

# Breakout Group Slides

## Talking About Race

ACT (Affirm, Counter, Transform)

April 2023



# Agenda

- I. Presentation – (10:00 – 11:10)
- II. Breakout discussions – (11:10 – 11:30) – details below
- III. Reconvene and report out – (11:30 – 11:50)
- IV. Wrap up – (11:50 – 12:00)

Time	Agenda for Group Discussions
Things to note before breakout discussion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ What is said here, stays here; what is learned here, leaves here: If you share about your experience, refrain from using names.</li><li>▪ These questions and topics can be uncomfortable to discuss. While being uncomfortable is often part of meaningful learning, feel free to step back or take moment if you need space.</li><li>▪ Zoom timer in the upper right-hand corner can be used to reference remaining time.</li></ul>
11:10-11:30a	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Breakout groups practice <b>Affirm, Counter, Transform (ACT)</b> together</li><li>• Pick/adapt an example provided or come up with your own: see resources available in this document<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• ACT Definitions and Tips – slides 3-4</li><li>• ACT worksheets – slides 5-8</li><li>• Resources (e.g., data) to help respond to Counter section – slides 9-16</li><li>• Resources (e.g., policies) to help respond to Transform section – slides 17-21</li><li>• Examples of responses using ACT – slides 22-25</li><li>• FAQs – slides 26-30</li></ul></li><li>• Click the Ask for Help button to contact the meeting host if you get stuck. A PSRC staff person will briefly join your group to assist.</li></ul>

# ACT: Definitions

## AFFIRM

**Affirm** means to “start with the heart” and engage the audience with emotional appeals and explain how **people are in this together**.

Begin by affirming **core values** that your listener or audience shares with this effort. Reinforce the idea that **our goals are the same**.

## COUNTER

**Counter** means to explain the problem and take on race directly.

Explain the challenge, focusing on the institutional and structural drivers that have **created and maintained racial inequity**. Be explicit about race, **contrasting reality with the vision and values you've shared**. Use facts & stories to persuade your listener of the reality and importance of the problem.

## TRANSFORM

**Transform** involves reframing winners and losers, and it ends with a message that binds the heart and a transformative **solution** that people want to **support**.

Reiterate that we're **all in this together** and offer your audience or listener a **concrete step** they can take, or we can take together to transform our current reality into the **vision we share**.

# ACT: Tips

## AFFIRM

### Affirm

- Use plain language
- Emphasize **shared values**
- Describe your **vision for our communities** and how that audience **fits into that vision**
- Use stories that are evocative and specific

## COUNTER

### Counter

- Be **explicit about race**
- Be clear about the structural story
- Employ facts and historical context
- Detail how **current reality differs** from the **shared vision**

## TRANSFORM

### Transform

- Appeal again to the heart
- Identify **root causes** of the problem
- Invite audience to make a choice or **take action**

# ACT Worksheet | Breakout Groups

**Example 1** – How might you respond to this question? “Why doesn’t everyone build themselves up through education?”

<b>Affirm</b>	<b>Counter</b>	<b>Transform</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Type here!</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Type here!</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Type here!</li></ul>

# ACT Worksheet | Breakout Groups

**Example 2** – How might you respond to this statement? “I worked hard for what I have and didn't get any handouts.”

<b>Affirm</b>	<b>Counter</b>	<b>Transform</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Type here!</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Type here!</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Type here!</li></ul>

# ACT Worksheet | Breakout Groups

**Example 3** – How might you respond to this question? “But What About Me...Why can’t we have this much discussion about other issues?”

<b>Affirm</b>	<b>Counter</b>	<b>Transform</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Type here!</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Type here!</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Type here!</li></ul>

# ACT Worksheet | Breakout Groups

**Example 4** – How might you respond to this statement? “We have laws in place now to ensure fair and equal housing, we don't need to do anything more.”

