Vermont public health leaders and local BIPOC organizations.

What do you need from City Council?

- Public Health Funding
    - Community Advisory Board
    - Community Engagement and Outreach
    - Intervention Planning, Implementation, and Evaluation

Contact Us

- mmatthews@burlingtonvt.gov
- nruiz@burlingtonvt.gov