



**FACING
RACISM.
DEMANDING
CHANGE.**

TUESDAY, JUNE 2, 2020 | 7-8:30 PM

**Join us to honor GEORGE FLOYD
and share your voice in a virtual town hall**

Public Comments Summary Document

On June 2, 2020 community members, City government representatives, nonprofit leaders and faith leaders came together to host “Facing racism, demanding change,” a town hall discussion in response to the murder of George Floyd. This document summarizes the main themes, resources, and action items gathered from all of the live chat and Facebook Live comments from that event.

Some people on the call may not have had access to the chat feature (call-ins) or may have chosen not to participate in the chat. Thus, the comments and this analysis may not be representative of the thoughts, opinions, and ideas of everyone that participated in the program.

There was a corresponding poll/survey where the event organizers sought input on future topics and priorities for future action. The results from the poll can be found on the ACT for Alexandria’s website: <https://www.actforalexandria.org/shared-voices>.

Contributors to this analysis included: Sydney Etheredge, Jen Lachman, Jackie Didio, Sara Merlo, and Michele Longo.

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Police

Total Tags: 82

Key Themes

- The need for more data for the city's police department
- A systematic review of the city's policing policies and more public sharing of these practices and protocols
- Changing the communities perception of the police and their relationships with ACPS

Resources

- Link to recent [Law Enforcement Forum](#)

Action Items

- Mandate annual de-escalation training for police officers.
- Public data around police officers' misconduct.
- Union reform
- Call Congressmen Beyer and ask him to end qualified immunity
- Alexandria city republish policing policies
- A forum or community discussion with the police chief
- Data around police force racial makeup and hiring practices

Education

Total Tags: 71

Key Themes

- ACPS need more comprehensive education around history of Black and brown people in this country.
- Parents, teachers, and students need to have more honest and tough conversations around race.
- We need to ensure the PTA looks like the makeup of the children in the school.
- Rename TC Williams high school.
- Examine programs like TAG through an equity lens.

Resources

- [1619 Project](#)
- History Book- [Stamped from the Beginning](#)
- [Southern Poverty Law Center](#) review of state standards re: the Civil Rights Movement
- [Building the Federal Schoolhouse: Localism and the American Education State](#) by Douglas S. Reed
- ['Raising White Kids' Author On How White Parents Can Talk About Race](#)
- Office of Historic Alexandria's [Alexandria Black History Museum](#)

Action Items

- ACPS annual trips to the National Museum of African American History and Culture
- Review of ACPS staff and PTA to assess diversity- we need to ensure staff and decision-makers look like the student body.
- Review of curriculum taught at ACPS to ensure it is comprehensive when it comes to history and the Civil Rights Movement.
- We need to make sure funds are available for professional development for educators.
- Plan events for the schools that will ensure a multicultural turnout.
- Address TAG and inequities in it.
- Equip students for civic engagement and with strategies to bring about change in their community.
- Review how race is addressed in classroom teaching and conversations.
- Change how Christopher Columbus is taught in elementary schools.
- Summer enrichments opportunities teaching history and contributions of African Americans
- Implicit Bias Training for teachers and administrators.
- Take time to build relationships of trust between schools and parents of students of color.

Community Engagement

Total Tags: 62

Key Themes

- Continued training and resources for the community, specifically for white people, children, and older residents.
- Importance of spaces for people to meet others in the communities.
- People must fill out the census!
- More town halls and spaces for people to volunteer.

Resources

- [ACT for Alexandria](#)
- CNN Story- [Louisville BBQ man who was fatally shot when police dispersed crowd used to feed officers for free](#)

Action Items

- More organized town hall discussions on issues like this and more.
- Continue use of both zoom and facebook for town hall discussions.
- Removal of Confederate nostalgia in public spaces.
- A workshop for white people to talk about race.
- Clear connection to resources on how to volunteer or participate in direct action.

Voting

Total Tags: 25

Key Themes

- Voting is one of the most important steps to bring about change in our community
- The right to vote has been taken away from POC due to bad policing strategies and legal tactics

Resources

N/A

Action Items

- Writing letters to encourage people to vote
- Vote in favor of the amendment to the Virginia Constitution that creates a commission to draw political boundaries. It's on the ballot in November and is a HUGE improvement over what we have now.
- VOTE!

Cross-Sector

Total Tags: 20

Key Themes

1. Implicit bias training
2. Engagement across ethnic groups
3. City budget and financial allocations
4. Multiple social needs must be addressed

Resources

N/A

Action Items

- More dialogues and discussions that intentionally engage other ethnic groups (Hispanic/LatinX were specifically mentioned).
- Engage with people in Human Resources to discuss how these issues can impact employment and how to best handle situations like this in the workplace.
- We need to use data to identify disparities in every area (housing, health, income, food insecurity) so we can address these on a city level.
 - Possibly forming a citizens group to identify and lobby for these issues.
- Need for a DEI review at every level of law enforcement, government, teachers, etc. to ensure those in these positions reflect the community.
- Implicit bias training should be implemented at as many levels possible with the city government and school system.
- Conversations need to happen around funding for police force and the possible reallocating those funds to other areas such as education, housing, and health care.
- Coordinate across region to effect change more broadly

Legal

Total Tags: 13

Key Themes

- Stand your ground laws in the city
- Importance of looking at the criminal justice system in the city
- Importance of diversity in the City Attorney's office

Resources

- [13th](#) on Netflix

Action Items

- A systematic review of the diversity in the City Attorney's office
- Race, equity, and diversity training among the public defenders, judges, prosecutors, probation officers, etc. in the city.
- A discussion or a conversation with the Police around stand your ground laws.

Housing

Total Tags: 10

Key Themes

- Affordable housing in the city is one of the main problems in Alexandria
- More conversations around gentrification and development around the city
- Redlining and housing discrimination

Resources

N/A

Action Items

- A structured conversation and/or discussion with elected officials about affordable housing, discriminatory housing practices, future city development plans and gentrification.
- A review of covenants city-wide with detailed reports.

Art

Total Tags: 5

Key Themes

1. The importance of storytelling
2. Keeping the art by the river

Resources

N/A

Action Items

- The city or a local organization should set up a digital storytelling platform.
- The artwork that is currently at the waterfront needs to be made permanent.

Health

Total Tags: 4

Key Themes

- Reviewing and analyzing health data of the community
- Integrating mental health services when thinking about health care needs

Resources

- [Northern Virginia Health Foundation](#)
- [Alexandria Community Health Assessment](#)

Action Items

N/A

Transportation

Total Tags: 1

Key Themes

- Transportation is a key issue when talking about social need

Resources

N/A

Action Items

- Potential future town hall discussion since transportation impacts a number of other social factors.

Other

Total Tags: 84

Key Themes

- Thanks for holding the forum
- Questions or responses to the poll
- Need to have white people and non-POC learn what it means to be anti-racist and practice it every day
- Alexandria is three separate cities, how do we bring people together?

Resources

- [The New Jim Crow](#)

Action Items

- A city-wide book club focused on books about race.
- Public servants take the Black-White IAT test.
- We need to ensure the next town hall has any poll questions or documents in other languages.