

Racial Equity and Social Justice Impact Statements

Office of Legislative Oversight (OLO)

May 15, 2025

What is a RESJIS?

- **Racial Equity and Social Justice Impact Statements (RESJIS)** evaluate the anticipated impact of introduced bills and zoning text amendments (ZTAs) on racial equity and social justice in Montgomery County
- **Racial equity and social justice (RESJ)** is a process that focuses on centering the needs, leadership, and power of Black, Indigenous, and other People of Color (BIPOC) and communities with low-incomes with a goal of eliminating racial and social inequities

History



MONTGOMERY COUNTY
**RACIAL EQUITY &
SOCIAL JUSTICE ACT**



The 2019 RESJ Act prioritized RESJ as a goal for Montgomery County and created an infrastructure in the government to advance RESJ

2019 RESJ Act

- Created Office of Racial Equity and Social Justice
- Created RESJ Advisory Committee
- Requires all County staff to receive training on RESJ
- Requires all County departments to develop RESJ Action Plan
- **Requires OLO to draft RESJISs for all bills introduced by Council**

2020 RESJ Act Amendments

- Requires REIAs for all supplemental appropriations introduced by County Executive
- Requires REIAs for all special appropriations introduced by County Council
- **Requires OLO to draft RESJIS for all ZTAs introduced by Council**

Development of RESJ Act

2018



Sept

OLO Report 2018-8:
*Racial Equity In
Government Decision-
Making* is published

Mar

Council President Navarro
and County Executive
Elrich launch community
conversations on racial
equity and social justice

Sept

Council President
Navarro introduces
RESJ Act

Apr

County Council adopts
resolution to develop a racial
equity policy framework for the
County

2019



Jun

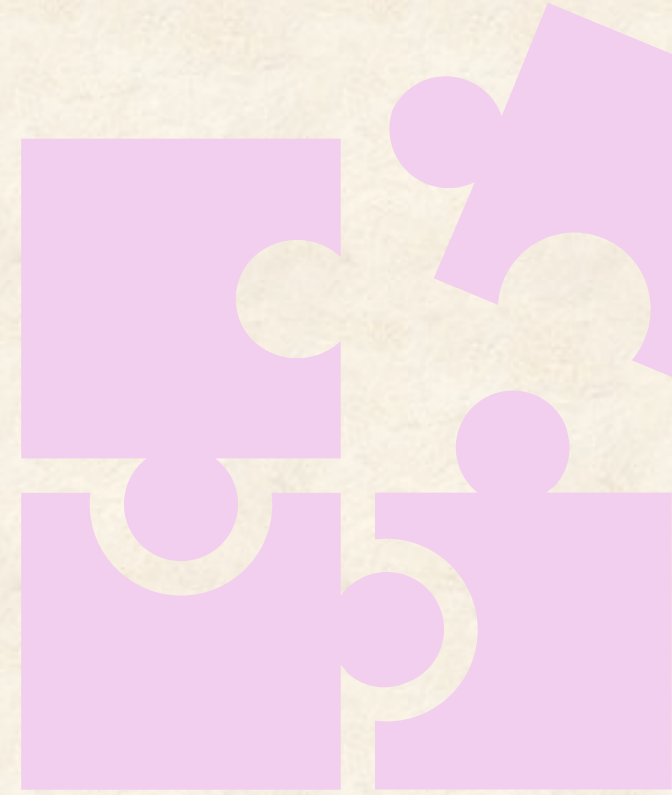
Council holds worksession
to discuss 2018 OLO report
and Montgomery County
Racial Equity Profile



Nov

RESJ Act is enacted

Framework & Process



Applying RESJ Lens and Centering Race

Seeing, thinking, and working differently to address the racial and social inequities that cause racial and social disparities

- Policies will have differential impacts by race and ethnicity, often sustaining or exacerbating inequities for BIPOC
- Using RESJ lens allows us to understand what those differential impacts by race and ethnicity will be and what is driving them
- Focus on impacts by race because BIPOC are most harmed by inequities, especially within other marginalized communities

Logistics



RESJIS is required for each bill and ZTA introduced by the Council



Bills and ZTAs are usually introduced on Tuesdays during full Council sessions



After bill/ZTA is introduced, generally have 21 days to complete and publish RESJIS



Usually have staff report for bill/ZTA on Thursday before



3 staff members who support with RESJISs



Before publishing, RESJISs undergo substantive reviews and proofreading

Content

1. Purpose

2. RESJ Context

3. Anticipated RESJ Impact

**4. Recommended
Amendments**

1. Purpose

What does the bill/ZTA seek to accomplish?

- Explaining how the bill/ZTA changes current policy
- Mainly rely on staff reports
- Sometimes engage departments that would be responsible for implementing policy

2. RESJ Context

How do racial and/or social inequities exist within the bill/ZTA's policy area?

- Explaining historical and current context of racial and social inequities
- Providing data on racial and social disparities
- Context of inequities helps highlight structural factors that cause disparities
- Research-intensive section of RESJIS
- Aim to provide context that is as local as possible

3. Anticipated RESJ Impact

Who benefits or is burdened by this bill/ZTA?

What racial and social inequities could this bill/ZTA strengthen or weaken?

- Evaluating disproportionalities by race or ethnicity among impacted community members
- Evaluating how policy could improve or worsen existing racial and social inequities
- Consider this information together to determine anticipated RESJ impact of policy

Scoring

- **Indeterminant:** Not enough information to determine.
- **Negative:** Worsens racial and social inequities. Recommended amendments required.
- **Minimal:** Sustains racial and social inequities.
- **Positive:** Reduces racial and social inequities but does not prioritize RESJ.
- **Equitable:** Prioritizes RESJ and reflects best practices for reducing racial and social inequities.

4. Recommended Amendments

What strategies could help mitigate a negative RESJ impact?

- Required for bills/ZTAs that are anticipated to have a negative RESJ impact
- Rely on best practices from research to advance RESJ in policy area

RESJISs by the Numbers

(Sept 2020 – Apr 2025)

RESJ Impact	Bills	ZTAs
Indeterminant	30 (17%)	11 (30%)
Negative	29 (16%)	3 (8%)
Minimal	60 (33%)	14 (38%)
Positive	53 (29%)	9 (24%)
Equitable	8 (4%)	0 (0%)
Total	180	37