

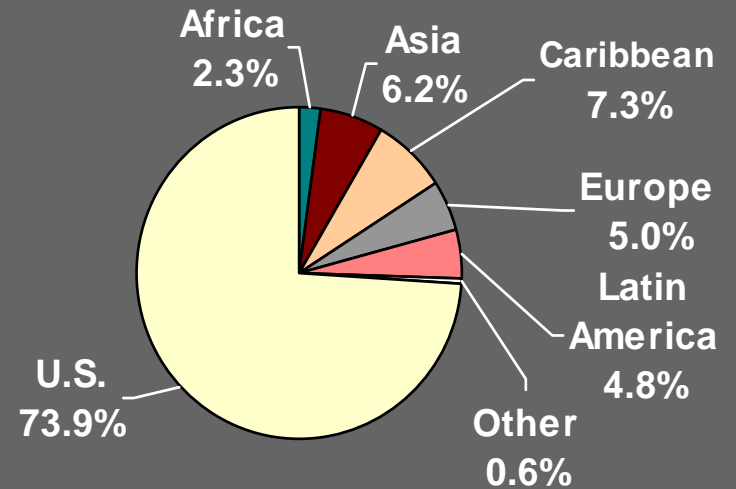
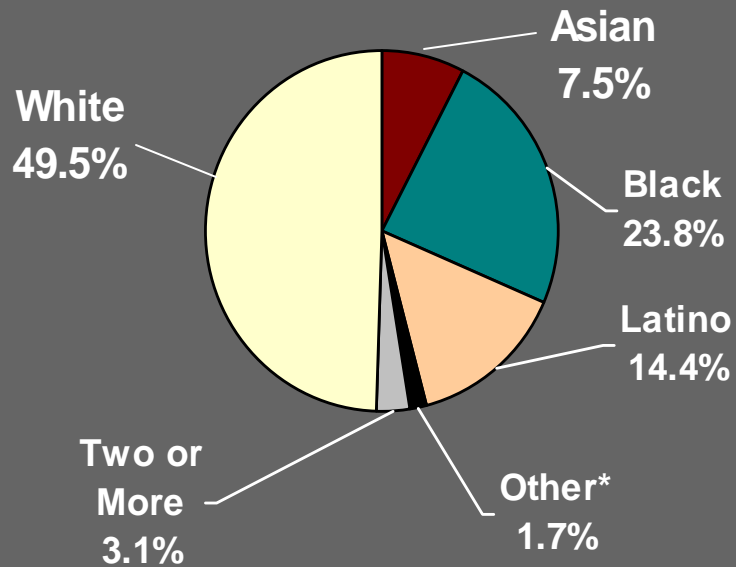
# TAKING ACTION TO ELIMINATE HEALTH INEQUITIES IN BOSTON



Nancy Norman, M.D., MPH  
Chief Medical Officer  
Boston Public Health Commission

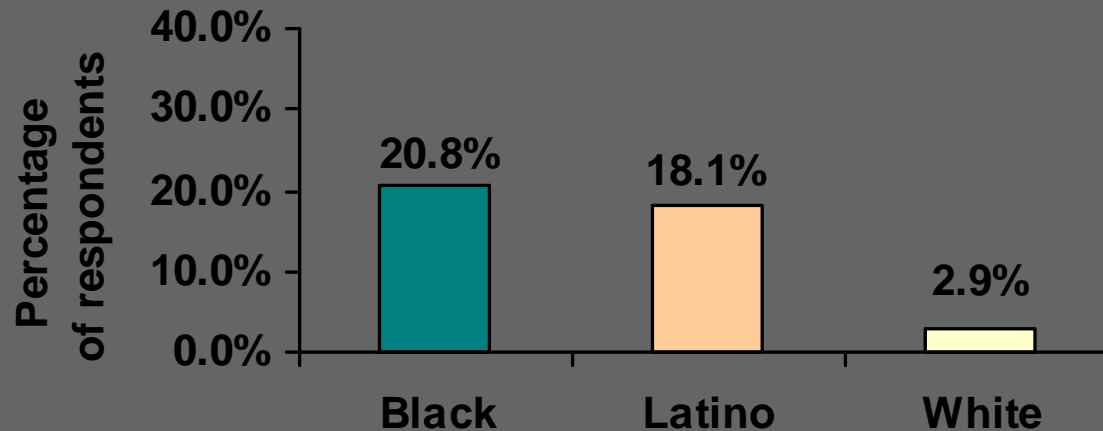
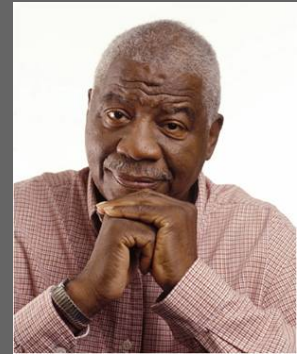
# Boston is a diverse city

