Project Goals

- Capture the concerns and needs of underserved and underrepresented communities in Montpelier.
- Identify effective strategies to engage with and include underserved and underrepresented communities in Montpelier.
Overview

- Focus Groups
- Survey (Met goal of 300+ responses)
- 1-1 Interviews
- SEJAC Check-Ins
- Communication with Police Review Committee

Creative Discourse
Focus Groups

*We spoke with over 80 people, including*

- 26 Residents (incl. 9 BIPOC, 14 LGBTQ+)
- 12 Community Leaders
- 24 City Staff
- 32 First Responders
Survey

Almost 350 people responded to the survey

- 88% of respondents live in Montpelier
Race/ethnicity of survey respondents

- White: 81%
- Two or more races: 5%
- Asian-American/Pacific Islander: 2%
- Indigenous: 1%
- Latinx: 1%
- Prefer not to say: 8%
- Black or African-American: 2%

Source: Montpelier Equity Survey, Spring 2021, Creative Discourse
Sexual orientation of survey respondents

- Heterosexual: 66%
- Prefer not to say: 17%
- LGBTQ+: 17%

Source: Montpelier Equity Survey, Spring 2021, Creative Discourse
Education level of survey respondents

- Masters or doctoral degree: 52%
- College degree: 36%
- Some college: 5%
- High school: 3%
- Prefer not to say: 4%

Source: Montpelier Equity Survey, Spring 2021, Creative Discourse
Experiences Living & Working in Montpelier
I feel a deep sense of belonging in Montpelier.

BIPOC: 39%

WHITE: 68%

Source: Montpelier Equity Survey, Spring 2021, Creative DisoulsS8
I feel a deep sense of belonging in Montpelier.

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<td>LGBTQ+</td>
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<td>HETEROSEXUAL</td>
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Source: Montpeijer Equity Survey, Spring 2021, Creative Discoul’S8
I feel a deep sense of belonging in Montpelier.

- NO COLLEGE DEGREE: 46%
- COLLEGE DEGREE OR ABOVE: 64%

Source: Montpelier Equity Survey, Spring 2021, Creative Discoul'S8
I have experienced or observed racism in Montpelier.

- BIPOC: 619'
- WHITE: 53%

Source: Montpeijer Equity Survey, Spring 2021, Creative Discoul'S8
Respondents are more likely to participate in public meetings IF....

- They felt confident their participation would make an impact 64%
- They could attend virtually 57%
- The meeting includes hearing from people with a diverse range of lived experiences 56%
- I could feel confident that the space could be made safer for people from marginalized groups 40%
Experiences
Interacting With
City Government

Creative Discourse
I feel engaged and valued.

Source: Montpelier Equity Survey, Spring 2021, Creative Discourse
I feel engaged and valued: City Council

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Source: Montpelier Equity Survey, Spring 2021, Creative Discourse
## I feel engaged and valued: Police Department

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Source: Montpelier Equity Survey, Spring 2021, Creative Discourse
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Source: Montpelier Equity Survey, Spring 2021, Creative Discourse
## Community Ideas for Change: City Services

### OPERATIONAL
- Create accommodations at meetings for people with disabilities
- Improve website (simplify content, multiple languages)
- Conduct anti-racism trainings for staff
- Keep remote meeting participation options

### RELATIONAL
- Improved communication and outreach - targeted to underserved populations
- Acknowledge receipt of communication to city councilors
- Continue to learn what people need

### STRUCTURAL
- Address housing issues and discrimination towards people experiencing homelessness
- Review and revise policies through an equity lens
- Hire more women and BIPOC staff

"Overt efforts to show an attention to marginalized groups -- like publicizing meeting info through non-traditional routes...making sure there is captioning on all videos on websites, having sign language interpreters at events, holding in-person meetings where access is easy for people of all abilities, having documents offered in more than one language."
Community Ideas for Change: Policing

**OPERATIONAL**

Create a mental health crisis response team.

Offer more resources and options via dispatch.

“Have folks trained in social services to help provide guidance when dealing with crisis situations. Restructure the police dept - create new community safety department.”

Improve representation, training, accountability, mechanisms, oversight.

**RELATIONAL**

Have police get out of vehicles and be more approachable.

“Each police officer needs to choose a community committee/group/project to work with people from marginalized identities so both can start building a relationship outside of biases and stereotypes.”

“Walk around more often.”

Decrease interactions with people from marginalized communities who may have a fear response triggered by police presence.

**STRUCTURAL**

Defund, decrease, or disarm the police.

“Don’t prepare for full battle 24-7. The bullet-proof vests, guns, tazers, and other weapons at the ready make a welcoming interaction difficult.”

“Honestly I’m just afraid of police, so there’s not any way they could really make me feel welcome.”

Reduce weaponization of police by community members against BIPOC and other marginalized communities.
Consultant Recommendations
City Services

● Offer stipends to residents for service on boards and commissions to support child care, income replacement, access to transportation, and other barriers to volunteer participation in involved City processes.

● Assign initial outreach to LEP households to a City staff person to assess unmet need, and then develop a Language Access Plan for the most commonly spoken languages.

● Implement plans to make public spaces and services more accessible via website, staff and council interactions, infrastructure, and building design.
Consultant Recommendations

Policing

- Create a restorative process that can be implemented after a use of force incident that causes community harm.
- Clarify the roles and expectations of LEOs in the greater vision for public safety and city engagement processes.
- Acknowledge that the feedback about LEO presence is often contradictory and opposing. Some community members want a greater police presence and some want to see less police presence. Underlying both appears to be a desire to build trusting, personal relationships with the Montpelier Police Department. All efforts to build trust should center the voices and needs of those most impacted by police violence locally and nationally.
- Strive for maximum transparency.
Thank You!

● What stands out to you?
● What surprises or concerns you? Is anything unclear?
● What strengths can you build on to address the findings you are hearing about? What changes would need to happen for you to be able to address these?
● What role do you envision having in advancing a vision for equity in Montpelier?