



OFFICE OF RACIAL EQUITY AND SOCIAL JUSTICE


Marc Elrich
County Executive

Tiffany Ward
Director and Chief Equity Officer

MEMORANDUM

February 3, 2025

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 Amendment to the FY25-30 Capital Improvements Program (CIP) and Supplemental Appropriation (SA) #25-32 FY25 Capital Budget, Montgomery County Government, Department of Public Libraries, Noyes Library for Young Children Rehabilitation and Renovation (No. P711704), \$3,000,000

- I. **FINDING:** The Office of Racial Equity and Social Justice (ORESJ) finds that *Amendment to the FY25-30 Capital Improvements Program (CIP) and Supplemental Appropriation (SA) #25-32 FY25 Capital Budget, Montgomery County Government, Department of Public Libraries, Noyes Library for Young Children Rehabilitation and Renovation (No. P711704)* does not advance equitable outcomes for young children and families in Montgomery County who identify as Black, Indigenous, or People of Color (BIPOC). Most notably, this particular request could effectively serve to widen existing gaps related to school readiness and educational achievement as services provided by this particular site are specifically focused on supplementing pre-kindergarten education and early childhood education, however, the library is situated in an area whose residents largely identify as White, suggesting these would be the primary beneficiaries its programming.
- II. **BACKGROUND:** *Amendment to the FY25-30 CIP and SA #25-32 FY25 Capital Budget, Montgomery County Government, Department of Public Libraries, Noyes Library for Young Children Rehabilitation and Renovation (No. P711704)* is intended to provide for comprehensive rehabilitation of this historic library to include conversion of the attic into a finished second floor, renovation of the first floor, and the addition of a finished basement, an elevator, Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) compliant restrooms, and

February 3, 2025

Page 2 of 4

egress stairs.¹ The rehabilitated facility will be able to accommodate more attendees and more types of programming and services than are possible in the current facility.²

The current cost of construction exceeds the project's original approved budget. Approval of this supplemental appropriation request will allow the selected contractor to complete the project's construction under phase two without interruption.

III. **ANALYSIS OF CIP PROJECTS THROUGH THE LENS OF RACE EQUITY:**

Over the years, ORESJ has developed Capital Improvements Program Budget Equity Tools (CIP BET) and Guidance Manuals³ to help stakeholders in Montgomery County incorporate a racial equity lens into CIP project development and resource decisions. Best practices for using a racial equity tool, such as the CIP BET, suggest that the tool should be used early and often in project development and involve a diverse set of project stakeholders—including community members and intended beneficiaries of the program.

During the FY25-30 CIP budget submission cycle, the Montgomery County Department of Public Libraries received a score of zero (out of a possible six) for their CIP BET response for CIP project No. P711704. A score of zero indicates that the *“Response does not identify a specific racial disparity or inequity related to the project or project issue/service area, but available evidence (ORESJ research) indicates that implementation/completion of the project could help reduce or widen racial disparities or inequities. Similarly, the response does not explain how the project is likely to impact racial disparities and inequities. There are also unintended consequences that the response does not identify or address.”*⁴ At the time, ORESJ provided the following analysis to the Department:

“The response does not include robust data, community engagement efforts, or additional research—stating that a primary driver of the project is ensuring that the building is ADA compliant as the library has never been accessible to those with physical disabilities. Included data identifies that the community primarily serviced by this particular library would be those who identify as White (with no income-level data being provided). The response also states that the library does not track the demographic data of its customers and asserts that residents travel to various library locations

¹ Montgomery County, MD Capital Budget. Noyes Library for Young Children Rehabilitation and Renovation. 2025. Available at:

<https://apps.montgomerycountymd.gov/BASISCAPITAL/Common/Project.aspx?ID=P711704&CID=7&SCID=92>

² Ibid.

³ Montgomery County Office of Racial Equity and Social Justice. *Budget Equity Tool Resources*. 2025. Available at: <https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/ore/bettool.html>

⁴ Montgomery County Office of Racial Equity and Social Justice. *FY25-30 Capital Improvements Program (CIP) Budget Equity Tool (BET) Guidance Manual*. 2023. Available at:

<https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/ORE/Resources/Files/GuidanceManualFY25CBET.pdf>

Racial Equity Impact Assessment (REIA) Amendment to the FY25-30 Capital Improvements Program (CIP) and Supplemental Appropriation (SA) #25-32 FY25 Capital Budget, Montgomery County Government, Department of Public Libraries, Noyes Library for Young Children Rehabilitation and Renovation (No. P711704)

February 3, 2025

Page 3 of 4

throughout the county, assuming that this could include children and families of color. As a result of this response, ORESJ cannot justify the project's need as it seemingly does not advance RESJ."

Much like the CIP BET response, this supplemental appropriation request does not propose substantive changes to the project that would address racial and other inequities related to accessibility of the library. While there may be limited opportunities to identify project changes that may support the reduction of racial disparities and inequities within the project – as these were not considered during the design – using ORESJ's CIP BET as a framework, we offer several observations for consideration:

What racial disparities or inequities will this specific project help to reduce or widen because of its implementation / completion?

As previously stated in the Department's response to the FY25-30 CIP BET, this project does not seek to address a specific racial disparity or inequity in the County but instead is assumed to benefit all County residents, particularly young children, and their families/caregivers. Specifically, CIP project No. P711704 will serve as an *"expanded center for early literacy and kindergarten readiness, providing resources for parents and caregivers of young children across the County, assisting in reaching communities of color with information and training related to the importance of early literacy for school success."* Limited data accompanying the response stated that the location of the library is an area whose racial makeup is 82.0% White, 3.7% Black, 4.7% Hispanic, and 4.5% Asian. As previously noted, no income information was provided. While responses to the tool assume that the library is accessible to all County residents, thus enabling all to benefit from its programming, considerations for low-income BIPOC families without access to a vehicle or the availability of public transportation were not given.

How will you mitigate any unintended consequences, for communities of color and other marginalized groups, resulting from the development, construction, or implementation of the project?

Addressing racial disparities and inequities is not identified as a core tenet of the funding request. Responses to the CIP BET lift up the project's ability to become ADA-compliant through this funding and subsequent construction, allowing the library to become accessible for those with disabilities. While this is a notable benefit to the community, responses do not consider other unintended consequences, particularly for low-income BIPOC children and families with limited transportation options. Specifically, responses state the *"project does not respond to data, etc. regarding racial disparities"*, but then asserts the *"project should not result in any unintended negative consequences"*. As CIP project No. P711704 does not consider racial disparities, it is difficult to determine any unintended consequences that could arise from the development of the project.

Racial Equity Impact Assessment (REIA) Amendment to the FY25-30 Capital Improvements Program (CIP) and Supplemental Appropriation (SA) #25-32 FY25 Capital Budget,
Montgomery County Government, Department of Public Libraries, Noyes Library for Young Children Rehabilitation and Renovation (No. P711704)

February 3, 2025

Page 4 of 4

cc: David Dise, Director, Department of General Services
Darcell Graham, Director, Department of Public Libraries
Tricia Swanson, Director, Strategic Partnerships, Office of the County Executive