Boston's Population in 2000, By Race/Ethnicity



Place of Origin Boston Residents

# The Experience of Racism & Discrimination

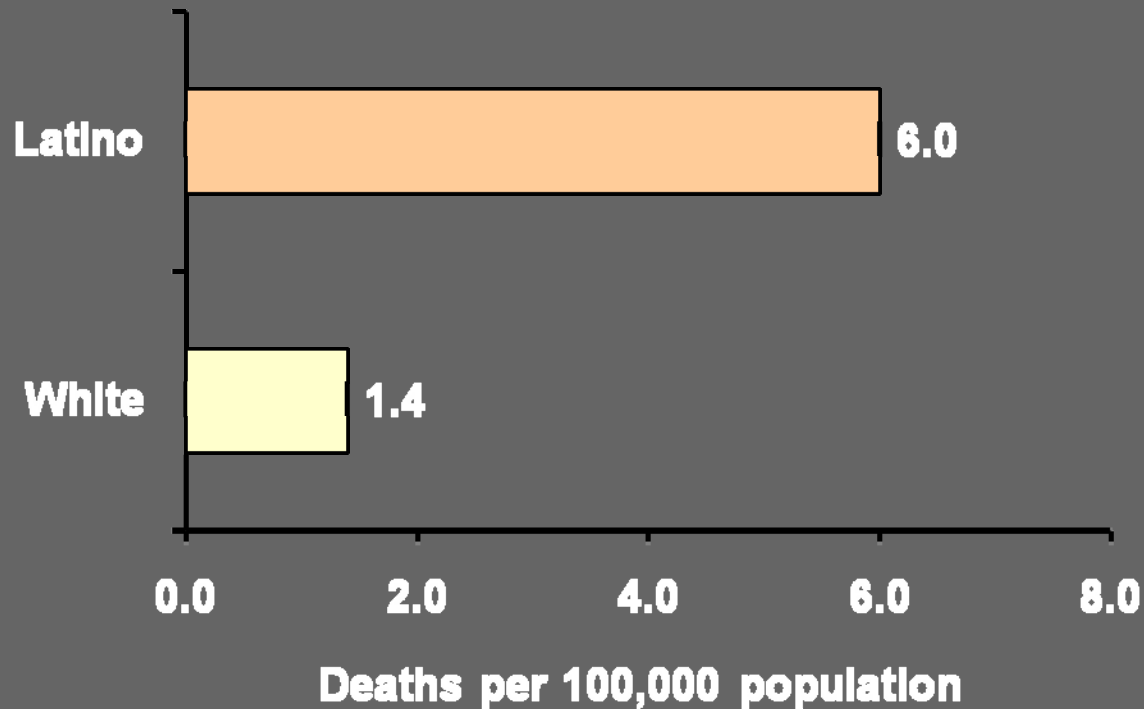


**Boston Adults Who Report Having Been Treated Worse Than People of Other Races At Work During the Previous Year, By Race/Ethnicity**

Note: Data about Asian residents not shown due to inadequate sample size

SOURCE: Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System, Massachusetts Department of Public Health and Boston Public Health Commission