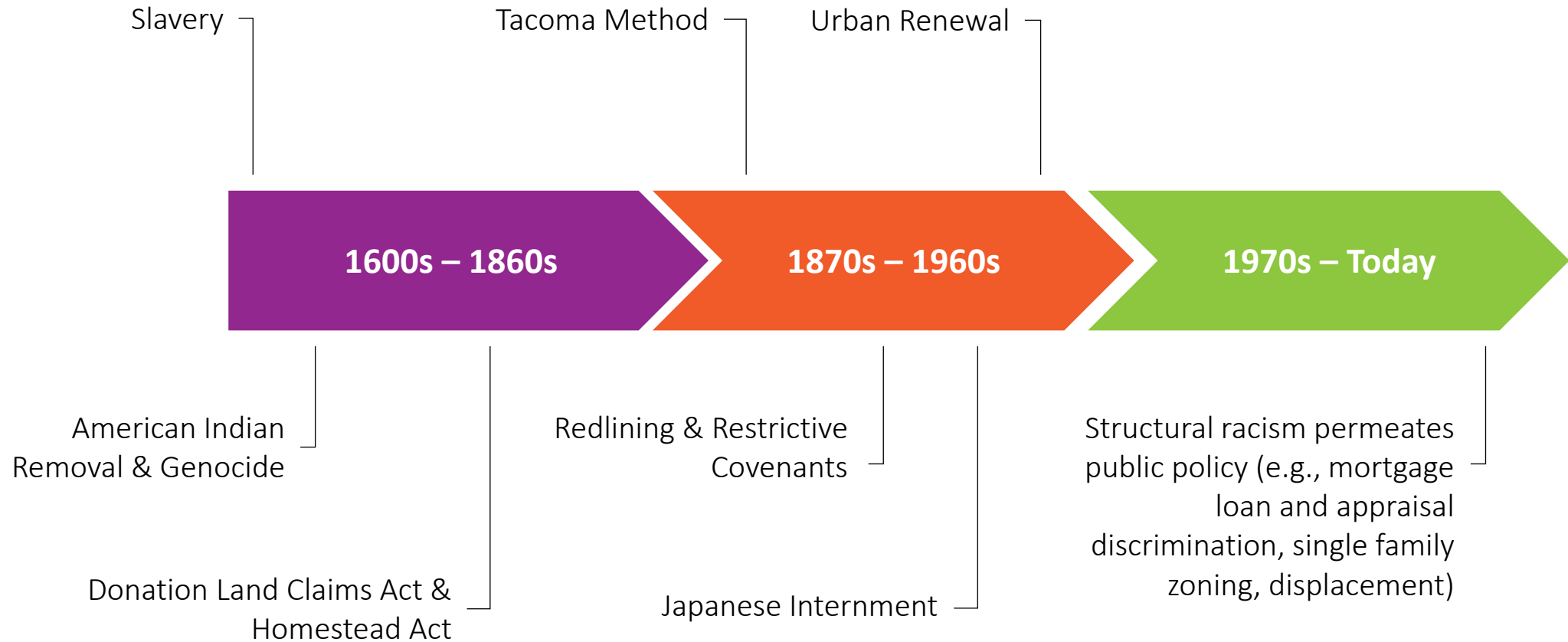
<b>Affirm</b>	<b>Counter</b>	<b>Transform</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Type here!</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Type here!</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Type here!</li></ul>



