City of Takoma Park
Public Works

Equity in Stormwater Management

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City Website Link: N/A

Project Goal

- To determine if there are differences in the capacity and performance of stormwater infrastructure among Wards/census tracts and identify and prepare to address disparities in infrastructure that unintentionally impact more racially diverse Wards/census tracts.

Project Description

- Assess stormwater infrastructure by Ward and/or census tract to identify infrastructure deficiencies.
- Identify correlations between stormwater infrastructure deficiencies and Ward/census tract racial diversity.
- Use data from the analysis to help the City produce an equitable stormwater management capital improvement plan.

City Council Priorities

- Ensure equitable practices in the provision of city services,
- Maintain and improve stormwater infrastructure, and
- Establish sustainable stormwater management practices and procedures.

Racial Equity Considerations Submitted to City Council

- NA

Racial Equity Toolkit Considerations

What does data tell us about who is likely to be impacted by the project? What data sources are you using and are there any data gaps?

A. We used census data to identify census tracts with a high percentage of racial diversity. We utilized GIS to overlay Public Works' stormwater infrastructure maps and census data to determine if there are disparities in stormwater infrastructure in more racially diverse neighborhoods. Data was gathered primarily from the U.S Census and stormwater data managed by Public Works.

The data and map from the analysis highlight a limitation of the project that restricts the City's ability to draw complete conclusions. The limitation is that the City's stormwater map layer is not frequently updated. The Department no longer has an on-staff person capable of entering updates. The last year the GIS mapping data was updated was 2017. The City has installed significant new structures and piping since then, primarily in Wards 5 and 6 (Flower Ave, Glenside Dr.), which contain a substantial portion of the City's minority population.

The City's Department of Public Works has engaged a consultant to update the City's GIS and infrastructure information, and the revised maps are expected to be available in late Winter. Once the maps are updated, the Department will review the analysis to determine if disparities exist.

What is your community engagement strategy for this project? How will you use community feedback to avoid unintended consequences?

A. The data collected from the analysis will be used together with other sources of information to identify potential areas needing additional stormwater infrastructure. The map of the City's stormwater infrastructure will also be shared publicly on the City's website to transparently show residents how their tax dollars are being used and where.

The analysis also ensures residents that equity is being considered at the forefront of the capital improvement planning process and that the unintended consequences of a disproportionately higher incidence of flooding, property damage from flooding, and lower home values are not realized.

How are you evaluating the success of this project?

A. Success will be evaluated based on the degree to which the stormwater management capital improvement plans prioritize and include more racially diverse sections of the City of Takoma Park. These evaluation criteria will measure success no matter the outcome of the assessment.

How might a successful project advance racial equity in Takoma Park, in a sustainable way?

A. Incorporating an equity and inclusion objective in the regular capital improvement planning process will ensure that it is always a consideration.

Report Back

Project Outcome & Racial Equity Impact

A. TBD.

*Note: This project is still ongoing.

Next Steps

What were the challenges of this project?

A. TBD.

*Note: This project is still ongoing.

What further action and resources are needed?

A. TBD.

*Note: This project is still ongoing.