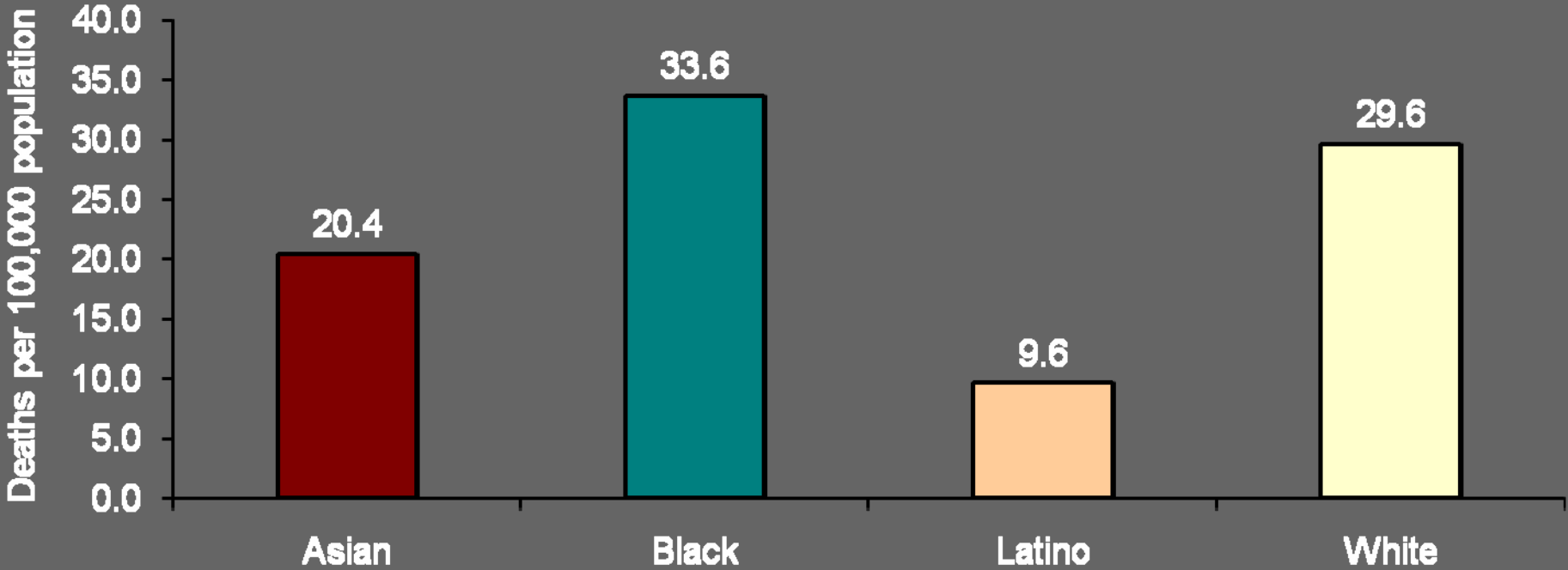
# Asthma Mortality Rates



SOURCES: Boston resident deaths, Massachusetts Department of Public Health Census 2000, U.S. Department of Commerce

# Breast Cancer Mortality

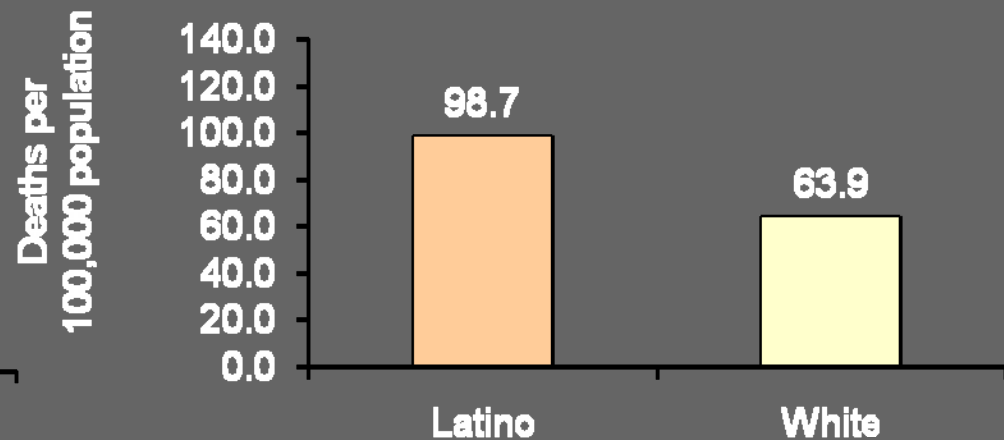
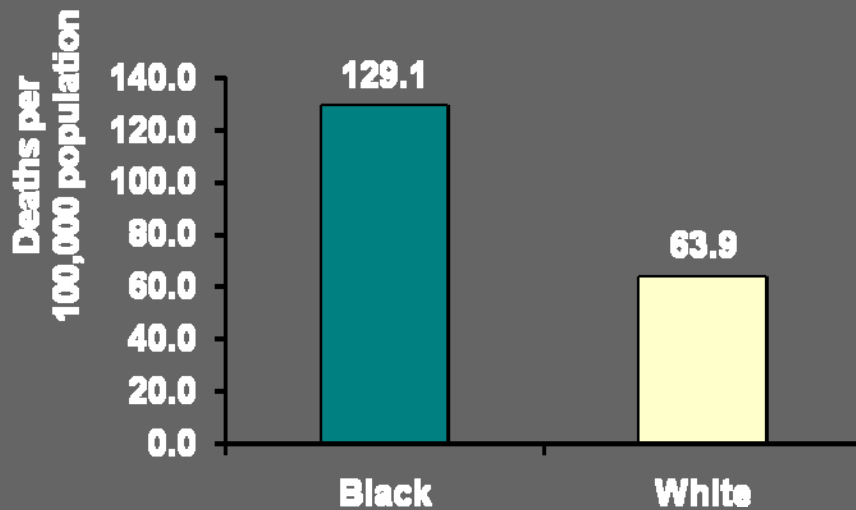
## Breast Cancer Mortality: Age-Adjusted Rates by Race/Ethnicity, Boston, 2001-2002



