

African American Community Concerns and Recommendations

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Community Violence and Police Reform:

Aspiration: We want to decrease interpersonal violence within black families and neighborhoods, reduce and then eliminate black male homicides and improve police community relations. We further want to eliminate incidents of excessive use of force and profiling of people of color by police.

Concerns:

- Adequate attention has not been paid by city leadership to the racial and ethnic components of violence in families, neighborhoods, and the broader community.
- There has been a significant racial/ethnic disparity for homicides in Marion County for years. In 2018, 103 black males were killed compared to 21 white males. In 2017 there were 85 and in 2016 103 criminal homicides; in these two years African American males were the majority killed by other African Americans. The economic and emotion, family and neighborhood destabilization, and impact upon potential marriages and parenting as well as child welfare are incalculable.
- The city does not presently have an Indianapolis Commission for African American Males (or any other body dedicated to address solutions to the complex issues of African American males) or representation upon the State's Commission on the Social Status of Black Males.
- There is much untreated trauma, depression and other mental health concerns among African American adults and children, especially those who've been impaled by homicides, shooting and community violence; there is a lack of coordinated informed care and community building.
- Many grassroots organizations/leaders do outstanding work in violence prevention and support for families addressing the consequences of violence; many have little-to-no support or recognition from the city, individuals, foundations, and corporate funding sources. Many groups believe their voices and work aren't sufficiently heard or considered in the City's response to community violence.
- To date the mayor's office has not completed two major items with respect to police reform. They are the review of the complaint process for IMPD as well as civilian inclusion on a Use of Force Review Board.

Proposed Action Items:

- ✓ Recognizing that city grant funding is a valuable credibility builder for other major funders, the AACI encourages the mayor's office to utilize every appropriate opportunity to fund and support the organizational capacity building and leadership effectiveness of emerging and grassroots organizations, especially those with community violence reduction as a primary agenda.

¹ When reviewing this document a "✓" reflects a completed task, while an "O" represent progress but not

completed. An "•" reflect a view that there has not been an enough progress on an issue based on information available.

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- ✓ Adequate numbers of well- trained Community Violence Department staff, and their on-going collaboration and training with other local, regional, and national community development efforts with certified best practices should be prioritized.
- ✓ Complete the process for establishing a Use of Force Review Board that reviews all use of force incidents involving citizens and IMPD that includes citizens within the deliberative process.
- ✓ We propose the establishment of an ombudsman empowered to coordinate among city/county agencies to work with community leadership addressing black males and aligned with the State's Commission on the Social Status of Black Males.
- ✓ City officials (MNA, appropriate Mayoral staff) should visit families/communities impacted by homicides to demonstrate their concern, empathy and address any immediate and appropriate needs.
- ✓ Perform a review of the citizen's police complaint process to understand its effectiveness and ascertain a baseline understanding of community confidence in the process to support future process improvement.
- Insure there is collaboration and joint planning and program management between the Marion County Juvenile Court and the City's Community Violence staff in implementing the dedicated approach to working with adjudicated juveniles.

Affordable Housing:

Aspiration: We want more access to affordable housing opportunities - apartment and homes -more aggressive enforcement of housing codes and owner accountability to residents, decreased housing discrimination, and improve quality of neighborhood life indices throughout Marion County, particularly as they impact Black people.

Concerns:

- Brookings Institute reports that in the Indianapolis-Carmel- Anderson MSA, black homes are devalued by roughly \$19,000 based on comparable homes in other neighborhoods.
- We are concerned about black homeownership rates, as the 2015 Indianapolis white homeownership rate was 61.7% while the black homeownership rate was 33.3% which was amongst the lowest among comparable cities (Nashville, 39.4%; Columbus (Franklin) 31.5%; Milwaukee, 25.9%; Kansas City (Jackson), 39.3%; Louisville, 38.4%.)
- Researchers at the IU Public Policy Institute found that minority populations, and specifically black female headed households experience evictions at higher rates than other groups.
- Marion County had third highest eviction rate in the state in 2016, as Wayne, Lawrence and Warren townships had eviction filing rates over 20% and evictions rates over 8.5%.
- A Princeton University study found Indianapolis has the second highest number of evictions in the country (2016).
- Non-resident apartment and home-owners and absentee landlords have financially and emotionally abused their occupants as well as endangered their health. The deteriorating apartment complexes, homes and other rental units further diminish the physical infrastructure, appearance and safety of many neighborhoods already beset with a multitude of other issues related to poverty.

Proposed Action Items:

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- ✓ We want to support CDBG decision committees with DMD where appropriate.
- ✓ The City should work with central Indiana legislators to develop legislation that would give the City greater authority to regulate, fine and secure the property of corporate and absentee landlords. Holding apartment and home rental to high standards of quality for rental units; timely and complete repairs, maintenance of health and safety standards and adherence to fair rental rates should be the goal of proposed legislation.
- ✓ There should be greater diversity in the leadership of community and housing development organizations receiving pass through funds from the city for each source of funding.
- We want to see the city's affordable housing strategy to address high crime areas and receive semi-annual updates regarding outcomes of housing construction/renovation, elimination of abandoned/deteriorated housing, and availability of units for Black low/moderate income people.
- ✓ We will develop a talent pipeline for Black community development talent.
- We want to collaborate with the city and the Fair Housing Center of Central Indiana on a housing forum where we address discrimination in rentals, tenant's rights and to provide information on how residents can file complaints with Health and Hospital, Code Enforcement, the Office Business and Neighborhood Services and others.
- We will work with appropriate partners to leverage a rental strategy that positions us for homeownership.

Education:

Aspiration: Decrease in the racial achievement gap by 5% each year for the next 3 years for Black students on standardized tests, as well as racial/ethnic and gender parity in suspension and expulsion rates in Marion County public schools and Mayor's Charter schools.

