

A Blueprint for Economic Justice
in Multnomah County

Appendix C
Community Discussion

Department of County Human Services
Multnomah Idea Lab



Multnomah County Economic Justice Project

Community Discussion Capture
April 29, 2023



The Economic Justice Project At A Glance

Background

In Fiscal Year 22, Multnomah County Board of County Commissioners funded a one-time only project to create a blueprint for action to guide future economic justice policy and investment.

This is a new area of exploration for Multnomah County. This would specifically focus on Multnomah County's unique role.

The Multnomah County Economic Justice Project Community Discussion that took place on April 29, 2023 explored and identified potential strategies for county action and investment.

What We Learned From the Research

- Economic disparities are racially based and the BIPOC communities have a higher rate of poverty.
- Economic Justice means promoting long-term systemic change to address the underlying issues at the roots of disparities. Although Multnomah County has made historic investments to meet existing needs, it does not currently fund programs identified as addressing the issues for Economic Justice.
- The recommended Economic Justice strategies are to build assets, to build income, to repair past harms by local jurisdictions, and to eliminate barriers to wealth-building.

Feedback From the Community Discussion

Community prioritized the following three actions for how the county could invest in economic justice strategies.

- Fund basic income
- Fund asset building/homeownership
- Re-focus current legal system investments on mental health & wellness

Next Steps

- We will assess the feasibility of prioritized ideas and build partnerships.
- We will seek to infuse economic justice into existing county programs in the 2023-24 fiscal year.
- We will work with the Board of County Commissioners to develop proposals for the 2024-25 fiscal year.

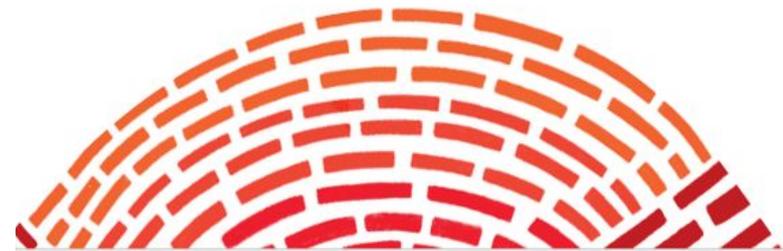
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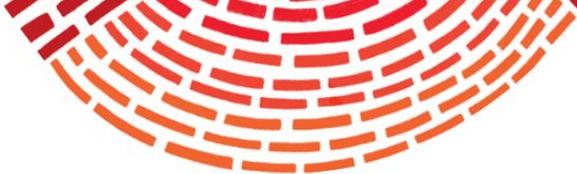
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Design Question

*How might Multnomah County increase **Economic Justice** in current systems of care and services for Black and Indigenous communities?*





Participating Organizations

African Family Holistic Health
Organization

Bayanihan Center

Black Parent Initiative

Interfaith Movement for Immigrant
Justice (IMIrJ)

Equitable Giving Circle

Home Forward

Multnomah County Commission for
Economic Dignity

Morrison Child & Family Services

Multnomah County Youth
Commission

Oregon Economic Justice
Roundtable

Oregon & SW Washington African
Community Development Center

P.O.I.C.

Proud Ground

REACH Community Development

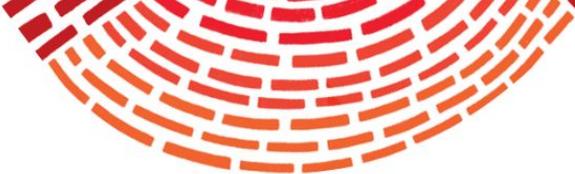
Self Enhancement Inc

WomenFirst



Above: Members of these organizations participated at the community discussion





What We Did

- We grounded our work in response to an acknowledgment of stolen land and lives
- We reviewed research on the need for economic justice in Multnomah County, and ideas for how the county could move forward
- We worked together in groups to develop more ideas for how the county could approach economic justice, and then narrowed our ideas down to the most promising ideas
- We shared our priorities with each other and celebrated



Graphic Recording

A graphic recorder, Nitya Wakhlu, created visual notes for the event.

This image depicts how the day got started: we defined economic justice, affirmed a focus on serving black, indigenous, and people of color, and acknowledged the role of government in creating and dismantling barriers to economic prosperity.



