



OFFICE OF RACIAL EQUITY AND SOCIAL JUSTICE

Marc Elrich  
*County Executive*

Tiffany Ward  
*Director*

MEMORANDUM

February 8, 2022

To: Jennifer Bryant, Director  
Office of Management and Budget

From: Tiffany Ward, Director  
Office of Racial Equity and Social Justice

Re: Racial Equity Impact Assessment (REIA) for Supplemental Appropriation #22-60  
Affordable Living Quarters

- I. **FINDING:** The Office of Racial Equity and Social Justice (ORESJ) finds that Supplemental Appropriation #22-60 Affordable Living Quarters is likely to advance racial equity and social justice in the County, if it results in the production of accessible and deeply affordable housing and examines the structures that produce housing instability and disproportionate rates of homelessness among communities of color in the County.
- II. **BACKGROUND:** The purpose of Supplemental Appropriation #22-60 is to provide the funding necessary to move forward an effort to create deeply affordable housing by conducting a preliminary planning and design study. Available information does not define 'deeply' affordable, but the proposed housing would be targeted towards individuals who are working but whose incomes are insufficient to afford rental rates; existing waivers don't entirely meet the need of this population.

As the CIP project description explains, lack of affordable housing in the County is a major obstacle to ending homelessness in the County. ORESJ has documented and explained many of the historical and contemporary racial inequities shaping housing insecurity and homelessness in the US and Montgomery County in the following Racial Equity Impact Assessments (REIAs):

1. Special Appropriation #22-527 Covid-19 Rental Relief:  
<https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/ore/Resources/Files/21-527.pdf>
2. Special Appropriation #22-10 Assistance in Community Integration Services Pilot:  
<https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/ore/Resources/Files/22-10.pdf>
3. Supplemental Appropriation #22-31 Nebel Street Shelter:  
<https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/ore/Resources/Files/22-31.pdf>

Adding to the background provided in these REIAs are details about racial disparities in eviction rates. In 2020, researchers from Rutgers University and Princeton University published novel research on racial and gender disparities in eviction in the US. Their research revealed that “Black and Latinx renters in general, and women in particular, are disproportionately threatened with eviction and disproportionately evicted from their homes”<sup>1</sup>. Another finding that demonstrates the persistence of this disparity is that Black and Latino renters were at a higher risk for serial eviction compared to their white counterparts, resulting in repeat exposure to eviction filing fines and fees. The financial hardship and instability created by these patterns, along with racial disparities in housing cost burden<sup>2</sup> (discussed in the above noted REIAs), demonstrate the need for both additional affordable housing and structural changes that address the underlying conditions leading to housing instability, for example eviction policies that create disparate impacts.

Finally, it’s important to note that applying a racial equity lens to decisions involves analysis of both process and outcome. In terms of process, it will be important for the housing study funded under this supplemental appropriation to consider racial disparities related to administrative burdens<sup>3</sup> individuals may experience in accessing this resource. The study should also consider the intersections of race, gender, employment, and disability to identify locations and sites that consider the structural burdens individuals may experience such as whether their home is accessible<sup>4</sup> or is close to major public transportation.

III. **DATA ANALYSIS:** The topic of Housing Cost Burden is discussed at length in the three REIAs cited in this memo. For the purposes of this analysis, it is important to consider who

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<sup>1</sup> Peter Hepburn, Renee Louis, and Matthew Desmond. “Racial and Gender Disparities among Evicted Americans”. Sociological Science 7: 649-662. DOI: 10.15195/v7.a27. Available at: <https://sociologicalscience.com/articles-v7-27-649/>.

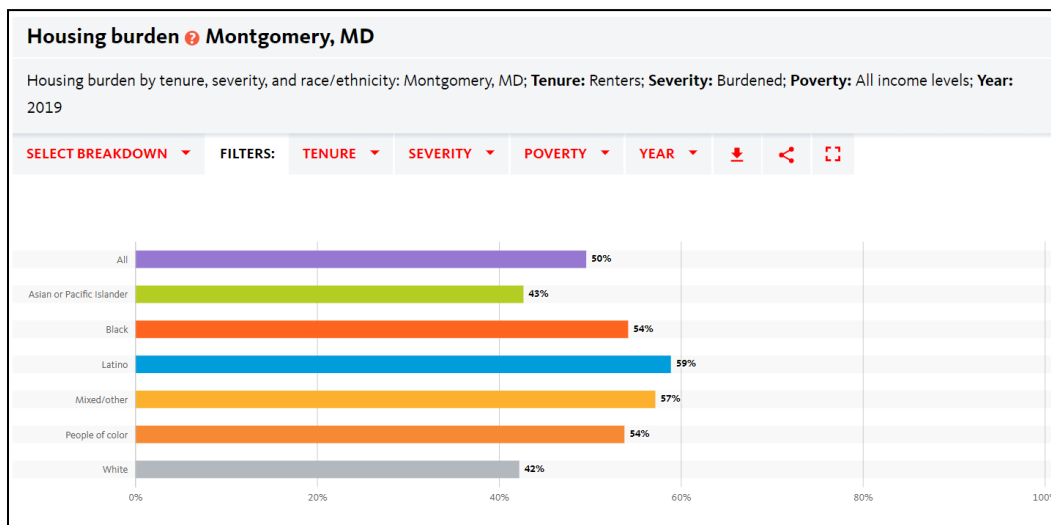
<sup>2</sup> See data analysis section.