# Resources for Counter

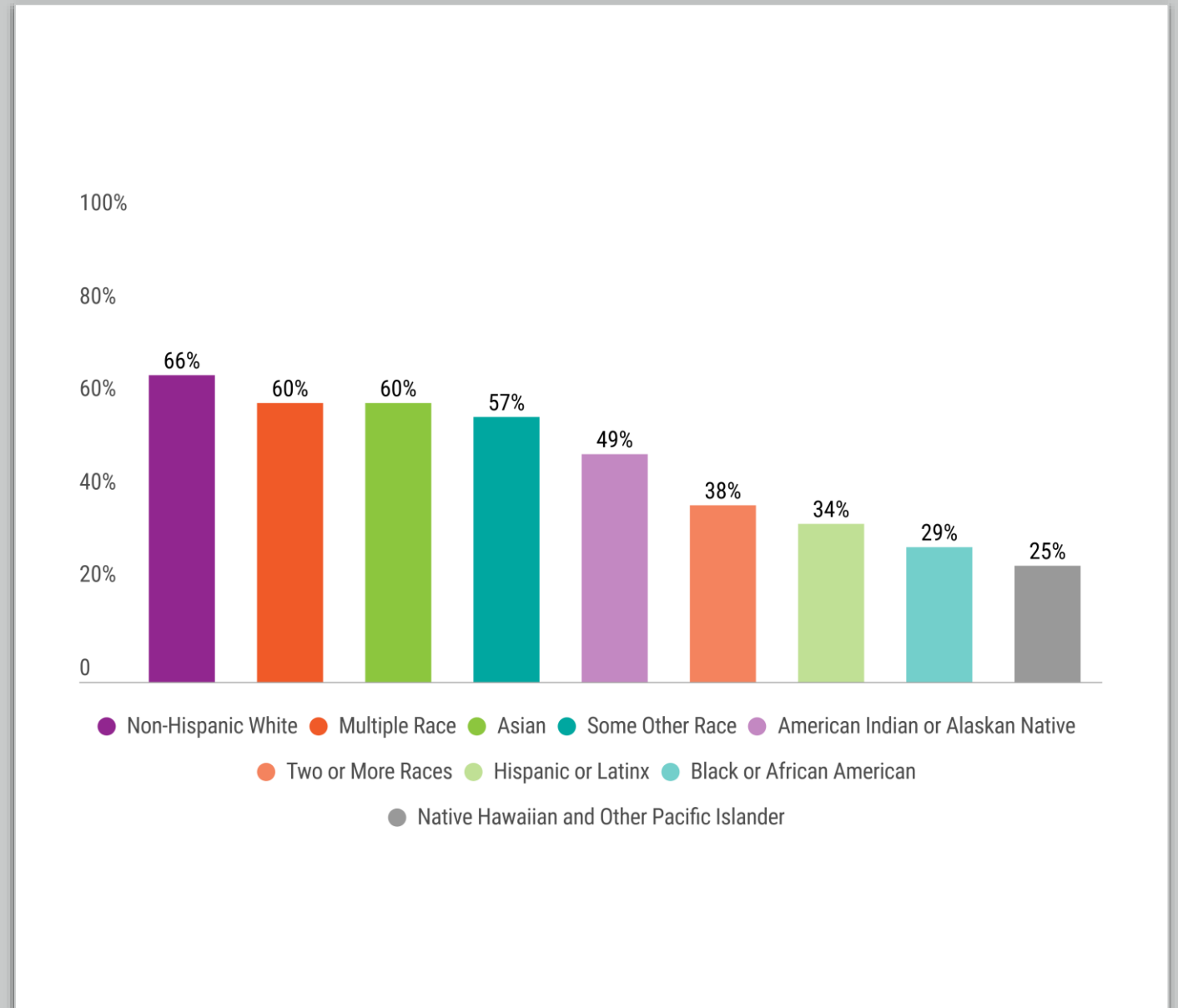


# A Chain of Discriminatory Policies



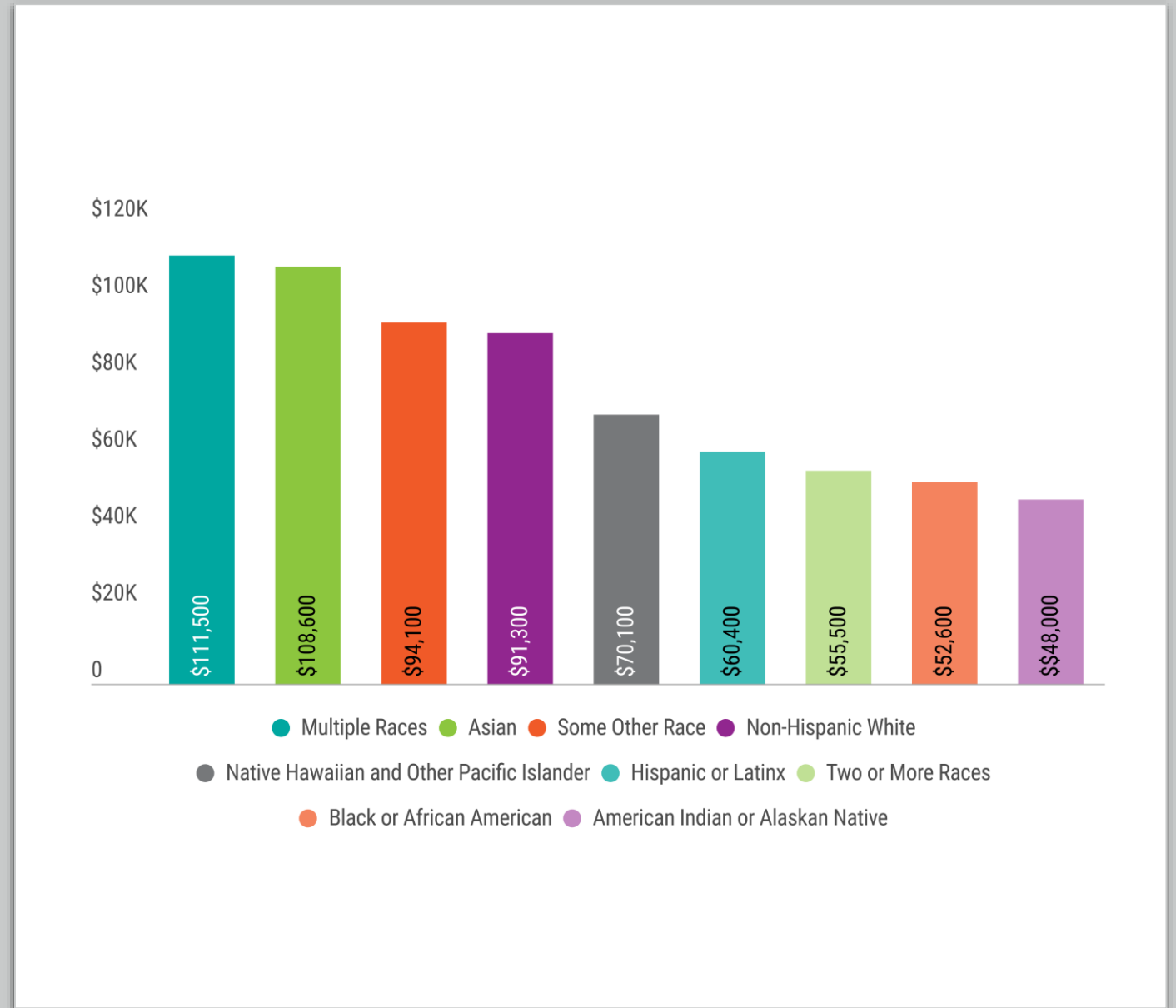
# Homeownership Rates

- 2 out of 3 of **white** residents own a home (**66%**), while only 1 out of 4 **Native Hawaiian / Pacific Islanders** own a home (**25%**).
- Wealth advantages resulting from the Donation Land Claims Act, redlining, single family zoning, etc., increase the likelihood that white families receive family assistance or an inheritance for down payments.
- This leads to larger up-front payments by white homeowners, lowering monthly payments and increasing affordability.