Concerns:

- Based on our analysis, in most township districts, more than 70 percent of black children in third through eighth grade failed the ISTEP.
- Only 12.7 percent of 10th-grade black students in the townships outside IPS passed both math and ELA for ISTEP.
- The Mayor's Office of Education Innovation is responsible for about 15,000 students and our review suggests that while the schools outpace IPS in academic growth, academic proficiency remains a challenge.
- There is no coherent countywide strategy for addressing the disparity in the academic achievement gaps of African American youth.

Proposed Action Items:

- ✓ Encourage philanthropic and public dollars to flow to appropriate non-profits to address factors that impede learning (ex. food deserts, trauma, financial literacy for families, ESL classes for parents). Funders should also support all Marion County schools on their efforts toward addressing the racial achievement gap leveraging research-based practices.
- Leverage Mayor's "Bully Pulpit" to raise the issue of racial achievement gaps until there is a dramatic improvement in the racial achievement scores
- ✓ Lead and regularly convene community conversation on what "high quality" education for all students means in Marion County.

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- The Mayor's Office of Education and Innovation should direct all Mayor-sponsored charter schools to have trauma informed care plans. All relevant city departments should promote trauma informed care and engage in community building and coordination efforts, especially with community and church youth and social service groups, community development corporations, neighborhood associations and physical and mental health providers. Such coordination and collaborations should be reviewed when city funds are allocated for the operation, programs, and service delivery of such groups. Neighborhood associations, CDCs and their neighborhood partners should detail how they will address community violence in their organizational and area plans.
- ✓ Provide a plan and rationale that outlines for the public the need for new Mayor approved charter schools and the criteria applicants must provide to secure approval.
- The city charter school board should issue a community report that details the academic, financial and community development impact of mayor approved charter schools. The report should address issues of student retention, suspension and expulsion, parent engagement and collaboration with other academic and youth development groups. The goal of the report be to demonstrate the overall value add of mayor approved charter schools to their students and the community.

Black Economic Inclusion and Black Business Development:

Aspiration: We are interested in increasing both the perception and the reality of Indianapolis as the best city for economic inclusion and mobility and minority and female business development, especially for African Americans.

Concerns:

- There has not been transparency about MWBE participation data, specifically related to reporting black business numbers, business diversity, etc.
- We believe there has been a decrease in the number of certified MWBE in construction and professional services businesses.
- We believe a large number of residents are in excess of 15 minutes away from work and are at risk of limited economic mobility options.
- We are the 6th most economically segregated region in the country which is up from 53rd in 1990.
- There has been an 80% increase in poverty over the last decade.
- A child born in the bottom 20% of the income distribution has a 4.8% of reaching the top 20%.
- 45% of families in Marion County are either below the poverty line (19%) or ALICE families (26%).
- Indianapolis ranks 220 in racial inclusion (out of 274 cities).
- We are not having a community wide discussion on wealth creation.

Action Items:

- ✓ We are interested in the results of the disparity study and any plans for implementation of recommendations.
- ✓ Mayor should encourage GIPC to partner with AACI on examining issues of economic inclusion.
- ✓ An understanding of how the city collects its MWBE data, specifically what is the total number of available contracts that are up for bid in a year and what departments adhere to the MWVDOBE goals.

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- ✓ MWBE contract and spend data should be posted on the city's website at a regular interval. This regular reporting should include a disaggregation of "minority" contracts so that the community can see Black contractor participation in XBE reporting.
- We would like to have the Equal Opportunity Advisory Board host joint information sessions with the AACI on the process for filing discrimination claims.
- Host, in concert with the Office of Minority and Women Business Development, semi-annual bidders and capacity-building conferences to prepare minority contractors to do business with the city with a goal of increasing minority participation/contracting to at least 25% of budget.

Food Insecurity:

Aspiration: A reduction of Indy residents facing food insecurity by 50% in 2 years.

Concerns:

- SAVI (Social Asset & Vulnerability Index) reports that nearly 200,000 residents experience food insecurity in Marion County daily.
- A consensus on a shared definition of food deserts/food swamps is lacking. This definition obscures where they exist, what food delivery resources are needed in particular locations, as well as a shared goal for insuring access to affordable, nutritious, healthy, and culturally relevant foods and related cooking supplies. Our specific areas of concern include:
 - Mapleton Fall Creek
 - Riverside
 - Crown Hill
 - Martindale-Brightwood
 - Forest Manor
 - Arlington Woods
 - CAFE/Far Eastside
 - Northwest Area
 - Twin Aires and south Indianapolis
- Food insecurity threatens the dignity of city residents and the ability of people to function at their greatest potential.

Action Items:

- ✓ Policy and financial investment solutions to increase the number of community assets such as supermarkets/grocery stores/food coops and other food delivery systems should be further explored. The impact of food stores upon home values, willingness to lives in neighborhoods, resident housing choices and mobility should be considered and factored into strategies to address food insecurity and access.
- Broader community organization and resident engagement in food insecurity plans of the city and its partner organizations, Gleaners, etc.
- The city should support more urban gardens throughout the city. The Cooperative Extension Service, master gardeners, and citizen gardener volunteers could be recruited to provide technical assistance to families and neighborhoods. The Mayor's Action Center and other departments could help coordinate and promote such efforts.

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- Update city ordinances to support farmers markets, food coops, gardens, and other food insecurity solutions.

Additional Action items:

- ✓ Seek ways for the city to promote Black Philanthropy in collaboration with AACI and AALFI
- ✓ The mayor should provide a list of actions his administration has taken that specifically and positively impacted the black community.
- There is a concern about the cleanliness of the city.