

Matias Valenzuela

Director of Office of Equity and Social Justice, King County

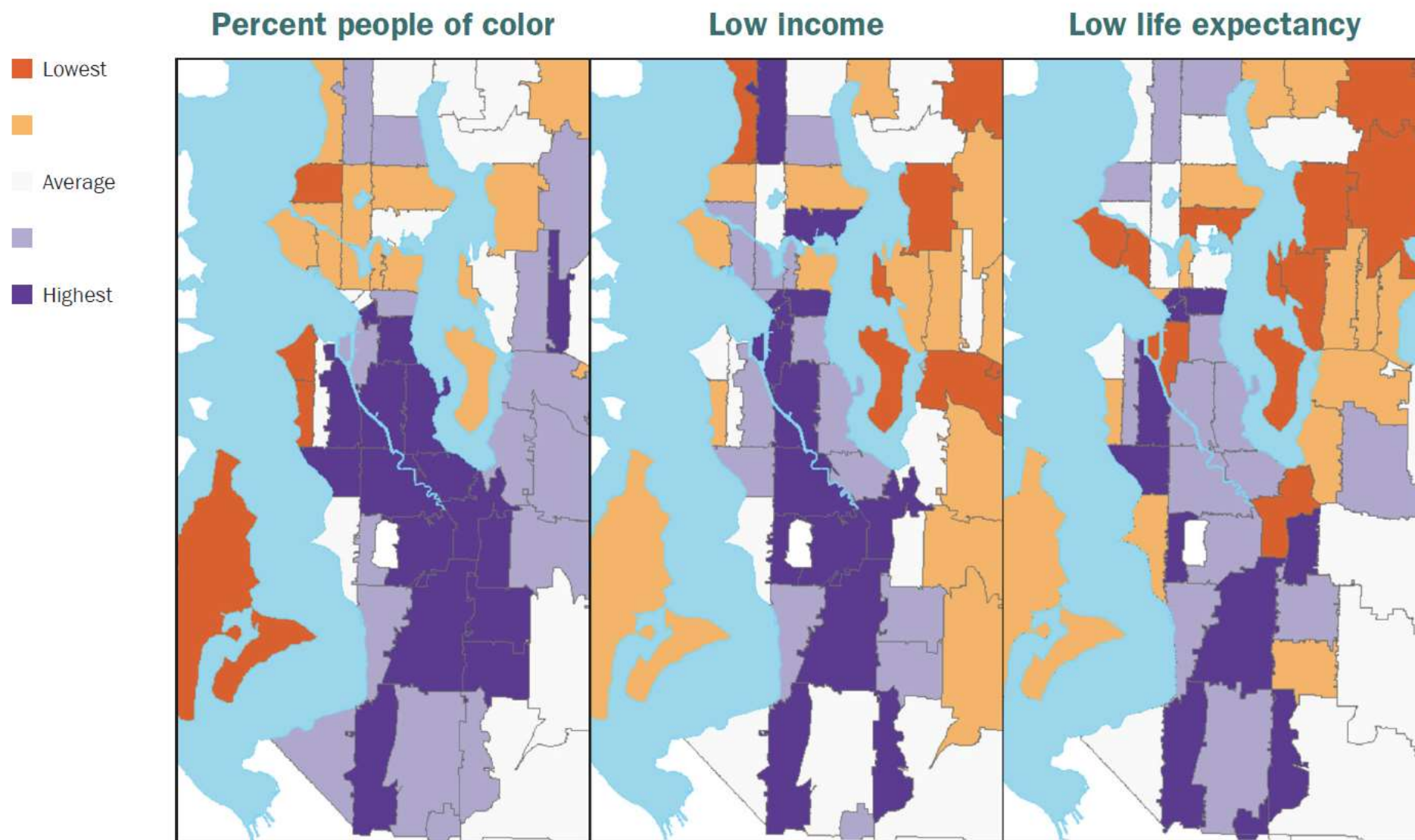
Sept 16, 2019

Washington State Equity Office Task Force

kingcounty.gov/equity

King County Equity and Social Justice Strategic Plan

Strong connection among place, race, income and health



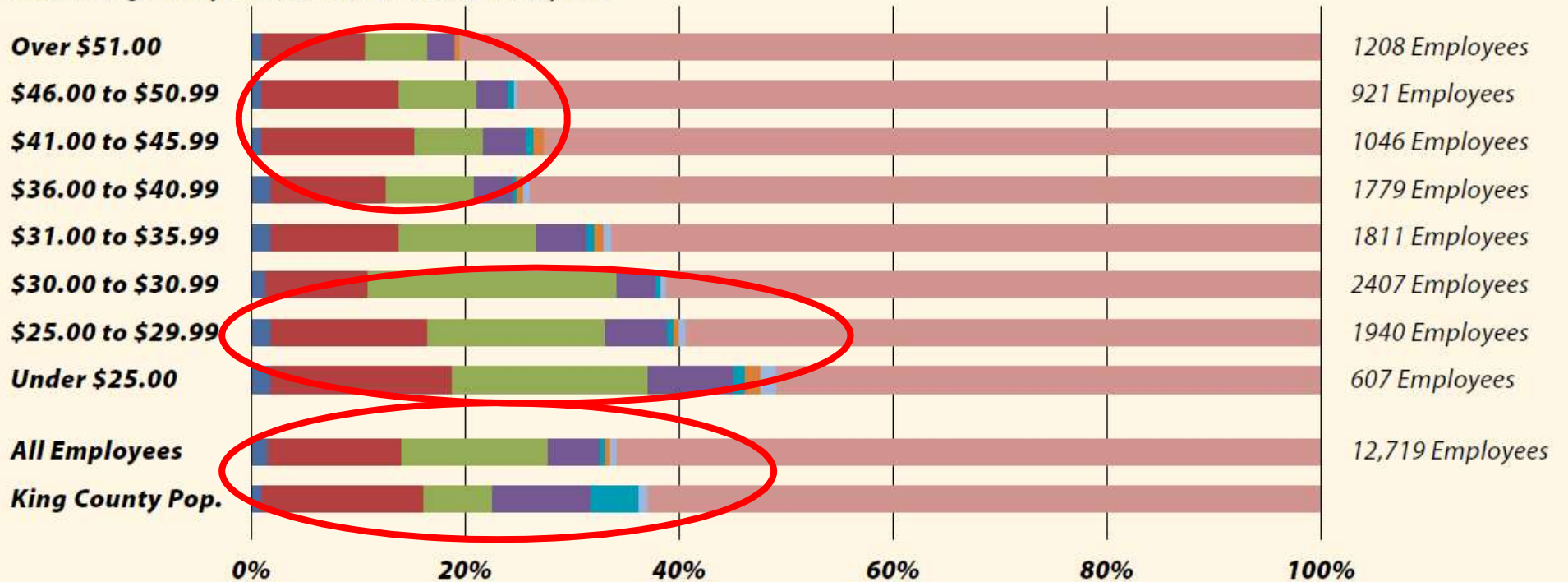
Our workforce and workplace inequities



KING COUNTY EMPLOYEES – RACE BY HOURLY PAY RATES

■ American Indian ■ Asian American ■ African American ■ Latino ■ Multiple races ■ Not identified ■ Pacific Islander ■ White

Source: King County Human Resources Division, July 2013



Phases of Equity & Social Justice at King County

❑ Before 2008

- Many King County departments and agencies focused on disparities and disproportionality in areas like health and criminal justice
- Equity work not coordinated countywide

❑ 2008 to 2014

- 2008 - King County Executive Ron Sims launches Equity and Social Justice (ESJ) Initiative
- 2010 - Strong commitment from Executive Dow Constantine and County Council helps integrate equity in County work (ESJ Ordinance, ESJ Inter-Branch Team, “fair and just” principles in King County Strategic Plan)

❑ 2015 to present

- Office of Equity and Social Justice created
- ESJ Strategic Plan



**EQUITY AND SOCIAL JUSTICE
STRATEGIC PLAN**
2016-2022



King County

Our Vision

A King County where all people have equitable opportunities to thrive.

Our Values

Racially Just

Inclusive and Collaborative

Diverse and People Focused

Responsive and Adaptive

Transparent and Accountable

Focused Upstream and Where Needs Are Greatest

The “unhealthy stream” creates inequities

POLICIES, PRACTICES & SYSTEMS– Policies, structures and systems – including those in government – have sustained and even contributed to Inequities

OUTCOMES– Organizations and their programs historically have tended to react to problems and treat poor individual and family-level outcomes

CONDITIONS– Past policies, systems and practices have resulted in adverse social, physical and economic conditions

structural racism and discrimination
class and gender bias
lack of access to resources
and decision-making
cross-generational inequities