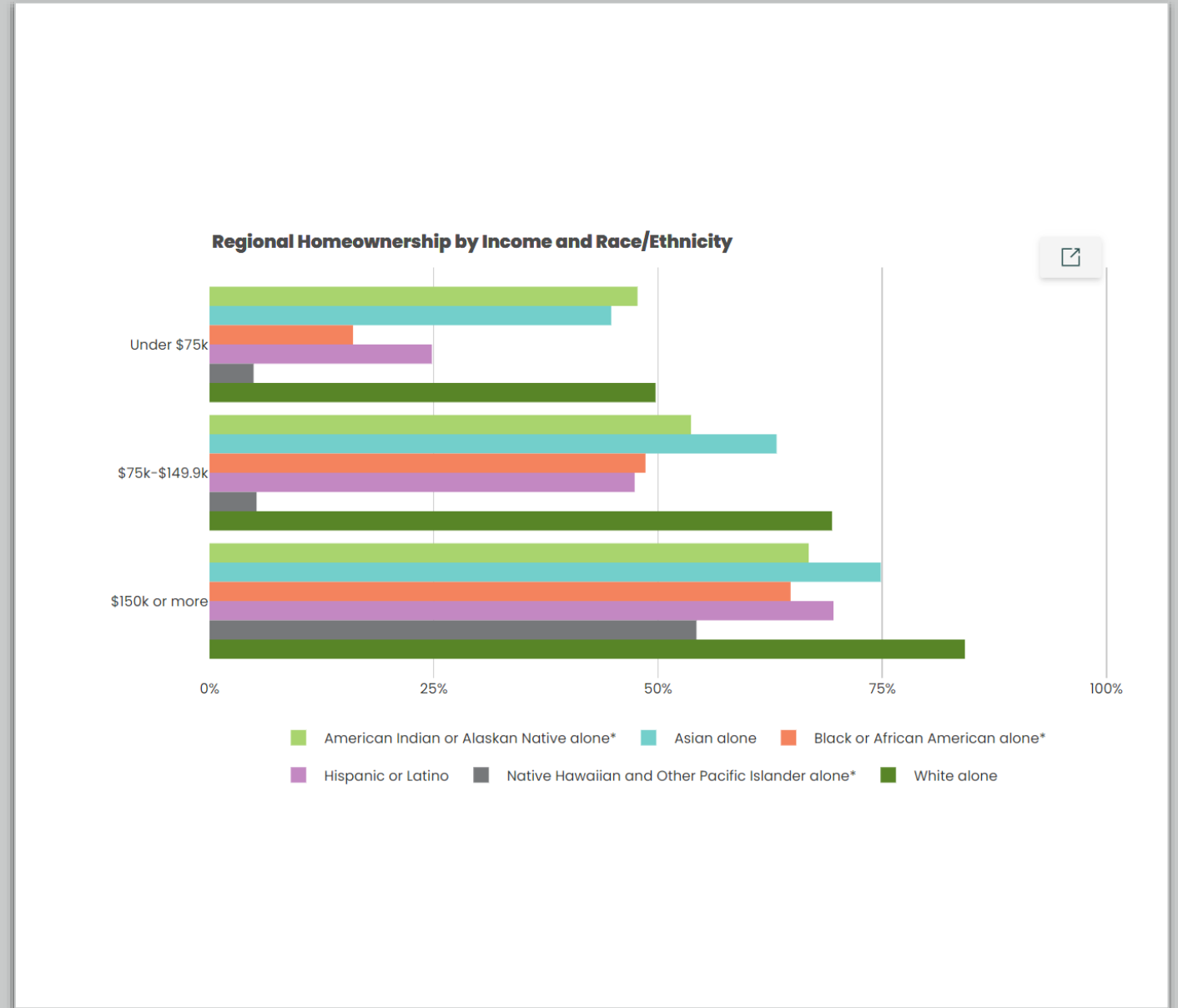
# Median Income

- **White** residents (**\$91,300**) earn almost double what **AIAN** residents earn (**\$48,000**).
- Segregation resulting from redlining, restrictive covenants, single family zoning, etc. has limited access to resources (e.g., quality schools), impeding many people of color's ability to compete in the labor market.



# Homeownership Rates by Income and Race/Ethnicity

- Homeownership rates for people of color are much lower than rates for white households, even after controlling for household income.
- If we solely focused on income, we would not capture these disparities and would never address the factors creating them.

