

PUBLIC WORKS AND ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES CALENDAR YEAR 2024 EQUITY IMPACT PLAN



Leadership Sponsor: Christopher Herrington, Director

Equity Lead(s): Courtney Willis-Banks, Equity Lead

Departmental Equity Guiding Statement: As one department with racial and gender diversity at all levels that reflect the community we serve, DPWES creates and preserves a sustainable community by ensuring that neither race nor social vulnerability are predictors of the quality of services realized by our customers.

Context: DPWES provides Fairfax County residents with a wide variety of services through the development of programs and projects including management of the urban forest, stormwater, wastewater, solid waste, and capital facility construction for the County. Examples of programs include infrastructure maintenance, trash collection, wastewater treatment, tree planting, LED streetlight retrofit, stream restoration, litter removal, and community sustainability outreach. DPWES also provides essential emergency response functions like snow removal at County facilities, flood response, and storm debris removal. Many DPWES programs are driven by regulatory obligations or are constructing projects initiated by other County departments, and DPWES has not historically prioritized delivery of our programs to explicitly address areas of opportunity or to ensure racial equity was a primary consideration in our service delivery.

DPWES continues to move forward with establishing and initiating government-sponsored equity work in the community and diversifying the department at all levels. Upward trends include an increased number of equity-trained individuals inside DPWES and the further use of the Vulnerability Index as a metric to target services in areas needing attention both internally with staff and externally in the community. Downward trends continue to be driven by a perceived lack of psychological safety for some employees and in the outcomes of employee relations actions. Marginalization based on socio-economic standing has consistently been an issue within the department and the local community. Finally, gender-based marginalization continues to be a problem as women are underrepresented in the department and in senior level management positions.

DPWES continues to expand our diversity and equity initiatives through two chartered cross-functional teams within the department. The DPWES Diversity Team is working to enhance racial and gender diversity within the department to be more demographically representative of Fairfax County at all levels of the department by evaluating our training and recruitment practices. The DPWES Equity Team has developed a new framework for key leadership in the department to evaluate the racial and social vulnerability outcomes of their programs. These teams will continue guiding DPWES towards achieving our Equity Guiding Statement and identifying necessary improvements in the delivery of DPWES services to Fairfax County to advance the County's One Fairfax Policy.

System-Level Infrastructure:

The DPWES Internal Diversity Team, External Equity Team, and associated sub-committees seek the assistance of various stakeholders to develop the framework for departments to utilize in addressing racial and social equity.

Internal Diversity Team:

- Department of Human Resources, County of Fairfax
- One Fairfax, Training Coordinator, Office of the County Executive
- Local Trade Schools and Apprenticeship Programs
- Minority Organizations such as National Society of Black Engineers (NSBE), and Society of Hispanic Engineers (SHPE)
- Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCU)
- DPWES LEO (Leadership Excellence Opportunity) programs

External Diversity Team:

- Department of Neighborhood & Community Services, County of Fairfax
 - NCS is needed to assist as subject matter experts as DPWES works to implement the Inclusive Community Engagement Framework, and to assist DPWES with identifying influential community leaders and organizations with whom DPWES can work as part of our ongoing outreach efforts.
- Department of Planning and Development, County of Fairfax
 - Coordination with DPD is necessary to ensure revisions to the County's Comprehensive Plan are consistent with DPWES infrastructure management objectives and strategies to advance One Fairfax in the delivery of DPWES' services.
- Department of Human Resources, County of Fairfax
 - DHR support is necessary to assist DPWES in developing and implementing policies and trainings that further the diversification of DPWES employees and broaden understanding of the One Fairfax Policy
- Land Development Services, County of Fairfax
 - Coordination with LDS is necessary to ensure regulatory solutions to concerns like flooding are addressed in alignment with DPWES infrastructure and programmatic solutions.
- Department of Information Technology GIS and Mapping Services, County of Fairfax
 - DPWES equity analytics rely heavily on spatial data maintained by DIT.
- Office of Public Affairs, County of Fairfax
 - To ensure that DPWES messaging reaches all County residents and that engagement with residents is inclusive, ongoing coordination with OPA is necessary.
- Department of Housing and Community Development, County of Fairfax
 - Implementation of some DPWES programs such recycling outreach and County code compliance requires the continued cooperation and collaboration with HCD.
- HOA/Community Organizations and Non-Governmental Partners
 - To assist as trusted sources of information and conduits for DPWES outreach efforts to
- Northern Virginia Soil and Water Conservation District
 - implementation of programmatic solutions that may assist individuals in taking individual action at home or work to address problems

- Fairfax County Public Schools
 - DPWES environmental outreach is heavily dependent upon finding willing partners within FCPS, and DPWES continues to seek partnership opportunities with FCPS to assist in recruiting new DPWES employees.