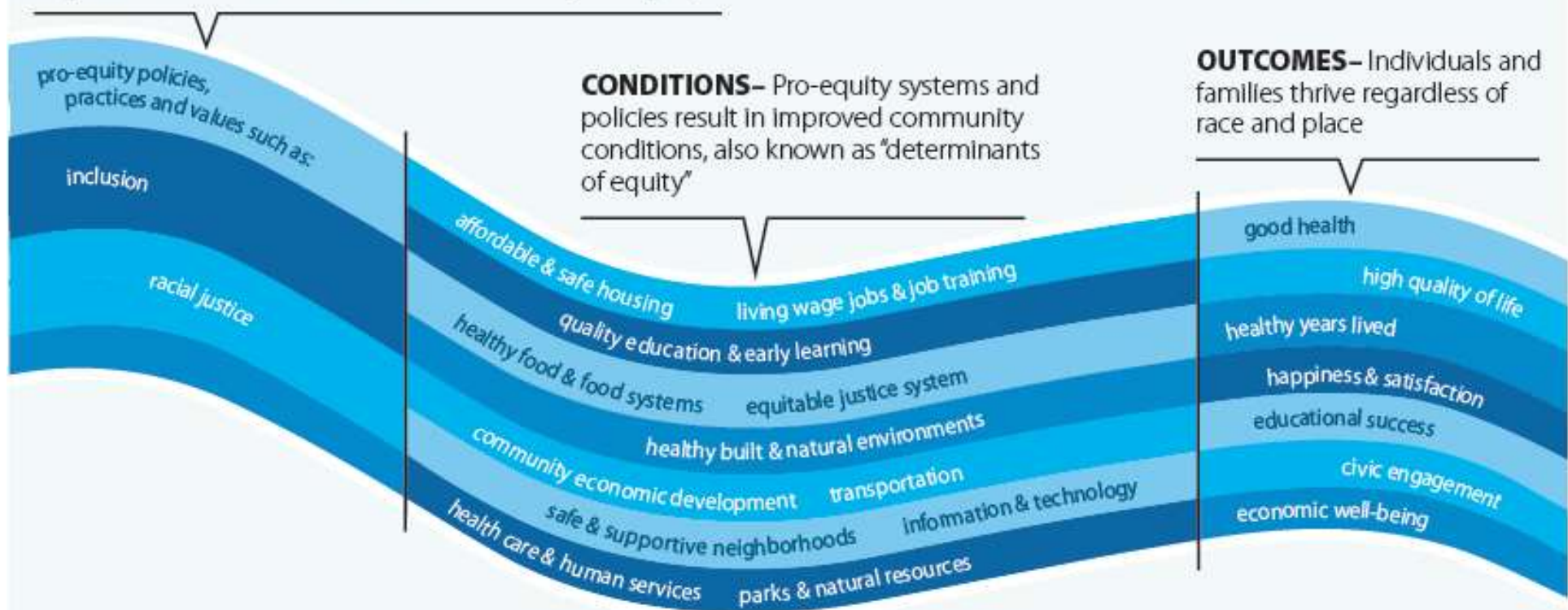
dilapidated housing
poor quality schools
unemployment & low wage work
limited & unsafe parks
food insecurity
pollution & toxic exposures
absence of community economic development
disproportionality in justice system
unsafe neighborhoods
no insurance or quality healthcare

incarceration
obesity
homelessness
health problems
untreated mental illness
low birth weight
unemployed and underemployed

The “healthy stream” creates equity

PRO-EQUITY POLICIES, PRACTICES & SYSTEMS–

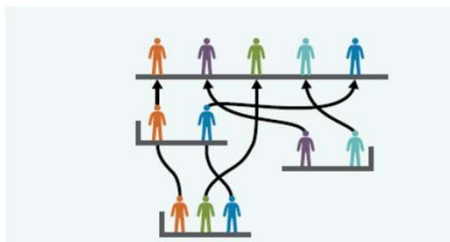
For greatest and most effective impact, King County is **focusing “upstream”** to address root causes and be pro-equity



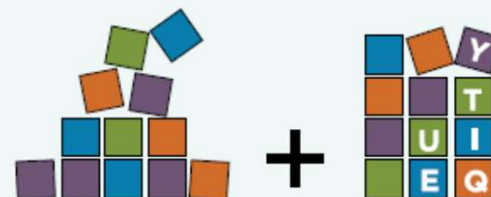
Pro-equity



King County



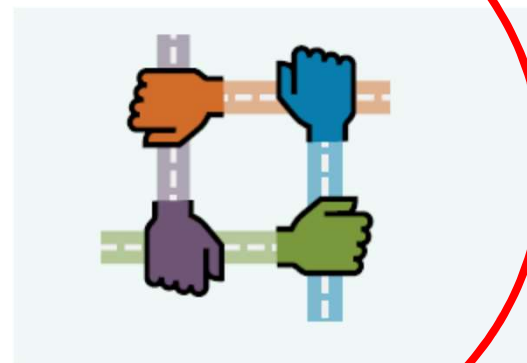
Targeted universalism



Dismantle systems of injustice



**Focus on people and places
with greatest needs**



Process equity

Our Strategies

KING COUNTY INVESTS...



Upstream, and where
needs are greatest,



in community
partnerships,



and in employees,



with transparent
and accountable
leadership.



**EQUITY AND SOCIAL JUSTICE
STRATEGIC PLAN**
2016-2022



King County

Major features of our plan

- Lead with racial equity
- Six-goal areas (such as leadership/operations/services; plans/policies/budgets; workforce workplace)
- Pro-equity policy agenda
- Regional collaborative on equity

Lessons learned

- Leadership commitment
- Integration, engagement and part of everybody's work
- Breaking down silos
- Tools and frameworks: Equity tools, ordinance, theory of change, determinants of equity, strategic plan
- Values driven, data supported (empirical & qualitative data)
- Concrete, clear actions defined by those most negatively affected
- Both hearts and minds – Deep personal and institutional change



Thank you!

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