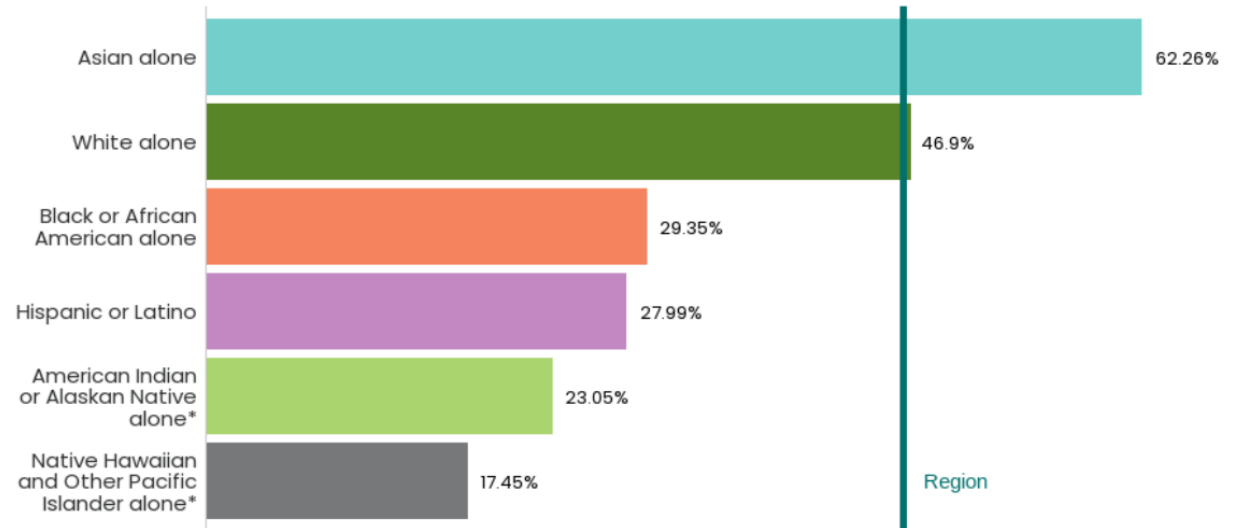


# Education

- Students in most communities of color are less likely to earn bachelor's degrees than their white counterparts.
- Households with limited wealth often cannot afford to live in resource rich areas with high quality schools or invest in educational resources (e.g., computers, tutors). This reduces the likelihood their children will attend college.
- Additionally, a disproportionate number of children of color who are qualified for college, are not in a financial position to afford the tuition because of racial wealth disparities.

## Regional Educational Attainment by Race/Ethnicity

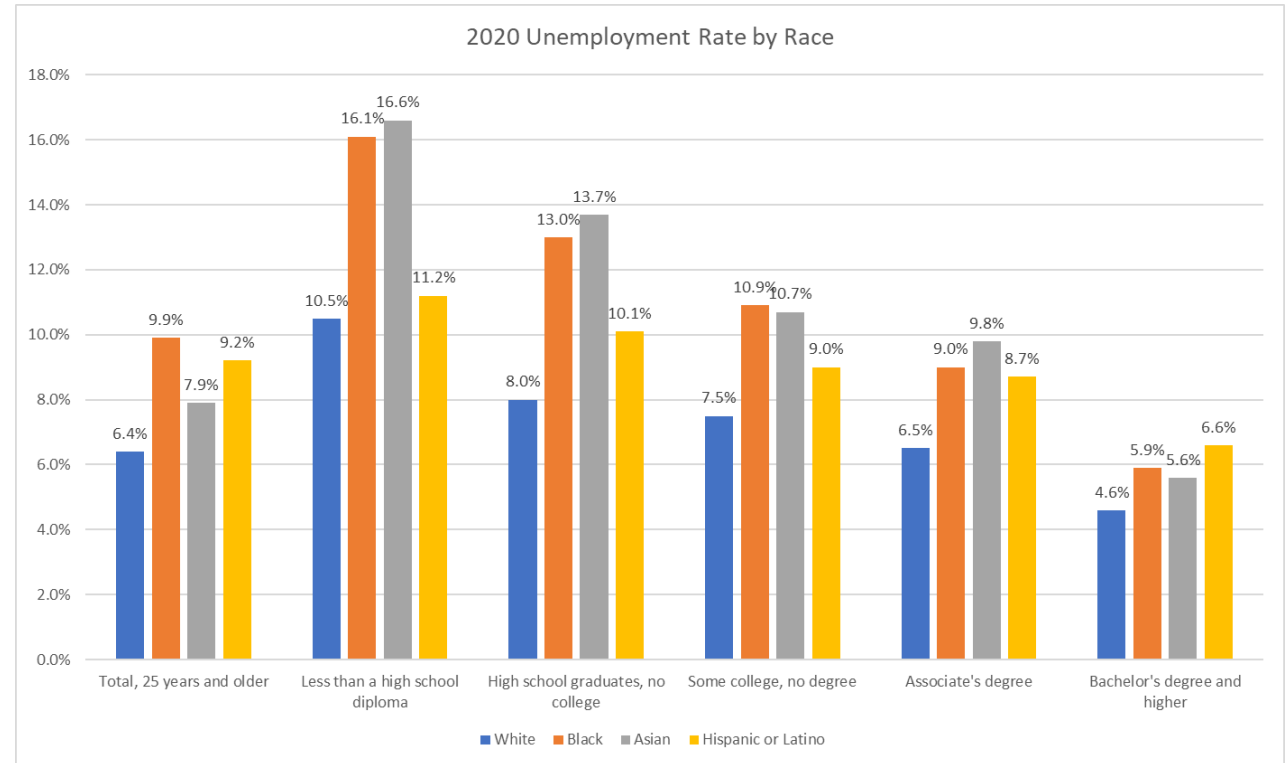
Bachelor's degree or higher for adults 25 years and older



U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey (ACS) 2021 1-Year Public Use Microdata Sample (PUMS)

# Unemployment

- People of color with similar levels of education as their white counterparts, experience higher rates of unemployment.
- Implicit bias can play a role in this, impacting every part of the employment experience, from recruitment to resume review to interviews. For example, research has shown applicants with names associated with people of color are less likely to receive callbacks for interviews.



Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor and Statistics, Current Population Survey.

# Scarcity Myth

- **Myth:**

- The more you get, means less for me.

- **Reality:**

- One group's gain isn't another group's loss. We can expand the pie.
- Equitable policies expand access to opportunity and grow economies, with new jobs from innovative ideas.





# Resources for Transform



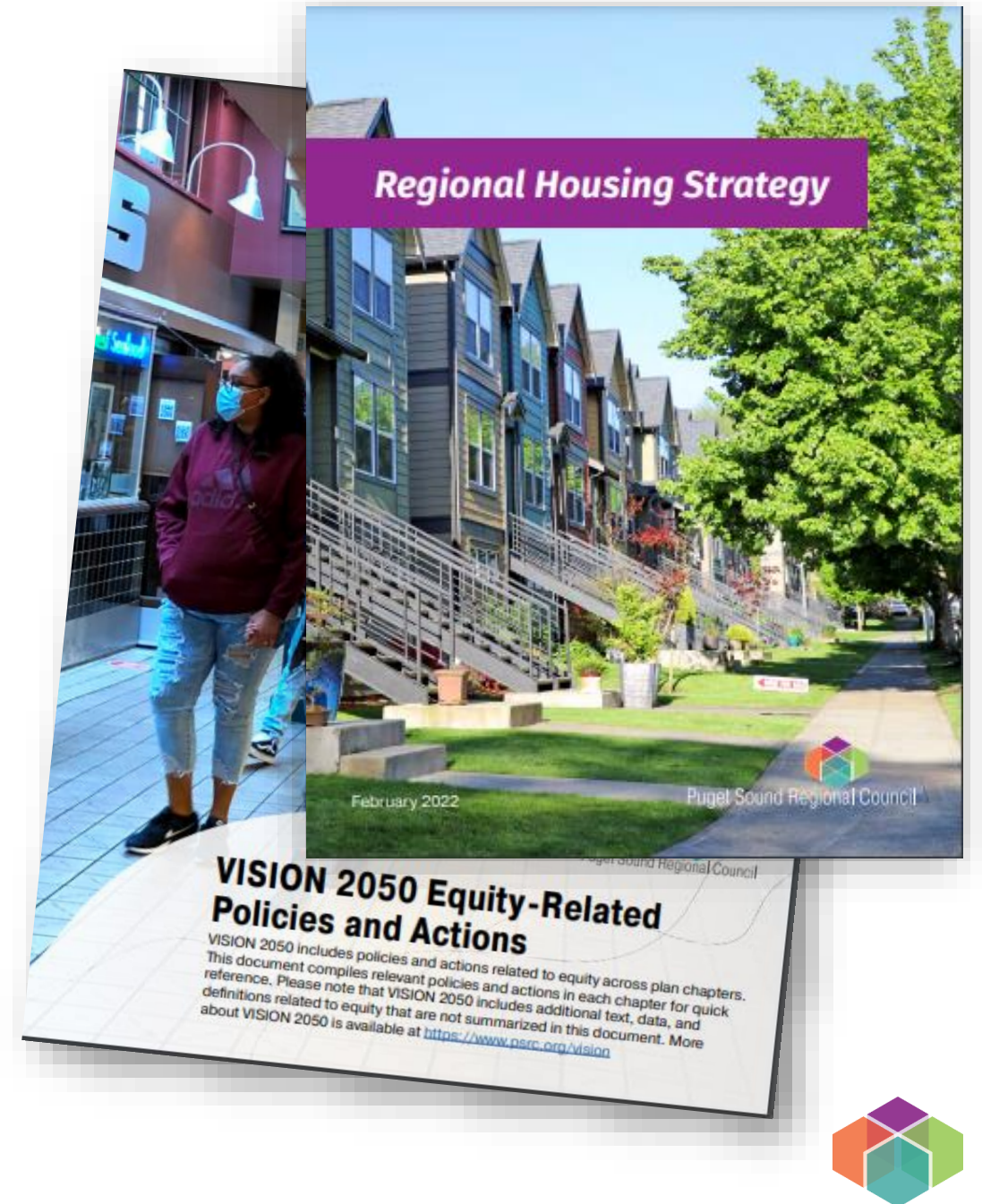
# VISION 2050 and Equity

- Jurisdictions have begun to recognize **need to address equity** in plans and policies
- **Regional guidance** through equity related multi-county planning policies (**MPPs**)