Opening Session

County Chair, Jessica Vega-Pederson

- One role of government is to create systemic solutions and dismantle economic barriers
- Support for the movement toward economic transformation led by BIPOC communities

County Commissioner, Susheela Jayapal

- Shared how the County builds the budget and creates policy
- Urged us to address the root causes of economic injustice and invest in strategies that help people go beyond survival



Research and Data

About the Discussion Guide

A Discussion Guide was developed to support incorporating economic justice into the county's programs, policies, and practices. It is designed to provide the basis for a collaborative community design process to develop a blueprint for economic justice in Multnomah County.

Key Insights

Dedicating new resources toward upstream Economic Justice strategies will reduce the need over time for continued high-level investments in downstream interventions to support Economic Survival and Economic Stability.

Economic Disparities in Multnomah County



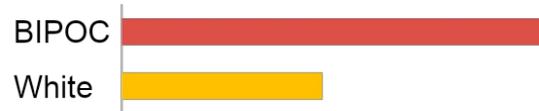
The **median income** for White households is almost **1.4 times** the median income for BIPOC households.



The **poverty rate** for BIPOC households is almost **two times** the poverty rate for White households.



The percentage of BIPOC households that have **zero net worth** is **1.5 times** the percentage of White households.



The **homeownership rate** for White households is almost **1.5 times** the BIPOC homeownership rate.



Current Investments in Economic Justice

Economic Justice

Promote long-term systemic change to address the underlying issues at the roots of disparities.

Economic Mobility

Equip people to move out of poverty and improve their economic situation by providing pathways to increased earning potential.

Economic Stability

Assist people with limited incomes to maintain their ability to meet their households' needs.

Economic Survival

Provide direct services for people whose lack of economic resources make it impossible to meet their human survival needs.

Current Multnomah County Investments by Category



4 Strategic Recommendations

1. Strategies that build assets

For example, Baby Bonds!