<sup>3</sup> Executive Office of the President. Office of Management and Budget. Study to Identify Methods to Assess Equity: Report to the President. July 20, 2021. Available at: [https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/OMB-Report-on-E013985-Implementation\\_508-Compliant-Secure-v1.1.pdf](https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/OMB-Report-on-E013985-Implementation_508-Compliant-Secure-v1.1.pdf). and Karissa Minnich. Association for Psychological Science. “Addressing Racial Equity Through Human-Centered Design”. September 30, 2020. Available at: <https://www.psychologicalscience.org/observer/racial-equity-human-centered-design>.

<sup>4</sup> Policy & Advocacy: Housing. The Arc. Available at: <https://thearc.org/policy-advocacy/housing/>. and Bridget Hayman. Access Living. “Lawsuit Alleging Decades of Housing Discrimination Against Disabled People in Chicago Can Proceed”. April 2, 2019. Available at: <https://www.accessliving.org/newsroom/press-releases-and-statements/lawsuit-alleging-decades-of-housing-discrimination-against-disabled-people-in-chicago-can-proceed/>.

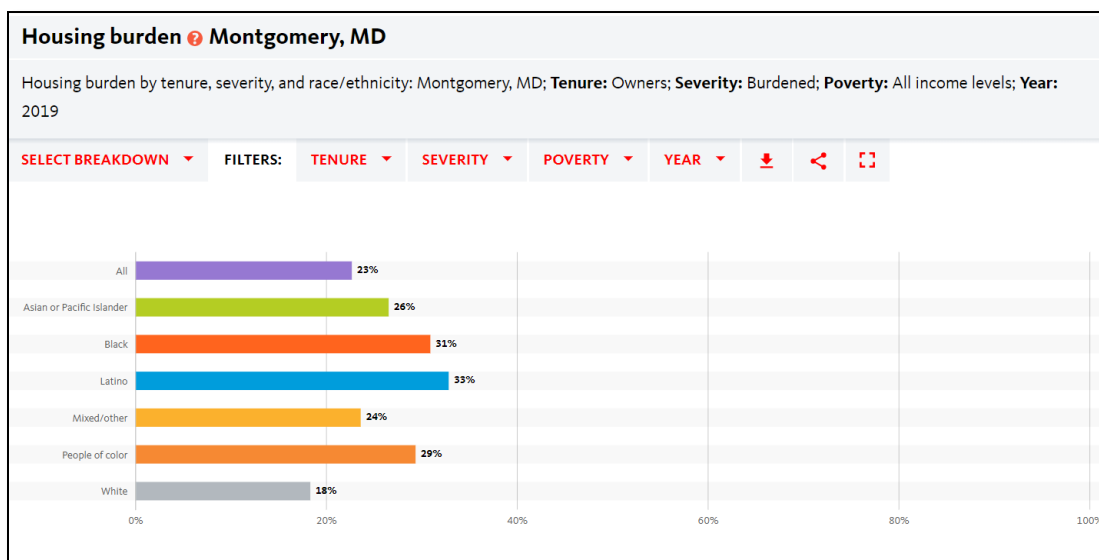
is housing cost burdened in Montgomery County to understand who is most likely to experience housing instability and as a result more likely to experience homelessness. The charts below illustrate housing cost burden by tenure (renter/owner) and by race/ethnicity.

### Renter Housing Burden in Montgomery County, MD in 2019



**Source:** Housing Burden, Renters, Montgomery County, Maryland, 2019. Available at: [https://nationalequityatlas.org/indicators/Housing\\_burden#/?geo=04000000000024031](https://nationalequityatlas.org/indicators/Housing_burden#/?geo=04000000000024031)

### Owner Housing Burden in Montgomery County, MD in 2019



**Source:** Housing Burden, Owners, Montgomery County, Maryland, 2019. Available at: [https://nationalequityatlas.org/indicators/Housing\\_burden#/?geo=04000000000024031&rentown01=2](https://nationalequityatlas.org/indicators/Housing_burden#/?geo=04000000000024031&rentown01=2)

cc: Ken Hartman, Director, Office of Strategic Partnerships, Office of the County Executive