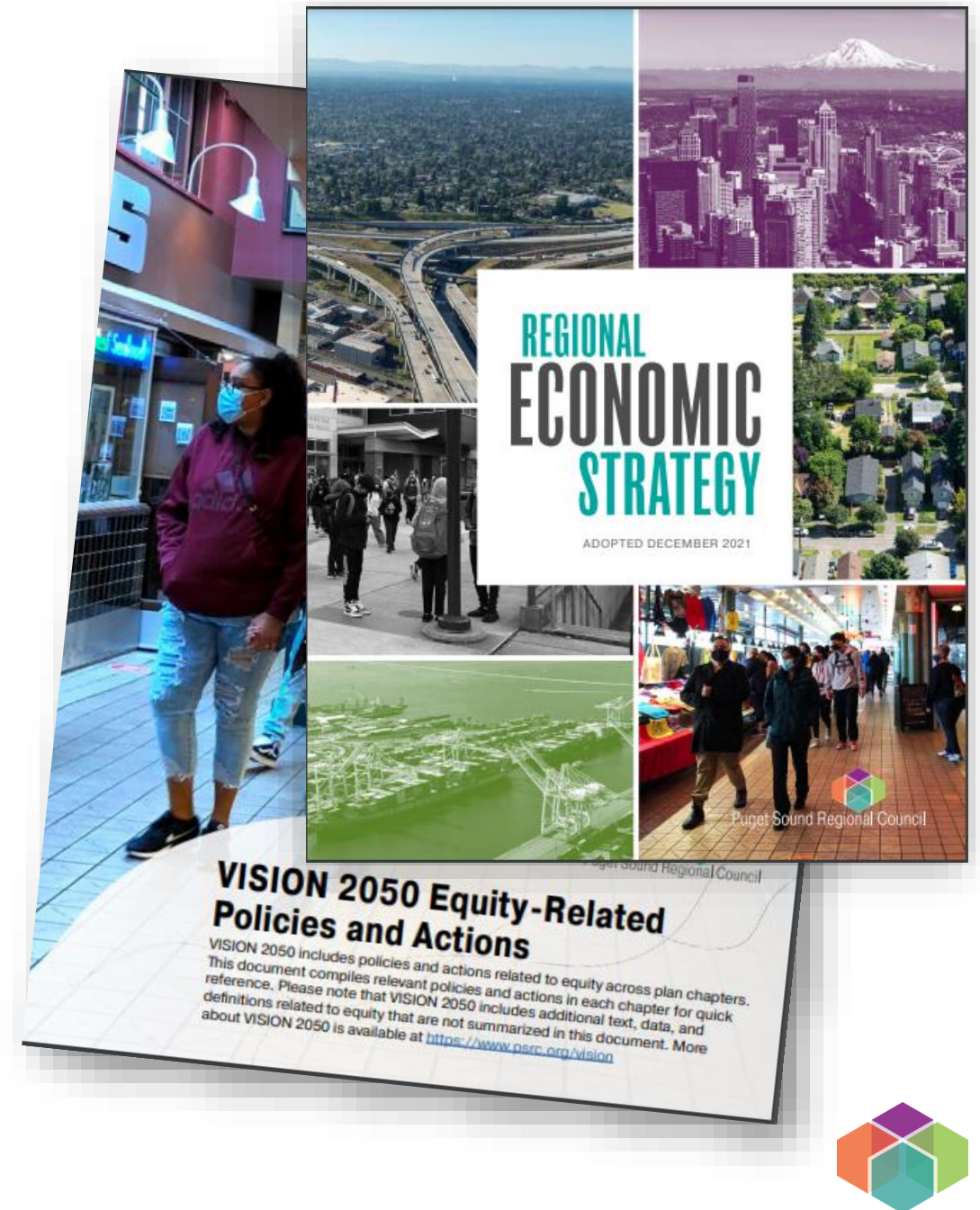
# Equity and Housing

MPP-H-5: Promote homeownership opportunities for low-income, moderate-income, and middle-income families and individuals while recognizing historic inequities in access to homeownership opportunities for communities of color.



# Equity and Economics

MPP-Ec-12: Identify potential **physical, economic, and cultural** displacement of existing businesses that may result from redevelopment and market pressure. Use a range of strategies to **mitigate displacement impacts** to the extent feasible.



# Equity and Transportation

MPP-T-9: Implement transportation programs and projects that provide access to opportunities while preventing or mitigating negative impacts to people of color, people with low incomes, and people with special transportation needs.



# Example Responses



# Example: Racism used to be a problem, but it doesn't have any impact on us today.

- **Affirm:** “Yes, racism used to be widespread, official policy of the US government. In many ways our country has made incredible progress in the last 75 years, as state and federal laws have been amended. In addition to the formal ways that racism negatively impacted our culture, economy and communities, explicit racism was also an unquestioned norm for most of our history.”
- **Counter:** “While many explicitly racist laws have been overturned, the impact of those laws and policies is profound. Consider the wealth lost over generations because of policies like the Homestead Act, which enriched white families with land stolen from Native Americans through threats of violence, forged signatures on treaties, etc. The intergenerational wealth passed down from this land increases the likelihood that white families can pay for college, live in high opportunity communities, leave an inheritance, etc. And it's created significant racial wealth disparities. For example, did you know that for every \$1 a white family has, a Black family has 10¢.”
- **Transform:** “While we may wish that ending racism were as simple as changing explicitly racist laws, that's not nearly enough. It's our job as government leaders and workers to ensure that laws, policies and practices explicitly advance racial equity — that they intentionally drive equitable outcomes for people of color and reduce the impact of our history of racist policies. This is what we're attempting to accomplish with the Regional Equity Strategy. I hope you'll work with us to weave the resources included in this strategy into our local plans to improve outcomes for all of our region's residents.”