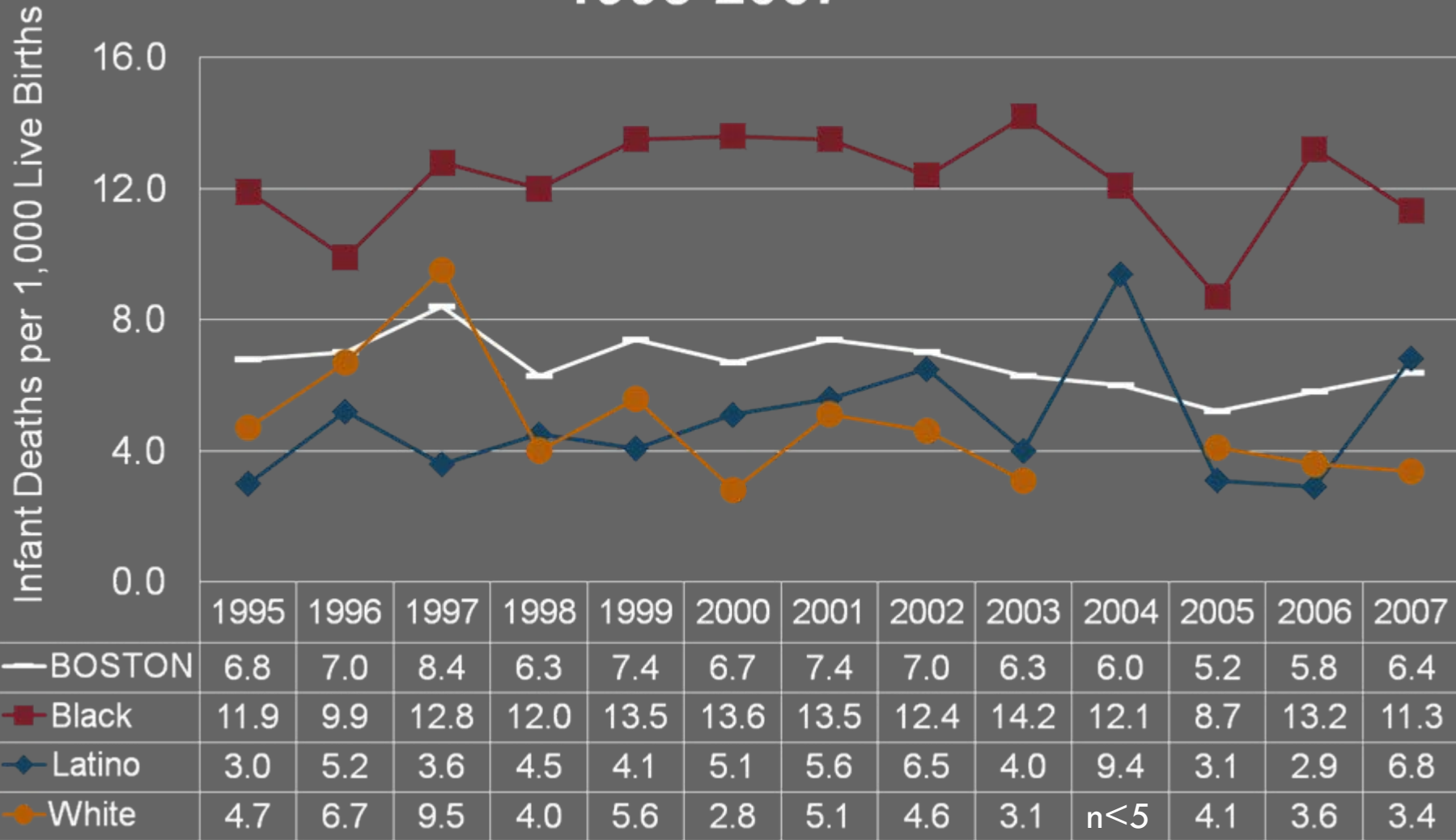
Source: Boston resident deaths, Massachusetts Department of Public Health (2001-2002)  
Data Analysis: Boston Public Health Commission, Research Office

# Diabetes Mortality

(Immediate or Underlying Cause of Death)