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DEPARTMENT GOALS

Goal 1: Implement departmental training, policies, and programs that further our diversity and equity goals in employee recruitment, retention, and development

One Fairfax Area(s) of Focus:

1. Community and economic development policies and programs that promote wealth creation and ensure fair access for all people.
3. Workforce development pathways that provide all residents with opportunity to develop knowledge and skills to participate in a diverse economy and earn sufficient income to support themselves and their families.
5. Education that promotes a responsive, caring, and inclusive culture where all feel valued, supported, and hopeful, and that every child is reached, challenged, and prepared for success in school and life.
16. Intentional, focused recruitment efforts that bolster a diverse applicant pool; hiring and evaluation practices, and processes for employee feedback, to achieve and preserve a culture of equity and fairness for all employees.
17. Policies that prohibit all forms of discrimination under Federal and State law in county and school system activities, and ensure that all practices provide fair treatment for all employees, contractors, clients, community partners, residents, and other sectors who interact with Fairfax County including higher education, business, nonprofit, faith, philanthropy, and civic.

Countywide Strategic Plan Community Outcome Area(s): Economic Opportunity (EO), Efficient and Effective Government (EEG), Lifelong Education and Learning (LEL)

Relationship to Countywide Strategic Plan Strategies/Metric(s):

Strategy EO2. Focus efforts on removing barriers such as lack of affordable housing, childcare and transportation that limit participation in the workforce and employment-related programs.

EO4. Contribute to the closing of the racial wealth gap by supporting the development of ecosystems that facilitate locally owned investment and economic opportunities for Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC).

EEG8. Improve the county's competitiveness as an employer to recruit, hire and retain a diverse, highly qualified workforce utilizing data to determine barriers and target strategies for marginalized groups.

EEG9. Make the onboarding process for all new employees streamlined, consistent and compelling, so that staff have the information, tools and technology they need to begin their county careers effectively.

EEG10. Enhance countywide succession planning and ensure continuity of operations by focusing on key positions and critical functions where effective knowledge transfer and smooth workforce transitions are required.

EEG11. Expand employee learning opportunities to increase staff competencies and experience in the areas of leadership, equity, cultural proficiency, use of technology and innovation to meet the needs of a changing environment.

EEG13. Implement a workplace culture change effort to actively promote equity and inclusion, collaboration, excellence, innovation, customer service, transparency, accountability and trustworthiness.

EEG14. Provide more flexibility in the areas of workplace environment, benefits, career progression and nontraditional employment arrangements to compete more effectively with surrounding private and public sector employers for the next generation of employees.

EEG16. Ensure diverse representation and inclusiveness in power and decision-making opportunities.

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EEG 31. Equitably assess and perform ongoing maintenance, upgrades and replacement of county facilities, infrastructure and equipment so that they can meet future demands and provide a safe and healthy environment for residents and staff.

LEL5. Expand and enhance the technology skills of learners of all ages.

LEL14. Promote career and technical education and associated career paths — including apprenticeship and internship programs — across schools, postsecondary institutions and workforce development organizations, ensuring accessibility and alignment with projected areas of job demand, and identifying and addressing common barriers.