2. Strategies that build income

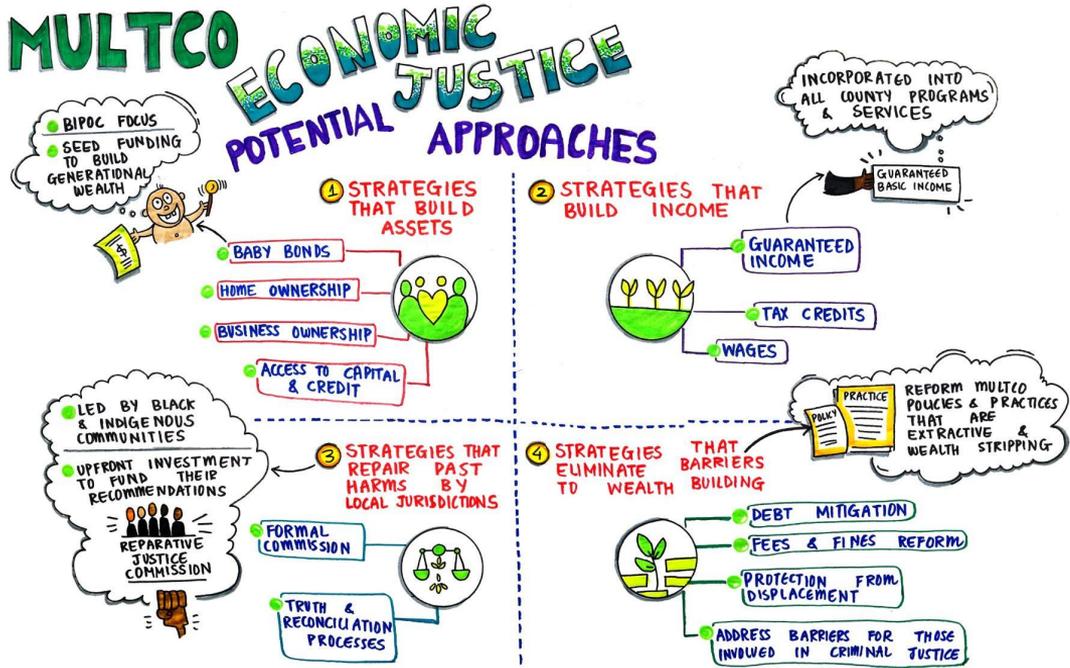
For example, basic income

3. Strategies that repair past harms by local jurisdictions

For example, a truth and reconciliation process

4. Strategies that eliminate barriers to wealth-building

For example, fines and fees reform



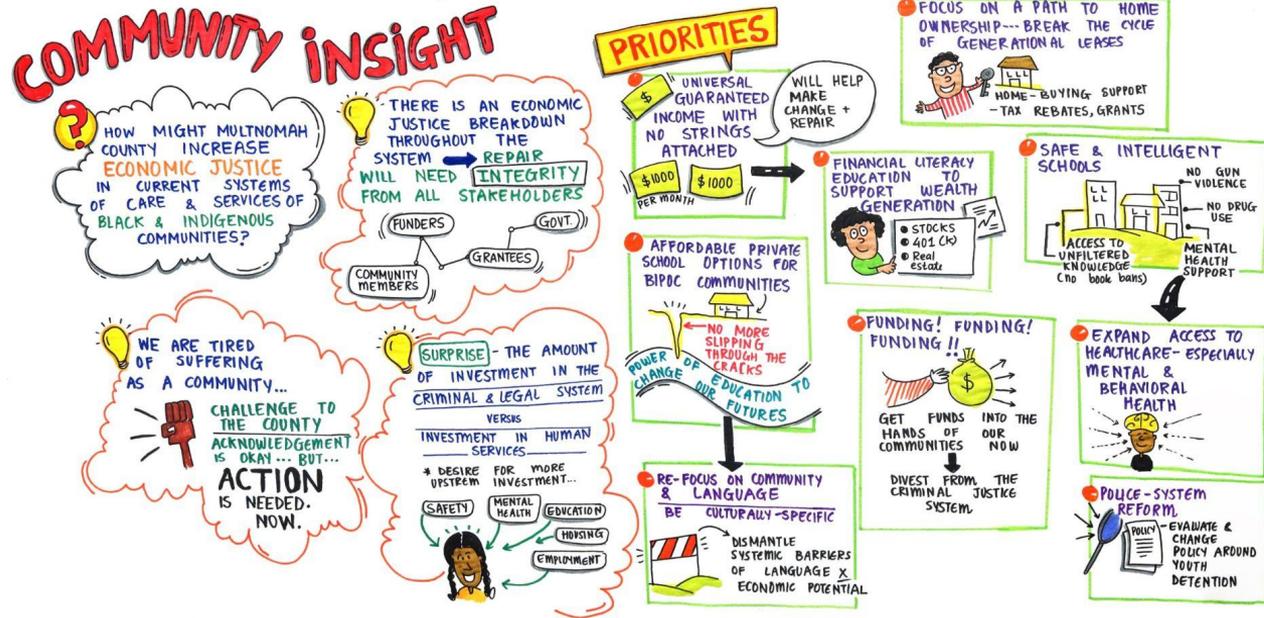
Small Group Priorities

The opening and presentation of the discussion guide were discussed. We gathered into four small groups (including a youth group) to generate ideas for how the county could invest in economic justice strategies, and then we prioritized those ideas.

Prioritized Ideas

After the small group discussions, everyone came together to share their ideas and priorities.

Those priorities are listed on the next slide.