# Infant Mortality by Race/Ethnicity, 1995-2007

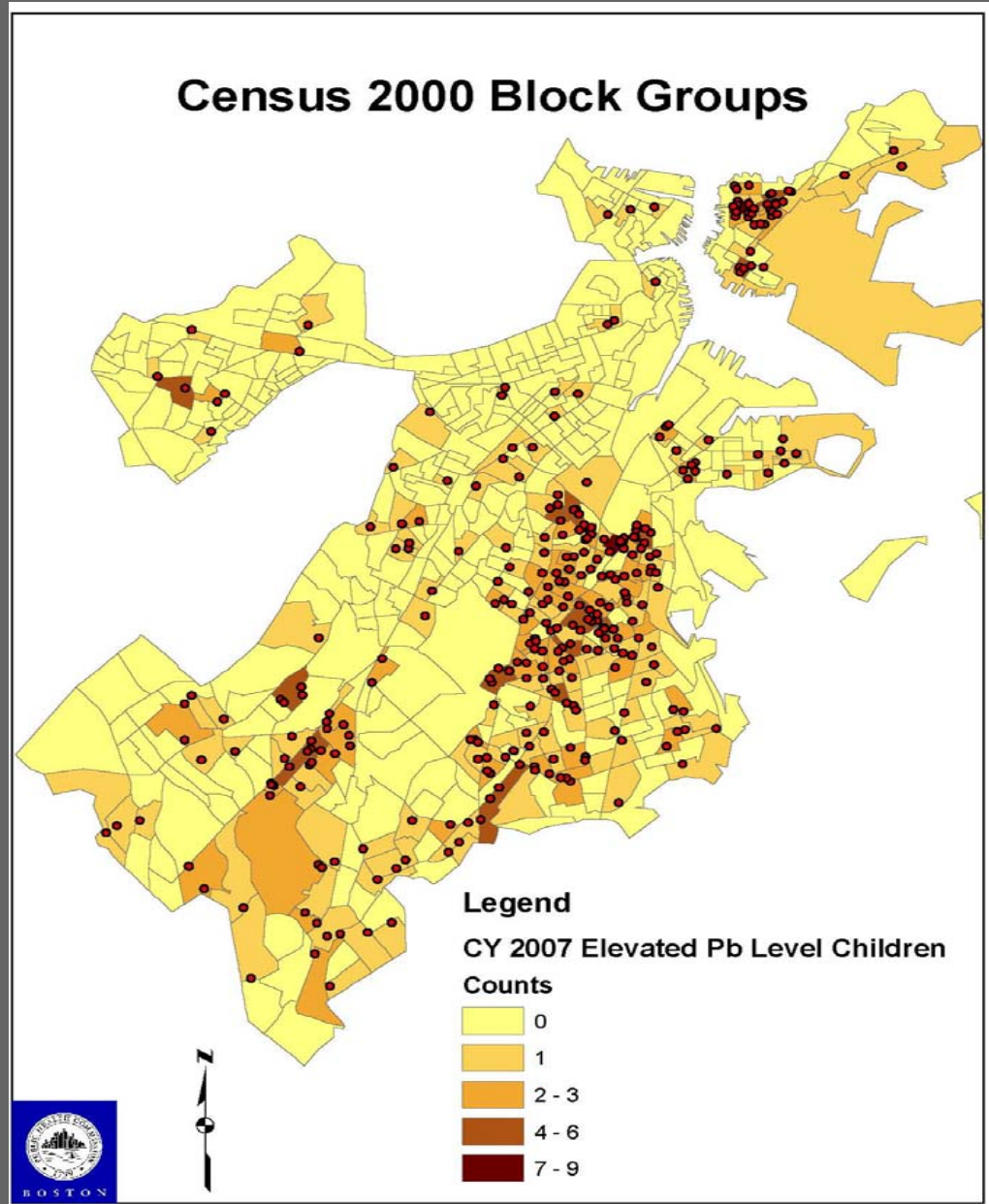


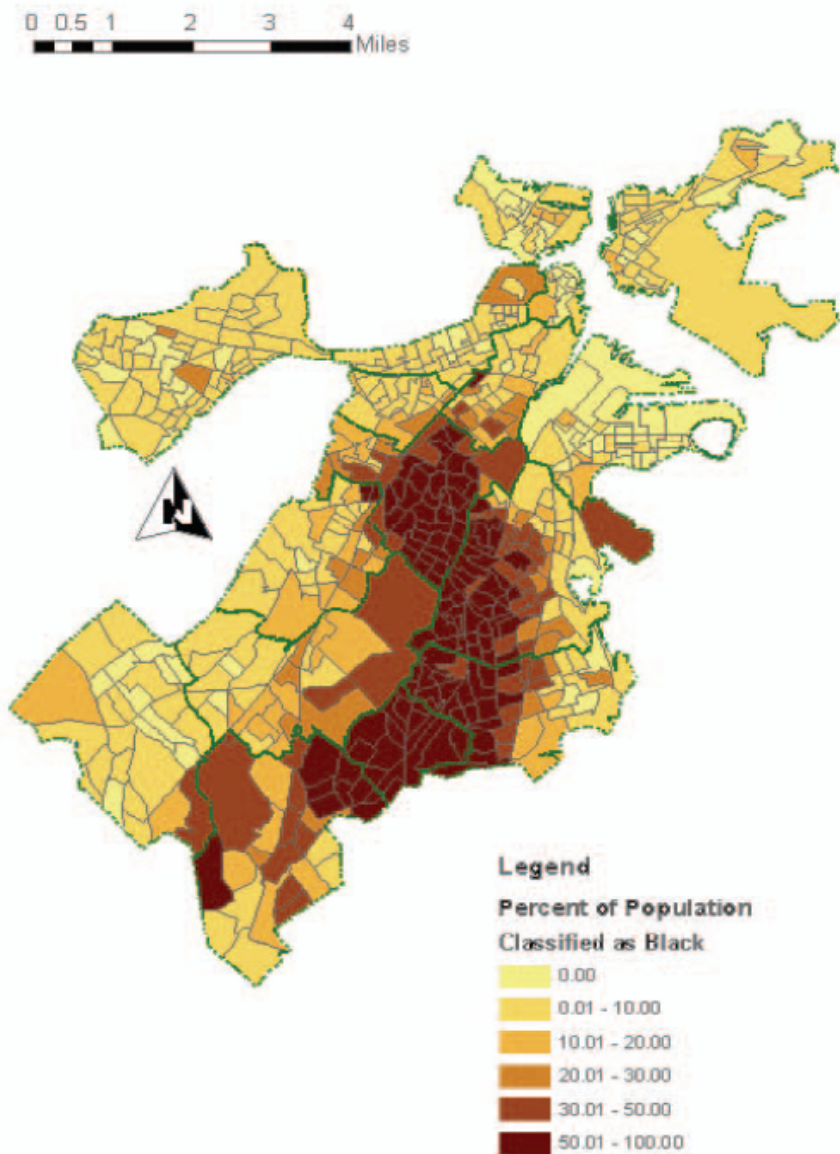
NOTE: Rates are not presented for Asians for 1995-2007 and Whites in 2004 due to the small number of infant deaths.