Actions	Stakeholders	Resources/ Supports	Responsible Parties	Timeline	Performance Measures
1a. Through targeted recruitment outreach, revised hiring practices, enhanced onboarding, and increased professional development opportunities, increase opportunities for more female employees at all levels of DPWES, for Black employees at S32+, and for Hispanic employees at S23+	DPWES Diversity Team, DPWES Executive Team, DPWES Leadership Team, DHR	DPWES Diversity Team, DPWES HR staff, DHR, FCPS, HOAs/NGOs	DPWES Director, DPWES HR Manager	01/2024 – 12/2024	% of DPWES employees identify as female (Target: 50%) % of DPWES S32+ identify as Black (Target: 10%) % of DPWES employees S23+ identify as Hispanic (Target: 16%)
1b. Identify implicit bias training vendor appropriate for DPWES and develop a plan to train all DPWES employees	DPWES Diversity Team, DPWES Executive Team, DPWES OD&T Team	DPWES Diversity Team, DPWES HR staff, DHR, One Fairfax	DPWES Director, DPWES HR Manager	01/2024 – 12/2024	Training initiated # participants
1c. Continue English-language proficiency courses for DPWES employees	Solid Waste Deputy Director, Solid Waste HR, DPWES Executive Team	Course vendor, Solid Waste HR staff, Solid Waste Newington Complex Manager	Deputy Director-Solid Waste	01/2024 – 12/2024	Second course installment initiated # participants
1d. Support employee affinity groups, including the Women of Water	Women of Water, DPWES Executive Team		Deputy Director-Stormwater/Wastewater, Assistant Director	01/2024 – 12/2024	Support any request for new affinity group creation or supporting existing groups # participants

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Goal 2: Evaluate the delivery of DPWES programs and projects to determine if our services are provided equitably to Fairfax County

One Fairfax Area(s) of Focus:

- 1. Community and economic development policies and programs that promote wealth creation and ensure fair access for all people.
- 6. Community and public safety that includes services such as fire, emergency medical services, police, health, emergency management and code enforcement that are responsive to all residents so that everyone feels safe to live, work, learn, and play in any neighborhood of Fairfax County.
- 11. A quality built and natural environment that accommodates anticipated growth and change in an economically, socially, and environmentally sustainable and equitable manner that includes mixes of land use that protects existing stable neighborhoods and green spaces, supports sustainability, supports a high quality of life, and promotes employment opportunities, housing, amenities and services for all people.
- 12. A healthy and quality environment to live and work in that acknowledges the need to breathe clean air, to drink clean water now and for future generations.
- 14. A multi-modal transportation system that supports the economic growth, health, congestion mitigation, and prosperity goals of Fairfax County and provides accessible mobility solutions that are based on the principles associated with sustainability, diversity, and community health.
- 17. Policies that prohibit all forms of discrimination under Federal and State law in county and school system activities, and ensure that all practices provide fair treatment for all employees, contractors, clients, community partners, residents, and other sectors who interact with Fairfax County including higher education, business, nonprofit, faith, philanthropy, and civic.

Countywide Strategic Plan Community Outcome Area(s): Effective and Efficient Government (EEG)

Relationship to Countywide Strategic Plan Strategies/Metric(s):

- Strategy EEG1. Implement a human-centered, highly responsive design approach across county and school programs and services to improve the customer experience.
- EEG13. Implement a workplace culture change effort to actively promote equity and inclusion, collaboration, excellence, innovation, customer service, transparency, accountability and trustworthiness.
- EEG17. Ensure local leaders, public and private, have the knowledge and capacity to understand the drivers of racial inequity and their contribution to structural racism, and use their power to build more equitable communities.
- EEG21. Strengthen the use of data-informed decision making through regular data collection, evaluation and distribution.
- EEG25. Develop, pilot, and institute Fairfax County equity-based decision-making tools for planning, projects, decision making and resource allocation.
- EEG31. Equitably assess and perform ongoing maintenance, upgrades and replacement of county facilities, infrastructure and equipment so that they can meet future demands and provide a safe and healthy environment for residents and staff.

Actions	Stakeholders	Resources/ Supports	Responsible Parties	Timeline	Performance Measures
2a. Branch Chiefs and Complex Managers complete the equity peer assessment to identify actions to be completed in FY25	DPWES Executive Team, DPWES Leadership Team, DPWES branch chiefs and complex	DPWES Director, DPWES Asst Director, DPWES Leadership Team, DPWES branch chiefs and	DPWES Director, DPWES Asst Director	Jan 2024 – Jun 2024	Complete equity assessments and identify actions

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	managers, Equity Team	complex managers, Equity Team			
2b Branch Chiefs and Complex Managers complete their identified actions by the end of FY25	DPWES Executive Team, DPWES Leadership Team, DPWES branch chiefs and complex managers	DPWES Director, DPWES Asst Director DPWES Leadership Team, DPWES branch chiefs and complex managers, LDS, DPD, HCD, HOAs/NGOs, NVSWCD	DPWES Director, DPWES Leadership Team	Jul 2024 – Jun 2025	All identified actions completed