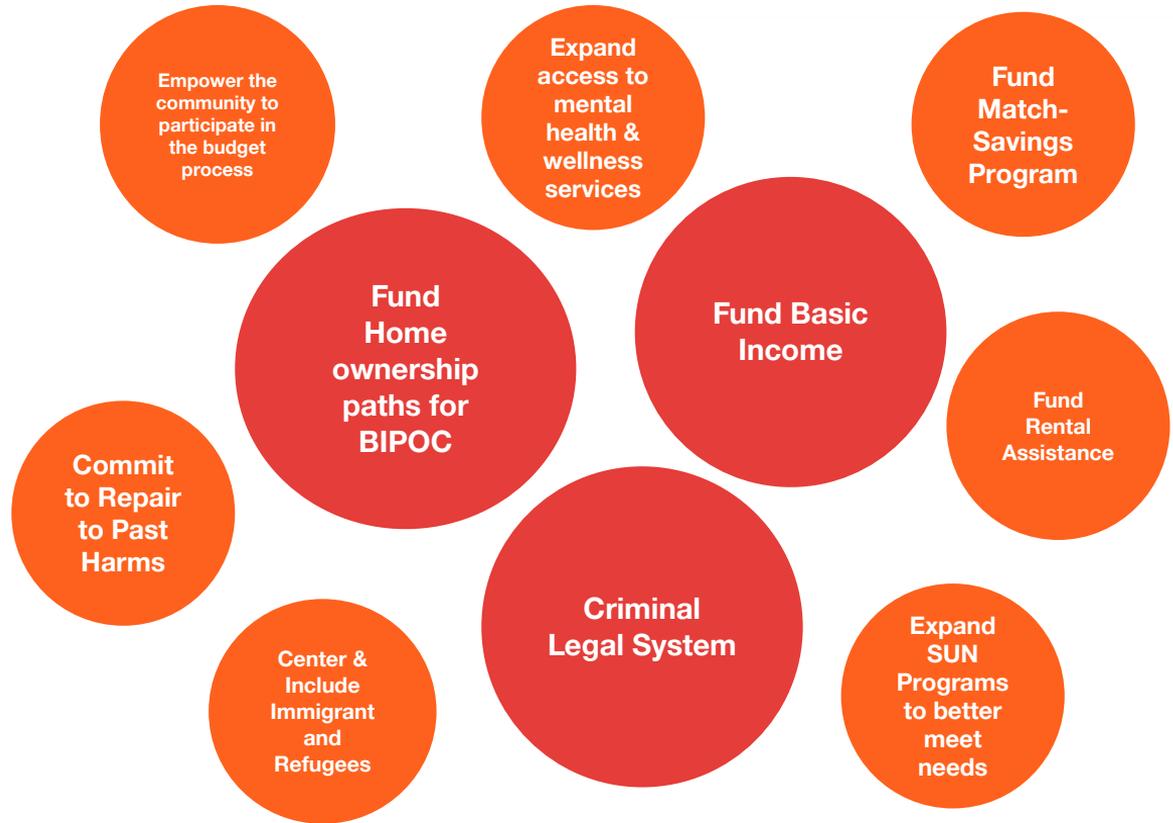


Prioritized Ideas

Upon bringing together the feedback across all four small groups, several themes arose.

The ideas that were prioritized were:

- Fund basic income
- Fund asset building/homeownership
- Re-focus current legal system investments on mental health & wellness



Next Steps

Mohammad Bader, DCHS Director

- Appreciated the time and wisdom shared

Suggested next steps for this process as follows:

- We will use the results of the day to identify shared priorities for further research and development
- We will assess the feasibility of prioritized ideas and build partnerships
- We will seek to infuse economic justice into existing county programs in the 2023-24 fiscal year
- We will work with the Board of County Commissioners to develop proposals for the 2024-25 fiscal year



Inspired to Action - Activated and Engaged!



Plus / Delta

What worked well

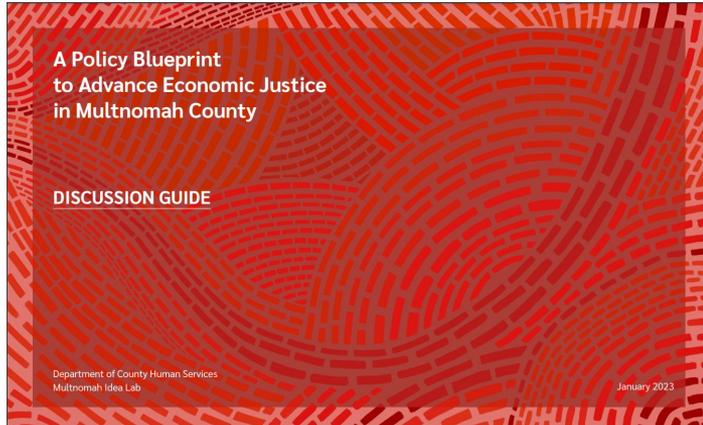
- Welcoming environment
- Time was well managed
- Liked the food
- Small groups worked well
- Informative; hoping to see actual change
- Enjoyed inclusiveness of youth involvement and translation - multigenerational worked well
- Good event planning and support

What can be done differently

- More outreach needed
- More support required for our non-English speaking community members
- More time for dialogue and connection among participants
- Elected leaders able to directly hear small group reports

Resources

*Click on the image
to get access



*Click on image for
access to main
powerpoint from the event



감사합니다 Obrigado شكراً لك

Спасибо Salamat

Thank you! Merci धन्यवाद

Asante Tatenda

Gracias 谢谢 Maita