DATA SOURCE: Boston resident deaths and live births, Massachusetts Department of Public Health

DATA ANALYSIS: Boston Public Health Commission Research and Evaluation Office

# Areas of Elevated Blood Lead Levels





Source: Census 2000, US Department of  
Commerce, Bureau of the Census, American  
FactFinder. <http://factfinder.census.gov/>

Based on 2000 U.S. Census  
data, about 92% of Boston's  
Black population live in 7 of  
the 17 neighborhoods,  
including:

*Roxbury*

*Dorchester*

*Hyde Park*

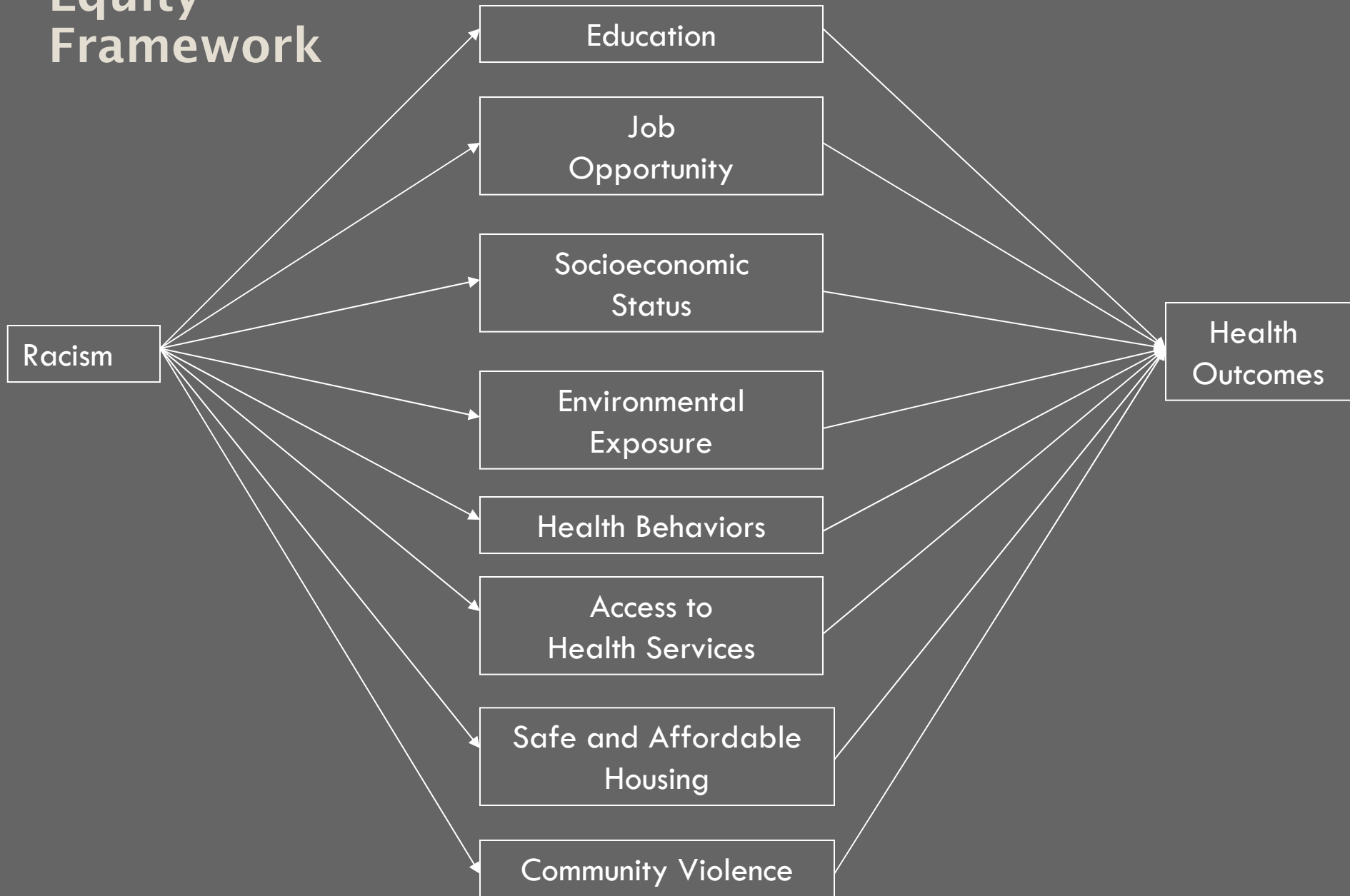
*Mattapan*

*Jamaica Plain*

*Roslindale*

*and the South End*

# BPHC Health Equity Framework



# Institutional Framework for Promoting Health Equity

- Give Voice
  - Use an empowerment model
- Build Partnerships and Collaborations
  - Abandon silos
- Work Upstream
  - Focus on regulations and policies

# Giving Voice: Building Neighborhood Capacity

Opportunity for residents and local agencies to work together to build a safe and vibrant neighborhood by ensuring the provision of city services, supporting civic engagement, and ensuring accountability.