# Example: It's about income inequality, not racial inequality.

- **Affirm:** “Yes, financial resources are incredibly important — and deeply interwoven with issues of race. Having access to income is a critical factor in whether individuals struggle or thrive in our nation.”
- **Counter:** “Limiting these conversations to topics related to income unfortunately hides the deep racial disparities we see across class lines. For example, many of us know that if you have less income, you are less likely to own a home. However, what some people don’t know is that homeownership rates for people of color are much lower than rates for white households who are in the same income category. If we solely focused on income, we would not capture these disparities.”
- **Transform:** “Recognizing the interconnected ways in which marginalization takes place will help to more effectively recognize and address hidden disparities like these. We’ve worked hard to include policies that can address these issues in our Regional Housing Strategy. I’m hoping that you will work with us to implement these policies so we can achieve equity for all our communities.”



# Example: We should take a colorblind approach. I don't even see race.

- **Affirm:** “I completely agree that’s it’s imperative that we treat everyone fairly and strive not to discriminate against people based on their race or any other demographic background.”
- **Counter:** “However, refusing to acknowledge that we all see race and are impacted by implicit racial biases will only impede our ability to reach this goal. Our minds are wired to sort objects, like chairs, into categories. Although the way our brains create shortcuts to quickly make sense of data is natural, the way we’ve been influenced to sort people into categories is not. It is the result of racist and discriminatory messaging, policies and practices that we’ve been exposed to over time. Without these messages and policies, we wouldn’t engage in this harmful behavior. Once again, the process is natural; the messages that shape the process are not.”
- **Transform:** “Because of this, it’s important that we talk about race, even though it can sometimes feel challenging. We need to both normalize conversations about race and implement strategies to advance racial equity. We need people like you to be actively engaged with us, supporting equity related policies and practices in VISION 2050.”

# FAQs



# FAQs

## Racism Definitions:

- **Internalized racism lies *within individuals*.**

This type of racism comprises our private beliefs and biases about race and racism, influenced by our culture. This can take many different forms including: prejudice towards others of a different race; internalized oppression—the negative beliefs about oneself by people of color; or internalized privilege beliefs about superiority or entitlement by white people.

**Focus of today's session: Interpersonal racism (personally mediated) occurs *between individuals*.**

This is the bias that occurs when individuals interact with others and their personal racial beliefs affect their public interactions.

# FAQs

## Racism Definitions (continued):

- **Institutional racism occurs *within institutions and systems of power*.**

This refers to the unfair policies and discriminatory practices of institutions (schools, workplaces, etc.) that routinely produce racially inequitable outcomes for people of color and advantages for white people. Individuals within institutions take on the power of the institution when they reinforce racial inequities.

- **Structural racism is racial bias *among institutions and across society*.**

This involves the cumulative and compounding effects of an array of societal factors, including the history, culture, ideology and interactions of institutions and policies that systematically privilege white people and disadvantage people of color.

# FAQs

## **What about white men?**

Our equity work is focused on addressing the needs of the most vulnerable and marginalized groups in our region. People of color have long suffered from inequities due to a chain of discriminatory choices that have been made across the history of this country and continue today. The compounding effect of racism in culture, policy, and institutions has led to disparities across every indicator imaginable: wealth, health, criminal justice, employment, housing, political representation and education. White men are rarely, if ever, the most vulnerable or marginalized group when we analyze these topics. However, although white men have benefitted from systems that have harmed communities of color, they have also suffered from a system that's not working as well as it could for us collectively. Everyone benefits when we advance racial equity. I'm hoping you will work with me to build bridges that achieve equity and improve our region as a whole.

## **Isn't this just about class, why are we talking about race?**

GARE acknowledges the overlap between race and income in the U.S. and the need to reduce income inequality. They note, however, that when controlling for income, racial disparities remain in education, health, employment, incarceration, and housing. This points to the need to focus on both race and class to reduce disparities by race.

# FAQs

## **Shouldn't we use a "colorblind" approach?**

I don't see race or, I don't see color. GARE acknowledges that race is a social construct but that we nevertheless live in a highly racialized society with differential access to opportunities based on race. GARE contends that "(i)f we don't see color, we don't see important characteristics about people, and we limit our own ability to develop strategies to address racial equity." They note that while it is now illegal to explicitly discriminate against people of color, systems, policies, and procedures still work to favor white people. Because of this, it is important that we talk about race, even though it can be challenging.

## **What is the role of white people in doing work for racial equity?**

GARE finds that there is not a one-size-fits-all answer to this question. Sometimes what is most helpful is for white people promoting racial equity to be quiet and to listen to people of color; other times, it may mean speaking up. GARE notes that it can be helpful for white people to think about the ways they have benefited from systems and policies that have harmed people of color and to acknowledge that when governments and other institutions transform their systems to work well for the "least of these" they often generate benefits for all of us.