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Goal 3: Implement community engagement and public participation processes that are inclusive and equitable for all Fairfax County residents

One Fairfax Area(s) of Focus:

- 6. Community and public safety that includes services such as fire, emergency medical services, police, health, emergency management and code enforcement that are responsive to all residents so that everyone feels safe to live, work, learn, and play in any neighborhood of Fairfax County.
- 11. A quality built and natural environment that accommodates anticipated growth and change in an economically, socially, and environmentally sustainable and equitable manner that includes mixes of land use that protects existing stable neighborhoods and green spaces, supports sustainability, supports a high quality of life, and promotes employment opportunities, housing, amenities and services for all people.
- 12. A healthy and quality environment to live and work in that acknowledges the need to breathe clean air, to drink clean water now and for future generations.
- 17. Policies that prohibit all forms of discrimination under Federal and State law in county and school system activities, and ensure that all practices provide fair treatment for all employees, contractors, clients, community partners, residents, and other sectors who interact with Fairfax County including higher education, business, nonprofit, faith, philanthropy, and civic.

Countywide Strategic Plan Community Outcome Area(s): Economic Opportunity (EO), Effective and Efficient Government (EEG), Empowerment and Support for Residents Facing Vulnerability (ESRFV), Environment and Energy (EE), Safety and Security (SS)

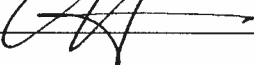
Relationship to Countywide Strategic Plan Strategies/Metric(s):

- Strategy EO1. Provide residents with a comprehensive menu of available services and resources to promote individual and family economic opportunity and facilitate broad access through proactive community engagement.
- EEG1. Implement a human-centered, highly responsive design approach across county and school programs and services to improve the customer experience.
- EEG3. Enhance communication and outreach to the community by using all available communication methods and tailoring messaging to individual needs.**
- EEG4. Improve public participation and engagement opportunities to ensure all facets of the community are represented and have the physical, technological, and language access necessary to engage and participate in community discussions and decisions.**
- EEG 6. Expand capacity to meaningfully engage the community in places that are accessible and in ways that consider needs, traditions, and values of diverse ethnic, racial, and cultural groups.
- EEG23. Provide greater access to information, engage with our community in an inclusive way and receive wide and diversified community input regarding spending priorities.
- ESRFV1. Develop targeted marketing and outreach strategies, in coordination with community-based partners, to proactively engage residents facing vulnerability.
- EE9. Develop a climate action plan to improve community health and resilience, and to prepare for anticipated changes in weather patterns, rainfall intensities, residential and river flooding and tidal impacts. Improve community resilience through better planning, mitigation and response to increasing severity of weather events.
- SS 8. Develop and implement risk-reduction programs to prevent or mitigate the loss of life, property and resources associated with emergencies and other disasters within the community.**
- SS 9. Strengthen individual, family, employee, school and community capability to facilitate effective emergency preparedness, mitigation, response and recovery.

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Actions	Stakeholders	Resources/ Supports	Responsible Parties	Timeline	Performance Measures
3a. Complete training of all DPWES project managers on using the Inclusive Community Engagement Framework	DPWES Executive Team, DPWES Leadership Team, DPWES project managers	NCS, DHR	DPWES Director, DPWES Asst Director	Jan 2024 – Jun 2024	# and % of project managers completing new training (Target: 100%)
3b. Perform targeted outreach to evaluate the equity impacts of the new Solid Waste Management Plan	DPWES Solid Waste leadership team, DPWES Director	DPWES solid waste planning team, consultant resources, community groups (HOAs/NGOs), NCS, HCD	DPWES Director, DPWES Deputy Director-Solid Waste	Jan 2024 – Mar 2025	Equity analysis or mitigation plan completed
3c. Continue collaboration with Culmore Partners to identify more effective means of partnering with local community groups to achieve larger collective impact	DPWES Director, DPWES Asst Director, DPWES outreach staff	Culmore Partners group, NCS	DPWES Director, DPWES Asst Director	Jan 2024 – Jun 2025	DPWES representative attends all Culmore Partners meetings # partnerships

Department Director's Signature:  _____