## Goals:

- Define a neighborhood vision
- Build relationships
- Construct solutions
- Create opportunities for civic engagement at all ages

# PINK ISN'T THE ONLY COLOR ASSOCIATED WITH BREAST CANCER

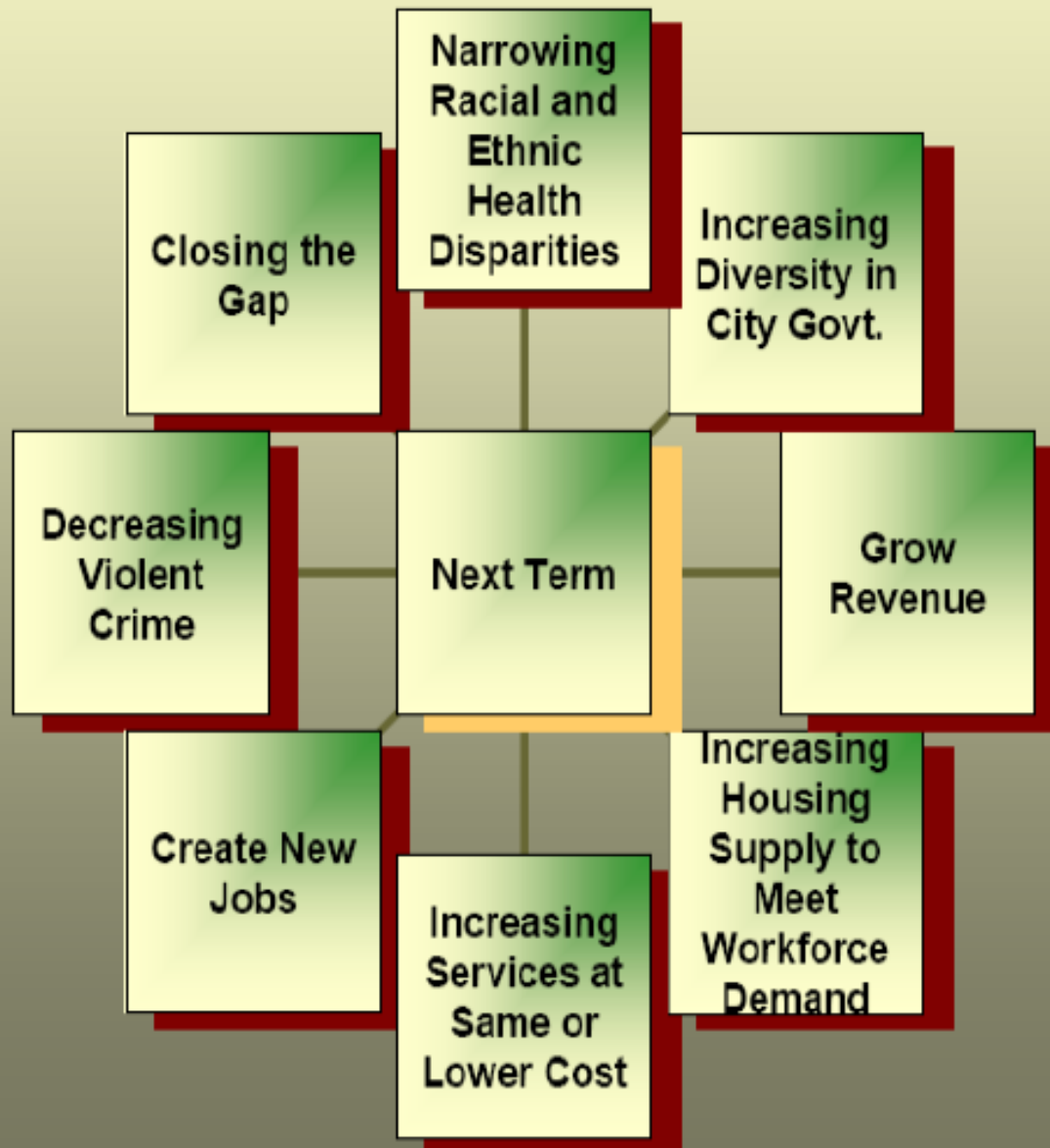


[www.pinkandblack.org](http://www.pinkandblack.org)

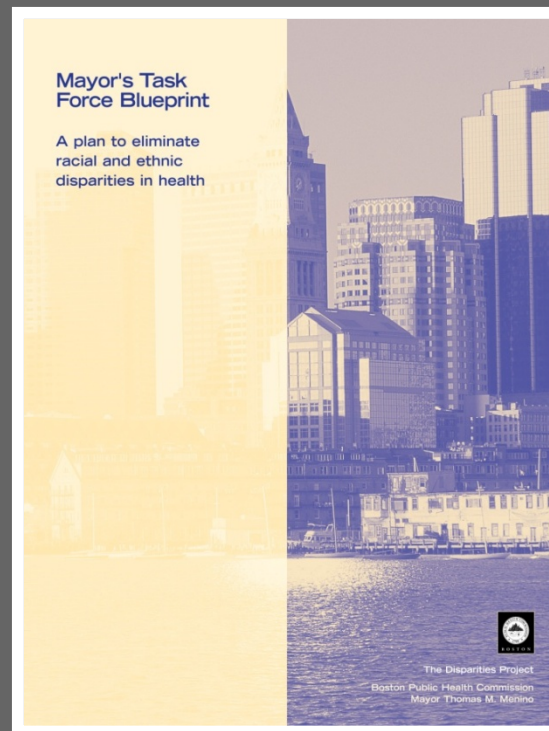
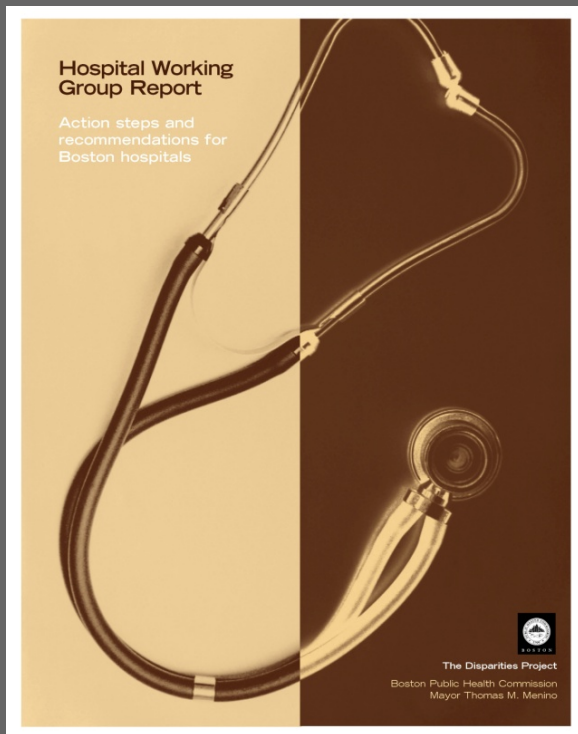
A message from Mayor Thomas M. Menino, the Boston Public Health Commission, and the Massachusetts Department of Public Health.

Photo: Philip Porcella / Design: Boston Public Health Commission, Communications Department

# Mayor Menino's strategic plan



# Boston's efforts to address racial and ethnic inequities in health



[www.bphc.org/healthequity](http://www.bphc.org/healthequity)

# Work Upstream: Boston Data Collection Regulation

- ❑ Passed by the Public Health Board in June 2006
- ❑ Requires all hospitals and community health centers to:
  - ❑ Collect race, ethnicity, preferred language and highest level of education
  - ❑ Report individual patient data to BPHC
  - ❑ Report on quality measures by race, ethnicity, language and education
- ❑ Creates a city-wide Health Equity Committee to review findings and address identified challenges

# Center for Health Equity and Social Justice

CDC designated the Boston Public Health Commission as one of 18 national Centers of Excellence in the Elimination of Disparities

Place Matters Model: CEED and the Office of Health equity support 13 organizations and coalitions in Boston and across New England providing funding and TA



# Building Partnerships: Supporting Community Organizations

## Chronic Disease

- Bowdoin Street Health Center
- Mattapan Food and Fitness Coalition
- Sociedad Latina
- The Food Project

## Workforce Diversity

- American Red Cross
- Boston University Goldman School of Dental Medicine
- Youth & Family Enrichment Services, Inc.
- Health Careers Academy

## Building Health Equity

- Southern Jamaica Plain Community Health Center

**Eliminating Racial and Ethnic Health Inequities in Boston**

# Refocus, Realign, Restructure

- ❑ Focus on policies that are good for health, not just health policies
- ❑ Fund efforts promoting community health
- ❑ Develop workforce capacity to create health equity

# Lessons learned

- Consider both downstream and upstream approaches
- Aim for sustainable change in policy and practice
- Engage staff across the organization
- Identify stakeholders – both traditional and non-traditional partners
- Residents and community-based approaches must be included in defining the problems, and solutions.

# Challenges

- Increasing public awareness of efforts
- Time required to develop community-based strategies not often supported by grants with short timelines
- Discussing race, all levels of racism and discrimination as a root cause of inequities in health
- Defining the evolving role public health and health education in “non-traditional” arenas
  - Public safety
  - Public education
  - Housing
  - Neighborhood development and investment
  - Food access